

PHD IN NURSING

The PhD in Nursing program prepares advanced students to become scientists who conduct research in health care and who contribute to the expansion of knowledge as nursing educators and leaders in the healthcare system. Graduates will be scientists who improve health and enrich healthcare systems through the integration of theory, research and practice.

In contrast to the practice-based Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), this doctoral program is rooted in foundations of theory and research needed to develop researchers, leaders, educators and discoverers of knowledge in health care.

We understand that students have varied needs and learning styles, so courses are offered in both face-to-face and online formats. Also, our dynamic PhD program may be completed on a part-time or full-time schedule.

Our outstanding faculty are committed to preparing nurse scientists and scholars who can lead in extending the body of healthcare knowledge. We foster a collegial and supportive environment with close faculty interaction. Our learning atmosphere is distinctive, challenging and includes rich mentoring experiences.

The School's dedicated Nursing Research Department promotes collaborations, enhances scholarship and stimulates clinically relevant investigative questions and innovative approaches. We offer unique access to expert faculty researchers in a comprehensive six-discipline academic health center. Doctoral students also have access to courses and resources in the affiliated institutions of the Texas Medical Center, a vibrant academic and healthcare community in the heart of Houston.

For those seeking a future in nursing as a faculty leader or clinical researcher, the PhD in Nursing program at the Cizik School of Nursing offers a compelling next step to advance their professional journey.

Program Outcome

The curriculum of the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing degree program is designed to prepare graduates to:

1. Conceptualize, design, and conduct clinical and population-based research that advances science.
2. Extend, promote, and disseminate knowledge generated by independent, collaborative, and transdisciplinary research and scholarship.
3. Synthesize theoretical and empirical knowledge from nursing and other academic disciplines in relation to health and healthcare.
4. Articulate health care issues and policy in relation to social, ethical, and cultural phenomena related to the area of scholarship.

Transfer of Credits

A student may submit graduate course credits earned at other universities for application toward the PhD degree. Requirements for transfer of credit are as follows:

1. The course must clearly relate to the student's approved program of study.
2. Nine semester hours taken prior to admission may be eligible for transfer from accredited institutions outside The University of Texas

System. After the student is enrolled in the program, eligibility will be assessed.

3. An unlimited number of hours may be transferred from institutions within The University of Texas.
4. All credits transferred as electives must be approved by the student's advisor.
5. All credits transferred as cognates must be approved by the student's dissertation chair.
6. Substitution for a doctoral program required course must be approved by the faculty advisor.
7. The transcript must show an "A", "B", or "P" in the course.
8. The course must have been taken within the seven-year time limit to complete doctoral degree requirements.
9. The course may not be transferred if it was used to apply to another completed degree.
10. All courses to be transferred must be graduate level courses.

See PhD Student Policy, D7980 Transfer of Credit (<https://nursing.uth.edu/academic-affairs/policies/documents/phdpolicies/d7980.pdf?v=725208>) for further information.

Courses Taken in Other University of Texas Health Science Center – Houston Schools

All students who have been admitted to the PhD Program and who plan to take courses applicable to a nursing degree in a University of Texas Health Science Center - Houston School other than Cizik School of Nursing must obtain approval from the advisor prior to taking such courses. A transcript must be sent to the Office of the Registrar immediately upon the completion of the course(s).

Candidacy Exam

The candidacy examination serves as a basis for determining the student's readiness for pursuing dissertation research. The student should demonstrate a command of the theoretical and methodological issues related to the selected topic as a basis for pursuing research in a specific population of interest. The candidacy examination is viewed as a continuing step in the educational process building on previous course work and leading to the dissertation proposal defense and dissertation. Candidacy exam policy and procedures may be found in PhD Program Policy D7315 (<https://nursing.uth.edu/academic-affairs/policies/documents/phdpolicies/d7315.pdf>).

Dissertation Requirement

An original research dissertation that constitutes a substantial contribution to the body of knowledge in nursing must be completed under the direction of a dissertation committee chairperson who is a member of the Cizik School of Nursing faculty.

Students must complete 12 hours of dissertation prior to graduation. The 12 hours are taken after Candidacy is successfully completed and should be taken in increments of 3 hours but must have at least 3 hours in the last semester (semester of final defense).

Information regarding the dissertation policy and procedures may be found in PhD Program Policy D7400 (<https://nursing.uth.edu/academic-affairs/policies/documents/phdpolicies/d7400.pdf?v=12393336>). The Dissertation Manual for students admitted before Fall 2021 can be found at Dissertation Manual (pre 2021) (<https://nursing.uth.edu/programs/>)

phd/docs/dissertationmanual.pdf). For students admitted Fall 2021 and after, the Dissertation Manual can be found at Dissertation Manual (post 2021) (https://nursing.uth.edu/programs/phd/docs/Dissertation-Manual_5-17-2023.pdf).

An active list of recent graduate dissertations is available for viewing through the Texas Medical Center library.

PhD Student Academic Advisement Policy

All doctoral students will be advised by a Research Department faculty member throughout the doctoral program. The student is assigned to an advisor upon admission to the program. The advisor continues with the student during the program of study as long as it is mutually agreeable with the student and advisor. The student's advisor provides academic advisement, and may also serve on the mentorship team and dissertation committee. The student has the option to ask another eligible faculty member to assume the advisor role anytime during the program until the appointment of the dissertation committee. Upon the appointment of a dissertation committee, the chairperson of the dissertation committee becomes the faculty advisor for the remainder of the program. If a student changes advisors, it is the student's responsibility to notify, in writing, the present advisor, the PhD Program Director and the Student Affairs Office of the change.

Degree Requirements

The curriculum for the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Program at Cizik School of Nursing includes 66 semester hours for MSN-prepared students, 66 semester hours for DNP-prepared students and 90 hours for BSN-prepared students. The course sequence is designed to prepare nurse scientists to develop, test, and implement innovation in health care delivery and teach the next generations of nurses in research and practice.

During the sequence of courses, the student participates in development of a research program that includes interdisciplinary interactions. The student works with an interdisciplinary team of faculty mentors who have established research programs. Courses in the nursing sequence are focused on the health care delivery system, theory, and research.

The student also takes one elective and three cognate courses to develop knowledge in a focused area of interest. The theory, research, and practice links provide the basis for the student to develop a dissertation that is focused on preparing a nurse scientist who will improve health and health care.

DNP to PhD Program

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) and Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science (PhD) are both doctoral nursing degrees. Yet, their focus differs, with the PhD centered on creating new knowledge using research methods and DNP focused on translation of research knowledge into practice using knowledge translation methods. For those nurses with a current DNP who wish to broaden their knowledge of research methodologies or conduct original research, Cizik School of Nursing offers a DNP to PhD program. The hybrid program is a synchronous online program offered one day per week with some in-person classes. Students have opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration with renowned researchers and will be mentored by expert nursing professors. Nine (9) semester hours taken prior to admission may be eligible for transfer from accredited institutions outside The University of Texas System. After the student is enrolled in the program, eligibility will be assessed. Obtaining up to 9-credits for prior DNP coursework may

accelerate the path to PhD while reducing costs. The program prepares graduates to become leaders in nursing, contributing to knowledge development, theory generation, and advancing the profession through research and education.

Academic Requirements for PhD Progression

The Semester Hour

One semester hour of credit is given for one clock hour per week of lecture, or two clock hours per week of seminar.

Withdrawing from Courses

Students may withdraw from a course with the approval of the instructor at any time up to and including the last day of class in any semester. The symbol "W" is recorded to indicate a drop without prejudice and penalty. If a student with a grade less than "B" for a graduate student chooses to withdraw after the deadline for "W" grade, a grade of "WF" will be recorded. WF is considered a failing grade and is used in calculating the GPA value.

On the recommendation of the instructor and with approval of the Dean, a student may be required to drop a course at any time because of neglect or for lack of preparation. Under such circumstances, the symbol "W" will be recorded.

Full-time and Part-Time

A full-time graduate student is one who is registered for at least nine semester hours during the Fall and Spring semester, six hours during the 12-week summer session, or three semester hours during the six-week summer session. A part-time student is one who is registered for fewer hours than the stated requirement for full-time status.

Withdrawal Requiring Application for Readmission

Students withdrawing from the Cizik School of Nursing who wish to be considered for readmission must submit a written request to the UTHealth Houston Office of the Registrar (this excludes taking a semester for Inactive Status.)

Inactive Status

A student in good standing who desires to take one semester off may do so without penalty. A student remaining out of the program for more than one semester must notify Student Affairs Office and the Registrar's Office in writing when she/he wishes her/his file reactivated, and the student will be considered for readmission on an individual basis. Any student withdrawing or requesting inactive status must complete an Inactive Form, which may be found in the CSON Student Affairs Office. This constitutes official inactivation.