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COLLEGE OF NURSING

Doctor of Nursing Practice Scholarly Project Handbook

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Overview of Scholarly Project.....	3
DNP Residency (Practicum)	3
Scholarly Project Committee.....	6
Scholarly Proposal Defense.....	6
DNP Scholarly Proposal Outline.....	7
IRB Committee Approval.....	8
Scholarly Project Final Report.....	8
Scholarly Defense	9
Guidelines for Internal Review of Scholarly Work.....	10
Guidelines for authorship	10
Guidelines for acknowledgement	11
Professional Portfolio (e-portfolio).....	11
Graduation Preparation.....	12
Appendix A	13
Appendix B	14
Appendix C	15
Appendix D	16
Appendix E	17
Appendix F.....	19

Introduction

This handbook has been developed to serve as a roadmap to the processes, procedures and requirements of the DNP scholarly project and residency. The DNP scholarly project is developed, implemented and disseminated over a one-year residency (NUR 773, 775, 777) supported by content delivered across three didactic courses (NUR 772, 774, 776).

Overview of Scholarly Project

The DNP program culminates in the successful completion of the scholarly project that is completed over three semesters. This project is a comprehensive, integrative practice experience that reflects synthesis of program course work and mastery of expert practice knowledge in the translation of current research to improve nursing practice or healthcare outcomes for patients, families, populations or systems. Each student collaborates with an agency to address a real-world clinical problem or health issue. The scholarly project allows the student to demonstrate clinical expertise and competencies in organizational leadership, system analysis, program assessment and evaluation and practice change. The student must successfully defend the scholarly project in order to complete the requirements for the course and the DNP degree. The final products of the project are a scholarly paper, professional poster, and presentation.

Scholarly projects can take the form of a/an:

- Evidence-based intervention or change initiative
- Program development and/or evaluation
- Quality improvement initiatives
- Implementation and evaluation of evidence-based practice guidelines
- Design and evaluation of new models of care
- Policy implementation, analysis, revision

A shared feature of these examples is the use of research evidence and systems leadership to improve healthcare outcomes, whether at the practice, patient, or health system level.

Specific examples of completed scholarly projects may be viewed in the College of Nursing Graduate Office.

DNP Residency (Practicum)

The DNP Residency combines a clinical immersion experience with scholarly activities to provide in-depth learning for students. The residency is designed to provide the DNP student with a comprehensive clinical experience individually designed to meet the professional and clinical goals of each DNP student. The scholarly project advisor will establish practice partnerships for residency placement. The residency site may be a hospital, healthcare system, public health agency, primary care practice or other appropriate organization. The essential components of

residency are scholarly activities related to the identification, development, implementation and evaluation of a scholarly project; synthesis of the AANC *DNP Essentials* (AACN, 2006) (Appendix A) and the NONPF *Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies* (NONPF, 2017) (Appendix B); and dissemination of knowledge related to the scholarly project. Residency activities may be disqualified if not substantively related to the scholarly project, at an appropriate level for doctoral work, or consistent with the DNP Essentials.

Five hundred clinical scholarly hours, divided proportionately across three semesters, will complement the 500 pre-DNP clinical hours to meet the DNP competencies.

Residency hours must be documented and submitted. A record of the residency hours is to be maintained by the student in the designated electronic database (Typhon).

All students are required to demonstrate accomplishment of the DNP Essentials throughout their coursework and residency experiences. Attainment of the eight DNP Essentials will be documented by the student upon completion of the final semester.

The following activities are *some* examples of time that can be applied toward residency hours:

- Observational, meeting time with identified experts
- Organizational planning meetings to determine goals/approached for project
- Attending seminars, meeting with consultants related to project problem
- Learning new leadership and advanced practice skills appropriate to the scholarly project topic
- Evaluating and rating evidence for scholarly project
- Producing educational materials related to the scholarly project topic
- Developing tools for assessment and evaluation related to the scholarly project topic
- Engaging in organizational work related to the scholarly project
- Engaging in policy development related to scholarly project
- Poster, paper presentations of findings in agency or at conference
- Staff in-services related to project implementation
- Manuscript preparation

The following is required in each semester of residency:

- Develop residency goals related to the DNP Essentials
- Maintain a log of clinical practicum hours and activities
- Maintain a reflective journal related to development and implementation of the Scholarly Project and attainment of the DNP Essentials

On-going self-evaluation relative to accomplishing the DNP Essentials

Development and Progression of the Scholarly Project (residency)

	Pre-773	NUR 773	NUR 775	NUR 777
Identify broad interest area	X			
Agency placement	X			
<u>Scholarly project committee formation</u> Scholarly project committee chairperson Faculty committee member Residency site mentor		X		
<u>Needs assessment</u> for identification of the challenges/problems leading to the proposed project.		X		
<u>Identify Scholarly project</u> : describe the project and how the project intervention addresses at least one challenge/problem that influences healthcare for a significant number of persons.		X		
Review of the literature Rating		X	X	
Proposal development		X		
CITI Training (copy of successful completion record posted to e-portfolio)	X			
IRB Preparation		X		
Proposal defense		X		
IRB submission		X		
Scholarly project implementation			X	
Data/outcome analysis			X	
Project evaluation (facilitators and barriers)				X
Dissemination of findings: Paper presentation Poster presentation In-services				X
Report development				X
Manuscript development				X
Scholarly project defense				X

Scholarly Project Committee

The student is required to submit a scholarly project proposal during NUR 774. The proposal is written under the direction of the DNP scholarly project advisor and approved by the DNP Scholarly Project Committee. The DNP Project Committee will be composed of three members including the DNP scholarly project committee chairperson, a doctorally prepared faculty member and the residency site mentor the committee will be selected once residency placement and mentor have been established.

DNP Scholarly Project Committee Chairperson

The scholarly project committee chairperson provides academic guidance and mentoring to the DNP student regarding the scholarly project. The student should meet regularly with the committee chairperson for assistance with project development, implementation, analysis and dissemination of results. This may occur during residency time. The committee chairperson does not need to be an expert in the student's area of interest.

Faculty Committee Member

The faculty committee member is a member of the faculty who contributes to the development and refinement of the scholarly project, serves as a paper reader and participates in defense processes.

Residency Site Mentor

Residency site mentors are advanced clinical practice or administration professionals who are experts in the students focus area. They facilitate the students meeting of project objectives and collaborate on the committee. They have an ongoing relationship with students throughout the residency, contributing especially to the student's development as a leader in the student's area of practice. Residency site mentors may be selected from among a variety of disciplines, thereby building upon the DNP program objective to enhance the student's interdisciplinary experience.

Scholarly Project Proposal Defense

The scholarly project proposal should be submitted to the committee two weeks prior to the defense meeting. The student and all committee members must attend the proposal defense. The student will provide a 30-minute overview of the proposal. The proposal may be accepted in full, accepted with major or minor revisions, or rejected. In the case of major revisions or rejection, the students may have one opportunity to revise their proposal and re-define at a time determined by the committee chairperson.

Once approved, the Scholarly Project Approval Form (Appendix C) must be signed by all committee members and placed in the official academic folder. Application for IRB approval

should be submitted to the Office of Institutional Compliance. Implementation of the scholarly project may begin once IRB approval has been received.

DNP Scholarly Proposal Outline

(See rubric - Appendix D)

The scholarly project proposal should demonstrate evidence of review and critique of the literature and a detailed and well thought out project plan.

1. Title Page and Table of Contents
2. Section 1 – Background and Significance (needs assessment, problem statement)
 - a. Identify specific problem in targeted clinical situation/population
 - b. Background and significance of problem (define magnitude of problem in measurable terms, characterize impact of problem on population and/or organization. Consider bio-psycho-social-cultural-spiritual dimensions.
 - c. Congruence of needs and organizational strategic plan with project (market analysis, strategic analysis, readiness for change)
 - d. Concise problem and purpose statement
 - e. Project objectives
3. Section 2- Framework
 - a. Identify and discuss EBP framework for project
 - b. Identify and discuss organizational theory for project
 - c. Identify and discuss practice theory for project (if applicable)
4. Section 3- Literature Review
 - a. Evidence-based literature search and critical appraisal of evidence (leveling and grading) to support project and interventions
 - b. (evidence rating may occur at multiple time points in the project)
5. Section 4- Project Design (Evidence Based Project/Intervention Plan)
 - a. Project Intervention Plan (Procedures)
 - b. Participants/population
 - c. Recruitment
 - d. Data collection instruments
 - e. Procedures for project implementation
 - f. Key personnel
 - g. Stakeholders
 - h. Potential barriers to implementation and sustainability
 - i. Ethical considerations
 - j. Risk-benefits
 - k. Proposed timeline
 - l. Anticipated resources and Budget

6. Section 5- Evaluation Plan
 - a. Specific plan for evaluation of each objective
 - b. Evidence-based measures to be applied to evaluation plan
 - c. Analysis method for each objective
7. References
8. Appendices

IRB Committee Approval

All projects require approval by the Institutional Review Board through the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth IRB Committee

<https://www.umassd.edu/research/institutional-compliance/institutional-review-board/>

Even if human subjects are not involved (ex. data mining, etc), IRB approval is necessary since the student is expected to publish and present findings. The student is responsible for securing IRB approval. *The scholarly project committee chairperson is required to serve as the Principal Investigator on all student IRB applications. Students will serve as co-investigator.*

Students are required to successfully pass the CITI certification exam in order to submit a proposal to the IRB. (<https://www.citiprogram.org/Default.asp?>)

Scholarly Project Final Report

(See rubric – Appendix E)

The final report of the DNP scholarly project is a scholarly paper.

The specific format of the paper will be negotiated between the scholarly project advisor, committee members and the student. The final report is to be submitted in electronic and hardcopy format once recommended revisions are completed. The following is the recommended order/format of the report:

1. Title page: Project title, student name and credentials, institution and “in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree” statement (i)
2. Signature page (ii)
3. Dedication and Acknowledgment pages (iii and iv)
4. Abstract (v)
5. Table of contents (vi)
6. List of Figures (vii)
7. List of Tables (viii)

8. Background and significance (1)
9. Purpose Statement –PICO Question
10. Evidence based process model and theoretical framework
11. Literature Review
12. Project Methods (instruments in Appendix)

13. Project Implementation
14. Results (specific details of how project was evaluated, method of analysis for each objective) Objective presentation of findings
15. Discussion – analysis of findings, support with literature, (discussion of facilitators and barriers, unintended consequences (positive/negative)
16. Recommendations and limitations (within framework of strategic plan).
Recommendation for sustaining intervention (or not?). Application in other settings/populations. Limitations of project findings
17. Implications for Practice and Career Development
Contribution of project in achieving DNP Essentials, personal goals
18. References
19. Appendices

Scholarly Project Final Defense

The scholarly project oral defense hearing will be scheduled by the scholarly project committee chairperson after all requirements for the DNP have been met and committee members agree that the scholarly project is complete and ready to undergo defense. The final draft of the paper is delivered to all committee members at an agreed upon date prior to the scheduled defense. All members of the committee are expected to read the scholarly paper and forward any clarification questions to the student and committee at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled defense. Students must send final revisions and defense presentation slides to committee chairperson 48 hours prior to defense. All members are required to attend the defense hearing.

Students are expected to develop a 30-minute presentation of the project. After the presentation, committee members will ask questions for up to 30 minutes. Following the defense, the committee meets and makes one of two determinations: 1) approve; or 2) approve subject to minor changes. In the case of approval with minor revisions, the student need only submit the revised scholarly report to the chair and any other specified committee members.

Copies of the scholarly report, with signed defense form (Appendix F) and an electronic copy of the professional portfolio are submitted to the DNP scholarly project advisor prior to graduation. Print Scholarly Paper on 32#, 25% cotton professional paper. Have it wire bound (Staples/Office Max) with blue or black vinyl/heavy paper front and back.

Guidelines for Internal Review of Scholarly Work

Students seeking to submit their work for any type of external review must seek an internal review from his/her Scholarly Project Committee Chairperson.

The purpose of this review process is to strengthen the quality of the work and assist the student's scholarly development. Work that should be reviewed includes abstracts for conferences, oral or poster presentations, manuscripts for submission and grant proposals.

Guidelines for authorship

Students should refer to International Committee of Medical Journal Editor (ICMJE) criteria for authorship

<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>

As a matter of professional integrity, scholars list each major contributor to a work as a coauthor. Contributions by authors may include conception of the work, writing, data analysis and revision of the work. Students who are developing a paper or other work for external review should confer with their scholarly project advisor before the work begins. Student groups working on a paper or other project for external review should confer with each other about authorship prior to beginning the work. These guidelines apply for ideas and papers submitted as part of course work and considered potentially publishable.

- Authorship may be a complex issue depending on whether the work was the idea of one person or multiple people and the type of contributions of each person.
- For student work developed with the support of a faculty member, the student will be first author and the faculty will be listed as second author.
- The order of coauthor's names is important and varies depending on the journal and field of study. In nursing, the order of author typically signifies the contributions of each author. The order of authors should be agreed upon before the publication is developed.
- Some journals require authors to formally list the role of each author in the publication and provide guidelines about who should be included as an author based on their role in the publication.
- Most publications require authors to sign certain assurances about the originality and contributions of authors to the work presented, and certain laws protecting intellectual property apply.

Guidelines for acknowledgement

Authors publicly thank those people and organizations that supported the work submitted for public presentation.

- Prior to acknowledging an organization or person, confer in advance with the person or organization whose name you intend to publicly recognize.
- Some organizations that provide grant funding will require acknowledgement and may have a preferred statement about how they wish to be acknowledged.
- Students publishing or presenting their scholarly work as sole authors typically acknowledge the scholarly project committee and any funding sources.

Professional Portfolio (e-portfolio)

The purpose of the Clinical Scholarship Portfolio is to demonstrate achievement of Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program outcomes. Residency experiences will culminate with portfolio development as a component of the scholarly evaluation. Submission of an acceptable portfolio is a requirement for completion of the DNP program.

Students are responsible for maintaining a log of clinical practicum/residency hours, activities, and accomplishment of the DNP Essentials. Clinical hours, description of residency/immersion activity, and reflection on accomplishment of the DNP Essentials are to be maintained in the student's e-portfolio throughout the one-year residency. Demonstration of satisfactory progress on the DNP Essentials is required for progression through the three semesters of residency. In the final semester of residency, the student completes an in- depth synthesis evaluation of their progress and performance on the DNP Essentials, demonstrating full and meaningful completion of the Essentials. The academic professional portfolio will also include:

- Current CV
- Scholarly project related documents (IRB etc)
- Competency assessment
- Reflective journal entries
- Final paper, presentation slides and poster templates

Graduation Preparation

At the beginning of the last semester, students should complete the application for diploma (available at registrar site). Students should order CON doctoral regalia (gown, hood and cap) from the UMass Dartmouth bookstore. Custom doctoral gowns may also be purchased through the UMass Dartmouth bookstore. Doctoral hooding takes place at the commencement ceremony.

Appendix A

The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice

The DNP Essentials (AACN, 2006), outlines eight foundational Essentials. The specialization content is defined by the appropriate specialty organization. Faculty will work with students individually to ensure the specialized content complements the areas of core content.

- I. Scientific Underpinnings for Practice
- II. Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking
- III. Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice
- IV. Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care
- V. Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care
- VI. Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
- VII. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health
- VIII. Advanced Nursing Practice

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2006). *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice*. Washington, DC: Author

Appendix B

NONPF & National Panel for NP Practice Doctorate Competencies. (2017). *Nurse Practitioner Core Competences*.

<https://www.nonpf.org/page/14#>

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Competencies

<https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nonpf.org/resource/resmgr/imported/PMHNPcomps03.pdf>

Adult-Gerontological Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Competencies

<https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nonpf.org/resource/resmgr/competencies/adult-geropccomps2010.pdf>

Appendix C

Scholarly Project Proposal Defense Form

This is to certify that _____, a
DNP student in the College of Nursing, has successfully defended his/her scholarly project
proposal entitled _____ and it
has been approved for implementation pending IRB approval.

Scholarly Project Committee Chairperson Date

Faculty Committee Member Date

Residency Site Mentor Date

DNP Graduate Program Director Date

Appendix D

Doctor of Nursing Practice Scholarly Project Proposal Rubric

Criteria		
Background & Significance	Describes the phenomena, its importance to healthcare and affected stakeholders.	
Purpose Statement	Clearly and concisely states the goal of the project.	
Review of the Literature	Provides an organized, integrated summary of the state of the science (with level of evidence provided).	
Theoretical Framework	Provides appropriate theoretical framework to guide project.	
Methods and Procedures	Clearly and concisely summarizes (where applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based Practice model or Research design • Participants/population • Sample/setting • Recruitment • Instruments • Procedures • Key personnel • Stakeholders • Barriers to implementation and sustainability • Data collection plan • Data analysis plan • Ethical considerations 	
Timeline	Provides realistic timeline for project implementation.	
Resources	Identifies all anticipated resources and potential costs.	
Approvals for Implementation	Identifies required approvals needed for implementation (cooperating agencies, IRB, etc)	
Evaluation Plan	Clearly and concisely summarizes evaluation plan (where applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives or research questions. • Plan for monitoring objective accomplishment. • Plan if problems encountered during implementation. 	
References	Current references	
Clarity of Writing and Writing Technique	Writing is crisp, clear, and succinct. The writer incorporates the active voice when appropriate. Appropriate grammar.	
APA	Follows current APA format guidelines	

Appendix E

Doctor of Nursing Practice Final Scholarly Report Rubric

	Prefaces	APA format – Dedication/Acknowledgements/Abstract/List of Figures / List of Tables
Section I	Background & Significance	Describes the phenomena, its importance to healthcare and affected stakeholders.
	Purpose Statement	Clearly and concisely states the goal of the project. PICO Question
Section II	Theoretical Framework	Provides appropriate evidence-based process model and theoretical framework to guide project.
	Review of Literature	Provides an organized, integrated summary of the state of the science (with level of evidence provided).
Section III	Project Design and Implementation	Clearly and concisely summarizes (where applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based Practice model or Research design • Participants/population • Sample/setting • Recruitment • Instruments • Timetable • Key personnel • Stakeholders • Ethical considerations • Risks and Benefits • Project Implementation
	Resources/Budget	Identifies all required resources and costs
	Approvals for Implementation	Provides all required letters of support from cooperating agencies (as appendices).
Section IV	Results	Clearly and concisely summarizes (if appropriate): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How each goal/research question was objectively evaluated. • Statistical analyses for each goal/question.
Section V	Discussion	Thorough analysis of findings with comparison to Literature. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides facilitators and barriers encountered. • Barriers to implementation and sustainability

	Recommendations and Limitations	Provides future recommendations for this project/research project and possible application of this project in other settings. Identifies all limitations of project
	Implications for practice and career development	Discusses impact of project and residency on personal growth and development.
	References	Current state of the science references (with matrix).
	Clarity of Writing and Writing Technique	Writing is crisp, clear, and succinct. The writer incorporates the active voice when appropriate. Grammar appropriate
	APA	Follows APA.

Appendix F

Scholarly Project Defense Form

This is to certify that _____, a
DNP student in the College of Nursing, has successfully defended his/her scholarly project
proposal entitled _____ and it
has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice.

Oral defense approved Date: _____

Manuscript approved Date: _____

Scholarly Project Committee Chairperson Date

Faculty Committee Member Date

Residency Site Mentor Date

DNP Graduate Program Director Date