Text

Description automatically generated

**Western Carolina University.**

**Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)Program**

**Clinical Scholarly Project Guidelines 2022-2023**

Western Carolina University 28 Schenck Parkway, Suite 300

Asheville, NC 28803

[WCU](https://www.wcu.edu/learn/programs/nursing-practice-dnp/index.aspx) DNP Website

Rev. July 24, 2022

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**TOPIC PAGE**

Handbook Disclaimer 4

Overview of DNP Project Courses 4

WCD DNP Clinical Scholarly Project Guidelines 9

DNP Project: Frequently Asked Questions… 10

Selection of DNP Clinical Scholarly Project Leader and Leader 13

Clinical Expert Credentialing Criteria… 14

Changes in DNP Project Leader/Team members… 15

Steps and Timeline for DNP Project Completion and Work with Team 16

DNP Project Checklist… 16

Explanation of the steps… 17

DNP Project Registration… 18

Protection of Human Subjects 18

DNP Clinical Scholarly Project Types… 19

Dissemination Activity 20

Oral Presentations of The DNP Clinical Scholarly Project 21

Copies of DNP Project and Approval Page 21

DNP Project Assignment and Instructions 22

Module I: CITI Training Completion 22

Module II: Needs Assessment and Clinical Questions 22

Module III: Project Team Recruitment 23

Module IV: Problem Statement, Project Purpose, and Project Outcomes 23

Module V: Conceptual Framework to Include Measures 24

Module VI: Project Preliminary Topic Proposal and PowerPoint Presentation 25

Module VII: Literature Evaluation and Synthesis Table 27

Module VIII: Implementation and Data Collection Plan 28

Module IX: DNP Project Proposal and IBB Application 28

Module X: Project Implementation, Data Analysis, Conclusion, Recommendation and Modification 29

Module XI: Scholarly Project Defense and Final Project Paper 29

DNP Project Final Presentation Guidelines 29

Format Recommendations for Power Point Presentations 29

DNP Project Final Written Deliverable 29

Report to The Institution: Sample Table of Contents 29

DNP Project Final Presentation Process 30

Appendix A: … 31

**This handbook provides information regarding the DNP project for students in the   
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) nursing programs.**

Please Note: Additional sources of information related to student policies are published in

The Western Carolina University Student Handbook

The Graduate School Handbook

The College of Nursing (CON) Student Handbook

Course specific policies may be found in the individual course syllabi

Students are expected to be knowledgeable about these policies and procedures especially those related to academic integrity, professional conduct and clinical policies.

**HANDBOOK DISCLAIMER**

While the provisions of the WCU Student Handbook are as accurate and complete as possible, the College of Nursing reserves the right to change any provision herein without actual notice. Every effort will be made to keep students advised of such changes. However, each student has the responsibility to know what changes have been made to the DNP Project Handbook and to successfully complete the requirements of the DNP degree program.

**Overview of DNP Project Courses**

Students will complete courses which provide content, structure, and resources to help facilitate all aspects of the project. An overview of the project courses is provided below, for more in-depth description, refer to specific course syllabi.

\*\*New table needed to include Project course name, description, objectives\*\*\*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DNP Project Courses** | **Course Description** | **Course Objectives** |
| **Evaluation and Quality** | **Emphasis is on conceptual, methodological, organizational, political, and ethical considerations in evaluating health care programs** | 1. Identify quality and outcome indicators in a variety of healthcare settings.  2. Evaluate methods appropriate for program design.  3. Analyze and interpret data related to project goal.  4. Implement program evaluation in their advanced practice clinical setting.  5.Disseminate program quality and evaluation findings to stakeholders. |
| **NSG 801: Essentials of Academic Writing** | **Graduate programs require extensive high-quality academic writing. Successful graduate students must be able to effectively express their thoughts and ideas in writing and should develop the ability to evaluate their own and others writing for strengths and weaknesses. Graduate work should also feature exceptional attention to good mechanics and source documentation; failure in these areas weakens the written work.**  **This course offers an introduction to the art of academic discourse that will prepare students for graduate-level writing assignments, including research papers, theses, and DNP projects.** | 1. Demonstrate effective thinking and writing, with particular emphasis on effectively interacting collaboratively with the academic writing of others within their group.  2. Design effective paragraphs and sustained discourse on complex.  3. Synthesize the writing process, including outlining, drafting, and utilize appropriate style, including word choice, grammar. |
| **NSG 802: Community Epidemiology** | **Rationale/Purpose/Catalog Description: Principles and methods of epidemiology including models of health, illness, and disease; modes of transmission; risk factors and chronic diseases; and paradigms of health promotion and disease prevention.**  **Course Objectives: At the completion of this course the student will be able to** | 1. Describe a public health problem in terms of magnitude, person, place, and time.  2. Describe how social, behavioral, environmental, and biological factors contribute to health outcomes.  3. Describe how the public health information infrastructure is used to collect, process, maintain and disseminate data.  4. Draw appropriate inferences from epidemiologic text, tables and figures based on calculations of basic epidemiology measures (incidence, prevalence, and mortality rates)  5. Critique the design, analysis, and findings of epidemiologic studies, various study designs, and explain how they can inform professional practice  6. Explain the importance of epidemiology for informing scientific, ethical, economic, and political discussion of health issues and recommendations about health policy.  7. Communicate epidemiologic findings and interpretations to lay and professional audiences.  8. Describe the steps of public health investigation and surveillance.  9. Discuss how surveillance data can be used to identify and characterize public health problems and monitor control |
| **NSG 814: Foundations and Applications of Evidence Based Practice** | This course is an overview of models of Evidence-Based Practice processes including knowledge development activities addressing translation of research in practice, the evaluation of practice, and activities designed for the improvement in healthcare practice and outcomes for patients and populations. | 1. Examine the foundational and philosophical aspects of evidence-based practice for the advanced practice nurse at the clinical doctorate level.  2. Integrate information technology and research methods to guide the collection, analysis, and evaluation of healthcare outcomes  3. Apply analytical methods to critically appraise existing research, practice guidelines, and other evidence to determine and implement best practice  4. Describe methods of translating and integrating scientific evidence into health care settings to promote safe, effective, efficient, equitable, timely, and patient-centered care. |
| **NSG 816 Global Health & Social Justice** | **An interdisciplinary human rights and social justice perspective of contemporary issues, problems and controversies that effect social, economic, political, and environmental global health.** | 1. Analyze social, cultural. ecological, biological, historical, political, and economic factors affecting global health disparities.  2. Utilize theoretical frameworks to analyze policy issues related to global health and social justice  3. Evaluate how sources of information influence development of global health policy  4. Explain how interdisciplinary collaboration can address global health challenges. |
| **NSG 817: Applied Biostatistics** | NSG 817 - Applied Biostatistics: This course emphasizes statistical literacy and develops critical statistical thinking. Students analyze data sets and communicate statistical results in a concise, cohesive, and readable manner. **Course Overview:**This course is an introduction to statistical methods used in public health, nursing, and medical sciences. It is not a mathematics course, and such will not stress derivations of formulae. Instead, the course will emphasize the application of statistical ideas and methods to the design and interpretation of experimental and comparative data frequently encountered in the health sciences. The student will be able to assess a situation involving data analysis, state the nature of the research question and the hypotheses proposed, decide on the best statistical procedure for assessing the relationships, identify the assumptions of the test used, calculate the statistics, assess both the clinical and statistical significance of the results, and interpret the data considering the context in which the data are collected. Topics include descriptive statistics, performance characteristics of diagnostic tests, estimation, hypothesis testing, p-values, confidence intervals, correlation, linear regression, logistic regression, survival analysis, sample size and power analysis. Course participants will also develop basic skills in the use of the statistical package SPSS. Although no prerequisite work in statistics is required, it is assumed that the student has completed an introductory course in research methods and is familiar with the concepts of research design. | 1. Evaluate the assumptions for statistical inference.  2. Demonstrate competence in utilization of one statistical software package.  3. Apply appropriate statistical tests to analyze data sets.  4. Communicate statistical results using appropriate graphics, tables, and charts. |
| **NSG 822: Health Care Policy and Ethics** | By the end of this course, students will be able to discuss variables (local, state, & national) that influence healthcare policy & ethics in the clinical setting. | 1. Analyze factors in the clinical setting that impact health policy development & implementation.  2. Analyze an existing healthcare policy and ethical implications relevant to a selected population focus.  3. Propose a modification to selected healthcare policy.  4. Explain how the effectiveness of the modified healthcare policy can be implemented in the population of focus. |
| **NSG 823: Economic and Financial Aspects of Healthcare Systems** | **Rationale/Purpose/Catalog Description: Study of financial and business factors related to health care delivery systems and advanced practice nursing.** | 1. Identify key factors that impact the rising health care costs and approaches to controlling the costs.  2. Identify the history, theory, and characteristics of the major types of payment systems in the US.  3. Integrate financial analysis into leadership decision-making utilizing key drivers of revenues and costs.  4. Read, interpretant communicate key financial information. |
| **NSG 826: Leadership and Health Care Systems** | **Aims: This course will examine challenges and socio-political issues impacting** **strategies for organizational design to promote communication, collaboration, conflict** **management, power-sharing, and innovation.** | 1. Apply theories of leadership to their vision of healthcare delivery.  2. Apply theories of organizational design to support communication and productive behavior among interdisciplinary teams. 3. Demonstrate reflective awareness of personal leadership qualities and strategies to expand and capitalize on them. 4. Discuss strategies to create a practice environment that promotes and sustains evidence-based clinical and administrative decision-making. 5. Demonstrate skills based on implementation science to affect change. 6. Apply principles for organizing and writing effective reports and proposals. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AACN Essentials of Doctoral Education** | **Concentration Courses: Theory** | | | | | | | | |
| **Essential** | **814 EBP** | **802 Epi** | **822 Policy/ Ethics** | **823 Econ/ Finance** | **816 Global health** | **826 Lead/ Hlt systems** | **817 Stats** | **815 Prog Eval/QA** | **917** |
| I: Scientific Underpinnings for Practice | X | X |  | X | X |  | X | X | X |
| II: Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking |  |  |  | X | X | X |  | X | X |
| III: Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-based Practice | X |  |  | X | X |  | X | X | X |
| IV: Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care. | X |  |  | X | X |  | X |  | X |
| V: Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care |  |  | X | X | X |  |  | X |  |
| VI: Inter-professional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  | X |
| VII: Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation’s Health |  | X |  | X | X |  | X |  |  |
| VIII: Advanced Nursing Practice | X | X |  | X | X |  | X | X | X |
| **NSG 801**: Essentials of Academic Writing (1) | * II: Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking *(2.b-use communication skills to lead QI/Safety initiatives)* * III: Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-based Practice *(7. disseminate findings….)* * VI: Inter-professional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes (*1.*   *employ effective communication ….skills……)* | | | | | | | | |

**Post-Master’s DNP**

**Mapping of AACN Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice and the Post-master’s DNP Curriculum**

**WCD DNP Clinical Scholarly Project Guidelines**

DNP students are required to complete a clinical scholarly project in order to meet the program’s requirement and be eligible for graduation. The DNP Scholarly Project is a project that brings together the practice and scholarship aspects of the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. It is designed to address complex practice issues that affect groups of patients, health care organizations, or health care systems utilizing informatics, technology, and in-depth knowledge of the clinical and behavioral sciences. The clinical scholarship required in the DNP Scholarly Project reflects mastery and competency in the student’s area of expertise.

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (2006):

The DNP primarily involves mastery of an advanced specialty within nursing practice. Therefore, other methods must be used to distinguish the achievement of that mastery. Unlike a dissertation, the work may take a number of forms. One example of a final DNP product is a practice change initiative. This may be represented by a pilot study, a program evaluation, a quality improvement project, or an evaluation of a new practice model.

The Final DNP Project provides an opportunity for the student to integrate their new skills into practice and to demonstrate many of the principles of nursing scholarship and the competencies delineated in the [*DNP Essentials*](https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/Publications/DNPEssentials.pdf).  The integration of these new or refined skills improves outcomes through organizational/systems leadership, quality improvement processes, and the translation of evidence into practice.

All DNP Projects should:

* Focus on a change that impacts healthcare outcomes either through direct or indirect care.
* Have systems (micro-, meso-, or macro- level) or population/aggregate focus.
* Demonstrate implementation in the appropriate arena or area of practice.
* Include a plan for sustainability (e.g. financial, systems or political realities, not only theoretical abstractions).
* Include an evaluation of processes and/or outcomes (formative or summative). DNP Projects should be designed so that processes and/or outcomes will be evaluated to guide practice and policy. Clinical significance is as important in guiding practice as statistical significance is in evaluating research.
* Provide a foundation for future practice scholarship

The final DNP project produces a tangible and deliverable academic product that is derived from the practice immersion experience and is reviewed and evaluated by an academic team. The final DNP product documents outcomes of the student’s educational experiences, provides a measurable medium for evaluating the immersion experience, and summarizes the student’s growth in knowledge and expertise. The final

DNP product should be defined by the academic unit and utilize a form that best incorporates the requirements of the specialty and the institution that is awarding the degree. Whatever form the final DNP product takes, it will serve as a foundation for future scholarly practice. (AACN p. 20)

Each of the Clinical Residency courses serves to facilitate the development of the Clinical Scholarly Project. The Scholarly Project Team evaluates the project for satisfactory progress and completion, which includes a scholarly presentation and poster presentation at a regional, state, or national conference or an article for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Students may choose to work in private practices, clinics, inpatient units, hospital systems, and other institutions and communities in the assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of outcomes of the DNP Scholarly project.

The student, the practice setting, and the student’s DNP Scholarly Project Team must jointly agree upon the scholarly initiative. The student must complete any required IRB approvals prior to implementing the project.

**DNP project: Frequently Asked Questions:**

Who is required to do a DNP Project?

Every student enrolled in a DNP degree program is required to successfully complete a DNP project as part of the requirements for graduation with a DNP degree.

What is a DNP Project?

The DNP Project is a quality improvement/practice change project that involves the systematic application of existing research/evidence in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of a systems level practice change to improve health care outcomes. The project allows the student to utilize and apply the concepts and skills learned throughout the program.

What is the DNP Project Process?

The student will identify a health care problem or need. An in-depth understanding of the problem will be gained through review of related research literature and examination of the ethical, political, economic, and cultural aspects inherent in the problem.

After a problem or need has been identified and confirmed, the student will design a detailed plan to address the problem. The design will evolve based on evaluation and synthesis of existing research. The student will translate the evidence into a specific plan after conducting a thorough assessment of the community, target population and setting for implementation.

Evaluation of the project process and outcomes measures are also key components of the DNP project.

(It is similar to the nursing process (assess, plan, implement, evaluate) and the scientific process (question, background research, hypothesis – except in this case, you are basing your plan on evidence/research, implement, analyze data/outcomes, reach conclusion, and communicate the results)

Is there a difference between a DNP Project done by a DNP-NP student and a DNP project done by a “traditional post-masters DNP student”?

“Traditional post-masters DNP students’” projects may have a broader scope and greater impact on a health care outcome due to their work experience in health care systems.

The American Association of College of Nurses (2015) released “The Doctor of Nursing Practice: Current Issues and Clarifying Recommendations Report from Task Force on

Implementation of the DNP” that answers this question. “though the DNP skill set represents new learning for all students pursuing the practice doctorate, the scope and impact of DNP projects can differ greatly since some are undertaken by post-baccalaureate students and others by experienced nurses in post-master’s programs.” (Pg 3).

What is the difference between a PhD research project/dissertation and a DNP project?

A PhD research project/dissertation is focused on creating new generalizable knowledge within the scope and practice of original research. A DNP project is focused on using evidence/research to address health care problems. Outcomes from DNP projects may be considered transferrable but are not considered generalizable (AACN, 2015, pg. 3).

DNP Project Topic:

Needs to be narrow (Often the most difficult aspect of the project). Needs to be based on a health care problem that is documented by evidence. Should not be preconceived solution to a problem that you think exists

How do I choose a topic for my DNP Project?

Think about problems that you have identified in your practice area. This is the best place to start!! Then you will begin to narrow your topic! Your faculty will help you with this process.

Don’t jump to the “solution” of the problem. Remember that a DNP project is based on a problem, the evidence is reviewed & a possible solution is found based on evidence. For example, teaching diabetic patients is not really a problem - “I want to teach diabetic patients!” indicates you have already decided what the solution to a problem is before identifying the problem and the evidence.

Try to stay away from preconceive notions about a problem. For example, if you say, “We have too many C-sections at my institutions.” This may just be your opinion. How do you know there are too many C-sections? What data support this? What are the associated negative outcomes?

When do I need to have the topic for my DNP Project finalized?

Some students, especially the full-time “traditional post-masters” DNP students, know what their project is when they enter the program because they must immediately start working on their project so that they can graduate on time. Other students take a little longer to identify a focus for their project or narrow their topic

Students should have their DNP project topic finalized when they start working with their team.

What makes a successful project?

A successful project has a clear focus – i.e., there is a clear problem, supported by evidence.

The leadership at the agency where the project is being done recognizes that the problem exists and supports the project (If you are doing your project at an agency - this is very important!).

DNP Project Team:

Guides and mentors, you through the DNP Project Process

What is the purpose of a DNP Project Team?

The DNP Project Team guides a student through the DNP Project Process which includes:

1) Refining and narrowing of project topic focus, 2) Examining the background of the problem, 3) Developing and refining the Project Plan, which serves as the blueprint for the student’s project, 4) Guiding the student through the implementation and evaluation of the project and 5) Preparation of the final oral and written requirements for dissemination of the project.

Do I choose my DNP Project Team?

Each student will be asked to identify members to serve as the DNP Project Team – but the DNP program leadership will work with students to identify individuals who have expertise with DNP projects, as well as content and process expertise.

What/who makes an effective DNP Project Team?

Experience with DNP Projects and expertise with the DNP Project content and process provides an important “balance” among your Project Team members. Consider this perspective in looking for team leader/member expertise: the team leader may be selected according to expertise related to the content of the student’s project or expertise related to the “process” used in the DNP project. For example, a student’s project may focus on evidence-based guidelines for insulin management in Type 2 diabetes mellitus. The Project Team Leader may have expertise in evaluation/implementation of evidence-based guidelines, but not have expertise related to insulin management.

What are the specific duties of the DNP Project Team Leader and Team Members?

The Project Team Leader serves as the leader of the student’s Project Team, mentors the student, assists the student to focus the area of interest, and guides the student throughout the project process The Project Team is responsible for the following activities:

Guiding the student in the planning and development of the student’s project

Critical review of the project proposal, implementation, and evaluation

Critical review and guidance in submission of project to WCU IRB

Administering and evaluating the student’s performance on both the Proposal and Final Project evaluations

What happens if someone on my DNP Project Team must quit my Project Team for some reason before I have completed my project?

If a DNP Project Team member must resign from a student’s DNP Project Team before the project is complete, the student will collaborate with the DNP Program Director and remaining Project Team member(s) to identify a new team member. Any changes in the Project Team must be submitted in writing to the DNP Program Director and a new Project Form amended.

Communication with DNP Project Team Members

To have a record of student progress throughout the project process, each student needs to hold routine meetings with all members of the project team present several times each semester. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that these meetings are scheduled.

**SELECTION OF DNP CLINICAL SCHOLARLY PROJECT LEADER AND LEADER**

The DNP Scholarly project begins with the selection of the team that will be guiding the project. The DNP Scholarly Project Team evaluates the progression of the student through the project process. The student and team will meet at least once during each semester.

The DNP Scholarly Project is guided by the DNP Scholarly Project Team. The student is responsible for:

* Choosing the team members with input from his/her leader during the first clinical redeny course.
* The composition of the DNP Scholarly Project team is expected to include a minimum of one doctoral prepared (PhD, DNP, MD or any other doctoral prepared individual) regular faculty member with graduate faculty status from WCU School of Nursing, and a clinical expert/preceptor from the practice area, who is also doctoral prepared. The leader must be a WCU university faculty member.

The Team is responsible for:

* Guiding the student through the project planning, implementation, and evaluation.
* Determining the successful completion of the project requirements. Failure to successfully complete the DNP scholarly project more than twice will result in termination from the program.

## **Clinical Expert Credentialing Criteria**

## Clinical Experts are identified collaboratively by students and the clinical residency course faculty, and program director.

## Clinical Expert qualifications include:

* A doctoral degree in their field of study (DNP, PhD, DO, MD, etc.)
* Active clinical practice in the student’s project site, as evidenced by their CV

## Educational and experiential preparation are validated by the clinical residency course faculty, and program director.

In addition to providing support and expertise to the student, the Clinical Expert serves on the Scholarly Project Team and participates in the approval process for the proposal and final presentation of the scholarly project. Clinical Experts are typically selected from the DNP students work environment, as such there is no affiliation agreement or clinical compliance process required

As stated above, a DNP project requires a doctoral prepared nursing faculty member to serve as the team leader and a working professional with a doctorate (DNP, PhD, DO, MD, etc.) to serve as a clinical expert. The DNP Clinical Scholarly Project is conducted under the direction of a project leader. The project leader helps the student ensure that the content, conduct, and form of the project are acceptable to the profession of nursing, the School of Nursing, and the Graduate School of the University. The student cannot graduate without the team’s approval of the completed project. The student has the privilege - and the responsibility - of selecting a project leader appropriate to his or her project. The student will work closely with the project leader; therefore, a personal as well as a professional "fit" is beneficial. The student's peers, academic advisor, or other faculty member may help guide the student to an appropriate person who might be willing to serve as project leader. In asking a faculty member to be a project leader, it is helpful for the student to understand that from the faculty point of view, the job of the project leader is intensely time-consuming and requires considerable expertise in the area being examined, or the preferred methodology. Therefore, faculty members may decline a request to serve because they cannot offer the student the time or the expertise that is needed. Once a student has selected a project leader, the student will meet with the leader to:

* Discuss and agree on the nature of the project or study.
* Negotiate a timeline of activities to be completed.
* Identify and mutually agree upon additional team members the student might approach.
* Outline role responsibilities for all team members once full team is formed.
* Review the DNP Clinical Scholarly Project Handbook

The student should now approach the team members to obtain their commitment to serve on the team. After the project leader and team member(s) have agreed to serve, it is the student's responsibility to:

* Obtain all signatures on the appropriate approval forms: Appointment of Doctoral Project Team (Appendix A), the four (4) Clinical Residency and Project Development Learning Contracts (Appendix K), and the Dissemination Activity Agreement (Appendix F).
* Submit the completed forms to the course faculty and the DNP Program Director.

**CHANGES IN DNP CLINICAL SCHOLARLY PROJECT LEADER/TEAM MEMBERS**

In some cases, it is necessary or advisable for the student to select a different project leader and/or team member(s). If any changes are made, a new approval form for the DNP Clinical Scholarly project team must be signed and submitted as described above. The most current approval form serves as the official record. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the signatures and submit the forms to the DNP Program Coordinator/Director.

A change in the project leader may involve delays because the new project leader's perspectives may differ from those of the former project leader. To avoid changes due to faculty resignation or retirement, the student is urged to complete the project in a timely manner. In some cases, the student may elect to change the project leader; the student should carefully weigh the advantages and disadvantages of such a change and choose the route that will be most beneficial for the completion of his or her degree requirements and professional goals. Please refer to the DNP Handbook for further instruction regarding terminating the relationship with the DNP team leader.

**STEPS AND TIMELINE FOR DNP CLINICAL SCHOLARLY**

Each semester, students are expected to work with their team to reach certain milestones in completing their Scholarly Project to graduate on time. The milestones are as follows.

**DNP PROJECT CHECKLIST**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module** | **Assignment** | **Weight** | **Connected to Course Outcome #** | **Target TimeLine** |
| Module I | CITI Training Completion | S/U | 1, 10 | 1st Semester |
| Module II | Needs Assessment and Clinical Question | 10% | 1, 2, 4, 5, 13 | 1st Semester |
| Module III | Project Team Leader and Member Recruitment  Clinical Expert Identified- proposed clinical learning contract completed | S/U | 1, 6 | 1st Semester |
| Module IV | Problem Statement, Project Purpose, and Project Outcomes | 5% | 1, 2, 7 | 1st Semester |
| Module V | Conceptual Framework to include measures | 5% | 1,3, 4, 7, 10, 13 | 1st Semester |
| Module VI | Project Preliminary topic proposal and PowerPoint presentation. | S/U | 4, 7, 10 | 1st Semester |
| Module VII | Literature Evaluation and Synthesis Tables | 10% | 8 | 2nd Semester |
| Module VIII | Implementation and Data Collection Plan | 10% | 7, 10 | 2nd Semester |
| Module IX | DNP Project Proposal IRB application | S/U | 5, 7, 8, 12 | 2nd Semester |
| Module X | Project Implementation, Data Analysis, Conclusions, Recommendations and Modifications | 10% | 5, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16 | 3rd Semester |
| Module XI | Scholarly Project Defense and Final Project Paper | 50% | 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 17, 18 | 3rd Semester |

**Explanation of the steps:**

1. Topic Approval. Students make an oral and written presentation to the DNP Scholarly Project Team for approval and feasibility of their topic. Student must provide a power point presentation describing the key components of the project proposal at the end of the first semester. If a student fails to pass the oral presentation, the team and the student will develop a remediation plan.
2. Presentation and Approval of Project Proposal. Students submit a written proposal to their team at least two weeks in advance of the oral presentation. Students make a formal presentation to their team of their scholarly project proposal. A student is allowed a second attempt to present their proposal to the team if they are unsuccessful the first time. Failing the proposal on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the program.
3. IRB Approval. The student works with their leader to secure IRB approval from the appropriate institutions. Typically, IRB approval at the institution where the project will occur is the first step followed by approval at the admitting university.
4. Presentation and Approval of Scholarly Project. Students submit their completed written project to their team at least two weeks in advance of an oral presentation. Students make a formal public presentation to their team and invited guests of their Scholarly Project Final Defense. The process for scheduling and announcing the presentation will vary by campus. A student is allowed a second attempt to defend their project to the team if they are unsuccessful the first time. Failing the final presentation on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the program.
   1. Write the final scholarly project following the outline.
   2. Schedule the public presentation of the scholarly project to the Team and invited guests at least 2 weeks prior to the deadline for final submission to the Graduate School. Check the campus academic calendar for deadlines.
   3. Students will complete the Dissemination Agreement and disseminate the results of their project at a regional, state, or national conference.

**DNP CLINICAL SCHOLARLY PROJECT REGISTRATION**

Milestones and completion of the DNP Clinical Scholarly Project are achieved in the completion of individual semester requirements for NSG 917 course. Each semester students will register for NSG 917. Each semester students will complete 180 clinical hours to satisfy program and graduation requirements of 500 additional hours to master’s prepared document supervised clinical hours. If a student did not achieve a documented supervised clinical hour requirement of 500 hours or present documentation of an approved certification program/course, they will complete required additional clinical hours with NSG 887. Should the student fail to meet project milestones in each course or need to withdraw from one of the Clinical Residency courses, the student will need to seek approval from the team leader, course instructor, and the DNP Program Director to outline a new plan of action for project completion.

**PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS**

If the proposed study involves any research with human or animal subjects, or the records of humans (e.g., medical charts, questionnaires, death records, computer databases for humans, etc.) written approval by the IRB or designated official(s) of the involved agency/agencies (e.g., the hospital or other setting in which the research will be conducted) must be obtained. Once approval from the project site is obtained, the student must obtain the approval of the pertinent University's Review Board, IRB for human subjects or IACUC for animals. While it is a good idea to seek informal approval from the agencies before you submit the final proposal to your project leader (so that you will know whether it is feasible to conduct your research at the desired agency), you may NOT seek formal written approval from any agency until AFTER the project leader has given you approval to do so. You may not seek University IRB approval, which also requires external agency approval, until after the project leader's approval and faculty team approval of the proposed project.

Content related to the completion of IRB approval and required CITI training is provided during Clinical Residency and Project Development (NSG 917, second semester). The team leader will be responsible for giving the student final approval to submit their proposal to the IRB for review during the summer semester upon completion of the associated project milestones.

The guidelines and forms for the University IRB application are available from the [WCU Office of Research](https://www.wcu.edu/learn/office-of-the-provost/research/sponsored-research/research-compliance/index.aspx). All forms, procedures and resources can be accessed from these pages. Read and follow the instructions carefully. (Note that you should NOT submit your entire Preliminary Project proposal; instead, follow the directions on the application. Note that ALL research involving human or animal subjects, including research that is "exempt" from full IRB review, must be approved by the IRB prior to collection of data. Human subjects, including pilot study subjects, may NOT be approached for the study before IRB approval is obtained. Plan appropriately for time. If several agencies in addition to the University's IRB are involved, the process can be very time- consuming.

**DNP CLINICAL SCHOLARLY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLETION**

The DNP Clinical Scholarly Project is a scholarly endeavor and must be of a quality appropriate for a public dissemination activity. Students will disseminate the results of their project at a regional, state, or national conference. The Clinical Scholarly Project is a culmination of knowledge gained through the DNP coursework. Students have the opportunity to focus their project with support from coursework related to the evidence-based care, health policy, informatics, economics, and leadership in the healthcare arena. It is expected that students will collaborate with community stakeholders to influence health care quality and negotiate successful change in care delivery processes for individuals, groups, or populations across a broad spectrum of healthcare delivery systems. The project should exemplify advanced clinical judgment and expertise in a defined content area; critical thinking and accountability in designing, delivering, and/or evaluating evidence-based care to improve health care quality, safety, and outcomes; and leadership in the development and implementation of patient-care policy.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Scholarly Project** | **Description** | **Exemplar** |
| Case Study Project | Greater depth of understanding to complex issues through conceptual  Can be of an individual, group, institution, or entire community  Appropriate for describing, exploring, and understanding a phenomenon in its real-life context  Variety of data collection methods necessary | A Case Study of the Implementation analysis of an Electronic Health Record Preadmission in Surgery Centers |
|  |  |  |
| Qualitative Descriptive | Preferred method for direct descriptions | Nurses’ Perceptions of Nursing |
| Project | Based on naturalistic inquiry | Handoffs at the Bedside |
|  | Focus groups typically used to collect data |  |
|  | Moderators must be skilled communicators |  |
| Clinical Intervention Project | 2 basic designs: Pre-experimental and Quasi-Experimental | Health Promotion in School-Aged |
|  | Consent form is necessary | Hispanic Children Through a |
|  | Involve manipulation of the independent variable | Culturally Appropriate Nutrition and |
|  | Builds knowledge about what works and what doesn’t work | Exercise Family-School Program |
|  | Any deliberate physical, educational, or verbal action directed toward goal |  |
|  | accomplishment |  |
|  | Must be able to demonstrate fidelity |  |
| Program Evaluation Project | Evaluations fall into one of five categories:  Formative evaluation structure to provide input for immediate project improvement  Summative evaluation for the purpose of providing accountability  Outcome evaluation to measure whether or not a project achieved intended outcome  Goal-based evaluation to determine the extent to which programs are meeting predetermined goals  Process-based evaluation focused on a complete understanding of how a program work | Summative Evaluation of Patient Safety Strategies in an Urban Emergency Department |
| Quality Improvement Project | Implies a continuous monitoring process  Focus on the structure, process, and outcomes of healthcare  Has its own validated methods and tools for analysis | Utilization of a Nurse-Driven Protocol to Decrease Catheter- Associated Urinary Tract Infections |

**A variety of types of Scholarly Projects exist and may be considered for the DNP project and final manuscript. The following chart highlight types of DNP final products that may be completed:**

**Dissemination Activity:**

The project leader is responsible for helping the student select a venue for presentation, reviewing and assisting the student with development of an abstract, and for reviewing presentation materials and processes with the student. This activity must be approved by the project leader.

**Examples of such activities include (but are not limited to):**

* + - Submit a journal article for publication (based on the Project)
    - Submit an abstract to a conference for a poster or other formal presentation (based on the Project)

**Completion of the Project:**

* + - Preparation of the Written Document – The project leader will advise the student in the preparation of the scholarly project manuscript. It is not unusual for the project leader to review numerous drafts before the project manuscript is approved; these reviews should be returned to the student within two weeks. The project leader will direct the student(s) when to have drafts reviewed by team members for approval, who will return the draft with their comments within two weeks. It is the student's responsibility to stay informed of deadlines for submission of paperwork relevant to graduation and to plan the time appropriately. A general rule is that preparation of the project ALWAYS takes longer than anyone thinks it will.
    - Problem Resolution - The DNP Scholarly Project must be approved by the project team before the student can graduate. If there are matters of disagreement between the student(s) and team members, the project leader is responsible for managing the process towards resolving the disagreement. The project leader may convene a meeting of the team with the student(s) to discuss and try to resolve the disagreement. If team members disagree or give conflicting advice, the project leader’s decision is final. If the project leader and the student(s) are unable to resolve a disagreement, the Associate Director of Graduate Nursing Programs should be consulted for a final decision.

**ORAL PRESENTATION OF THE DNP CLINICAL SCHOLARLY PROJECT**

At the end of the last clinical residency semester there will be days scheduled for presentations. There will be a final defense presentation scheduled as a part of the Clinical Residency and Project Development Course NSG 917. The presentations will be for WCU students, team leaders and team members. Other faculty and community members may be in attendance as well.

In addition to the final defense presentation, the student will be asked to present the project orally via a podium or poster presentation. All students and faculty will be invited to attend. The presentation is scheduled AFTER the project leader has indicated that the project is satisfactory.

The project leader can provide guidance to the student in how to conduct the presentation.

Two presentation activities are required:

1. SON Nursing Research Day participating with all graduate students in their programs.

2. Another presentation at a local conference near the end of the final semester

**COPIES OF THE DNP CLINICAL SCHOLARLY PROJECT AND APPROVAL PAGE**

Completed projects are retained on file at the school for future reference by students and faculty. The student will provide one copy of the project manuscript with the original signed project approval page to the Director of the DNP program.

Final Project Document Folder for Program Archives:

1. The Written Project must also be sent to the DNP Program Director in Adobe PDF format for additional archiving.

|  |
| --- |
| **DNP PROJECT ASSIGNMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS**  **Module I**  **CITI Training Completion**  Complete [Human Subjects Research training](https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=14&message=64).  The required course is titled, Social/Behavioral Research. (The Responsible Conduct of Research Social/Behavioral course does not meet the requirement).    **Module II**  **Needs Assessment and Clinical Question**  A needs assessment should demonstrate support for the proposed improvement and should benefit a healthcare delivery system or population.  This should consist of a global or national perspective if appropriate that is specific to the project site. Publicly available data for the organization should be used if obtainable.  The needs assessment should detail the following:   1. The population 2. Stakeholders 3. The organization, facility, or unit where the project will be conducted 4. Available resources 5. Anticipated outcomes 6. Members of the team and the role of each team member 7. The role of the team leader 8. Scope and limitations of the project   Construct a focused clinical question derived from the assessment using the PICO format. PICO is a mnemonic used to develop a well-focused question. The question needs to address the patient, intervention, comparison, and outcome.   * P= Patient: Describe the patient, which can include gender, age, or race of a patient if relevant to the diagnosis or treatment of a disease. For example, *families of adults in a critical care unit.* * I=Intervention: What do you want to do for the patient? Prescribe a drug? Order a test? For example, *use of bedside rounds to provide information about the patient*. * C= Comparison: What alternative treatment can the intervention be compared to? Are you trying to decide between two diagnostic tests? For example, *patient-centered conference with healthcare team versus bedside rounds.* * O=What do you hope to accomplish, measure, improve for the patient? What are you trying to do to affect the patient positively?   **Module III**  **Project Team Recruitment**   1. Project Team Leader and Member Recruitment 2. Clinical Expert Identified- proposed clinical learning contract completed 3. Review: Clinical Expert Approval Process document. 4. All required documents must be completed including Castle Branch requirements before a student is approved to begin their clinical experience. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Module IV**  **Problem Statement, Project Purpose, and Project Outcomes**  The information included below reflects the content that should be included. |
| **This is an evidence-based paper**, so while your opinions/thoughts are important, they need to be supported by evidence/data. **Components (can be used as headings, as appropriate)** |
| **Introduction (couple of paragraphs):** Problem introduced with summary of startling statistics and dire consequences. A thesis statement/purpose statement is clearly stated. |
| Problem Overview**:** The scope, causes and consequences of problem are clearly stated, well supported by statistics and research, and provide a comprehensive understanding of the problem.   * The overview includes the data/research supporting the problem exists on a large scale (global, national, and state). Trends are identified and discussed * Factors contributing to the problem are identified and discussed * The consequences of the problem are discussed |
| **Project Specific Problem Discussion:** Evidence supporting that the problem potentially or really exists specific to the site/population/agency of the DNP project. This discussion should include:   * Comparison of the problem to national/state data or other benchmarks  (i.e., reportable benchmarks reflecting quality standards, etc.) *This should answer the question, “How do you know this problem exists at your project site?”* * Identification of factors contributing to the problem. Based on the factors identified in Problem Overview, which of those factors contribute to the problem at your project site/population/agency? What data supports this? It may be “soft” or anecdotal data. *This should answer the question, “What are the factors that are causing/contributing to the problem at your project* * *site/population/agency?” – Which is the focus your project .*OR you may not know – if not, say so. That is often the reason for a program evaluation project |
| **Project Idea:** This section includes a **brief** **introduction into your project idea** to include how the project will impact the problem by addressing the contributing factors you identified at your project site/population/agency. |
| **Summary:** Effectively summarize main points of paper. |
| **References:** Include valid sources of data and at least 10 articles that represent original research (can include systematic reviews and meta-analysis) from peer-reviewed journals. |
| **Formatting:**   * **Paper:** is well written. Grammar usage is correct. Flow of paper is logical. Paragraphs include topic sentences and statements are supported by evidence and appropriately referenced. APA formatting is correct according to the **7th edition** of the APA manual * **Presentation**: use of professional presentation slide development. Presentation is organized, clear, concise, and correct. Content on slides is appropriately referenced. Tables/graphs/charts are used appropriately to illustrate data. APA formatting is correct according to the **7th edition** of the APA manual |

**Module V**

**Conceptual Framework to include measures**

|  |
| --- |
| DNP Project should be “framed” within a conceptual model or conceptual framework. Work with you team to identify a model/framework that matches your project. |
| **Conceptual Framework/Model Overview** |
| Some of the conceptual models that are often used with DNP Projects are listed below.   * Systems Model – typically based on Donabedian’s Quality Improvement Systems Model * Theory of Planned Behavior * Theory of Reasoned Action  (This is Ajzen’s expansion of the Theory of Planned Behavior) * Quality Improvement Models such as Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) * Health Belief Model * Synergy Model from American Association of Critical Care |
| This is a brief paper (**3-5 page)** or presentation that provides an overview of the conceptual framework/model that is being used for your project and describes how your project. |
| **Components (can be used as headings, as appropriate)** |
| **Introduction:** Utilize basic writing requirements for introduction. Do not forget the thesis/purpose statement! It should link your project problem/concepts and the model. |
| **Overview of (insert name of Model/Framework):**   * Development of Model: Who and when developed - * Purpose of the model - * Summarize the constructs and relationships of the model * Incorporate a diagram of the model that reflects the model components and relationships - |
| **Incorporation of DNP Project to (insert name of Model/Framework)**  *Please note that your DNP project may not match all aspects of the model – it may only match certain constructs and relationships to the model.*   * Incorporate your project into the diagram of the model. Use some aspect (i.e. font color, highlight of font, etc) to identify the aspects of the project within the diagram of the model. * Explain how the aspects of your project match the framework/model and why. |
| **Summary of strengths of the match of Project to (insert name of Model/Framework)**   * Summarize the strengths of the match between your project and the chosen model (in other words explain why you chose the model). |
| **Formatting:**   * **Paper:** is well written. Grammar usage is correct. Flow of paper is logical. Paragraphs include topic sentences and statements are supported by evidence and appropriately referenced. APA formatting is correct according to the **7th edition** of the APA manual * **Presentation**: use of professional presentation slide development. Presentation is organized, clear, concise, and correct. Content on slides are appropriately referenced. Tables/graphs/charts are used appropriately to illustrate data. APA formatting is correct according to the **7th edition** of the APA manual |

**Module VI**

**Project Preliminary topic proposal and PowerPoint presentation.**

The purpose of the DNP Project Summary is to provide a clear, concise overview of the DNP project. It includes the

* Significance of the project – i.e. why your project is important and worth doing
* Purpose & aims
* How the purpose & aims will be met

**Proposal Outline:**

The **Project Title** needs to be the same on every document – especially if you are applying to IRB

**Student Name & Faculty Name**

**Example Introduction:**

*The* ***quality improvement project*** *involves designing a plan for expanding the facility’s SSC program to the OB OR for cesarean births. The expansion of this program helps promote the agency’s strategic objective to achieve Baby Friendly designation. This project involves collaborating with the facility’s Nursing Care & Quality Council program planning only, implementation of the program is not part of this DNP project*

**Background:**

* Builds case
* Data to support problem
* Start broad 🡪   
  Narrow to institution
* Evidence r/t intervention
* Include tool/survey background
* Will vary from project to   
  project

**Purpose:** is the purpose of your project

**Aims**: typically, there are 2-4 aims for each DNP project.   
Each aim will need a measurable outcome.

Briefly describe the **setting** of the project – a detailed description is not needed since that was included in the background section above.

Description of the **Participants** includes the number of participants to be involved in the project as well as how participants will be recruited. Include inclusion/exclusion criteria.

Briefly describe the **Project Methodology**. Examples include Quality Improvement Project, Pre-post-test evaluation of an educational intervention, Program Evaluation, Program Development, Retrospective Chart Review, etc

**Data Collection**: should reflect the outcomes being measured to determine if the project aims are met.  
**Data Collection tools:** include the name(s) of the tool(s), who developed it, what that tool will measure, & if a survey-include # of items & describe the reliability & validity if known. If not, say so.

**Data Collection:** describe how the data will be collected-include who, when where and how.

**Data Analysis**: what method will be used to analyze the data, include specific statistical analysis.

**Educational Intervention**: If applicable- an educational program is going to be offered and evaluated, then describe what content will be covered, when, where. If the educational program will not be evaluated, then you can relabel this section to educational program and describe ☺

* **Participant Consent**: describe how consent will be obtained, who will obtain it, when participant questions will be answered.
* **Participant confidentiality:** describe how confidentiality will be protected.
* **Data Storage**: describe where all data, paper and electronic, will be stored during and after project completed.
* **Data destruction:** Describe when/how data will be destroyed.

**References:** include references used in Introduction, background & citation of source if you are using a tool that was developed by someone else.

**Formatting:**

* **Paper:** is well written. Grammar usage is correct. Flow of paper is logical. Paragraphs include topic sentences and statements are supported by evidence and appropriately referenced. APA formatting is correct according to the **7th edition** of the APA manual

**Presentation**: use of professional presentation slide development. Presentation is organized, clear, concise, and correct. Content on slides are appropriately referenced. Tables/graphs/charts are used appropriately to illustrate data. APA formatting is correct according to the **7th edition** of the APA manual

**Module VII**

**Literature Evaluation and Synthesis Table**

“Evidence” is the cornerstone of DNP practice. So, each DNP project must contain a literature review related to practice recommendations.

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **Literature Review** |
| ***The literature review that is being referred to in this section is the literature that is specifically reviewed to support the intervention*** Now WHERE the literature review occurs may vary slightly – for example:   * If the project is an “intervention” project, then the literature review will need to be done before the intervention is decided upon – since the evidence will guide the intervention. * If the project is a program evaluation, then the literature review will be done after the evaluation is done, and the literature review will be done so that evidence-based recommendations can be made as part of the follow-up for the evaluation. * Work with your faculty to focus your literature search.   The DNP student will need to demonstrate an understanding, analysis, and synthesis of the literature in the following ways:   * During DNP Project Proposal – this is when the most discussion of the synthesis of evidence occurs * Within the DNP Project Summary – summarized in the background section * During the DNP Final Project Presentation – Literature review themes are summarized * Within the Final Written Deliverable   Report to the Institution: will be included as an evidence table & brief written summary |
| **Literature review should include:**  **Systematic search**: This is not a systematic review, as it is not exhaustive review of the literature, though it should include:   * Search terms, data bases searched, limitations, inclusion/exclusion criteria * The number of references identified with each step of the search   **Review & Analysis** of literature   * + *Rank the level of evidence* for each article using one of the models such as Stetler, USPTF, etc   + *Grade the quality* of each article/study using the appropriate tool – for example Clinical practice guidelines – AGREE tool, Meta-analysis – PRISMA tool, Systematic reviews – APPRAISE tool, Experimental studies/RCTs – CONSORT tool, Quasi-experimental studies – NIH assessment tool   + *Develop an evidence table* through analysis of articles * Synthesis of literature |
| **Module VIII**  **Implementation and Data Collection Plan** |

|  |
| --- |
| **DNP Project Proposal** |
| Each student needs to deliver an oral presentation to his/her project team that summarizes the literature review and the DNP Project Summary/overview and includes the conceptual framework that will be used for the project.   * Refer to Guidelines for Power Point development under * It is recommended that you use the power point template for this presentation |
| ***Recommended Proposal Elements***   * Introduction * Background of the problem * Literature review, synthesis, and valuation of the evidence (evidence tables) * Conceptual Framework * Project Plan   + Purpose of project   + Project aims   + Targeted population or sample   + Setting (site description and rationale for choice of setting)   + Data collection tools or methods   + Plan for data and statistical analysis * Evaluation of resources (financial and human) with budget proposal   + Plan for implementation * Plan for dissemination of information * Conclusion * References |

**Module IX**

**DNP Project Proposal and *IRB* application**

You will need to apply to the IRB. We use a system called [wcu.infoedglobal.com] InfoEd. You may submit a request to get access from the button on [this webpage](https://www.wcu.edu/learn/office-of-the-provost/research/sponsored-research/infoed.aspx). You will also find several training documents on the page.

You will need to submit a consent form, recruitment materials, and your data collection instruments, along with any other material the participant will view.

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **Module X**  **Project Implementation, Data Analysis, Conclusions, Recommendations and Modifications** |
| You will engage in the implication of your DNP project. |
| **Module XI**  **Scholarly Project Defense and Final Project Paper** |
|  |
| **DNP Project Final Written Deliverable** |
| The final project paper is to be developed using a format that is appropriate for review by health care providers and administrators. The paper can be in one of two formats,   1. *a manuscript submission ready for publication in a peer reviewed journal  OR* 2. *a “Report to the Institution” that contains an executive summary*. |
| Manuscript ready for publication   * + Work with Project Team to select an appropriate journal.   + Follow the author guidelines for formatting paper.   + Report to the Institution   + This is a portfolio of “pieces” of the DNP project, combined as a report and summarized by an executive summary.   + The contents of the report will vary some from project to project. Two sample table of contents are included below. Each of these reports were about 45 pages long, including the Appendices.   **REPORT TO THE INSTITUTION: See Appendix for Paper Outline** |

***DNP Project Final Presentation Process:***

* All presentations must be scheduled ahead of time-Because all members of the DNP Project Team must be present for the student’s Final Defense, it is the student’s responsibility to coordinate with the DNP Project Team to determine possible dates and times for scheduling the oral presentation.
* Once the date and time are confirmed, the presentation will be posted on the College of Nursing calendar and flyers will be distributed to CON faculty.
* The details for these procedures are available in the project course and distributed to the DNP students and their Project teams along with deadlines for graduation each semester.
* Each Final Presentation will be facilitated by a member of the Graduate College Faculty.
* It is the responsibility of the DNP Program Director to arrange for facilitators for all presentations.
* The facilitator will introduce the candidate, and provide an overview of the expected course of events.
* The candidate will then make a thirty minute presentation of their project, usually without interruption.
* Following the presentation, the facilitator will open the floor to questions from the Project Team leader and members.
* After the candidate has addressed the questions from the DNP Project Team, the facilitator will open the floor to questions from the general audience.
* After the time limit has expired or at which time all questions have been addressed, the facilitator will announce that the candidate will now meet privately with his/her DNP Project Team.
* During this private meeting, the DNP Project Team may ask the candidate additional questions, after which time the facilitator will ask the candidate to leave the room for DNP Project Team deliberation. The facilitator will be responsible for observing the deliberations, and monitoring the time allotted for this process.  
  During this time, the DNP Project Team members will determine the outcome of the Final Defense
* Completion of the DNP Project Documentation Form is completed at this time by the DNP Project Team. A copy must be submitted to the DNP Program Director. If a student fails to pass the Final Project Presentation, a plan for remediation will be developed by the DNP Project Team, the DNP Program Director, and the student.
* The repeat Final Defense must be successfully completed at least 3 weeks prior to semester end for the student to be able to quality to apply for graduation.
* Once the DNP Project Team has agreed that the student has met all the requirements for graduation, **the student will submit an electronic version of the final written paper and final presentation power point to the DNP Program Manager via email,** with the project team members copied on the email

**Guidelines for DNP Scholarly Project: Appendix**

**Guidelines for DNP Scholarly Project: Appendix A**

**Scholarly Paper Format**

Use the following format for the DNP Scholarly Project:

* University Signature Page
* Title Page
* Copyright
* Acknowledgements
* Abstract
* Introduction/Background
* Problem Statement
* Purpose of the Project
* Clinical Question
* Literature Review
* Conceptual/ Theoretical Framework
* Project Design
  + Methodology
  + Subjects
  + Setting
  + Tools/Measures
* Intervention and Data Collection
* Project Analysis (including translation and impact on practice, fiscal impact)
* Project Findings/Results
* Significance or Implications
* Recommendations (Maintaining/Sustaining the Change)
* References
* Appendix

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Statement**  Please use the following scale to rate your experience this semester with your Clinical Expert. | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neutral** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** | **NA** |
| My clinical expert was readily available to me when needed. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| My clinical expert provided constructive feedback/communication. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| My clinical expert encouraged open discussions and fostered collaboration effectively. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| My clinical expert displayed knowledge in evidence-based research and practice. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| My clinical expert displayed competency in professional standards related to their advanced practice specialty. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| My clinical expert identified and connected me with appropriate resources when needed. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| My clinical expert helped me meet required objectives of the semester. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Recommended areas for improvement:** |  | | | | | |
| **Describe the best aspects of the clinical expert:** |  | | | | | |

**WCU Clinical Expert Evaluation Form-Appendix B**

**Course Number: Semester:**

**Name of Graduate Student:**

**Name of Clinical Expert Preceptor:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Student Evaluation of Clinical Site-Appendix C** |  | | | | |
| Student's Name: Preceptor: |
| Clinical Site: Date: Course: |
| **5=Strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neither Agree or Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| This clinical site provided adequate practice opportunities for growth as an advanced practice nurse |  |  |  |  |  |
| This clinical site has resources to support a student practicum. |  |  |  |  |  |
| This clinical site has procedure and protocol manuals, educational materials, and personnel to adequately support a student in advanced practice nursing. |  |  |  |  |  |
| The clinical site director, preceptor (circle one) assisted me to fulfill the  objectives of the course of study for which this clinical practicum was organized. |  |  |  |  |  |
| The clinical site personnel were supportive of my role as an NP student. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Clients are variable in age, diagnoses, and ethnicity. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Diagnostic test results are readily accessible. |  |  |  |  |  |
| The philosophy of the personnel was directed toward quality care, health promotion, and disease prevention. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities were readily available for my participation in management of care for patients. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I would recommend this clinical site to my peers for practicum experience. |  |  |  |  |  |
| My overall evaluation of this clinical practicum site is:  Excellent=5, Good=4, Fair=3, Poor=2, Would not recommend for future placements=1 |  | | | | |
| Please feel free to share any comments about this course:  . |  | | | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DNP Project Learning Contract-Appendix D**  Students participate in multiple academic and scholarly activities. For example, students are expected to attend conferences, seminars, journal club, grand rounds, morbidity and mortality meetings, patient conferences, practice-based lectures, interdisciplinary committees, quality improvement committees and any other opportunities available at their site. Each student is expected to post a minimum of at least three scholarly activities during residency. In addition, students are required to be involved and contribute to interdisciplinary initiatives. The scholarly activities should support the objectives in the Clinical Learning Contract.  Deadlines to have data entered in columns II, III, and IV by student is determined by the course faculty/instructor of record. (DNP program suggested deadlines: Columns II and III to be completed no later than the end of the 6th week of the semester;  Column IV to be completed prior to the end of the semester) | | | | | |
| **I**  **Course Faculty/IOR** | **II**  **Identify Clinical Learning Strategies, Activities, and Resources** | | **III**  **Measurable Outcomes** | | **IV**  **Evaluation** |
| Clinical Learning Objectives | Reflect on current clinical practice skill related to delineated objectives and competencies | | Deliverables Means for evaluating | | Achievement of Deliverables  Activities supporting fulfilment of objectives were met (Describe)  3 Recommended next steps  (Review/reflect/revise)  Reflect on current clinical  practice skill related to delineated  objectives/competencies |
| 1. CITI Training Completion |  | |  | |  |
| 1. Needs Assessment and Clinical Question |  | |  | |  |
| 1. Project Committee Chair   and Member Recruitment  Clinical Expert Identified- proposed clinical learning contract completed | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Problem Statement, Project Purpose, and Project Outcomes | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Apply EBP and Theory to analyze the literature for the scholarly project. | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Identify theoretical frameworks utilized in the body of research on the project topic. | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Project Preliminary topic proposal and PowerPoint presentation | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Literature Evaluation and Synthesis Tables | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Implementation and Data Collection Plan | |  |  |  | |
| 1. DNP Project Proposal IRB application | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Project Implementation, Data Analysis, Conclusions, Recommendations and Modifications | |  |  |  | |
| 1. Scholarly Project Defense and Final Project Paper | |  |  |  | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**  Attend Scholarly Conferences, Seminars, Journal Club, Grand Rounds, Morbidity/Mortality Meetings, Practice-Based Lectures, Interdisciplinary Committees, Quality Improvement Committee meetings, and other opportunities at the practice site. **\*Minimum of 3** |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CLINICAL OBJECTIVES and EVALUATION CRITERIA**  Per the 2022-23 Student Handbook “The student and clinical expert must establish mutually agreed upon objectives and evaluation criteria. The specific objectives, requirements, and evaluation criteria will depend on the practice focus in which the student is participating, the student’s level of education, and the student’s educational needs”. | | | |
| (DNP program suggested deadlines: CLINICAL OBJECTIVES and EVALUATION CRITERIA to be established no later than the end of the 6th week of the semester) | | Student self-evaluation of attainment clinical objectives  **5=Strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neither Agree or Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree** | Clinical expert evaluation of student attainment of clinal objectives  **5=Strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neither Agree or Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree** |
| CLINICAL OBJECTIVES mutually agreed upon by the student and clinical expert. |  |  |  |
| EVALUATION CRITERIA mutually agreed upon by the student and clinical expert. |  |  |  |

Student Comments:

Clinical Expert Comments:

**CONTRACT REVIEWED AND APPROVED: (**typed or electronic signature is acceptable)

(DNP Program suggested deadline for completing review and approval of clinical contract: no later than the end of the 8th week of the semester)

Student: Date:

Clinical Expert Signature: Date:

Course Faculty/Instructor of Record: Date:

Clinical Learning Objectives WERE MET \_\_\_\_\_ NOT MET \_\_\_\_\_ (to be completed by Course Faculty/Instructor of Record)

Student:

Clinical Expert: Date:

*The course faculty/IOR has reviewed the Clinical Learning Contract and has determined that the clinical expert*

*contributed to the achievement of clinical objectives and program outcomes.*

Course Faculty/Instructor of Record: Date:

Approval DNP Program Coordinator/Director

Yes

No

Verified Agency Affiliation Agreement

Yes

\_No

**Clinical Scholarly Project Committee Form: C**

(Form available at: DNP Homeplace)

Text, logo, company name

Description automatically generated

**Appointment of Doctoral Project Committee**

Name (print): 92#: Degree/Major: Address: E-mail:

Tentative Project Topic:

**DNP Project Committee: (Please print name, sign and date)**

Chair:

Member:

Member:

Member:

**APPROVED:**

DNP Program Director:

**STUDENT APPROVAL: *I agree to the above information and hereby grant Western Carolina University a limited, non-exclusive, royalty-free license to reproduce my project, in whole or in part, in electronic form or paper form and make available to the general public at no charge.***

DNP Candidate Signature: Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Clinical Scholarly Project Topic Approval: Appendix D**

**Student Name: Project Title:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROJECT COMPONENT** | **ORAL PROPOSAL** | | **WRITTEN PROPOSAL** | |
|  | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| DNP Project Topic Summary is concise, accurate, and provides project topic overview | **n/a** | **n/a** |  |  |
| **Problem/Focus** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Background information:  Description of given population Epidemiological data support significance  Political environment for practice change  Brief review of evidence to support project problem |  |  |  |  |
| Problem/change clearly identified in PICOT format |  |  |  |  |
| Problem appropriate for DNP project |  |  |  |  |
| Scope of proposed change realistic and appropriate |  |  |  |  |
| Clinical Site Identified to implement project |  |  |  |  |

Evaluation of DNP Topic Proposal: Approved as Presented/Approved with Recommendations/Not Approved (Highlight one)

Additional Comments:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leader Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Team Member Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Team Member Signature:** | **Date:** |

**DNP Program Coordinator/Director**

**Approval Status Legend:** S=Satisfactory; U=Unsatisfactory; NR=Needs Revision; NA=Not Applicable

**Clinical Scholarly Project Proposal Approval Form: Appendix E**

**Student Name: Project Title:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROJECT COMPONENT** | **ORAL PROPOSAL** | | **WRITTEN PROPOSAL** | |
|  | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| **Abstract** | **n/a** | **n/a** |  |  |
| **Introduction** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Background of the problem |  |  |  |  |
| Problem statement – PICOT |  |  |  |  |
| Scope of proposed change realistic and appropriate |  |  |  |  |
| **Conceptual Framework/Theory:** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Described, evident and applicable |  |  |  |  |
| **Evidence of Synthesis** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Research and evidence of the clinical issue supported/influenced clinical project |  |  |  |  |
| **Environmental Context** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Need, feasibility, and sustainability clearly presented |  |  |  |  |
| Benchmarks and supporting data provided |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcomes** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Short- and long-term objectives/outcomes outlined |  |  |  |  |
| Objectives/outcomes stated in feasible and measurable terms |  |  |  |  |
| Evaluation measures linked to objectives/outcomes and conceptual framework |  |  |  |  |
| **Methods/Implementation Plan** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Appropriate for objectives/outcomes |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROJECT COMPONENT** | **ORAL PROPOSAL** | | **WRITTEN PROPOSAL** | |
| Clear rationale for actions |  |  |  |  |
| Setting and group clearly identified |  |  |  |  |
| Tools/measures described |  |  |  |  |
| Resources/supports and risks/threats noted |  |  |  |  |
| Marketing plan developed |  |  |  |  |
| Appropriate evaluation plan |  |  |  |  |
| **Timeframe for Completion** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Reasonable and complete |  |  |  |  |
| **Necessary Supports (Finances and Resources)** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Appropriate to meet objectives/outcomes |  |  |  |  |
| Provides rationale for resources expenditures, and funding |  |  |  |  |
| **Site/Facilitator** | **S** | **Comments** | **S** | **Comments** |
| Site is appropriate for project | n/a | n/a |  |  |
| **Writing and Organization** | **S** | **Comments** | **S** | **Comments** |
| APA format followed appropriately; clear writing; copyrights obtained as appropriate | n/a | n/a |  |  |

Evaluation of DNP Topic Proposal: Approved as Presented/Approved with Recommendations/Not Approved (Highlight one)

Additional Comments:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leader Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Team member Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Team member Signature:** | **Date:** |

**DNP Program Coordinator/Director**

**Approval Status Legend:** S=Satisfactory; U=Unsatisfactory; NR=Needs Revision; NA=Not Applicable

**Clinical Scholarly Project Presentation Approval Form: Appendix F**

**Student Name: Project Title:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROJECT COMPONENT** | **ORAL PRESENTATION** | | **WRITTEN DOCUMENT** | |
|  | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| **Abstract** | **n/a** | **n/a** |  |  |
| **Introduction** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Background of the problem |  |  |  |  |
| Problem statement - PICOT |  |  |  |  |
| Context for the impact of the DNP Scholarly Project |  |  |  |  |
| **Conceptual Framework/Theory:** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** |  |
| Described, evident and applicable |  |  |  |  |
| **Evidence of Synthesis** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** |  |
| Research and evidence of the clinical issue supported/influenced clinical project |  |  |  |  |
| Synthesis table | **n/a** |  |  |  |
| **Environmental Context** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Need, feasibility, and sustainability clearly presented |  |  |  |  |
| Benchmarks and supporting data provided |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcomes** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Short- and long-term objectives/outcomes outlined |  |  |  |  |
| Objectives/outcomes stated in feasible and measurable terms |  |  |  |  |
| Evaluation measures link objectives/outcomes and conceptual framework |  |  |  |  |
| **Methods/Implementation Plan** | **S/U** | **Comments** |  | **Comments** |
| Appropriate for objectives/outcomes |  |  |  |  |
| Clear rationale for actions and methods |  |  |  |  |
| Setting and group clearly described |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROJECT COMPONENT** | **ORAL PRESENTATION** | | **WRITTEN DOCUMENT** | |
| Tools/measures described and linked to measures and objectives |  |  |  |  |
| Data collection described |  |  |  |  |
| Methods of analysis clearly described for each measurement including appropriate statistical tests |  |  |  |  |
| **Time Frame** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Completed within projected time frame |  |  |  |  |
| **Findings** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Organized |  |  |  |  |
| Linked to problem statement |  |  |  |  |
| Described the extent to which the objectives were achieved |  |  |  |  |
| Discuss interpretation of results and appropriate statistical analysis |  |  |  |  |
| Cost savings |  |  |  |  |
| **Scope of Project** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Describe locally, nationally, and internationally impact |  |  |  |  |
| Recommendations/Implications addressed for problem statement, supporting organization, key stakeholders, and other settings. |  |  |  |  |
| **Impact of Project** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Discuss dissemination plan (local, regional & national) |  |  |  |  |
| Describe next steps |  |  |  |  |
| Discuss how current regulations/policies influence the next steps |  |  |  |  |
| **Project Synthesis** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| Evidence candidate demonstrated practice inquiry skills including appraising and translating evidence into practice within the project |  |  |  |  |
| Evidence of candidate’s ability to lead DNP scholarly project |  |  |  |  |
| Ability of candidate to articulate state of current knowledge as it relates to advanced practice nursing in the health care system |  |  |  |  |
| **Writing and Organization** | **S/U** | **Comments** | **S/U** | **Comments** |
| APA format followed appropriately; clear writing; copyrights obtained as appropriate |  |  |  |  |

Evaluation of Proposal: Approved as Presented/Approved with/Recommendations Not/Approved

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leader Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Team Member Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Team Member Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **Team Member Signature:** | **Date:** |

**Additional Comments:**

**DNP Program Coordinator/Director**

**Approval Status Legend:** S=Satisfactory; U=Unsatisfactory; NR=Needs Revision; NA=Not Applicable

**Dissemination Agreement Form: Appendix G**

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITY AGREEMENT

Authors are

1. Student Investigator
2. Project Chair
3. Other Team members (in alphabetical order).

After one year, the team leader may take the lead on preparing and submitting the project results as an article or presentation with authorship and order of authors to be determined at the discretion of the Project Leader after appropriate discussion with the DNP student and team. Sequence of authorship and contact author will be assigned according to the amount of substantive contribution to the manuscript by each respective author for subsequent publication or presentation. The contact author for first submission of the article/presentation will be the team leader unless otherwise negotiated. No author will impede the publication or presentation of results without due reason and justification. Planned use of research findings/results in future publications or projects must be discussed among authors before graduation of the DNP student. It is understood that student members will maintain current contact information with the team leader and DNP program.

DNP Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Project Chair Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Clinical Expert/Team Member(s) Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name(s)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**DNP Project Completion Checklist: Appendix H**

**Student Name:**

**Project Members:**

Signed Clinical Learning Contracts X 3

Signed Doctoral Team Appointment Form

Signed Dissemination Agreement Completed

Clinical Residency Logs

Approved IRB Proposal

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Submitted |
| **Topic Approval** |  |
| **Project Proposal** |  |
| **Completed Scholarly Project Presentation** |  |
| **Dissemination Activity** |  |

**EVALUATION REVIEWED: (**typed or electronic signature is acceptable**)**

**Graduate Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Instructor of Record: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Director Post-MSN DNP Program: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**