

Case Western Reserve University
 Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing
 Doctor of Nursing Practice Program
DNP Project Guide

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	Graduate with your DNP!	

I. Overview of the nature of the DNP Project (see later section for details)

What the DNP Project Is	What the DNP Project is Not
Provides the opportunity to demonstrate synthesis of knowledge gained throughout the DNP Program.	It is not a dissertation. The DNP project focuses on application and adaptation; the PhD dissertation focuses on discovery.
Uses systematic investigation (such as program evaluation, evidence-based practice, translational science, or improvement science) to examine a problem in a particular setting of clinical practice.	DNP programs prepare students for leadership roles in practice. PhD Programs prepare students to use research to develop generalizable knowledge.
Should use reliable and valid measurement tools and include the collection and evaluation of data. All students are expected to analyze data.	The DNP project is not necessarily designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge.

	Should not involve theory testing, psychometric evaluation of instruments, or experimental research designs.
<p>The project may be done by a single student or a team of 2 or 3 students working with the same advisor/Committee Chair. If a team project, each student will contribute comparable amounts of content to, and demonstrate comprehension of, each phase of the project.</p> <p>Team projects are to be sufficiently complex and of a scope that warrants group work.</p>	<p>Team projects are not to be a project of individual- scope divided for ease and speed.</p>
<p><u>Dissemination:</u> “It is expected the student will disseminate the findings and outcomes of the DNP Project to a broad audience (AACN DNP Project Toolkit).</p> <p>At CWRU, all students are expected to prepare a final written report or manuscript and do a final oral presentation at the school of nursing (see details in later sections). If applicable, the student should provide a report to stakeholders at the host facility. This may take the form of oral presentation or written report or summary. Other venues for dissemination may include professional meetings, lay media, site-sponsored publications, peer-review journals, the internet, or textbooks.</p>	<p>It is not appropriate to expect every DNP Project to be published in a peer-review journal” (AACN DNP Project Toolkit). <u>(See details later in this guide)</u></p>
	DNP students do not have a candidacy exam and cannot list themselves as degree candidates.

II. Identify a clinical problem/topic

- Discuss the focus of the project with the advisor during each meeting.
- Use each course, including the practicum, as an opportunity to explore some aspect of the topic. This will help promote a deep understanding of the topic from various perspectives.
- During NUND 540 and 541, gain valuable input from faculty and peers regarding shaping the specific topic and its’ measurement and write elements of the proposal.

- (Effective Spring, 2020 semester) All papers written for DNP courses are to be in APA 7th edition style, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020)*.
 - The APA provides many resources on line here <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format> and sample papers, handouts and guides for the 2020 7th edition here <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids>
 - The APA publication manual is an excellent guide for scholarly writing style as well as formatting. We recommend reviewing chapters 1-6.
 - Note: If a Team Project and student wish to submit the work for publication– there is only one first author for each manuscript. Therefore, topics of manuscripts and authorship should be discussed early in the Project.

III. Form the Project Committee

- During NUND 541, work with your advisor to identify the DNP Project Committee, composed of a minimum of three individuals:
 1. Faculty Committee Chair- also the student’s faculty advisor.
 2. Member 2- A member of the FPB faculty.
 3. Member 3- A practice member from the partner organization where the project will be implemented.
- At least two members of the team have earned doctoral preparation.
- After consulting with the Committee Chair, the student will write the potential members to invite them to join the committee.
- Once the project Committee is set, the student requests the members sign the Notice of DNP Project topic and Committee members form (see DNP website- forms).
- The Committee member from the partner organization sends the letter of agreement (see DNP forms) and CV to the Committee Chair who reviews and forwards to the DNP Program Assistant.

IV. Write the proposal

- Proposal development begins with the papers from NUND 540 and 541 and culminates with the successful oral presentation of the project proposal.
- Meet with Committee Chair to develop a tentative schedule for completing the proposal and register for 1-2 credits of NUND 619 for that semester. Most students require at least one semester plus all or part of a second semester to write and successfully present the proposal to the team.
- Prepare a paper which incorporates the feedback of the NUND 540 and 541 faculty. Forward the paper to your Chair to review.
- Determine the Chair’s requirements for the proposal; it may be three chapters or another format. They may ask to review one chapter or section at a time or a draft of the full proposal.
- Over the following weeks, prepare revisions according to Chair’s feedback. After

discussion with the Chair, other committee members may be consulted for specific questions.

- **Measurement:**
 - Collaborate with your Chair in planning measurement for the project.
 - DNP students use existing tools to measure concepts of the project (demographic tool may be original).
 - Many tools require permission of the author. Time should be allowed for this process.
 - Additionally, while a copy of the instrument may have been published, the author may be the only source of the current version of the instrument as well as current scoring instructions and validity and reliability data.
- **Theoretical or Conceptual Framework.** A theoretical or conceptual framework is expected as the foundation for the project. The theory may serve one or more purposes: explanatory (explain the key concepts), logic (suggest a process) or both. While permission of the author is not required, students are encouraged to contact the author or other expert on the theory to ask feedback on their plan to incorporate the theory in the project.
- **Research Ethics** - all faculty and students are responsible for compliance with principles of research ethics including protecting the rights of participants. See detailed section on Protection of Human Rights.
- **Data Analysis:**
 - Students are expected to enter and analyze their own data.
 - Discuss with the Chair the advisability of consulting an external statistician and, if so, at what point in the project.
- **Financial Support:**
 - Students may apply for external funding of the project.
 - Examples of sources include: Alumni Associations including FPB, Sigma Theta Tau (national and chapters), and professional nursing associations.
 - This should be explored well in advance of the need for funds as most organizations have specific requirements for applications.
- **Plan dissemination and format of the final product**
 - Final Product Format
 - The format of the written product may be a written report or a manuscript.
 - Discuss the format of the final product with the Chair, ideally, before the proposal defense.
- **Dissemination-**
 - Refer to the dissemination section of the “Overview of the nature of the DNP Project” on page 1. Further information about dissemination of the DNP project and examples of routes for dissemination may be found on the AACN website.
 - See earlier note about authorship of manuscripts from team projects.
 - Note for students who prepare a 5-chapter report: the required uploading to OhioLink does not constitute publication of the document. Therefore, the

document can be revised into a manuscript and submitted for publication.

V. The Proposal Presentation Meeting

- With the Chair's consent, the student arranges a date/time for the Proposal Presentation.
- Unless arranged otherwise in advance, the committee members will receive the proposal at least two weeks before the presentation meeting.
- Presentation Meeting
 - The proposal presentation meeting is a 20-minute overview by the student of the proposed project followed by Q & A facilitated by the Chair.
 - A power point template with topics for the presentation is available on the DNP Guidelines/Forms page. Check with the Faculty Chair if ok to use it or if a different format is preferred.
- The faculty Chair will indicate the amount of time to allot for the event, generally 90 minutes.
- The student and members of the Committee may participate in person at the Health Education Campus or by web conference (all CWRU students and faculty have access to Zoom).
 - The student will arrange a room:
 - We recommend the room be reserved for 30 minutes before and after the actual time requested by the Chair so the student has 30 minutes to prepare and 30 minutes to wrap up.
 - Check with the Chair as to any preference of room location.
 - Students have access to the Spartan Reservation System, where they can reserve space at the Samson Pavilion (HEC) Classrooms and Conference Rooms. You may be asked to first sign in, the upper right corner. Please be sure to select Samson Pavilion (HEC) and **NOT** Samson - NUR Conference Rooms when creating your reservation.
 - If you need further assistance, please email hec-rooms@case.edu."
 - The student **will arrange a Zoom web/phone conference**:
 - Go to the CWRU Zoom website. It will walk you through downloading the software and setting up the zoom event.
 - The student should discuss format (video or phone) with the Committee chair.
 - Screen share and recording are options as well.
 - **The student notifies the DNP program assistant (dnpsst@case.edu) of the date/time/location of the proposal defense.**
- The Chair hosts the presentation meeting and sets the agenda. The student may be asked to "step out" while the committee deliberates.
- The project may be approved at the time of the proposal meeting or following

revisions.

- After the proposal is approved by at least two of the three Committee members, the proposal approval form should be signed by Committee members. The student will forward the form to the DNP Program Assistant, cc the Faculty Chair and retain a copy for their own records. After the form is signed by the Program Director, the DNP Program Assistant will send a copy to the members of the Committee and student.

IV. Prepare to Conduct the Project

A. Enroll in NUND 620

1. Consult with your Chair to identify a plan for enrolling in a total of 3 credits of NUND 620.
2. You must be enrolled in at least 1 credit of NUND 620 in the semester in which the final completed project is presented.
3. **Note:** all DNP courses must be completed prior to enrolling in NUND 620. One exception: NUND 611 practicum may be completed while enrolled in NUND 620.

B. Research Ethics

- After the proposal has been fully approved by the Committee and the signed form sent to the DNP Program Assistant, **EVERY DNP student** will submit a research protocol to the CWRU Institutional Review Board (IRB).
 - If the study (i.e. data collection) will be conducted at an external site, a letter of support or IRB decision letter must be secured prior to application to CWRU's IRB. Requests for an alternate process should be discussed with the CWRU IRB in advance.
 - While the student takes the lead on drafting the application, the project faculty Chair is the Principal Investigator (PI) for the CWRU application and the student is Co-investigator. Applications to other institutions, if necessary, may require a contact at that institution to be the PI for the IRB application at that site.
 - Allow at least four weeks for processing and approval of your submission. The IRB strongly encourages the student work closely with their Chair on the submission. The time to approval is highly dependent upon the quality of the submission and the accuracy of the responses to the IRB requests. Haste makes waste!
 - The general process for application to the CWRU IRB is described below. As individual situations vary and the IRB policies, processes and forms are subject to change, please use the links provided for questions regarding submission of the IRB protocol.
 - Download and save the decision letter to a secure location. The student is required to send a copy to the DNP Department Assistant before they are approved to graduate.
1. Review research compliance as necessary at the CWRU IRB home page <https://case.edu/research/faculty-staff/compliance/institutional-review-board-cwru-irb>
 2. All communication with the CWRU IRB is via the SpartaIRB system (spartaairb.case.edu).

3. Go to CWRU's SpartaIRB Information page next. <https://case.edu/research/faculty-staff/education-and-training/spartairb-info> . It explains the Sparta IRB System and there are links to FAQs and templates.
4. CWRU faculty and students do not automatically have access to the SpartaIRB System. On the right side of the [information page](#), click on New user request so they can give you access. You can also go directly to the [account request form](#).
5. Link to SpartaIRB log in- where you will start your application after they make you a new user. <https://spartairb.case.edu/>
6. Make sure your CREC is current. You can submit your protocol for review. However, they will not approve a study without current CREC by each member of the research team. You can check your CREC status in Spiderweb. Go here <https://case.edu/research/faculty-staff/education-and-training/crec-faqs> to find more info about CREC. Scroll to the question "How can I access my CREC account information." For additional questions about CREC, contact crec@case.edu.
7. Now log into [SpartaIRB.case.edu](https://spartairb.case.edu) using your CWRU username and password– Use the CWRU option (do NOT use UHHS)
8. Within SpartaIRB are tabs to a "Help Center" section with useful documents and videos and a "Library" tab which includes a template tab containing consent and protocol templates (although links to these documents can also be found within your study submission form).
9. Click on "Create New Study"
10. Begin to answer the questions
 1. The faculty Chair is the principal investigator (PI). (Student is co-investigator on the "Study Team Members" page of the submission form)
 2. "Nursing FPB" is primary department
 3. Even if a second IRB is reviewing your study, choose "no" to question #8 and choose "single site" to question #9 unless you have discussed reliant review with the IRB office and have been instructed to answer differently.
 4. Protocol Template
 1. When choosing a protocol template, discuss with your Chair which template to use. The student and Chair can determine which protocol template will be used for the CWRU IRB application. The IRB office may be consulted if necessary, but that is not required.
 2. Each template has guidelines as to its' purpose.
 3. Only upload your protocol to the protocol section on the "Basic Information" page. There is a separate page for other documents.
 5. On the "Funding Sources" page, make sure to choose a funding source even if you have no funding. There is an option for "internal/departmental/not external" if you have no formal funding.
 6. Research team: list only those persons who will be involved in consent process and/or data collection.
 7. If you are collecting data off CWRU campus, select "yes" to question #1 on the "Study Scope" page and then enter your other locations when directed.

8. On the “Local Site Documents” page, upload consents and consent scripts in the “1. Consent Forms” section, recruitment related materials to “2. Recruitment materials” and all other documents to “3. Other attachments.” If the study will be conducted at an external site/s, upload the letter of support/s or IRB decision letter/s from the external site/s.
9. When the submission is complete, the study needs to be sent for Department Scientific Review. This may be done by the student or the PI, according to the preference of the PI.
10. Once Department Scientific Approval is received, the PI must submit the study to the IRB. Students do not have the ability to initially send a study to the IRB. Once the study has been sent to the IRB, the submission state will change from “Pre-submission” to “Pre-review.”
11. You may be required to complete a Conflict of Interest form before your study can be approved. If so, the IRB staff will request a COI form from the COI team and alert you in response to your submission. The COI team will contact you with instructions. Follow them closely and direct any questions to cwrucoi@case.edu. Additional information can be found here: <https://case.edu/research/faculty-staff/compliance/conflict-interests-committee-coi>.
12. Receive your decision letter from CWRU! Yay!

VI. Implement the DNP Project

- Under the supervision of the Project Committee Chair /Advisor, implement the project approved by the Committee chair and members and the IRB.
- Maintain regular communication with the Chair and send email updates at least every two weeks or as requested by the Chair.
- No changes may be made to any aspect of the project design (sample, recruitment, measurement and analysis) without prior approval of the Project Chair (and Committee members and IRB if indicated).
- For CWRU IRB purposes, the Project Chair is the Primary Investigator and is responsible for all IRB aspects of the project.
- During this time, update the proposal with revisions recommended by the Project Committee, update the literature review, and note changes made to the methods during implementation of the project.
- If planning a manuscript, begin to write the sections which precede Results.

VII. Complete the Project

- Consider the deadlines posted on the guidelines/forms section DNP website for final presentation and final documents.
- Analyze the data according to the final plan in Chapter 3.
- Statistician: Students may consult with a statistician. However, they are expected to enter

and analyze their own data. All recommendations by the statistician must be approved by the Faculty Committee Chair

- In the Results section of the final report (ch. 4) or manuscript, the outcomes of data analysis are used to describe the sample and answer the study questions or objectives. The results are reported objectively and are interpreted in Discussion.
- Write the Results, with supporting tables in APA 7th edition format, and Discussion. Drafts are submitted to the Faculty Team Leader per their preferences. Topics in these sections are provided by Faculty Team Leader (for final report) or per the format required by the selected journal.
- Highly recommended resource for tables: Nicol, A. & Pexman, P. (2010) *Presenting Your Findings: A Practical Guide to Creating Tables*, American Psychological Association. (Based on APA, 6th ed., an updated version may be published to reflect the APA, 7th ed.)
- Final Product:
 - Report: The final draft of the report is prepared according to APA 7th edition format and the guidelines at the end of this document.
 - Manuscript: The final draft of the manuscript is prepared according to author guidelines of the selected journal (i.e. tables may be separate files, etc.)

VIII. Prepare to Graduate

- At least 4 months prior to anticipated graduation date:
 - Check your SIS homepage or watch emails or contact the FPB Registrar for the deadline to apply for graduation. Awarding of the diploma is not automatic.
 - Petition to Graduate is completed online through your SIS homepage.
 - Be sure to check your CWRU email regularly for important graduation information throughout the semester in which you intend to graduate.
- Confirm with Chair/Advisor that you are meeting all program requirements for graduation. Resolve any outstanding issues.
- Only if necessary, contact the DNP Program Assistant to confirm all necessary paperwork has been submitted to verify fulfillment of program requirements.
- Discuss plans for dissemination of the project with the Faculty Chair and other Committee members as indicated. See previous guidelines for dissemination.

IX. Present the Final, Complete DNP Project

- The DNP student does an oral, public presentation of the completed project.
- Schedule the event:
 - When the Chair gives the ok, arrange a meeting acceptable to the Committee members and their schedules.
 - Consider the deadlines posted on the guidelines/forms section DNP website for final presentation and final documents.
 - Schedule room and schedule Zoom if necessary. See information under **Proposal**

- The student, Chair and FPB Committee member attend in person at the School of Nursing. The external member is welcome in person but may attend via Zoom.
- Email the following information to the DNP Program assistant (dnpasst@case.edu) at least 3 weeks prior to final presentation date:
 - title of DNP Project
 - Committee members
 - date and actual time of defense
 - where it will be held.
- Provide the final written report or manuscript to each committee member at least 2 weeks prior to presentation date. Also provide the slides in advance. The Committee Chair may wish to review a draft of the slides.
- Presentation
 - The format is similar to that of the proposal.
 - A power point template with topics for the presentation is available on the DNP Guidelines/Forms page. Check with the Chair if ok to use it.
 - The Faculty Chair will facilitate the meeting.
 - Guests from within and outside the SON may be invited to the event with the permission of the Chair.
 - After questions from the Committee, the Chair will provide an opportunity for questions from the audience.
 - The audience may be asked to step out for further Q & A.
- The student may be asked to step out while the team deliberates. Bring the Final
- Approval of the DNP Project form to the meeting.

XI: Final Details - Almost There!

- FINAL APPROVAL occurs when all revisions requested by committee members have been incorporated and the Faculty Chair has determined that all requirements for graduation have been fulfilled.
- Make sure the Faculty Chair signs the Final Approval Form a second time after all requirements are complete. The Chair then submits the form directly to the DNP Program Assistant.
- Convert the written project to a PDF using Adobe Acrobat.
- Submit:
 - **Manuscript option** – electronically submit project to the DNP Program Assistant (dnpasst@case.edu) by the established deadline to submit all final materials for the semester in which you wish to graduate.
 - **Final written report– Guidelines for formatting the final written report** are at the end of this document. These guidelines must be followed precisely. Pay close attention to ALL formatting requirements - margins, page number locations, format and style, and reference page format.

- Submit your project electronically to DNP Program Assistant (dnpasst@case.edu) for format check **prior** to your submission to OhioLink ETD as a PDF.
- The Program Assistant will check formatting and notify the student if any changes are required.
- Once confirmation is received from the Program Assistant, upload the pdf to OhioLink by visiting <https://etdadmin.ohiolink.edu/ap/LOGIN?100817681067656> and following the instructions.
- To get started you'll need to:
 - Choose "new user" in the Login box (bottom right corner of box)
 - Fill in your information (note that your email address will be your user name)
 - When asked to indicate "Institution/Unit," choose Case Western Reserve University Doctor of Nursing Practice
 - OhioLink ETD submission must be done no later than the established deadline to submit all final materials for the semester in which the student wishes to graduate.
- For all projects:
 - The Committee chair, in conjunction with the student, must notify the IRB that the project is complete and any open protocol must be closed. This is done through a form on your IRB project home page.
 - The Project Team Leader should receive all data.
- Email the DNP Program Assistant at dnpasst@case.edu with any questions.

Guidelines: Manuscript Option for DNP Scholarly Project

DNP students have the option, with approval of the Project Committee, of preparing a manuscript for the final written product of their project. The following are general guidelines for this process:

1. See earlier section on Proposal for information on deciding whether to follow the manuscript or non-manuscript option.

Writing the Manuscript: the project should follow the guidelines of the journal to which the manuscript will be submitted.

2. It can be difficult for the novice (and experienced) writer to synthesize all relevant content to fit within the requirements of the journal. It is suggested that the student work with the Faculty Team Leader to start this process while collecting data. There are basically two approaches.
 - a. Edit down the proposal, keeping the key elements.
 - b. Start writing from scratch, highlighting key aspects of the background, significance, and literature review.
 - c. Once the student collects and analyzes the data, the results and discussion sections of the manuscript can be written following journal guidelines.

3. The student is required to have one manuscript at the time of the final presentation. However, it may be possible to identify additional manuscripts with different foci.

4. The expectation is that the manuscript submitted to the project team is “ready for submission” with the assumption that the committee will likely request additional editing. The order of authorship should be determined by the committee, with the student as first author.

Guidelines for Organizing and Formatting the DNP Final Written Report

For students who choose the final written report option, the following guidelines must be used in formatting the paper and preparing the abstract.

General

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA - the latest edition) is to be followed, except where the following directions take precedence:

- Organization of the Written Report (Appendices found at the end of this document)
 - Title Page (Appendix A)
 - Committee Approval Page (Appendix B)
 - Abstract
 - Copyright page (Appendix C)
 - Dedication page (if applicable)
 - Preface or Acknowledgements
 - Table of Contents
 - List of Figures
 - List of Tables
 - Body of Scholarly Project
 - References
 - Appendices
 - **Remember to use Roman numerals for the Title Page through the List of Tables. Arabic numerals are used for the body of the project, references, and appendices.
- Preparation of the Abstract
 - A succinct report of the investigation is to be prepared. The abstract shall be no longer than 400 words in length and shall include the statement of the problem, aims, methods, pertinent findings, and conclusions.
 - All formatting guidelines are the same as for the overall report.
- Typeface and Font
 - Use a serif font face such as Times New Roman or Courier. Font size = 12.
 - The font size may be reduced for captions on figures and tables.
- Margins
 - All margins are 1.0 inch.

- All photographs, tables, charts, graphs, etc. must fit within these specified margins.
- Spacing
 - Text should be double-spaced. Long quotations, captions, footnotes, endnotes, itemized data, and references may be single spaced.
- Footnotes
 - Footnotes, if used, should be consistent with the APA manual.
- Hanging References
 - The reference list is typed using a hanging-indent format with the first line of each citation flush with the left margin and the second and following lines indented 3 spaces from the left margin.

TITLE OF SCHOLARLY WRITTEN PROJECT GOES HERE IN ALL CAPS (2" from top margin)

By (3" from top margin)

YOUR NAME IN ALL CAPS (3 ½" from top margin)

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Nursing
Practice (5 ½" from top margin)**

Faculty Committee Chair: (name) (7" from top margin)

Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing (7 ½" from top margin)

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

Graduation Month, Year (8 ½" from top margin)

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY (2" from top margin)
FRANCES PAYNE BOLTON SCHOOL OF NURSING

We hereby approve the scholarly written project of (3" from top margin)
(Your name)

Committee Chair (4" from top margin)
(Name)

Committee Member (5" from top margin)
(Name)

Committee Member (6" from top margin)
(Name)

Date of Final Presentation (7" from top margin)
(Date)

*We also certify that written approval has been obtained for any proprietary material contained therein. (8 ½ in from top margin).

Copyright © (insert year) by Name of Student, credentials
(3 ½ inches from top margin)