Pursue advanced practice or nursing science with a doctoral degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Nursing
Diversity and inclusivity are infused into our curricula, resources, services, and events for students, faculty, and staff. We are committed to promoting dialogue and learning around diversity, fostering an inclusive climate, and supporting students from underrepresented groups. Members of our community come from diverse and rich backgrounds in terms of race/ethnicity, sexuality, socioeconomic status, religion, nationality, and many other factors.

We believe that understanding diversity is also necessary to improve health, ensure equity, and eliminate the health disparities that exist across many populations. Our tradition of integrated research and practice focuses on the needs of those whose health status or social condition leaves them vulnerable or places them at risk. Our collaborative innovations increase the diversity of participation in healthcare research, promote sharing of diverse interprofessional perspectives, provide tools to support those working with vulnerable populations, and enhance community engagement.
The University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Nursing, established in 1924, develops leaders for the nursing profession and society. We make discoveries, enhance systems, and improve health through research, education, and practice.

The school is the preeminent nursing research institution in Wisconsin and a fundamental part of the state’s healthcare system. Located near the School of Medicine and Public Health, School of Pharmacy, and UW Hospitals and Clinics, the School of Nursing is well positioned for collaboration across professions.

Our faculty and staff members team with scientists and renowned scholars across the UW–Madison campus, the nation, and the world. We work both independently and in partnership to generate discoveries that are innovative, translational in nature, and grounded in practical application.

We are committed to the academic preparation of nurses at all levels of practice and scholarship. The school offers the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD) degrees, as well as continuing education and certificate programs.

Our impact is immediate and our influence profound, as we endeavor to better lives throughout Wisconsin’s communities, hospitals, clinics, schools, and homes.
At UW–Madison, we strive to improve nursing practices, patient health, and healthcare system operations by advancing the full spectrum of nursing science from inquiry and discovery through translation and, ultimately, implementation and assessment.

Our faculty members work closely with students in our two doctoral degree programs to craft personalized educational experiences that emphasize leadership development and position graduates for continuous advancement along individualized career trajectories in both academia and clinical practice.
Leaders in Practice (DNP)

We offer a doctoral-level advanced practice degree to prepare our students to employ critical thinking and evidence-based practice in their work and to position them as leaders capable of facilitating organizational change that leads to better patient care, improved operations, and greater nursing workforce satisfaction and efficacy.

With five separate program tracks, students can prepare for careers as clinical nurse specialists for adult or gerontological populations or as nurse practitioners in adult or gerontological acute care, adult or gerontological primary care, pediatric primary care, or psychiatric mental health. We also offer a nurse educator certificate program.

Leaders in Research (PhD)

As a top-tier research institution, we are committed to advancing nursing science. Our researchers use both qualitative and quantitative methods in their efforts to broaden and deepen nursing knowledge across the lifespan of care—from pediatrics through family care to aging populations and end-of-life—with special attention to practice improvement, symptom science, palliative care, and mental health.

Deeply committed to student success, our faculty embraces a student development philosophy that emphasizes collaboration and mentorship. We mirror the interprofessional nature of modern healthcare with our interdisciplinary faculty. Our students work directly with nursing, psychology, and engineering scholars all housed in the School of Nursing. Our PhD students also receive individualized guidance and career development from nationally renowned researchers with demonstrated success in securing grant funding, working with large and complex datasets, developing programs of research, publishing and presenting findings, preparing for tenure processes, and more.

The UW–Madison School of Nursing provided me the experience to conduct interdisciplinary research with scholars from different areas that could build from nursing research questions. This allowed me to conduct a dissertation study that involves nursing, neuroscience, and sleep medicine.

—Chooza Moon PhD ’16
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepares nursing scholars who will translate nursing knowledge and evidence into practice; terminal degree in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate nursing scientific findings and apply them to nursing healthcare problems and clinical settings for improved health outcomes; graduates are positioned to translate evidence into practice with diverse populations, inform healthcare policy, and implement and evaluate clinical programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Expanding practice to highest level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Theory related to practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Apply translational science methods to practice-focused scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Health system and policy transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty-supervised practicum hours in clinical practice and leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge translation and implementation science. Students complete an evidence-based scholarly project at the end of the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Advanced practice nursing positions (e.g., Nurse Practitioner) in a variety of health settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Leadership positions in a variety of organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Clinical nursing faculty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Philosophy of Science (PhD)

**Program Objective**

Prepares nurse scientists for research and academic careers in public or private sectors of healthcare; terminal degree in research.

**Career Focus**

Conduct and disseminate independent research and participate as interdisciplinary researchers to respond to regional, national, and international priorities; graduates advance the nursing discipline and practice through research, education, and health policy.

**Curriculum Focus**

- Knowledge generation
- Theory construction and analytics
- Scientific quantitative and qualitative research methodologies
- Health policy development and advocacy
- Minor in related areas of interest to guide research program development

**Practicum Requirements**

Practicum research experiences and mentored research opportunities with faculty compose integral components of the PhD curriculum.

**Research Requirements**

Knowledge generation and nurse scientist skill development. Students complete a research dissertation at the end of the program.

**Employment Opportunities**

- Nursing faculty and other academic roles including research, education, and service roles
- Nurse scientist for healthcare organizations, industry, policy, etc.
- Leadership positions in a variety of organizations
The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) prepares experts in specialized nursing practice. Students are able to focus on one of the following areas while developing the clinical expertise and leadership skills to expand their job prospects:

- Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
- Adult/Gerontology Primary Care Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Adult/Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
- Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Through a combination of coursework, a scholarly project, and supervised clinical hours, students become more than expert clinicians. They also gain advanced knowledge and skills in systems, leadership, program evaluation, informatics, and policy. Our graduates evaluate, influence, and lead practice.

**Coursework**

There are two tracks within the DNP program: one for post-BS students and one for post-MS students. Most of the students in our program are post-BS students.

The post-BS option requires a minimum of 71 credits (68 in program plan plus 3-credit graduate statistics requirement). Nurses who have a non-APN master’s degree in nursing are considered post-BS students. They are able to waive up to 18 credits based on previous graduate coursework. Part-time and full-time program options are available. Part-time students complete the program in five years. Full-time students complete the program in three years.

The program of study for post-MS students who have a master’s degree in a specialty track and are certified (or eligible for certification) as advanced practice nurses requires a minimum of 51 credits: 32 credits completed as part of the DNP program with up to 19 credits recognized from the MS degree.
A Blend of Online and Classroom Learning

Our hybrid classes offer the best of both worlds: the convenience of online classes combined with the benefits of classroom learning. It’s a format proven to be effective in keeping students engaged and improving learning outcomes.

On-campus meetings are required for all courses—their frequency varies based on the course. These in-person class meetings offer dynamic discussions and case studies, as well as the opportunity to get to know peers and professors.

Clinical and Leadership Practicum Experiences

As part of the DNP program, post-BS students complete a minimum of 1,000 practicum hours: 500 hours in clinical practice and 500 hours in clinical leadership. Post-MS students complete a minimum of 500 hours in clinical leadership. All clinical placements are arranged by the School of Nursing, taking advantage of established academic partnerships with major healthcare systems across Wisconsin. We attempt to honor student requests to complete clinicals near their home community or another site of interest, provided the site meets the requirements for the course and a qualified preceptor is available.

Scholarly Project

In the final year of the program each student completes a scholarly project, which represents the culmination of a student’s doctoral education. The project uses evidence to improve either practice or patient outcomes and may take the form of a program evaluation, program development proposal, or quality improvement project. Students develop their scholarly project over three semesters to produce a paper of publishable quality and deliver an oral presentation to faculty, students, and the community. The scholarly project challenges our students to tackle complex problems using systems-level thinking and analysis, and it prepares them for visionary leadership in their careers. It is a key element of the DNP curriculum that sets both our program and our graduates apart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Areas of Study</th>
<th>Post-BS Option Minimum Credits</th>
<th>Post-MS Option Minimum Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systematic Evaluation of Practice</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership &amp; Policy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Minimum Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>68</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The purpose of our PhD program is to prepare researchers to develop, evaluate, and disseminate new knowledge in nursing and health science. Our program provides nurses with the foundation to become leaders in research that advances the scientific basis of nursing and contributes to public health. We offer three options for entry into the PhD program: post-BS, post-MS, and an early entry option for students enrolled in our BSN program. The School of Nursing is committed to growing and supporting our faculty, with members ranging from talented and enthusiastic young investigators to award-winning senior nurse scientists. Our faculty members have a wide variety of research interests and expertise to support PhD students in all three entry options. Areas of particular strength and depth include the following:

- Aging
- Chronic illness and symptom management
- Care of children and families
- Health systems and care delivery
- Psychiatric mental health

Our comprehensive program prepares students for roles as scientists, academic faculty members, health policy leaders, and principal investigators or collaborators on interdisciplinary science teams. To this end, we supplement core areas of coursework with intentional and collaborative guided research experiences and coursework outside the nursing discipline. We augment this combination of research and coursework with practica and close mentoring as we prepare PhD students to be stewards of the discipline of nursing. As a result, our graduates possess expertise in not only the theory and practice of nursing, but also health policy and leadership.

Coursework

Our program requires a minimum of 52 credits and can be completed in as few as three years. Students complete core courses in the areas of scholarly inquiry, theory and practice of nursing, policy and leadership, and nursing education. Our program is delivered in a face-to-face format to actively and personally engage students in the practice of scholarly inquiry and to allow students to take advantage of the expertise on the university campus.

Students are able to choose from two tracks in the PhD program: theory and practice and policy and leadership. Theory and practice focuses on a clinical problem for which nurse scientists can influence nursing practice and healthcare (e.g., physical inactivity in hospitalized older adults; non-pharmacological pain management and symptom distress interventions for patients being treated for cancer) or a health phenomenon of concern to nursing (e.g., trauma healing in community-dwelling adult survivors of child abuse) typically addressing health issues of individuals and families.

Policy and leadership focuses on research addressing public health, economic, social, ethical, political factors, healthcare disparities, and workforce issues associated with nursing and health policy, systems, and practices aimed at improving the health of communities and populations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Areas of Study</th>
<th>Minimum Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly Inquiry</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy &amp; Leadership</td>
<td>3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory &amp; Practice of Nursing</td>
<td>3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research/Dissertation Group Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Minor</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Minimum Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early Immersion Research & Mentoring

Students are carefully matched with faculty mentors based on common interests and/or methodologies. Students are immediately immersed in research from their first semester, allowing them to gain hands-on experience and formulate ideas for their own dissertation research and pilot studies. Participation in research groups also provide students with the opportunity to discuss and present their research ideas to faculty and peers. Students are encouraged to present early findings at poster fairs and conferences, and many PhD students have successfully sought grant funding that supports their research and funds all or part of their travel to conferences and seminars.

Collaboration Within the School, Across Campus, Into the Community

While we are committed to fully supporting our graduate students within the School of Nursing, we also embrace opportunities outside the school that allow us to partner, share information and best practices, and connect research with nursing practice.

We are fortunate to be a part of a thriving, world-class research university that offers vast resources beyond our walls and brings diverse perspectives and insights to our work. We encourage and foster cross-campus collaboration with other schools and colleges, such as medicine, public health, psychology, engineering, business, and education. PhD students also can access campus-based research support services (including data management tools), consulting, mentorship, and more through organizations including the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR). Additionally, there are campus funding opportunities specifically for health sciences researchers.

For more information, visit: https://nursing.wisc.edu/graduate-programs/phd

GRADUATE PROFILE

Maichou Lor, PhD ’17
Postdoctoral Fellow, Columbia University, New York City

Research Areas: health disparities, disease prevention, health literacy, communication, data visualization, recruitment methodologies for vulnerable populations, measurement issues

“The interdisciplinary work at the UW–Madison School of Nursing has allowed me to be involved in a range of research projects and learn a range of methodologies. This network has provided me with continual research and collaborative opportunities throughout my education.”
## HOW TO APPLY

### Application Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>DNP (Post-BS)</th>
<th>DNP (Post-MS)</th>
<th>PhD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Science in Nursing</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Nursing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s degree in a specialty track from an accredited nursing program</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>GPA of 3.0 on the last 60 credits for the baccalaureate degree</td>
<td>GPA of 3.5 for the master’s degree</td>
<td>Undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) on the last 60 credits of the most recent baccalaureate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>Grade of B or better in a graduate-level statistics course within the last 5 years*</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensure</td>
<td>RN required</td>
<td>RN required</td>
<td>RN strongly preferred</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing Experience</td>
<td>Required; minimum 1 year</td>
<td>Required; minimum 1 year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Form</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
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<td>Transcripts</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
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<td>Personal Statements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scholarly Writing Samples</td>
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<td>Required</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRE Scores</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Required</td>
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</table>

*Note: The course does not need to be taken before applying, but must be successfully completed prior to the start of the fall term.

### Application Timeline

- **SEPTEMBER**: Application Opens
- **DECEMBER**: Priority Deadline
- **MARCH / APRIL**: Decision Notification
- **MAY**: Decision Deadline
- **SEPTEMBER**: Program Begins
Scholarships & Funding Opportunities

The School of Nursing is committed to funding DNP and PhD students. Several forms of financial aid are available. These include assistantships (project, research, and teaching), fellowships, traineeships, and other sources. Graduate students who have a qualifying assistantship or fellowship are eligible to receive tuition remission or deferral. Financial aid is renewable, but dependent on the availability of funds and satisfactory academic progress of students.

Assistantships administered by the School of Nursing are funded by faculty research grants and by School of Nursing gifts. Several fellowships are available to students who are from underrepresented and/or economically disadvantaged backgrounds and show excellence in their research areas.

Students in the PhD program are also strongly encouraged to apply for and have been successful in obtaining federal National Research Service Awards (NRSA) individual pre-doctoral fellowships.

Contact the School of Nursing Admissions Office at admissions@nursing.wisc.edu

“\nThe UW–Madison School of Nursing is very dedicated to its students’ success. They provide a range of opportunities for students to grow academically and professionally. The researchers at the School of Nursing are incredible mentors. My experience at the School of Nursing is indescribable."

—Maichou Lor, PhD ’17
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Founded in 1848, the University of Wisconsin–Madison is a public land-grant university and comprehensive research institution where students and faculty members contribute to world-class education and solve real-world problems. Students have opportunities that range from conducting research to participating in interprofessional education to developing cultural competency. Learning in and out of the classroom creates a complete student experience.

The Wisconsin Idea

UW–Madison’s research mission stems from the Wisconsin Idea. The Wisconsin Idea is a longstanding, deeply held university belief that education should influence lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Synonymous with Wisconsin for more than a century, this idea has become the guiding philosophy driving university outreach efforts throughout Wisconsin and around the world.

Life in Madison

Madison is a vibrant community that blends the art and culture of city living with a Midwestern friendliness and accessibility. Funky neighborhoods offer festivals, galleries, and shopping, while an urbane downtown brims with farm-to-table restaurants, music venues, and theater. Sports fans cheer on the Badger teams across campus throughout the year, and recreational athletes take to the bike trails and roadways for exercise and amateur competition. With miles of shoreline along several lakes, rolling hills to the west, and native prairies and bucolic country sides all just a few minutes from the outskirts of town, Madison and Dane County are also a nature-lover’s dream no matter the season. With Milwaukee just over an hour to the east and Chicago less than three hours south, the amenities of larger metropolitan areas are also close at hand.
The most valuable parts of my experience at UW–Madison have been the incredible mentoring and opportunities. I have been able to travel and present at national and international conferences, have received funding for a pilot study, and have been able to attend many professional development events.

—Jessica Rainbow, current PhD student