Regis College
Richard and Sheila Young School of Nursing
Doctor of Nursing Practice Program

Guidelines for the DNP Scholarly Practice Project I-IV (NU 740-743)

Scholarly Practice Project

Overview

All students in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program must complete a Scholarly Practice Project (SPP) that provides evidence of their ability to think critically, apply research principles, and implement and translate evidence into practice through Evidenced Based Practice or a Quality Improvement Project. With the guidance of the SPP Team, the SPP reports the outcome of evidence-based projects, program evaluation, translational research, clinical guidelines development, or other approved projects.

This document provides some general SPP guidelines and information regarding progression in the program related to preparation for graduation (see Appendix A).

What is a DNP Project?

Scholarly Product: The product of the DNP Project may take on various final forms depending on the academic institution's requirements and the student's area of advanced nursing practice. Students are encouraged to demonstrate innovation in the design and dissemination of the final project and product to reflect the changing healthcare environment. However, the elements of the DNP Project are the same for all students and include assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination components. As an outcome of the program, students must have the opportunity to integrate all *DNP Essentials* into practice. However, all eight *Essentials* do not have to be demonstrated in the DNP Project. All DNP Projects should:

a. Focus on a change that impacts healthcare outcomes either through direct or indirect care.

b. Have a systems (micro-, meso-, or macro-level) or population/aggregate focus.

c. Demonstrate implementation in the appropriate arena or area of practice.

d. Include a plan for sustainability (e.g. financial, systems or political realities, not only theoretical abstractions).

e. 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.

f. Provide a foundation for future practice scholarship (AACN, 2015, p.4).

What are some examples of DNP projects?

You may refer to online digital repositories of completed DNP projects found at either Doctors of Nursing Practice, Inc. (https://www.doctorsofnursingpractice.org/doctoral-project-repository/) or Sigma Theta Tau Virginia Henderson e-Repository (https://www.nursingrepository.org/).

How do I complete a minimum of 1000 post-baccalaureate practice hours?

BSN>DNP students will obtain 600 clinical hours during the nurse practitioner courses; MSN>DNP students may enter the program with various pre-approved hours determined at

application to the program and approved on the *Verification of Hours* document. Students complete at least 400 hours during their SPP courses (NU 740-743) and during other DNP courses. DNP hours are logged into the student's Regis Approved log account and approved by DNP faculty.

How do I obtain a CITI Certificate for Institutional Review Board submission?

- Student must complete the required CITI Social and Behavioral Research Training Module and receive a certificate of completion as required by the Regis College IRB. This is a requirement that must be satisfied at the start of NU 741, as required by the Regis College Institutional Review Board (IRB). The website to complete the CITI certificate is https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=154&icat=0&clear=1. Once you click on register, you will enter "Regis" and continue. You will create a user name and password. At this point, you will complete the Social and Behavioral Research Training Module. Please be sure that you and your mentor complete this training before submitting to the IRB.
- The student must obtain IRB approval from the site(s) where they will be conducting the project. The student will also need approval from Regis College IRB. In the event the outside institution is not affiliated with an IRB, the student will obtain permission from appropriate authorities at that institution. **(Students may not initiate any part of their research study/project until approval from Regis College and any other institution where the SPP will be conducted has been met).** The website for the Regis College IRB forms is https://www.regiscollege.edu/about-regis/administrative-offices/institutional-review-board
- CITI Training

  The principal investigator (student) and the chair must have CITI Training to participate in any DNP project. Any other individual that is on the committee, including the mentor that will be viewing or working with raw data will also need CITI Training; one example would be anyone that is working with the student as a statistical consultant. Any committee member that is only viewing the results of the statistical analysis will not need to complete CITI Training. The type of CITI Training is specified in DNP Connections.

Who is on my SPP Team?
The SPP Team shall consist of a minimum of three members. All faculty/mentor members must have a doctorate; the exception to the doctorate requirement may be waived with the Project Chair's permission when it is determined that the expertise of the non-doctoral member is essential to the successful completion of the doctoral project. Team members, other than the Project Chair, may be external to Regis College. One of your Team Members may serve as your Mentor to aid progression of your SPP; however, additional team members may be needed depending on the SPP. The roles and responsibilities of Team Members are as follows:

1. **The Student**

2. **The Project Chair:** The Project Chair of the Team is most often the first reader. The Project Chair is Regis College assigned faculty at the start of NU740 or NU741. The Project Chair provides guidance throughout the entire project process, including selection of Team members, project development, and writing refinement. Based on the expertise and interests of the other Team members, the Project Chair may delegate a Team member to focus on a particular aspect of the SPP such as the Methods, Review of Literature, Results, or Conclusion sections. The Project Chair is the main coordinator for the SPP process and is notified of any concerns or issues related to the student or the project.

3. **Second and/or Third Readers:** Students may choose a second and/or third reader based on how they can contribute to the facilitation of their project, such as subject and/or content area expert. The Second and/or Third Readers are expected to read all drafts of the manuscript as requested by the Project Chair, provide timely feedback within two weeks to the DNP student, and to copy such feedback to the Project Chair and other Reader(s). Communication among student and all Team members is vital. Cooperation and collaboration are critical for the successful completion of the project.

4. **The Practice Mentor:** The student chooses their project site mentor. The mentor serves as a professional support, educator, and academic coach in helping the student complete the SPP. Intrinsic to this role is guiding the student in meeting challenges inherent in completion of their work. The practice mentor should be a stakeholder at the location where the project is being implemented.

What is a proposal hearing and a project defense?

The SPP project hearing will usually occur during NU741 and will include your project team to offer suggestions and address any potential challenges. Following the hearing, and successful approval by your team, you may then proceed with obtaining IRB approval.

The SPP project defense occurs during NU743. It is the official public dissemination of your project presented to Regis faculty, students, and the invited public.

What are the SPP dissemination expectations?
   a. Dissemination of the DNP Project should include a product that describes the purpose, planning, implementation, and evaluation components of the project, and is required for each project. This may be in the form of a submitted Abstract to a professional journal or professional conference outside of the college.
   b. Dissemination of the project outcomes is essential and may include a variety of forms depending upon the focus and area of advanced nursing practice and should be targeted to appropriate audiences to ensure impact (AACN, 2015, p.5).

Regis College requires the following dissemination activities:
   a. SPP Public Final Defense
   b. Abstract submission for a poster/podium presentation or journal article publication.
   c. Participation in Regis College Poster Presentation Day
Regis College suggests the following dissemination activities:
   a. SPP paper digital repository
        a. DNP, Inc. Repository

SPP Guidelines rev June 2020

        b. Sigma Theta Tau's Virginia Henderson e-Repository
    b. Poster/podium presentation at regional, state, national, international conferences
    c. Journal article publication
    d. Presentation to leadership/stakeholders at site of project implementation

What is the curriculum plan for the SPP?
The progression of DNP SPP courses is as follows:
NU740/NU726/NU727/NU741/NU742/NU743

NU 740 Scholarly DNP Project I (Please refer to course syllabus for all requirements)

Course Description:
This seminar-formatted course is the first of a four-course series designed to assist students in implementing an evidence-based (EBP) practice project. This course will introduce students to the project process and progression through the four (4) course series. Discussions of project scope, quality and development of an EBP project proposal will take place. Students will work with faculty to assess, plan, design, and evaluate evidence-based projects. Students will begin the process of program management, gather and critically appraise evidence, develop goals, determine expected project outcomes and establish an appropriate time management plan for the project. As part of this four-course sequence, students will engage in 400 hours of mentored experience from the inception of the EBP problem to dissemination of the findings.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Identify a practice problem for the evidence-based practice (EBP) project.
2. Evaluate current research, theory, and other available evidence in addressing an identified practice problem.
3. Select an appropriate evidence-based practice model for the EBP practice project based on an evaluation of relevant EBP models.
4. Develop an identified practice problem based on the evaluation and synthesis of available evidence from research, theory, and practice.
5. Commence a mentoring relationship with a mentor that will be determined through a conversation with the chair for the purpose of evaluating the leadership and management roles of the doctoral prepared nurse in creating a quality health care delivery system and synthesizing the theoretical concepts of the DNP curriculum.
6. Initiate the assessment of her or his achievement of the DNP program outcomes through the development of a portfolio.

Grading: Pass/Fail

NU726: Advance Research Methods for Evidence-based Practice I (Please refer to course syllabus for all requirements)

Course Description:

This is the first of two sequential courses that provides the students with an in-depth analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods used in nursing and health care research. Throughout the course, students will use critical thinking skills to analyze qualitative and quantitative methods as a framework for making decisions regarding clinical problems. Evidence-based practice models will be analyzed to facilitate the identification of a practice problem and the development of an extensive review of the literature.

Course Objectives:

1. Critically analyze evidence from varying research methods.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts related to the design and conduct of varied qualitative and quantitative research methods.
3. Analyze and apply the philosophical and/or theoretical foundations of qualitative and quantitative research methods.
4. Evaluate various evidence-based practice models for their effectiveness in meeting current organizational and interdisciplinary service needs.
5. Critically analyze and synthesize the evidence to identify an EBP problem in practice.
6. Develop Chapters I and II to address the identified EBP problem.

NU727: Advance Research Methods for Evidence-based Practice II (Please refer to course syllabus for all requirements)

Course Description:

This is the second of two sequential courses that will guide students in the progressive development of their evidence-based practice project. This course will focus on in-depth analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. Utilizing an EBP model, students will develop a comprehensive plan for project implementation and evaluation.

Course Objectives:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the use of qualitative techniques for data gathering including interview and focus groups.
2. Analyze and apply procedures for the analysis of data.
3. Apply knowledge of methods of thematic analysis and other methods in order to summarize and examine research data within the decision-making framework.
4. Apply knowledge of probability and decision theory in answering research questions and in the selection of statistical tests and data collection instruments.
5. Apply knowledge of the ethical and legal principles governing research methods, in particular the use of human subjects.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based practice strategies in integrating and synthesizing research studies to advance professional practice.
7. Develop Chapter III to address the identified EBP problem.

NU 741 Scholarly DNP Project II (Please refer to course syllabus for all requirements)

Course Description:
This seminar-formatted course is the second of a four-course series designed to assist students in implementing an evidence-based practice (EBP) project. This course will build upon work completed in the first course, with the focus on project management, evaluation methods, completion of an EBP project proposal and hearing, and submission of an IRB application. Students will continue in their completion of 400 hours of mentored experience from the inception of the EBP problem to dissemination of the findings.

Course Objectives:

Successful completion of this course will enable the student to:

1. Completion of a proposal hearing
2. Submission of a successfully defended, committee approved EBP proposal
3. Completion of an IRB application, if appropriate
4. Continued engagement in the mentorship experience
5. Continued entries in mentorship journal
6. Continued contributions to the DNP portfolio
   Grading: Pass/Fail

Procedure Checklist for NU740-741

Scholarly I (NU740) and II (NU741):

☐ Assigned SPP Regis Project Chair:_____ CV_____CITI_____
☐ Secure second/third reader (optional) and Mentor (required)
    o Second reader:_____ CV_____CITI_____
    o Third reader:_____ CV_____CITI_____
    o Practice Mentor:_____ CV_____CITI_____

☐ Communicate with SPP faculty regarding proposal development
☐ Create a first draft of Doctoral SPP Proposal and submit to SPP faculty at the time determined by faculty chair
☐ Create a Portfolio account

☐ Continue Regis electronic documentation system submissions
☐ Review and sign the *DNP Program Doctoral Scholarly Work Acknowledgement Agreement*
    o Date: _____
☐ Chapters I, II, and III submitted
    o Date: _____

SPP Guidelines rev June 2020

☐ With Committee, identify potential dates for Proposal Hearing
   o Date: _____
☐ Proposal Hearing
   o Date: _____
☐ Permission received to submit to IRB
☐ Submit IRB application to external organization, if necessary
   o Date:_____
☐ IRB application submitted to Regis College
   o Date: _____

Informed Consent:

An informed consent reflects the basic principle of respect for persons. The basic meaning of informed consent is that the participants considering being a part of a research study should have legal capacity to give consent, and be able to make their own decisions without help from anyone, otherwise known as free choice. There should be no evidence of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion. They should have enough knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to they can make an informed decision to participate or not. The potential participant should know what the project is about, the time frame and duration of the project, the goal of the experiment, all risks and discomforts they may experience, and finally any effects the project may have on their health, if any.

What are the steps taken in NU740 and NU741 to complete the SPP Procedure Checklist?
1. Identify a general area of interest and identify member(s) for your Team (including Mentor) with expertise in the area of interest who agrees to work with you;
2. Clarify the availability of your Project Chair and your Team over the period you will be working on the project;
3. Develop a timeframe based on the Team availability and the term parameters;
4. Develop a tentative plan for discussing your SPP with your Project Chair;
5. Prepare and submit the first draft of your proposal;
6. Review the proposal with your Project Chair and make revisions as recommended.
7. Submit the second draft of your proposal to the whole Team;
8. Schedule and attend meetings with the Project Chair and members as needed;
9. Submit subsequent drafts of SPP proposal as deemed necessary by Project Chair and Members according to agree upon due date;
10. Complete and schedule the proposal hearing with the Team after obtaining approval from the committee; Team members will agree upon a date for the proposal hearing
11. Review and discuss the appropriate Regis IRB forms with the Project Chair;

12. Submit the Regis IRB forms electronically to the Project Chair;
13. **Written approval from Regis' IRB must be granted prior to any type of subject recruitment, data collection, or seeking required external IRB or authorization at a research site;**
14. Once Regis IRB approval is obtained, any modifications to the proposed methodology or other key aspects of the study/project must be discussed with the Project Chair; the Project Chair may require that the Regis IRB application be resubmitted;
15. Submit abstract for poster, podium presentation or article, or apply for grant funding.

NU 742 Scholarly DNP Project III (Please refer to the course syllabus for all requirements)

Course Description: This seminar formatted course is the third of a four-course series designed to assist students in implementing an evidence-based practice project. The focus of this course is on the implementation of the evidence-based practice project and subsequent data collection of data for evaluation of the project. It will be expected that the student will engage in 400 hours of mentored experience from the inception of the EBP problem to dissemination of the findings**.**

Course Objectives:
By the completion of this course, the student will have:
1. Implemented an evidence-based practice project
2. Continued development of a portfolio
Grading: Pass/Fail

NU 743 Scholarly DNP Project IV (Please refer to the course syllabus for all requirements)

Course Description: This seminar format course is the fourth of a four-course series design to assist students in implementing an evidence-based practice project. The focus of this course is on analyzing data obtained from the evaluation process and dissemination of the project findings. Students must successful orally defend their project as well as submit an article for publication or abstract for public presentation and/or an executive summary. It is expected that the student will disseminate her or his project findings. It will be expected that the student will engage in 400 hours of mentored experience from the inception of the EBP problem to dissemination of the findings.

Course Objectives:
By the completion of this course, the student will have:
1. Evaluated data obtained from implementation of an EBP project.
2. Completed a written document of an implemented EBP project.
3. Defended the findings of an EBP document.
4. Generated knowledge through dissemination of evidence-based practice findings.
5. Demonstrated final assessment of attainment of the DNP student learning outcomes and synthesis of theoretical concepts in the DNP program through the completion of a portfolio.

SPP Procedure Checklist for NU742-743

Scholarly III (NU742) and IV (NU743):

- ☐ Recruit subjects and data collection
- ☐ Data analysis
- ☐ Continue development of portfolio
- ☐ Continue Regis electronic documentation submissions
- ☐ Review presentation guidelines
  - ○ Date: _____
- ☐ Draft of Chapters IV & V submitted
  - ○ Date: _____
- ☐ Review presentation
  - ○ Date: _____
- ☐ Complete copy of SPP
  - ○ Date: _____
- ☐ Dissemination of project to external facility
  - ○ Date: _____
  - ○ Location: _____
- ☐ Final copy of SPP
  - ○ Date: _____
- ☐ Scholarly presentation, publication, poster, abstract submission
  - ○ Source/Location/Date: _____
- ☐ With Committee, identify Project Defense date
  - ○ Date: _____
- ☐ Project Defense
  - ○ Date: _____
- ☐ Graduation
  - ○ Date: _____

What are the tasks for NU742-NU743 to complete SPP Procedure Checklist?

1. Collect data and implement EBP project during **NU 742**
   The remaining steps will be completed in NU 743
2. Submit completed sections of SPP for review by Project Chair according to the agreed upon schedule;
3. Submit drafts of SPP document as requested by the Team for review;
4. Schedule meetings with Team members, as needed;
5. The Project Chair, with consultation of other Team Members, will inform the student when the SPP is at the point that the student may defend it;
6. Schedule the defense hearing with Project Chair and Team members;
7. Obtain Team members' approval and signatures for final SPP document at defense;
8. Submit the signed signature changes to the Project Chair after successful conclusion of defense. Submit the final approved project manuscript with signatures to Project Chair;

9. Project Chair reviews final project manuscript regarding adherence to format guidelines;

10. Project Chair will submit the SPP document to the Director of the DNP Program;

11. DNP Program requirement is that, sometime during the program, the student is required to submit an abstract of their SPP for journal article publication, podium or poster presentation.

Appendix A

SPP Dates and Guidelines for Graduation

The College offers three graduation dates: May, August, and December. Ceremonies of recognition (Graduate and Doctoral Hooding and Graduation) are held in May. Doctor of Nursing Practice students most often complete the program with their final course being NU 743. To be eligible for graduation, all degree requirements must be successfully completed.

A completed SPP is defined as implementation of the entire research/evidence-based practice project, including data collection and analysis, successful defense of the doctoral project, and submission of the finalized approved written document of that project.

Course Incompletes: Any NU 743 student who does not have the completed, approved, and finalized written doctoral project manuscript will receive an incomplete (I) for that term. Students with Incompletes in NU 743, who are eligible for the next graduation date, must first determine their Team's availability to continue to work with them. They are also required to have:

1. Completed the SPP including the analysis and discussion of results and have successfully defended their DNP Project.

2. Completed a near-finalized draft document of each of the chapters of the doctoral project and provided this written document to each Team member, and

3. Received Team approval of the near-finalized draft document and of the timeline to completion.

If the above three conditions are met, the student may participate in the Doctoral Hooding and Graduation ceremonies held in May. Assuming all requirements inherent in a completed doctoral project are met by the August date, the actual diploma will be dated August and then made available to the student after that time.

If the student does not meet the requirements to participate in the May ceremonies, the student can participate in Doctoral Hooding and May Graduation ceremonies in a subsequent year at a time after all requirements are satisfied.

A continuing student fee (1 credit) will be assessed for the subsequent semesters in which the work is still in progress.

USE OF DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE CREDENTIAL

Doctor of Nursing Practice students who successfully defend their proposal are then allowed to use the DNP credential with a (c) after the credential to indicate they are in candidacy for the degree. The DNP credential can only be used after the student has successfully defended the completed doctoral project and all other DNP program requirements are met.

Appendix B

Scholarly Practice Project Proposal Defense Evaluation

Student Name: _____   Date: _____

Proposal Title: _____

IRB Approval
     Regis College IRB
     External Agency/Agencies
     Name of Institution/s: _____

Decisions/Recommendations:

    ☐ Accepted with revisions (pending review of written proposal
    ☐ Not accepted

Comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

Regis College Team Signatures (these will be completed electronically)

Chair: _____Date:_____

Team Member: _____Date:_____

Team Member: _____Date:_____

Mentor/Team Member: _____Date:_____

Scholarly Practice Project Final Defense

Student: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

_____

Decisions/Recommendations:

use boxes like above form Accepted with revisions

_____ Not accepted

Comments/Revisions:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Regis College Team Signatures (these will be completed electronically)

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Team Member: _____ Date: _____

Team Member: _____ Date: _____

Mentor/Team Member: _____Date:_____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

SPP Guidelines rev June 2020

Reviewing Faculty overall comments may be entered here: