Application Process & Instructions: Academic Year 2015 - 2016

APPLICATION PROCESS
The School of Nursing welcomes applications to the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. If you have additional questions after reviewing the following instructions please contact the School as detailed at the end of this document.

The School of Nursing admits students for the fall semester each year. Admission consideration is extended to those applicants who complete and submit the online application and submit all required documents (outlined below) to the appropriate UNC office by the posted deadline. The DNP Admissions Committee will only evaluate and review complete applications containing all required materials. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the entire application is received by the posted deadline by checking the online application portal.

Fall Semester

| Application Deadline: | December 16, 2014 | December 16, 2014 is the final deadline for University Scholarship consideration. |

Students in the DNP program may enroll for either full-time or part-time study. Full-time study requires enrolling in at least nine credit hours per semester. Part-time study requires enrolling in three to six credit hours per semester. Students may work while enrolled in the program to the extent that the student’s academic progression is not compromised. However, in accordance with School of Nursing policy, full-time graduate students employed by the University may work no more than 50 percent (20 hours/week) while actively engaged in coursework.

The GRE Requirement has been waived for the School of Nursing Graduate Admission!

BSN to DNP Pathway
There are two options for BSN prepared nurses to obtain their DNP:

The Healthcare Systems option prepares nurses for roles that support clinical practice such as administration, informatics and organizational leadership in these areas:

- Health Care Systems– Administration
- Health Care Systems – Outcomes Management
- Health Care Systems– Informatics

The direct care pathway will prepare graduates to be nurse practitioners in the following Advanced Practice Areas:

- Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner – Primary Care
- Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner – Primary Care - Oncology
- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- Pediatric Nurse Practitioner – Primary Care

MSN to DNP Pathway
This option provides enhanced education to those who are already prepared as Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Registered Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Midwives, Nurse Administrators or other Health Care Systems Leaders.
PROGRAM PREREQUISITES

BSN to DNP Pathway

- Hold a BSN from a CCNE or NLNAC accredited program.

- Registered Nurse Licensure: all applicants must hold a current unencumbered license as a registered nurse in the state in which the student will do clinical course work. Note: an “unencumbered license” means neither the license, the licensee’s practice, nor the licensee is associated with any type of restriction, encumbrance, or probationary limitations imposed by the applicable Board of Nursing or any judicial entity. Documentary evidence must be submitted with the application.

- Possess a minimum of one year of recent (within the past 3 years) clinical work experience, as a Registered Nurse by the date of matriculation. The following specialties have additional requirements:
  - **Health Care Systems:** applicants should have experience in a leadership role within a health care setting.
  - **Adult/Gerontology (AGNP):** applicants must have experience with adults in a medical-surgical type setting.
  - **Family (FNP):** applicants should have nursing experience in community or ambulatory settings (either as a paid employee or as a volunteer).
  - **Psychiatric/Mental Health (PMH):** applicants should have the equivalent of 6 months within the past 3 years of full-time clinical work experience as a Registered Nurse in an acute or community setting that serves psychiatric illness/substance abuse.
  - **Pediatric (PNP):** applicants should have a minimum of 6 months of the most recent 12 months of full-time clinical work experience as a Registered Nurse with pediatric patients in a neonatal or pediatric inpatient setting, or community setting that serves children and families.

- Provide evidence of successfully completing an undergraduate statistics course within 5 years of matriculation with a grade of B or better. (Fall 2010 or later)

MSN to DNP Pathway

- Hold a master's degree in nursing from an NLNAC or CCNE accredited program.

- Professional Nurse licensure and if applicable, provide verification of being certified or ever having been certified as an advanced practice nurse.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION

This document contains instructions for the integrated online application process; the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School and School of Nursing Supplemental Application have been combined for user-ease and processing efficiency. Information regarding Graduate School requirements is available at: [http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html](http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html). Please carefully read and follow the School of Nursing application instructions below; each element described is a required facet of the online application.

1. **Transcripts of Undergraduate and Graduate Education:** Applicants must scan into the application an unofficial transcript from all post-secondary schools attended since high school. These documents must reflect all college-level coursework you have taken. Upon admission, official transcripts must be submitted from all colleges/universities attended to The Graduate School. Competitive BSN-DNP applicants will present a grade point average of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in their undergraduate nursing program. Applicants with a master’s degree in nursing are expected to have earned a 3.5 cumulative grade point average in graduate coursework. All applicants must be admissible to all previously attended colleges/universities. If you have been declared academically ineligible and as such are unable to return to any previous institutions, you must contact that institution and seek documentation that reinstates your eligibility or your application cannot undergo review. Copies of ALL correspondence regarding your reinstatement request must be submitted in the application. Additionally, if your final institutional cumulative GPA is below 2.0, please provide documentation of your eligibility to return to that particular institution.

International students and students who have attended schools outside of the US must provide a full credit evaluation of all courses completed at a foreign institution. The National Association of Credential Evaluation Services provides a list of organizations that offer this service at the link below. Please submit the credit
evaluation report and an official copy of your transcript with your application for admission. These documents may be scanned into the transcript section of the application. Submission of this credit evaluation with degree validation will allow us to view your transcripts in a US transcript format on a 4.0 GPA scale. Related URL: http://www.naces.org/

2. **Letters of Recommendation**: Submit three (3) letters of recommendation supporting your potential for success in the DNP program. Recommendations must be received from three individuals familiar with the applicant’s intellectual ability, academic achievement, practice expertise, and professional commitment to nursing. Letters from relatives, family friends, fellow staff members, clients/patients or religious/spiritual leaders will not be accepted.

- **BSN to DNP** applicants should submit 2 academic references from faculty who have taught you in an academic course for which you earned credit. At least one reference should be from faculty at your most recently attended educational program, and at least one faculty referent should be doctorally prepared. The third reference must come on the SON Employer Recommendation form from a current supervisor in an employment setting (Please provide your employer referents with the School of Nursing’s DNP Recommendation Form – see EMPLOYER RECOMMENDATION INFORMATION below http://nursing.unc.edu/admissions/applications/).

- **MSN to DNP** referents should include at least one doctorally prepared faculty member, a current supervisor in an employment setting (Please provide your employer referents with the School of Nursing’s DNP Employer Recommendation Form – see EMPLOYER RECOMMENDATION INFORMATION below http://nursing.unc.edu/admissions/applications/), and a professional colleague with a graduate degree.

The online application will prompt you to submit the email addresses for your three required recommenders. The recommender will then receive an email request for recommendation and must upload the letter into the application.

**OUT OF SCHOOL OVER 5 YEARS (Graduated Prior to August 2010)!!!**

*Note*: applicants who have been out of school five or more years may substitute professional colleagues as referents. If this option is utilized, the professional colleagues must have an earned graduate degree (master’s or doctorate) and possess the ability to speak to your potential for success in graduate school.

**EMPLOYER RECOMMENDATION INFORMATION!!!**
The third reference must be submitted by your immediate supervisor or department head of your current or most recent nursing position. Use of the School of Nursing’s Employer Recommendation Form is required. It is the applicant’s responsibility to provide the School’s form to the employer with the top portion completed. Select between the Word Document to email or the PDF to hand deliver http://nursing.unc.edu/admissions/applications/) YOU MUST GIVE OR SEND YOUR EMPLOYER OUR FORM BEFORE YOU LIST THEIR NAME AND EMAIL IN YOUR APPLICATION.

Please print the employer recommendation form from our website or save the Word Document. Complete the top of the form and give it to your supervisor or email the Word Document. Please ask your supervisor to complete the form. If you provided the supervisor the pdf, ask them to scan the completed recommendation form to their computer. If you sent the Word Document, ask them to save the form. Next, let your supervisor know that they will be receiving an email request from “University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - The Graduate School [mailto:support@hobsons.com]”. Following the instructions provided in the email, your supervisor will be able to upload your recommendation directly into your application portfolio.

**USING PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED RECOMMENDATIONS INFORMATION!!!**
Students who are reapplying to Nursing and who had letters of recommendation submitted last year, may re-use the letters from that application. In order to do this, you must list the Recommender’s name in the Recommender section of the application. In the email spot, you may list previousrec1@unc.edu, previousrec2@unc.edu and previousrec3@unc.edu. The system requires a different email address be listed for each recommender. Listing this email will trigger the Office of Admissions at the School of Nursing to load the letter or letters from last year.
**Professional Statement:** You are asked to write and upload into the application, a two-part essay combined into one document. It is most important that you address each bulleted item noted and format the document as requested. Create a topic-specific header for every response. Poorly written statements will weaken your portfolio notably. Please include references on a separate page and upload together as one document into the application. This narrative is a very important part of your portfolio as it offers insight into the professional goals and expectations of the applicant. The quality of the Professional Statement is often crucial in admissions decisions since it provides the Admissions Committee a first-hand example of your writing skills and your ability to present ideas in a clear, logical and coherent manner. In lieu of an interview, the professional statements avails the Committee of your personal perspective on your professional contributions, strengths as a student, current skills and abilities, and prior experiences. Prepare and proofread your statement carefully!

**PART 1:** Professional Goals and Background (2 pages, double-spaced):

- Explain why you have chosen the specific advanced practice area in the DNP program
- Describe your short and long-term professional goals
- Detail how obtaining the DNP degree from UNC-Chapel Hill degree will help you attain those goals
- Discuss relevant areas of your background, such as prior coursework, earned degrees, continuing education, practice history, and professional activities, and how each has prepared you for doctoral study. It is important to include information on scholarship activities (publications, presentations and research experience), service activities (local community, global or professional), honors and awards, language fluency other than English, leadership activities and military service.
- Describe how your practice background has prepared you for doctoral study.
- Identify clinical and academic strengths and areas of improvement that may impact your doctoral studies. Address any aspect of the program’s admission criteria for which you do not meet minimum requirements and provide an explanation for your situation (e.g., an explanation is needed if GPA < minimum, work experience not current or < 1 year, etc.)

**PART 2:** Clinical Interest (4 pages, double-spaced including references):

Identify an important practice-based problem that you would like to examine during your DNP studies. Provide a brief, referenced review of the literature about why this problem requires further exploration. Include details about prior work on the topic (if any), the importance of the problem in patient care delivery, and how you would go about studying this problem during the DNP program. You must provide a sufficient (a minimum of two) references to support your argument.

MSN-DNP applicants are to identify a member of the School of Nursing faculty who would be a good match for your scholarly interests. A listing of Doctoral Faculty is available on the School’s web site ([http://nursing.unc.edu/doctoral-program/faculty-advisors-research/](http://nursing.unc.edu/doctoral-program/faculty-advisors-research/))

5. **Upload a copy of your current Curriculum Vitae or Resume.** This document should detail your career path, explaining any gap in employment greater than one year. Note: Full disclosure of your complete education history is required. Please review the CV template provided by the School of Nursing and make sure that your CV includes all the information outlined in the template: [http://nursing.unc.edu/admissions/applications/](http://nursing.unc.edu/admissions/applications/)

6. **Professional Nursing Licensure:** Documentation substantiating the applicant holds a current unrestricted/unencumbered license as a registered nurse must be uploaded into the application. Note: an "unencumbered license" means neither the license, the licensee's practice, nor the licensee is associated with any type of restriction, encumbrance, or probationary limitations imposed by the applicable Board of Nursing or any judicial entity. [See Application Section Supplemental Documents] NC License needed by matriculation.

MSN to DNP only – if applicable, provide verification of being certified or ever having been certified as an advanced practice nurse.

*The Information provided by the Board of Nursing website of your state is sufficient. Print and scan or save a screenshot.*

7. **Upload a completed and signed Application Checklist.** The application checklist is a newly required document created to assure that you have taken all the necessary steps to submit a complete and competitive application. The checklist will call your attention to areas of the application that are of importance to the admissions committee.
8. **TOEFL or IELTS Score (International Applicants only):** Standardized test scores must be official and are reportable for a period of two years from the date of the exam. Exam results more than two years old cannot be considered. Standardized test scores that are submitted to this institution are kept on file for only one year. Refer to The Graduate School for more information
http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html#toefl

9. **Application fee:** $85.00 (may be paid by check, money order or online by credit card to The Graduate School; instructions are available on the final screen of the application)

**BASIS FOR DECISIONS**
Admission to the DNP program is necessarily a selective process. Meeting the posted criteria does not ensure admission. Using an objective review procedure, the Admissions Committee selects candidates to recommend to the Dean of The Graduate School for admission. The Committee considers the quality of performance in previous undergraduate and graduate study (when applicable), success in previous employment and other pertinent experiences, and personal qualifications including suitability for advanced study. The Admissions Committee weighs the applicant’s accomplishments and potential for success in the program. Diversity in student backgrounds and scholarly interests is desired.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Nursing is committed to equality of educational opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, national origin, age, religion, sexual preference, or handicap. Members of racial or ethnic minority groups and males are encouraged to apply.

**NOTIFICATION OF DECISION**
It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the online application is submitted prior to the posted deadline, all requested documents are uploaded properly into the application, and that your file is complete. You can check the status of your application review by logging on to the application to see if any required items are missing. The Admissions Committee only considers COMPLETE applications. It is your responsibility to check your application in the online application portal, and follow up with your recommenders and schools. The School of Nursing will contact you directly, if we need additional information or documents. Please do not call the School of Nursing to check the completion status of your application. Please direct your questions or concerns about the DNP application to son_gradapp@unc.edu.

The School of Nursing and Dean of The Graduate School will notify you in writing of your outcome as soon as decisions are rendered. Therefore, please modify your information in the Update Profile section of your application if you change your address prior to notification.

**FOLLOWING ADMISSION ACCEPTANCE:**
Admitted students seeking to establish North Carolina residency for tuition purposes, shall submit an online application located at this site: http://gradschool.unc.edu/student/residency/

Information concerning visa, U.S. Immigration, or financial certificate matters can be obtained from the UNC Office of International Student and Scholar Services. http://oisss.unc.edu/

International Applicants must submit their Financial Certificate and supportive documents to The Graduate School. http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/instructions.html#fincert

**Accessing the Correct Application**
Go to the Graduate School Admissions Page http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/

Select Apply Now and Create an Account or Log in with an existing account

Start Application*

*NOTE: School of Nursing Applicants are not required to enter their test scores on the Test Scores Page!!!
Applicant Type

Level of Study* select Graduate

Type of Applicant* select New degree seeking applicant

Plans for Graduate Study

Select a major* you must select Nursing Practice

Select a degree* select Doctor of Nursing Practice

Are you applying for a dual degree? select No

If so, please indicate 2nd program here: leave blank

Area of Interest or Specialization* highlight Nursing Practice

Term of Entry

Please select the term of entry* select Fall 2015 Select save & continue to complete the application

BSN to DNP APRN Specialization Selection occurs on the Supplemental Documents Page

Good Luck!