

**Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing
Case Western Reserve University
Doctor of Nursing Practice Program**

Scholarly Project Guidelines

The Scholarly Project provides the DNP student with the opportunity to demonstrate synthesis of knowledge gained in the DNP program to examine a problem that is related to nursing practice through the use of systematic investigation. The Scholarly Project employs scholarship to advance knowledge that will contribute to the improvement of health care provision and health care outcomes. The Scholarly Project has a narrower focus than the PhD dissertation, reflective of the intention of DNP programs to prepare students for leadership roles in practice, while PhD programs are intended to prepare students for a career in research. The design of the Scholarly project evolves from a practice problem and should take the form of a Program Evaluation, an Evidence-Based Practice project, a Quality Improvement project or a small scale cross-sectional descriptive or descriptive/comparative study using primarily quantitative methodologies. The Scholarly Project should not focus on theory testing or psychometric evaluation of instruments and generally should not use designs such as an RCT. Students who wish to use qualitative methodologies may be required to take a qualitative course.

Ideas about the topic of the Scholarly Project should be discussed with the advisor beginning on admission. The advisor will work with the student to identify and develop the project and select committee members. The committee consists of three people. The advisor is the Chair of the committee. Among the three people, two have to be FPB faculty and two have to be doctorally prepared. The student should have the committee members sign the [Notice of Scholarly Written Project Topic and Committee Members](#) form. When the Chair approves the student's proposal the student arranges a date for the proposal defense meeting with the committee. This meeting can be conducted by phone conference. The [Proposal Approval](#) should be signed by all committee members after the proposal defense. The Chair will guide the student as to the process for IRB approval, which can only be done after the proposal has been approved.

When data are collected and analyzed the student will work with the Chair to finalize the written Scholarly Project and when the Chair has approved the document the student will again arrange the final defense which must take place on campus. The student then has the committee sign the [Final Approval](#) and other required forms and makes changes to the document required by the committee. These final documents are then submitted to the Program Assistant.