



School of Nursing

**DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP) PROJECT  
REQUIREMENTS**

Requirements for Development, Implementation,  
Evaluation and Dissemination of DNP Projects

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## Overview

School of Nursing (SON) faculty familiar with the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) project requirements are involved in the development of this document and provide feedback annually regarding updates and changes. DNP students are required to read through this document following acceptance to the DNP program and are expected to use it as a reference throughout the program.

## Clarification of DNP versus PhD Scholarship

There are two options for a terminal degree in nursing: the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or the DNP. PhD programs focus on generation of new knowledge, test hypothesis or theoretical models, or generate information that is considered generalizable. DNP programs, on the other hand, focus on translation of new science and its application and evaluation (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2015). The scholarship distinction is understood as ‘research-focused’ versus ‘practice-focused’. The AACN (2015) states:

Research-focused graduates are prepared to generate knowledge through rigorous research and statistical methodologies that may be broadly applicable or generalizable. Practice-focused graduates are prepared to demonstrate innovation of practice change, translation of evidence, and the implementation of quality improvement processes in specific practice settings, systems, or with specific populations to improve health or health outcomes (p. 2).

## AACN Guidelines for the DNP Project

The following AACN documents provide the basis for the DNP project requirements:

- The Essentials of Doctoral Education for advanced Nursing Practice (2006).
- The Doctor of Nursing Practice: Current Issues and Clarifying Recommendations (2015).
- Defining Scholarship for Academic Nursing Position Statement (2018).

## Handbook Development Resources

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (n.d.). *AHRQ: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*. <https://www.ahrq.gov/>
- Brown, R.E. (2018). *VCU health nursing inquiry process diagram (Version 2)*. Virginia Commonwealth University. [https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1056&context=libraries\\_pubs](https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1056&context=libraries_pubs)
- Dearholt, S. L. & Dang, D. (2018). *Johns Hopkins nursing evidence-based practice: Model and guidelines* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Sigma Theta Tau International.
- Melnyk, B. M. & Fineout-Overholt, E. (2019). *Evidence-based practice in nursing and healthcare* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Wolters Kluwer.
- Moran, K., Burson, R., & Conrad, D. (2020). *The doctor of nursing practice project: A framework for success* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Jones & Bartlett.
- Zaccagnini, M. E. & White, K. W. (2017). *The doctor of nursing practice essentials: A new model for advanced practice nursing* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Jones & Bartlett.
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (2019). Quality improvement tools and resources (2019). <https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/index.html>

## Getting Started: Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Project

NAU students enrolled in the DNP program will complete a DNP project as a requirement for graduation. The purpose of this document is to describe the project requirements and provide resources to guide students through the process of development, implementation, evaluation and dissemination. The project is developed in phases, and the curriculum is designed to facilitate progression from Phase 1 through Phase 4. *Students are required to adhere to their curriculum plan and are not permitted to take courses listed in Phases 1 through 4 out of sequence or without meeting pre or co-requisites as described in course catalog and course syllabi.*

Project Progression		
<b>Phase 1</b>	NUR 677	Phenomenon of Interest; Finding Relevant Evidence
<b>Phase 2</b>	NUR 712	Project Planning and Development
<b>Phase 3</b>	NUR 704	Project Implementation and Evaluation
<b>Phase 4</b>	NUR 706	Project Dissemination

### Scope of DNP Project

The DNP project provides an opportunity for students to integrate new skills into practice and to demonstrate many of the principles of nursing scholarship and the competencies delineated in the DNP Essentials. The integration of these new or refined skills improves outcomes through organizational and systems leadership, quality improvement processes, and the translation of evidence into practice. The project is intended to make an impact, directly or indirectly, on patient and/or healthcare outcomes. DNP students will identify a clinical problem, evaluate the context of the problem, conduct an exhaustive review of literature, and use research evidence to formulate a potential solution or intervention. The intervention is then implemented and evaluated to determine what impact it had on the given clinical problem. The findings are then shared with stakeholders, other scholars, and the public.

### DNP Project Outcomes

1. The proposed change will impact healthcare outcomes through direct or indirect care.
2. The project will have a system (micro-, meso-, or macro-level) or population/aggregate focus.
3. The design of the project will follow sound methodology.
4. The design of the project will be supported by a theoretical framework.
5. Development will include an evaluation of current and emerging financial, political, and organizational issues unique to the project.
6. The project will contain a comprehensive appraisal of current and classical evidence.
7. The project will be implemented in an appropriate arena or area of practice.
8. The project will demonstrate integration of leadership, ethics, systems thinking, and health policy.
9. The project will include an evaluation process that measures outcomes and demonstrates an impact on individuals, patient populations or systems.
10. The project will provide a foundation for future practice scholarship.
11. The project will include a plan for sustainability.
12. The project will be disseminated to appropriate professional and organizational bodies.
13. The project deliverables will demonstrate scholarly writing, presentation, and application of current APA guidelines.

## DNP Essentials

- 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

The DNP Essentials outline the curricular elements and competencies required for schools conferring the DNP degree. The DNP coursework, practicum and project contribute to fulfillment of the [DNP Essentials](#). Students will use practicum hours for activities related to project development and implementation and will map these activities to the DNP Essentials and document them on the practicum documentation log, which will be submitted to the NAU DNP Repository when completed. *Additional information about the DNP Practicum and documentation is located in the DNP Practicum Handbook.*

## Required Textbooks

The following textbooks are required for DNP students and will be used throughout the program. Faculty chairs should also be familiar with the texts and refer to them when working with DNP students. Course faculty may require additional textbooks in specific courses, but the texts listed here will be used for project development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination.

Aderholt, S. & Dang, D. (2018). *Johns Hopkins nursing evidence-based practice model and guidelines* (3rd ed.). Sigma Theta Tau International.

Kim, M., Mallory, C., & Valerio, T. (2022). *Statistics for evidence-based practice in nursing* (3rd ed.). Jones & Bartlett.

Moran, K., Burson, R., & Conrad, D. (2020). *The Doctor of Nursing Practice scholarly project: A framework for success* (3rd ed.). Jones and Bartlett.

Rousch, K. (2019). *A nurse's step-by-step guide to writing a dissertation or scholarly project* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Sigma Theta Tau International.

White, K., Dudley-Brown, S., & Terhaar, M. (2021). *Translation of evidence into nursing and health Care* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Springer Publishing Company.

## Resources for Success

The following links may be helpful as students prepare for course and project work.

[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#)

[American Psychological Association, 7th ed.](#)

[Cline Library Subject \(Nursing\) Librarian](#)

[Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services QI Tools & Resources](#)

[Doctor of Nursing Practice](#)

[Doctor of Nursing Practice AACN White Paper](#)

[Equator Network Health Research Resources](#)

[Grammarly](#)

[Graduate Nursing Library Guide](#)

[Joanna Briggs Institute \(JBI\) Resources](#)

[John's Hopkins Nursing EBP Tool Kit](#)

[Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#)

[Purdue Owl](#)

[Rand Cooperation - Surveys](#)

[Sigma Repository](#)

[Squire Guidelines](#)

[The University Writing Commons](#)

[VCU Libraries Scholars Compass – The Clinical Inquiry Process Diagram](#)

[Writing for Professional Journals \(University of Utah - open course\)](#)

### Checklist for Success

Being successful requires excellent time management and organizational skills. Strategies that facilitate success require knowledge of and access to basic resources. Students should consider the following items as they prepare to engage in doctoral level work.

- Have you prepared yourself and your family for the time commitment needed for success?
- Do you have dedicated workspace?
- Have you scheduled adequate time each day/week for studying, reading, and writing?
- Does your employer support your academic pursuits and provide flexibility in your work schedule?
- Do you have access to a computer that is in good working order with sufficient power, speed, and memory capability?
- Do you have access to a computer that has video and audio capability?
- Do you have access to and a working knowledge of a recent version of MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint?
- Do you have access to consistent reliable internet?
- Do you have access to an external drive or a Cloud account to back up your work?
- Do you have access to Google Docs, Drop Box, ZOOM, and related platforms that facilitate communication and document sharing?
- Are you familiar with the resources available through the NAU Cline Library?
- Have you met with the NAU SON librarian?
- Are you familiar with bibliographic software?
- Have you explored the [NAU writing resources?](#)

### Project Repository

At the beginning of the program students will be automatically enrolled in a non-credit Bb Learn course titled '**DNP Program Repository**' and will have access to the repository throughout the DNP program. It is intended to electronically store critical documents, demonstrate completion of requirements for a DNP degree, and to promote communication between students, project chairs, and DNP coordinator. See [Appendix 1](#) for the DNP repository requirements.

## Phase 1: Core Courses and Phenomenon of Interest

Prior to entry into the DNP program students are asked to identify a topic or area of interest. Although this may change, identifying the area of interest early allows students to begin networking and exploring the community encompassing their area of interest. Strategies for networking include engaging with peers through journal clubs, subscribing to relevant journals, attending conferences, joining a professional organization, and interviewing content experts. Students will also work with the program coordinator to identify a faculty project chair. Faculty chairs help students achieve success by ensuring milestones and program requirements are met, and providing oversight and guidance to ensure the project work reaches the level of rigor expected of a DNP student.

### Core Courses

In Phase 1 students build the foundation for their project work. The core courses provide students with opportunities to build knowledge and examine their topics in different contexts. Students will explore the significance of leadership, organizational systems, and health policy on the design and implementation of their projects.

#### NUR 609: Synthesis of Writing, Research, and Statistical Principles in Healthcare

The purpose of this course is to critically analyze professional literature with a focus on research design, methodology, implementation and statistical analysis. This course will facilitate the development of scholarly writing skills to communicate a critical analysis of the evidence with an application to practice.

#### NUR 700: Introduction to the Doctor of Nursing Practice

The purpose of this course is to build the foundation for subsequent DNP courses, the clinical practicum, and development of the DNP project.

#### NUR 701: Healthcare Policy

The purpose of the course is to examine social, economic and political forces that impact healthcare in the US and developing nations.

#### NUR 705: Healthcare Leadership

The purpose of this course is to develop leadership skills with a particular focus on organizational quality improvement and implementation of organizational change.

#### NUR 714: Health of Vulnerable Populations

In this course students examine and evaluate the sociodemographic patterns, epidemiological evidence, and major policies that affect the health equity of vulnerable populations across the life span.

#### NUR 716: Organizational Systems

The purpose of this course is to provide students with the requisite knowledge of assessing organizational culture.

### Phenomenon of Interest

An important milestone is development of the phenomenon of interest. Students are encouraged to read Chapter 5 in *The Doctor of Nursing Practice Project: A Framework for Success, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.* by Moran et al. (2020). Moran writes “The DNP project phenomenon of interest must center on a topic that is meaningful to the practice doctorate student and is valued by the practice setting” (p. 99). If a student has not decided on a topic of interest, or is unsure, it may be helpful to examine a DNP project repository and/or read other student’s DNP project work.

## Phase 2: Planning and Development

Once students have completed most or all of the core courses, they will enroll in courses that facilitate exploration and project development, implementation, and dissemination. During this phase, students are also expected to actively work with their project chair. The project planning courses must be taken in sequence. Students who receive a failing grade or an incomplete may not progress to the next course.

### Project Planning Courses

#### NUR 677

The purpose of this course is to promote discovery, analysis and synthesis of evidence toward addressing a clinical problem. Students will identify a clinical problem, develop a clinical question, complete an exhaustive literature search, apprise the literature, create evaluation tables, synthesize findings, and create a synthesis matrix.

#### NUR 712

This course builds on the work in NUR 677 and integrates evidence-based practice and theory in addressing the identified clinical problem. Students will clarify outcomes and outcome measures, develop project methods including data collection tools, and prepare for implementation of their project through identification of resources, facilitators, and barriers to guide the project plan. At the conclusion of this course students will have prepared their scholarly proposal and submitted their Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application.

#### NUR 704

This course guides the student through project implementation, data collection, and data analysis. At the conclusion of this course students will have completed their project implementation.

#### NUR 706

This course focuses on examining the impact of the project and dissemination of the project work. At the conclusion of this semester students will have completed their final project paper and submitted their work for journal publication and/or presentation to a professional organization.

### Project Development Tool

In NUR 677 students will complete the *DNP Project Development Tool*. This document provides a summary of the topic and the background project work that has been completed. It will be submitted at the conclusion of NUR 677 and reviewed by course faculty and the project chair. The document template can be found in the NAU DNP Repository and in [Appendix 2](#).

#### *Components of the document include:*

- Clarification of the clinical problem or practice issue.
- Description of the practice area.
- How the practice issue was identified, including strategies used to investigate the issue and need for change and discussion of internal evidence.
- How the project will support or align with the agency's mission, values, or vision.
- The scope of the problem.
- The elements of the PICOT question.
- Description of the evidence that has been or needs to be gathered to answer the question.
- Proposal for how to approach the problem (the project idea and design).
- How the project will change clinical practice.
- Outcomes, quality measures, or indicators that will demonstrate the impact of the project
- Identification of key issues that will drive the project development.

## Project Team

The project team includes the student, a faculty chair, and other team members as appropriate. Having appropriate interprofessional and interdisciplinary representation on the team is important to the project's success.

The Moran (2020) text recommends the following considerations when putting together the project team.

- Will this work be done in a specific organization?
- Will a specific population be affected by the project?
- Will the student need to implement certain tools, technologies, or guidelines?
- Will there be a methodological or analytical process that requires certain expertise?
- Will there be a need for statistical consultation?
- Is there organizational support for the project?
- Is there someone in the organization who can help navigate organizational challenges?
- Is there someone willing to sustain this work after the project is complete?

## Student Responsibilities

As the project leader the student is expected to demonstrate application of leadership skills and knowledge of organizational systems. Students are expected to:

- Maintain consistent and effective communication with project chair.
- Identify appropriate team members.
- Collaborate with the program coordinator and project chair for advisement, formal proposal preparation and presentation, and other project related activities.
- Submit work that demonstrates a high level of leadership and scholarship.
- Coordinate communication and activity between NAU and the project agency or organization.
- Ensure compliance with all DNP project requirements.
- Submit the project proposal to NAU's IRB.

## Project Chair Role

All students will be assigned a project chair based on the type of project and topic of interest. A project chair must be an NAU SON faculty member, must be a nurse, and have a terminal degree (D.N.P, Ph.D., EdD, D.N.S). The chair and student will sign the Notification of Agreement ([Appendix 3](#)). Project chairs are expected to:

- Serve as a scholarly advisor and work with the student throughout preparation of the project proposal and through project development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination.
- Work with the student to ensure project work is completed in a timely manner.
- Assist the student with the IRB process and application preparation.
- Collaborate with the student to schedule regular meetings.
- Critique the readiness of the project proposal for formal presentation.
- Critique the readiness of the final DNP project presentation in the final semester.
- Approve the final DNP paper prior to submission or publication and before submission to the Virginia Henderson electronic repository.

## Other Team Members

The student will work with the chair to identify other project team members based on the type and scope of the project. Team members contributions are based on their experience and level of expertise; they do not have to be an RN or have a terminal degree. Team members may be, for example, faculty from other departments, organizational personnel, or content experts in their field. In this role team members may:

- Lend expertise in a specialty area of nursing or related discipline.

- Provide guidance and advise at a particular project site.
- Facilitate access to organizational leadership.
- Provide feedback to the student's project development.

### Project Team Agreement

Students will secure signatures from project team members indicating their support and role in project development and implementation. The document will be submitted to the program coordinator and added to the project repository. See [Appendix 4](#) for the Project Team Agreement Form.

### Student and Chair Relationship

Students and project chairs will meet regularly throughout the project development. The student is responsible for scheduling the meetings and should document the meeting agenda, actions, and target dates. The student will follow a timeline that reflects benchmarks, agreed upon expectations, and due dates. See [Appendix 5](#) for the project milestone checklist.

### Choosing an Organization for the Project

It is important that students consult with the potential hosting agency before planning begins. Many organizations have restrictions and/or specific requirements that may impede progress and success of a project. At the onset of the planning process, students will secure a *Letter of Cooperation* from the Agency where the DNP project will be implemented. The document will be submitted to the program coordinator and added to the NAU DNP Repository. See [Appendix 6](#) for a letter template. At a minimum, the letter must include the student's name, project description, description of student activities, permission to access protected health information if applicable, and the project timeframe.

### Choosing an Individual or Group Project

**DNP students are expected to complete individual projects.** During the DNP project planning process students may inquire about doing a group project. Under some circumstances a group of two students may work together on a project. The request to complete a group project must be made at the onset of project planning in NUR 677. Approval is based on the type and scope of the project and the decision is made by the program coordinator.

### Types of Projects

DNP projects can take many forms, but all must align with the DNP Essentials and the NAU SON program outcomes. To determine the type of project, students will need to have a thorough understanding of their phenomenon of interest and have completed an exhaustive literature search and synthesis that identifies evidence that will support the project. Additionally, students will assess the organization, conduct a needs assessment, articulate a clear problem or quality issue, and identify key stakeholders. This information will then determine the project goals and desired outcomes, the scope of the project, and the type of project. All projects should be developed using a theory or theoretical framework.

### Definitions

The DNP project may take several approaches. Project design may involve research or practice-based inquiry, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, or program evaluation. When choosing a project, students should work closely with course faculty and their chair to determine the type of scholarship that best suits their project and desired outcomes. A shared feature of DNP projects is the use of research evidence and systems leadership to improve healthcare outcomes at the practice, population, or health systems level.

- **Research**  
Research and practice-based inquiry uses a scientific process to generate new knowledge that can be generalized. It is a systematic investigation, including development, testing, and evaluation of a question

or hypothesis. Data is analyzed and conclusions are drawn from the results. The purpose is to investigate or answer a research question relevant to nursing practice.

- **Quality Improvement**

Quality Improvement (QI) is a set of continuous actions that lead to measurable improvement in health care services and health status of targeted patient groups. QI involves systematic data-guided activities to monitor, evaluate, and improve quality and safety outcomes of health services and care processes. The purpose is to improvement in healthcare outcomes or workflow processes. QI improvements are specific to an organization or agency.

- **Evidence-Based Practice**

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a systematic approach that integrates the review and appraisal of the best available scientific evidence combined with clinical expertise and patient/population circumstances to guide care delivery. The purpose is to integrate evidence into practice.

- **Program Evaluation**

Program Evaluation (PE) is a systematic assessment of the processes and/or outcomes of a program guided by standards, to make judgments regarding the program, improve its effectiveness, and guide further development. The purpose is to evaluate a program's achievements and effectiveness.

- **Translational Research**

Translational research is rigorous research that studies how evidence-based interventions are translated to real-world clinical settings.

#### *Definition References:*

- Melnyk, B.M. & Fineout-Overholt, E. (2019). *Evidence-based practice in nursing and healthcare* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Wolters Kluwer.
- Moran, K., Burson, R., & Conrad, D. (2020). *The Doctor of Nursing Practice scholarly project: A framework for success* (3rd ed.). MA: Jones and Bartlett.
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Agency for Healthcare Quality

#### *Examples of DNP Projects*

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

#### *Education Based Project Recommendations*

Almost all DNP projects involve some element or degree of providing education. However, educational interventions and dissemination of information alone are insufficient as DNP projects. Education in the form of an in-service, a presentation, etc., results in implementation of information into practice only 4-6% of the time (Institute of Medicine [IOM], 2011). However, when education is coupled with other strategies a bigger impact is made on the healthcare outcome (IOM, 2011). Students and chairs should discuss this point.

DNP projects are **NOT** intended to develop DNP students in the role of nurse educators unless they are already trained and working in that capacity (AACN, 2015). In some circumstances, a Post-Master's DNP student who is employed at an academic institution in a school or college of nursing and has appropriate training and expertise as an educator may petition the DNP program coordinator for approval of a DNP project that meets the

NAU program outcomes and is consistent with AACN restrictions pertaining to DNP nursing education. This is decided on a case-by-case basis.

#### Quality Improvement and Program Evaluation at NAU

NAU requires that any access to health information in an electronic medical record, regardless if it is human research, be submitted to the IRB for review. The [Determination of Human Research](#) form should be used to document access to this private information for tracking purposes.

The NAU Office of Research Compliance (ORC) guidelines on QI and program evaluation projects can be accessed at: [https://nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/74/2018/05/Quality-Improvement-and-Program-Evaluation\\_v2019.8.pdf](https://nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/74/2018/05/Quality-Improvement-and-Program-Evaluation_v2019.8.pdf)

#### Conceptual Frameworks & Theories

Prior to beginning the planning and design phase, students will identify a conceptual framework or theory to guide and inform project development and implementation. This is an important step and provides a scholarly foundation for planning, data collection and evaluation, and interpreting your results. Conceptual framework and theory are used interchangeably, but there are differences. Therefore, it will be helpful to review relevant sections in your research and theory textbooks before choosing a framework or theory.

#### Concepts or Construct

Concepts and constructs are generally used interchangeable. Some theorists define them differently, but for the sake of continuity students should understand that concepts are the building blocks of conceptual frameworks and theories. Concepts are abstract and are defined by the application of the concept to the framework or theory. For example:

- The concept is 'chair'. Chair could be defined as an apparatus to sit on, wooden or leather, or even by location against the wall or middle of the room. We generally associate the concept of 'chair' to any item that supports sitting within a physical space.
- The concept of 'patient'. Each of us would define this differently based on personal experience and emphasis of practice. The definition of patient may be very broad and understood as someone seeking care. The definition may also be attached to where care is provided.

#### Conceptual Framework

Connecting concepts is the beginning of a framework. A good example to consider is the connection of concepts involved when establishing a nurse/patient relationship. The relationship may be one way or bidirectional, and the context may be one specific health issue, or multiple issues. Related concepts may also include health outcomes, health status, or patient motivation. To add usefulness to the framework, additional concepts and clarifications are added in order to understand the complexity that exists in the relationship.

#### Theory

Theories have been tested and have empirical evidence for their explanation of phenomenon. Theories explain and predict and help increase understanding of phenomenon. In nursing, there are four levels of theory defined as meta theory, grand theory, middle-range theory, and micro-range theory. Students are encouraged to explore nursing and non-nursing theories to identify the best fit for their project work.

#### Examples of Conceptual Frameworks and Theories

- [ACE Star Model of Knowledge Transformation](#)
- [Advancing Research and Clinical Practice \(ARCC Model\)](#)

- [Clinical Scholar Model](#)
- [Donabedian's Model for Quality Improvement](#)
- [Health Belief Model \(HBM\)](#)
- [Institute for Healthcare Improvement's \(IHI\) Breakthrough/Collaborative Model](#)
- [Iowa Model - Revised](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Nursing Evidence-Based Practice Model](#)
- [Lewin's Theory of Planned Change](#)
- [Ottawa Model of Research Use \(OMRU\)](#)
- [Promoting Action on Research Implementation in Health Services Framework \(PARIHS\)](#)
- [Roger's Diffusion of Innovations Theory](#)
- [Rosswurm and Larabee Model](#)
- [Six Sigma DMAIC Model](#)
- [Stettler Model of Evidence-Based Practice](#)
- [Stevens Star Model of Knowledge Translation](#)
- [The Knowledge to Action Framework](#)

#### Additional Resources

Website: [Nursing Theory.](#)

Website: [Behavioral Change Models](#)

Article: [Kivunja, C. \(2018\). Distinguishing between theory, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework: A systematic review of lessons from the field. International Journal of Higher Education, 7\(6\), 45-53.](#)

#### Project Proposal

All students will complete a written project proposal in NUR 712. The completed written proposal will be evaluated by the course faculty, the program coordinator, and the project chair prior to the formal presentation. The project proposal should follow a standard template and contain the key elements to implement the DNP project. The requirements are outlined in [Appendix 7](#). The written proposal serves as the basis for the IRB application.

\*Students who do not complete the written proposal, or who submit an unsatisfactory proposal, will not be allowed to formally present their proposal on Scholar's Day.

#### Resources for Proposal Elements

##### *Concept Map*

Students will create a diagram or concept map to illustrate how the project will be designed, implemented, and evaluated. There are multiple resources available to help students create concept maps. Examples include [Lucidchart](#) and [Creately](#), and [MindManager](#). There is also a link below to a YouTube tutorial on creating a mind map in PowerPoint. This assignment will be graded in NUR 712 and will be presented as part of the formal project proposal. See [Appendix 8](#) for the concept map grading rubric.

[Video Tutorial on creating a Mind Map in PowerPoint](#)

##### *Evidence Evaluation Table*

Students will develop a table of evidence illustrating the relevant (keeper) studies that were identified in their exhaustive literature search. Ten relevant, high-quality studies should be included in the evidence table. To standardize the elements of the table, students will use the headings and requirements presented in [Appendix 9](#).

### Synthesis Matrix

A synthesis matrix is a table that provides a visual representation of the key ideas or themes identified in the literature review. Data from the evidence table is used to develop the synthesis matrix. A minimum of three key issues should be identified across the studies. See [Appendix 10](#) for a sample matrix.

### Oral Presentation

All DNP proposals are formally presented to DNP faculty, project chairs, college leadership, and peers on Scholar's Day. A minimum of four reviewers will evaluate each proposal presentation. See [Appendix 11](#) for the project evaluation form. Following the presentation, the evaluators will meet and determine whether or not the project proposal can move forward. Feedback will be given to the students and will include one of the following:

1. Approval without recommendations.
2. Approval with minor revisions and recommendations.
3. Not approved: major revisions required.

If approved, students will receive written notification from the program coordinator. Once the proposal has been approved, students will complete and submit an application to the NAU Institutional Review Board (IRB). A copy of the proposal acceptance letter can be viewed in [Appendix 12](#).

If the proposal is not approved, the student, project chair, and program coordinator will meet within 5 days to determine the steps to take in order to secure approval. The student will then have two weeks from the meeting date to make revisions and submit them to their project chair. At that time, the project chair and program coordinator will determine if the revisions are sufficient to progress. **If the proposal is not sufficient to move forward the student will receive a failing grade in NUR 712 and be required to repeat the course.**

### Institutional Review Board (IRB)

All students are required to submit an IRB application and will work with their project chair and NAU IRB resource personnel to complete the process. This process is very prescribed and students are expected to be proactive to ensure the project is approved prior to starting NUR 704. Projects cannot be implemented without IRB approval or a determination by the IRB that the project is exempt. In some cases, students may also be required to submit a separate IRB application at the institution where they will be implementing their project. At times this can be a lengthy process and students should ask early in the process if this is needed.

- The IRB process will be reviewed in NUR 712.
- All DNP projects, without exception, must be submitted to the IRB.
- Students may not submit IRB documents without prior review and approval from their project chair.
- At the conclusion of the project, students will notify the IRB that their work is completed.

IRB submission and closeout information can be found at [IRBnet](#)  
[NAU IRB Human Research Protection Program](#)

All DNP students are required to complete CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Institute) training prior to submitting their project proposal. The training link is available below. Students will need to sign in using their NAU log-in and create an account. There are many course options, but students in the DNP program and their mentors need to complete the **Health & Human Services, Biomedical Research** course. If your project involves patient records you will also need to complete the optional HIPAA module.

### [NAU CITI Training](#)

## Phase 3: Implementation and Evaluation

In Phase 3 students will engage in the implementation and evaluation of the DNP Project. The purpose of NUR 704 is to provide support to the student and project team during the implementation process. Students are assisted in outcomes management, data collection and project evaluation. Additionally, students will complete the final DNP project paper and develop a project dissemination plan.

### Requirements

Students must be enrolled in NUR 704 and at least 1 credit hour of NUR 703.

### Practicum Hours and Project Implementation

Students will enroll in NUR 703 in the final 4 semesters of their degree program where they will work on development, implementation, and dissemination of their DNP Project. These hours are completed in conjunction with the four evidence-based practice courses (NUR 677, NUR 712, NUR 704, and NUR 706). One credit hour of NUR 703 is equal to 60 practicum hours. Therefore, students should expect to complete approximately 240 hours completing practicum activities that support the development and implementation of their project. Every DNP project is unique, and practicum experiences will vary. Specific information regarding acceptable practicum experiences is located in the *DNP Clinical Practicum Handbook*. It is expected that students will engage in meaningful activities that align with the DNP Essentials and NAU DNP Program Outcomes.

Please note that:

- Reading is not acceptable for practicum hours.
- General review of literature is not acceptable for practicum hours.
- Continuing education is not acceptable for practicum hours without prior approval from the program coordinator.

Students will submit a DNP Practicum Plan at the start of each NUR 703 course, will document activities and hours on the DNP Practicum Log, and provide a summary at the conclusion of each semester. Completed documents will be uploaded to the NAU DNP Repository at the end of each semester.

***While all DNP students complete 240 practicum hours towards their project, students admitted to the DNP program who do not have an advanced practice degree complete additional practicum hours. Please refer to the DNP Clinical Practicum Handbook for detailed information about practicum hour requirements.***

## Phase 4: Dissemination and Final Program Requirements

All students must disseminate their project findings. Students will work with team members, faculty and their project chair to determine how to disseminate their findings in academic, clinical, community, and professional settings. Although dissemination plans will vary, all students will 1) submit a final project paper; 2) submit a poster to the NAU Graduate Symposium, 3) submit their final paper to the Virginia Henderson Global Nursing e-Repository, and 4) make a formal presentation (defense) that may be attended by NAU faculty and leadership, peers, mentors, and the public.

### Requirements

Students must be enrolled in NUR 706 and at least 1 credit hour of NUR 703. Enrollment in NUR 703 is required for all students in the final semester, even if they have already completed the required practicum hours.

### DNP Project Paper

The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate the culmination of doctoral skills developed during the program and mastery of the *DNP Essentials*. It is a requirement for graduation and will be reviewed by course faculty, the program coordinator, and the student's project chair. In addition to the elements included in the project proposal, the final paper includes project findings, implications for clinical practice, healthcare policy, education, health equity, and quality, and a description of plans for dissemination beyond the academic setting and for future scholarship.

### Process for Approval of the Project Paper

- Paper is submitted in NUR 703 by the due date noted in the course. The paper will be reviewed by the course faculty and any correction must be made within one week. See [Appendix 13](#) for the paper requirements.
- When complete the paper is submitted (in its final form) for review by the program coordinator.
- If the paper requirements are met the student will be notified in writing that they may present their project on Scholar's Day. See [Appendix 14](#) for a copy of the approval notification and presentation instructions.
- Students will obtain team member signatures and submit the Project Signature Form to the program coordinator. See [Appendix 15](#) for a copy of the signature sheet. This document will become the second page of your final paper.
- Following the instructions provided in the notification, students will have two copies bound and present one each to the program coordinator and project chair.

### Virginia Henderson Global Nursing e-Repository

All students will submit an electronic copy of their final approved paper to the Virginia Henderson Global Nursing e-Repository. Students do not need to be a member of Sigma Theta Tau but will need to register as a new user and create a profile in order to complete the submission.

### DNP Project Poster

Students will present a Final DNP Project Poster at the [NAU Graduate Poster Symposium](#). The purpose of this activity is to share your work in an academic setting. This event occurs in the spring and the deadline for the poster abstract is usually mid to late January. Students should verify this date in the Fall term and be prepared to submit the abstract at the start of NUR 706. The NAU poster template can be found on the NAU website using the link provided here. [NAU Templates](#)

### Poster Requirements

- Full Title of the Project
- Introduction or Abstract of 250 words or less
- Methods
- Findings
- Discussion
- Short reference list in APA format
- Student contact information
- A copy of the poster (if presentation is live) and the poster as a handout will be shared at the final presentation.

### DNP Project Presentation

DNP students are required to give a formal presentation of their DNP Project work prior to graduation. The presentation will occur on Scholar's Day and is open to faculty, students, family members, and the public. The presentations will occur on a specified date between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> week of the final semester. The date will be shared at the beginning of the semester in order to give students ample time to arrange their schedules. Attendance is mandatory and, depending on the circumstances, the presentation may occur in-person or remotely.

### Requirements for Final Project Presentation

The final presentation needs to be in PowerPoint format using the [NAU template](#). Title slides for the presentation are in [Appendix 16](#). Plan for the length of the presentation to be around 30 minutes with 15 minutes for questions.

### Presentation Content

- Title page
- Background & significance
- The problem & desired outcomes
- Search for evidence
- Evidence synthesis and key issues
- Project aim
- Organizational systems & environment for change
- Conceptual/theoretical framework
- Project description
- Data collection
- Project outcomes & analysis
- Impact
- Application of leadership
- Dissemination
- Future scholarship

### Instructions for Binding the Final DNP Project Paper & Supporting Documents

NAU keeps an electronic and print copy of all DNP projects and related documents. In addition to uploading the required documents to the NAU DNP Repository, students will professionally bind two copies of the final DNP Project Paper. The instructions for binding will be included with the notification that the Final Project Paper has been approved.

### Binding Material

The cover page must be clear, and the binding should be flat.

### Beyond Requirements

Students are also encouraged to submit an abstract for a poster or podium presentation at a professional conference, prepare a manuscript draft for publication in a targeted peer-reviewed journal, prepare Executive Summary or White Paper, and/or disseminate their findings to the community, stakeholders, and peers. The deadline for submission to most conferences is set many months prior to the conference, so students are encouraged to identify a conference of interest well in advance.

### Final Steps

After successful completion of the Final Project Presentation the following FINAL STEPS are required.

- Close out the [IRB](#) application at NAU and the hosting agency if applicable.
- Submit the NAU IRB closeout documentation form found in [Appendix 17](#) to the DNP coordinator.
- Ensure all project related documents, including the final paper, are uploaded to the NAU DNP repository.
- Ensure all practicum hours are complete, have been approved by the DNP program coordinator, and that the log is uploaded to the NAU DNP repository.
- Thank the cooperating agency and team members with a letter of appreciation.

## Appendices

## Appendix 1: DNP Program Repository Requirements

### DNP Program Repository Requirements

The NAU DNP Repository is the landing place for scholarly papers, clinical practicum logs, and project related work. Students are automatically enrolled in a non-credit Bb Learn course labeled ‘DNP Program/Project Repository’.

At the end of each semester students will upload required documents as stated below. ***All documents must be uploaded prior to graduation.***

Course	Document	Due Dates
608	Practicum log Practicum summary Practicum documents	End of each semester
609	Scholarly writing paper	End of semester
677	Evidence synthesis paper	End of semester
700	Phenomenon of interest paper	End of semester
701	Policy paper	End of semester
703	Practicum log Practicum summary Practicum documents	End of each semester
704	Data collection & analysis paper	End of semester
705	Leadership paper	End of semester
706	Poster abstract and pdf Presentation slides Final project paper	End of semester
712	Project proposal	End of semester
714	Health equity paper	End of semester
716	Organizational systems paper	End of semester
	IRB approval notification	When obtained
	Project evaluation form	Following final project presentation
	Handbook acknowledgement form	At admission
	Approved program of study	At admission & if updated by advisor

## Appendix 2: DNP Project Development Tool

### DNP Project Development Tool

*A template of this tool can be found in the NAU DNP Repository*

<b>Student Name:</b>
Email:
Mentor:

<b>1. What is the practice issue and why is it important?</b>

<b>2. What is the practice area? (check all that apply)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Community
<b>What is the agency's organizational philosophy, mission and vision?</b>

<b>3. How as the practice issue identified? (check all that apply)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality and safety / risk management. <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical practice concerns. <input type="checkbox"/> Procedural or process issue. <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory patient outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Financial concerns. <input type="checkbox"/> Gap or variation in practice.

<b>4. What internal evidence has been gathered?</b>

<b>5. How will the project support or align with the agency's values?</b>

<b>6. What is the scope of the problem?</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Community <input type="checkbox"/> Institution/agency <input type="checkbox"/> Population health <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain) _____

<b>7. What are the elements of the clinical question? (use PICOT format)</b>
<b>Population:</b>
<b>Intervention:</b>
<b>Comparison:</b>
<b>Outcome:</b>
<b>Timeframe:</b>

<b>8. What is the PICOT question? (must be narrow in focus, searchable, and answerable)</b>

<b>9. What evidence has been or must be gathered to answer the clinical question?</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic literature review
<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical studies (RCTs, cohort studies, descriptive, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Practice guidelines
<input type="checkbox"/> Expert opinion
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial analysis
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional, regulatory, or policy standards
<input type="checkbox"/> Patient and/or family preferences
<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational data
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain)

<b>10. Based on your current knowledge, what do you think you can do to address the problem?</b>

--

<b>11. How will your project make a change in clinical practice?</b>

<b>12. What outcomes, quality measures, or indicators could verify the problem was addressed?</b>

<b>13. Do you anticipate other project team members?</b>
Name: Position: Institution:
Name: Position: Institution:

<b>Checklist</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> All questions on this document are answered completely. <input type="checkbox"/> A copy of the Evidence Synthesis paper has been given to the project chair. <input type="checkbox"/> The DNP Project Requirements Handbook has been read and an acknowledgement signed and uploaded to the NAU DNP repository.

<b>DNP Coordinator Signature:</b>
<b>Comments:</b>
<b>Recommended Action Items:</b>

Appendix 3: Project Chair Agreement

DNP Project Chair Appointment & Agreement

*A copy of this document can be found in the NAU DNP Repository*

Date:

Name of Student:

Proposed DNP Project Title:

Faculty Mentor:

Proposed Team Members:

*(team members will sign the Project Team Agreement form)*

---

Remarks:

---

Signatures:

Project Chair:

DNP Student:

DNP Program Coordinator:

## Appendix 4: Project Team Agreement Record

### DNP Project Team Agreement Record

*A copy of this document can be found in the NAU DNP Repository*

<b>Full Title of DNP Project:</b>
<b>DNP Student Information:</b>  Name: Email: Phone: <input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed the NAU DNP Project Requirements and understand my responsibilities Signature:
<b>Other Team Member Information:</b>  Name: Credentials: Email: Phone: <input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed the NAU DNP Project Requirements and understand my responsibilities Signature:
<b>Other Team Member Information:</b>  Name: Credentials: Email: Phone: <input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed the NAU DNP Project Requirements and understand my responsibilities Signature:
<b>Comments:</b>  <p>Submit completed form to the DNP Program Coordinator and upload to the Project Repository.</p>

## Appendix 5: Project Milestone Checklist

### DNP Project Milestone Checklist

The purpose of this checklist is to ensure students and faculty are aware of the requirements for each phase of the DNP project and to ensure that milestones are met.

*A copy of this document can be found in the NAU DNP Repository*

Phase	Activities/Assignments/Milestone
<b>Phase 1:</b> Core courses NUR 700 & NUR 609	<input type="checkbox"/> Read the DNP Essentials and Program Outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Develop Professional Network <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Write Phenomenon of Interest Paper</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty Mentor Assignment
<b>Phase 2:</b> Planning & Development NUR 677 & NUR 712	<input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Complete DNP Question Development Tool</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Literature Search and Synthesis <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Write Evidence Synthesis Paper</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Project Team Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Secure Agency Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Write DNP Project Proposal</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Formally Present Proposal</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete CITI Training Modules <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Submit Proposal to IRB</i></b> (following Mentor approval)
<b>Phase 3:</b> Implementation & Evaluation NUR 704	<input type="checkbox"/> Secure IRB Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Begin Project Implementation & Data Collection <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze and Synthesize Data & Findings <input type="checkbox"/> Verify all immersion hours are complete <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Submit abstract for poster presentation</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Complete Outcome Evaluation/Impact Paper</i></b>
<b>Phase 4:</b> Dissemination & Final Steps Nur 706	<input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Submit DNP Project Poster</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Submit Final Project Paper</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> Submit Final Paper to Virginia Henderson Repository <input type="checkbox"/> Bind and submit DNP Project Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Upload all required documents to NAU DNP Repository <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all Practicum Hours are Completed & Approved <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Attend Scholar's Day - Project Proposal Presentation</i></b>

## Appendix 6: Agency Letter of Cooperation

### Agency Letterhead

**Date:**

**Re: Letter of Agreement between Northern Arizona University and \_\_\_\_\_ (agency)**

This document confirms that that I \_\_\_\_\_, as an authorized representative of \_\_\_\_\_ (*Organization*), allow (*student*) access to this facility for the purpose of implementing a doctoral nursing project. The project-related activities are described below. The project will start on \_\_\_\_\_ (*date*).

- **Project Site(s):** *List the specific site name(s) and address(es) for all sites the student will access.*
- **Study Purpose:** *Briefly summarize the study’s purpose and chief aim(s).*
- **Study Activities:** *Briefly detail study activities that will commence at the site, such as surveys to be distributed to Site employees, interviews or interventions with patients, or access to patient records or database(s), etc.*
- **Target Population:** *Identify the project population.*
- **Site(s) Support:** *Detail what support the study site(s) agree to provide such as provide space to conduct study activities, authorize site employees to identify persons who might qualify for study, distribute questionnaires, retrieve patient data from site files, provide tissue samples etc.*
- **Data Management:** *Briefly detail the data management plan—what data will be collected, whether data will be identifiable or de-identified, and what protections will be in place to protect the data, e.g., password protected, encryption, etc.*
- **Other:** *Outline any other agreements you and the organization have made to further the research, if applicable.*
- **Anticipated End Date:** *State the anticipated date you will conclude research activities at the study site.*

I understand that this site’s participation will only take place during the project’s active IRB approval period. All project related activities must cease if IRB approval expires or is suspended. I understand that any activities involving Personal Private Information or Protected Health Information may require compliance with HIPAA Laws and NAU School of Nursing policies.

Our organization agrees to the terms and conditions stated above. If we have any concerns related to this project, we will contact the student. For concerns regarding IRB policy or human subject welfare, we may also contact the Northern Arizona University IRB @ [IRB@nau.edu](mailto:IRB@nau.edu) or (928) 523-4340.

**Please ask the representative authorized to grant permission to use the site for the DNP project to provide the following:**

Signature of Research Site Authorized Representative	
Name of Research Site Authorized Representative	
Job Title of Research Site Authorized Representative	
Date of Signing	

## Appendix 7: Project Proposal Requirements

### DNP Written Proposal Requirements

The following elements and headings are required for the DNP Proposal that will be completed in NUR 712. Additional items may be added if relevant to the project. To ensure all elements are addressed, please use this document as a checklist prior to submitting for grading. The grading rubric is provided in NUR 712.

A title page is required. The title should be clearly written and reflect the DNP project topic. It should be no more than 10 words.

- I. Introduction
  - a. The paragraph provides an overview of the project. The project purpose is clearly stated in the first 2 sentences.
- II. Background knowledge
  - a. The background, context, and importance of the problem is clearly presented using relevant data.
  - b. Presents possible solutions to the problem.
  - c. Discusses the significance to health care and advanced practice nursing. The significance is specific to the advanced-practice specialty and supported using relevant data.
- III. Local problem
  - a. Describes the local (agency specific) problem.
  - b. Discusses relevant stakeholders, including their role.
  - c. Identifies how the local problem was identified and includes supportive and compelling objective and/or subjective data (internal evidence).
- IV. Intended Improvement
  - a. Clearly states project purpose.
  - b. Clearly states clinical question using PICOT format.
  - c. Clearly describes the project objectives (objective 1, objective 2, and so forth), and aligns them with the project purpose. SMART criteria is used.
  - d. Discusses desired or expected outcomes.
- V. Literature Search
  - a. The search strategy is described and includes search terms, data bases, limitations, inclusion/exclusion criteria, etc.).
  - b. A flow diagram is provided as an appendix.
- VI. Synthesis
  - a. Includes a comprehensive appraisal of current evidence.
  - b. Discusses strengths of evidence.
  - c. Discusses weaknesses of evidence.
  - d. Discusses gaps and limitations of evidence.
- VII. Project Design
  - a. The project design is discussed and rational for the type of project is provided.
- VIII. Theoretical Framework
  - a. Describes theoretical framework or model guiding the project design, including rationale.
  - b. Presents theoretical framework definitions and concepts/constructs.
  - c. Links theoretical concepts/constructs to the project's purpose and objectives.
  - d. Provide illustration of theoretical framework (concept map).
- IX. Project Methods
  - a. Describe setting to be used for project implementation.
  - b. Describes the target population for the project, including inclusion and exclusion criteria.

- c. Describes participant recruitment procedure.
  - d. Describes consent process and ethical considerations
  - e. Includes the data collection plan, including description of tools that will be used.
  - f. Includes data analysis plan, i.e., how the collected data will be analyzed.
  - g. Provide a project timeline (step-by-step description for project implementation) as an appendix.
- X. Discussion
- a. Discusses implications to practice, education, research, and policy
  - b. Discusses limitations of project.
  - c. Identifies DNP Essentials that are addressed in the project.
- XI. Conclusion
- a. A review/summary of key points is presented in the conclusion. No new information is included.
- XII. Reference page
- XIII. Appendices
- a. Appendix A: Search Diagram
  - b. Appendix B: Concept Map
  - c. Appendix C: SWOT Analysis
  - d. Appendix D: Project Timeline

### **Writing**

- This is a scholarly paper and APA formatting is required.
- Professional writing and grammar are expected.
- Papers that are not organized, are missing content, or those with excessive spelling and grammar errors will be returned ungraded.
- This proposal must be approved before the student can formally present their project proposal

## Appendix 8: Concept Map Grading Rubric

### Concept Map Grading Rubric

This rubric is used in NUR 712 to evaluate the Concept Map developed for the DNP Project.

**Student**

**Course Faculty**

**DNP Faculty Mentor**

**Full Title of DNP Project**

#### **Instructions**

The purpose of this assignment is to facilitate the translation of a theory/framework into an actionable basis for a DNP Project. The concept map that will be submitted as an appendix to the DNP Proposal Paper.

<b>Element of Concept Map</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Theory or Framework aligns to the type of DNP Project				<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
The project's actionable items are described				<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
Organization of Information				<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
Visual Appeal				<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail

**Comments:**

Appendix 9: Evaluation Table – Primary Research Evidence

Example of Evaluation Table

<b>Citation</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Theoretical Foundation</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Recommendations/ Implications</b>	<b>Level of Evidence</b>

Use landscape layout.  
If abbreviations are used, include a legend at the bottom of the table.

Appendix 10: Synthesis Matrix

Example of Synthesis Matrix

**Determinants in HPV Vaccine Initiation**

	<i>Provider recommendation</i>	<i>Parental recommendation</i>	<i>Educational level</i>	<i>Sexually active</i>	<i>Self-efficacy</i>
Jones (2020)	✓§	✓§		✓	✓
Davis & Smith (2021)	✓		✓	✓	
Peters & Backus (2018)		✓			✓
Hanson (2015)	✓§	✓	✓§	✓	
Short (2016)	✓		✓§		
Miller (2020)				✓	✓§
Tasa & Judd (2013)	✓			✓	✓§
Marley & Lin (2017)	✓§			✓	
Millar & James (2011)	✓§		✓	✓	✓§
Cramer (2021)	✓	✓		✓	✓

§ = statistically significant findings

## Appendix 11: DNP Project Proposal Evaluation Tool

### DNP Project Proposal Evaluation Tool

*A copy of this document can be found in the NAU DNP Repository*

The DNP chair, DNP coordinator, and at least on DNP course faculty will use this document to evaluate the formal DNP proposal. Passing requires an overall score of 80% (74 out of 93 points) or greater from at least 2 reviewers. If two or more reviewers score the proposal less than 80% (< 74 points) the proposal cannot move forward.

Scoring: Unsatisfactory = 1 Satisfactory =2 Excellent =3

#### Introduction

##### Title

**Criteria:** Summarizes DNP project topic and is less than or equal to 10 words.

1.  Title is not clear or not included or is > 10 words.
  2.  Title is somewhat clearly written to reflect the DN project topic and is < 10 words.
  3.  Title is clearly written to reflect the DNP project topic and is < 10 words.
- 

##### Introductory Statement

**Criteria:** Paragraph introducing the DNP project topic

1.  Inaccurate, unfocused, or no introductory paragraph provided.
  2.  Overview of project, purpose is clear within the paragraph.
  3.  Introduction, overview of the project, and project purpose is clear.
- 

##### Background Knowledge

**Criteria 1:** Problem statement and significance

1.  Background not included
  2.  Background and context of the problem stated with some discussion
  3.  Background, context, and importance of problem clearly presented using relevant data
- 

**Criteria 2:** Use of literature to show relevant data using literature that supports project data

1.  Literature not used or does not show need or possible solutions, no synthesis of literature.
  2.  Literature somewhat used to show need and/or possible solutions, synthesis somewhat included.
  3.  Literature synthesized to support need for the DNP project's focus and discussion of possible solutions to the problem.
- 

**Criteria 3:** Significance to health care, advanced practice nursing clearly stated and discussed

1.  Significance not included
  2.  Significance to healthcare and/or advanced practice nursing stated with some supportive data.
  3.  Significance to healthcare and advanced practice nursing is clearly stated and supported using relevant data.
- 

##### Local Problem

**Criteria 1:** Local problem identified and stakeholders identified

1.  Local problem not identified & stakeholders not discussed.
  2.  Local problem superficially identified and/or some relevant stakeholders discussed.
  3.  Local problem identified and clearly described. Relevant stakeholders clearly discussed, including their role.
-

# DNP PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

**Criteria 2:** Thorough description of needs assessment, objective data, etc.

1.  Not addressed or not addressed enough to understand how this occurred.
  2.  Clearly stated with some support of how the problem was identified.
  3.  Clearly discussed how the local problem was identified and supported this with objective and/or subjective data.
- 

## Intended Improvement

### Project Purpose

**Criteria:** Project question related to purpose and clear rationale for conducting the project

1.  Purpose not included or not clearly discussed.
  2.  Vague or minimally supportive purpose provided.
  3.  Purpose clearly stated.
- 

### Project Question

**Criteria:** Project question clearly stated

1.  Project question not included or not related to project purpose
  2.  Question stated, not clearly related to purpose.
  3.  Practice improvement-related question clearly stated, including site for implementation.
- 

### Project Objectives

**Criteria:** Project objective(s) clearly stated utilizing SMART criteria

1.  Objectives not included or not well defined.
  2.  Objectives discussed and match the project purpose and question utilizes SMART criteria.
  3.  Objectives clearly described and closely align with the project purpose and utilize SMART criteria.
- 

## Theoretical Framework

### Theoretical Framework

**Criteria 1:** Theoretical Framework guiding the project

1.  Appropriate theoretical framework is not described.
  2.  Theoretical Framework is clearly described and indicates understanding.
  3.  Theoretical Framework is thoroughly described and is related to the project.
- 

**Criteria 2:** Theoretical Framework is related to the project purpose

1.  Theoretical Framework not identified or not effectively applied to the purpose of the project.
  2.  Relationship between theoretical framework and project purpose and objectives described.
  3.  Theoretical framework is clearly linked to the project's purpose and objectives.
- 

**Criteria 3:** Illustration of Theoretical Framework implementation

1.  Illustration not used or not customized to project.
  2.  Illustration customized to project in a clear and effective manner.
  3.  Illustration effectively demonstrates understanding and clearly links it to the project.
-

# DNP PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

## Criteria 4: Concepts & definitions identified

1.  Concepts not identified within the body of the text or as an appendix.
  2.  Concepts identified, adequately defined within the body of the text or as an appendix. No hyperlinks
  3.  Concepts clearly identified and defined within the body of the text or as an appendix. Using hyperlinks.
- 

## Literature Search & Synthesis

### Literature Search

#### Criteria 1: Research search terms described

1.  Did not clearly address databases or search criteria.
  2.  Adequately addressed databases used and search criteria.
  3.  Provided comprehensive search strategy, including databases and search criteria.
- 

#### Criteria 2: Results of search described

1.  Did not discuss the results of search or did not complete an adequate search.
  2.  Adequately stated results of search, including final number of selected studies and quality of evidence.
  3.  Clearly stated results of search, including final number of selected studies, quality of evidence, and rationale.
- 

#### Criteria 3: Flow diagram or a discussion of selected criteria

1.  Flow diagram or discussion absent or does not show appropriate selection of articles.
  2.  Flow diagram or discussion addresses appropriate selection criteria for articles used in synthesis.
  3.  Flow diagram or discussion is detailed and clearly shows appropriate selection criteria for articles including in synthesis.
- 

### Evidence Synthesis

#### Criteria 1: Comprehensive appraisal of current/up-to-date evidence

1.  Evidence not included or articles are reviewed and described by not synthesized.
  2.  Adequate appraisal of evidence and articles are synthesized.
  3.  Comprehensive appraisal of evidence; articles are fully synthesized.
- 

#### Criteria 2: Strength of evidence

1.  Strengths not addressed or inadequately addressed.
  2.  Adequate discussion of strengths including synthesis.
  3.  Comprehensive discussion of strengths showing clear support of the project.
- 

#### Criteria 3: Weakness of evidence

1.  Weakness not addressed or inadequately addressed.
  2.  Adequate discussion of weakness including synthesis.
  3.  Comprehensive discussion of weaknesses showing clear support of the project.
- 

#### Criteria 4: Gaps and limitations of evidence

1.  Gaps and limitations not addressed or inadequately addressed.
  2.  Adequate discussion of gaps and limitations including synthesis.
  3.  Comprehensive discussion of gaps and limitations.
-

## Methods

### Methods Introduction

Criteria: Methods introductory paragraph

1.  The methods introduction does not closely align with the projects purpose of not included.
  2.  Clear but incomplete introduction of the methods section that aligns with the purpose.
  3.  Clear and complete introduction of the methods section that closely aligns with the purpose.
- 

### Model for Implementation

Criteria: Discussion of the model for implementation

1.  Does not utilize the model or does not state how it guides implementation.
  2.  Utilizes the model to fully describe project implementation.
  3.  The implementation is comprehensive and incorporates all elements of the model into the project.
- 

### Setting & Stakeholders

Criteria: Description of setting used for project implementation and description of stakeholders

1.  Does not address or clearly describe setting or stakeholders.
  2.  Describes setting with limited details and stakeholders discussed in a clear manner.
  3.  Describes setting with high level of detail and stakeholders discussed in a comprehensive manner.
- 

### Planning the Intervention

Criteria: A detailed step-by-step guide for project implementation

1.  Implementation steps are not identified or adequately discussed.
  2.  Implementation steps are complete with sufficient level of detail and clearly organized.
  3.  Implementation steps are comprehensive with excellent level of detail and organized with precision.
- 

### Recruitment and Participants

Criteria: Description of recruitment of participants and the inclusion/exclusion selection criteria for participants

1.  Recruitment not addressed or does not adequately state inclusion / exclusion selection criteria.
  2.  Recruitment is adequately addressed and states inclusion / exclusion selection criteria.
  3.  Recruitment addressed in detail and precise detailed inclusion / exclusion selection criteria.
- 

### Consent and Ethical Considerations

Criteria: Discussion of consent process and ethical considerations related to the project

1.  Consent process not addressed or does not adequately address ethical considerations.
  2.  Consent process adequately addresses ethical considerations.
  3.  Consent process addressed in detail and comprehensive discussion of ethical considerations.
- 

### Data Collection

Criteria: Discussion of data collection process and data collection tool used for the project

1.  Data collection process not addressed or does not adequately discuss data collection tool.
  2.  Data collection process addressed adequately and data collection tool described.
  3.  Data collection process addressed in detail and comprehensive discussion of data collection tool.
-

# DNP PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

## Data Analysis

**Criteria:** Discussion of data analysis process for the project

1.  Data analysis process not addressed or does not adequately discuss data analysis process.
  2.  Data analysis process addressed adequately.
  3.  Data analysis process addressed in detail.
- 

## Scholarly Presentation

### Presentation media

**Criteria:** The presentation is professional prepared (ppt is clear, text is legible, follows professional guidelines for formatting and style, is visually appealing, and without errors)

1.  Unsatisfactory
  2.  Satisfactory
  3.  Excellent
- 

### Presentation style

**Criteria:** The proposal is professionally presented (rehearsed, organized, clear, articulate)

1.  Unsatisfactory
2.  Satisfactory
3.  Excellent

Appendix 12: Notification of Proposal Acceptance

DNP Project Proposal  
Notification of Acceptance

Name of Student:

Date and Time:

Proposed DNP Project Title:

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Evaluation Result:

- Approved
  - Approved (with minor recommendations)
  - Not approved
- 

Remarks:

---

Signatures:

Project Faculty Mentor:

DNP Program Coordinator:

## Appendix 13: Final Project Paper Content

### Final Project Paper Requirements

*A copy of this document can be found in the DNP Repository*

- COVER PAGE
- ABSTRACT
- DEDICATION
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (OPTIONAL)
- TABLE OF CONTENTS WITH HYPERLINKS

#### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

- Introduction
  - Background
  - Problem statement
  - Needs assessment
  - Significance
- Synthesis of the literature
  - Clinical question
  - Review of the literature
  - Synthesis of the literature
  - Key findings
  - Evidence-based practice recommendations
- Type of project
  - Project aims & objectives

#### **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

- Theoretical Framework
- Change Model

#### **CHAPTER 3: PROJECT DESIGN AND METHODS**

- Setting
  - Organizational mission, vision, values
  - Organizational need(s)
  - Organizational support
  - Project stakeholders
  - SWOT analysis
  - Barriers & facilitators
  - Resources needed
  - Project manager role
- PICOT question
  - Population
  - Intervention described
  - Comparison
  - Outcomes measured
  - Timeframe
  - Feasibility
- Design

- Recruitment
- Ethics and human subject protection
- Known and potential risks/harms
- Benefits
- Consent process
- Participant costs and compensation
- Data collection plan
- Data collection tools (validity/reliability)
- Data maintenance and security
- Data analysis plan
- Budget / resources
- Timeline (what happened when, to whom, where, and how)

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE PROJECT**

- Discussion of findings
- Measured outcomes
- Data Analysis
- Impact on system and population

## **CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSIONS**

- Implications for nursing practice
- Implications for quality, policy and education
- Recommendations
- Contributions to the profession of nursing
- Plans for dissemination
- Plans for future scholarship
- Summary / conclusion

## **REFERENCES**

## **APPENDICES**

- Concept map
- Evidence table
- Synthesis matrix
- DNP team signature form
- Agency agreement letter
- IRB determination letter from NAU
- IRB determination letter for hosting agency
- Consent
- Recruitment flyer
- Data collection instruments

## Appendix 14: Final Paper Approval Notification & Presentation Instructions

### Final Paper Approval Notification & Presentation Instructions

Congratulations on the completion of your final project paper! Your hard work is recognized, and I am looking forward to your project presentation. Please read this letter carefully as you put together your paper for submission to the Virginia Henderson e-repository, prepare your presentation for scholar's day, and complete a few other tasks.

#### Final paper requirements

- A closeout signature page will be completed and added to your paper. This document will include original signatures from your project chair, other team members and the DNP program coordinator. Please ask non-NAU project team members to sign your project title signature page.
- Binding your paper
  - You will print and bind two copies of your final paper.
  - The DNP project cover page is the 1st page of your bound copies.
  - The DNP project signature page is the second page of your bound copies.
  - Your paper should be organized and submitted as approved.
  - The binding cover should be clear on the front.
  - The binding should use flat binding as opposed to spiral or comb binding.
- Distribution of paper
  - Distribute one copy to the DNP program coordinator and one copy to your faculty chair.
  - Upload a copy to the Virginia Henderson e-Repository.

#### Practicum log

- Submit a copy of your practicum documentation log to the DNP program coordinator for approval. The log must demonstrate completion of all required hours.
- Upload the final practicum log to the DNP repository.

#### Before the presentation

1. Review the requirements for the presentation. In appendix 15 there is an outline of title slides.
2. Your presentation should last for 30 minutes. Please rehearse your presentation using the timer feature in PowerPoint.
3. Attendees will be given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments following the presentation. I highly recommend you anticipate some of the questions that may be asked.
4. Have your faculty chair review your presentation slides and address all feedback you receive.
5. Submit your presentation slides to the DNP program coordinator two weeks before the presentation date. The presentation must be approved before you can present at scholar's day.

#### Scholar's day

1. Scholar's day will be held on \_\_\_\_\_ beginning at 9:00 am. You are asked to attend the full day so you can support your peers, benefit from their work, and provide peer feedback on the proposals that will be presented by the next DNP cohort.
2. Bring copies of your poster as a pdf to share with attendees.
3. Following your presentation your chair will share comments from other reviews reviewers.

#### After the presentation

##### IRB Project Closure

- If you have an open IRB application, and all your project study data is complete, you must closeout your application. Instructions can be found on NAU IRB webpage. [IRB Closure Instructions](#)
- Complete and submit the closure documentation form to the DNP program coordinator.

# DNP PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

## Appendix 15: Project Signature Page

### DNP Project Signature Sheet

*A copy of this document can be found in the NAU DNP Repository*

Title of Project

This Project was presented to the Northern Arizona University School of Nursing Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice

By

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Name of DNP Student

**Approved: Project Chair/Mentor:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved: DNP Program Coordinator:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved: DNP Team Member(s):**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval Acknowledged: School of Nursing Director/Designee**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# DNP PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

## Appendix 16: Presentation Template

1 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Title</b> University Student Project Mentor</p>	2 <p><b>Topic Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Background &amp; Significance<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Historical milestones</li><li>• Epidemiology</li><li>• Financial burden</li><li>• Problem</li><li>• Gaps in the literature</li><li>• Etc.</li></ul></li></ul>	3 <p><b>The Problem</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internal evidence / organization needs assessment</li><li>• Clear statement of problem in context</li></ul>	4 <p><b>Desired Outcomes</b></p>
5 <p><b>Search for Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clinical question (should align with the problem &amp; desired outcomes)</li><li>• Search process summary<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PICOT question</li><li>• Key words</li><li>• Databases</li><li>• Inclusion/exclusion criteria</li><li>• Limitations</li></ul></li><li>• Analysis of studies - quality of keeper studies</li></ul>	6 <p><b>Key Synthesis Findings</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li></ol> <p>Synthesis of evidence – key issues across the studies • This should be very clearly articulated – it is the essence of your project</p>	7 <p><b>Project Type</b></p> <p>Problem → Outcome → Evidence → Project</p> <p><small>Describe and explain your choice of project. The project type is based on the problem, desired outcome and internal and external evidence</small></p>	8 <p><b>Project Aim</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What was the overall purpose of the project?</li><li>• What were your measurable outcomes that demonstrated your impact and achievement of the project goals?</li></ul>
9 <p><b>Environment for Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental analysis</li><li>• Facilitators, barriers</li><li>• Readiness for change</li></ul>	10 <p><b>Project Team</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe your team members and why you chose them.</li></ul>	11 <p><b>Conceptual/theoretical framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain the framework or theory you used for your project</li></ul>	12 <p><b>Project Description</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PROJECT METHODS (address who, what, where, when and how)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Population</li><li>• Location</li><li>• Data collection tools</li><li>• Intervention</li><li>• Timeline</li><li>• Protocol</li><li>• IRB</li></ul></li></ul>
13 <p><b>Data Collection Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data Collection Tools<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reliability/validity</li></ul></li><li>• Data Collection Plan</li><li>• Data Analysis Plan</li></ul> <p><small>What data did you collect, why, how was it used in terms of demonstrating the impact of your project.</small></p>	14 <p><b>Project Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe findings/results</li><li>• Use graphs and charts to demonstrate the outcomes</li></ul>	15 <p><b>Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss impact on:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patients</li><li>• Providers</li><li>• Stakeholders</li><li>• Community</li></ul></li><li>• Local, national, global impact</li><li>• Policy implications</li></ul>	16 <p><b>Reflections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lessons learned</li></ul>
17 <p><b>Application of Leadership</b></p>	18 <p><b>Dissemination Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Publications</li><li>• Presentations</li></ul>	19 <p><b>Future Scholarship</b></p>	20 <p><b>Acknowledgements</b></p>
21 <p><b>References</b></p>			

## Appendix 17: IRB Closeout Documentation Form

### IRB Closeout Documentation Form

*A copy of this document can be found in the DNP Repository*

Date:

I affirm that I have:

been notified by the NAU IRB office that my request to close my protocol has been approved.

have completed the NAU IRB closure process.

---

Signature of DNP Program Candidate

*Forward this form to the DNP program coordinator.*