



Nevada

**TOURO UNIVERSITY NEVADA  
SCHOOL OF NURSING  
DNP PROJECT & PRACTICUM HANDBOOK**

**2022-23**

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## **Introduction**

The following handbook was developed to help guide you through the DNP project process and practice-based experiences at Touro University Nevada (TUN). It contains the DNP Project background, definitions and procedures that are required for successful completion of your final project. This handbook also contains necessary documents and templates that will need to be submitted throughout development and completion of your DNP project and other practicum experiences.

## **Mission and Vision**

### **Vision:**

The vision of the Touro University Nevada School of Nursing is to foster the development of professional nurses at all levels who excel in practice, research, education, leadership, and community service.

### **Mission:**

The mission of the Touro University Nevada School of Nursing is to prepare graduates who demonstrate outstanding nurse leadership at all levels who uphold the values, philosophy, and practice of the nursing profession and who are committed to care for patients within an ethical, culturally diverse, and evidenced based framework. The programs are student centered and serve society through practice, research, education, leadership, and community service.

## **DNP Program Outcomes**

### **The graduate will be able to:**

1. Integrate nursing science, theories, and concepts with knowledge from ethics, the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, and organizational sciences as the basis for the highest level of nursing practice.
2. Select appropriate organizational and systems leadership models and theories to promote quality improvement and systems thinking.
3. Compile epidemiological, biostatistical, environmental, cultural, and other appropriate scientific data related to individual, aggregate, and population health to determine and implement the best evidence for practice.
4. Design evidence based practice that integrates nursing science and quality improvement methodologies with the science of other applicable disciplines to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes.
5. Synthesize information systems/technology and patient care technology concepts to improve and transform nursing practice.
6. Critically analyze policy/laws/ethics to develop, evaluate, and advocate for, change that shapes financing, regulation, and delivery of nursing and health care services.
7. Employ effective communication and collaborative skills in the development and implementation of evidence based nursing practice.

## Leadership Focus

TUN's DNP program focuses on nursing leadership, preparing graduates for administrative and/or leadership roles that focus on aggregates, populations, systems, or organizations. Students do not participate in direct patient care through their DNP education. DNP graduates bring knowledge and expertise to identify systems and organizational level problems and develop evidence-based health interventions. The ability to perform such activities requires competency in organizational assessment techniques in addition to expert level knowledge of nursing and related biological and behavioral sciences. The timeline for completing the DNP Project is located in Appendix A.

### DNP Practicum Information PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE IN THE DNP PROGRAM

Throughout the DNP Program at Touro University Nevada (TUN), students are required to enroll in 4 different courses which will allow an opportunity to gain practice experiences. An additional self-study practicum course is available to students who have earned less than 472 post-baccalaureate practice hours prior to this DNP program. The required hours per course are outlined below:

Course Title	Trimester (Accelerated Track)	Trimester (Standard Track)	Practice Hours Required
DNPV 761 DNP Project I	Trimester 1	Trimester 4	144 hours
DNPV 763 Project II	Trimester 2	Trimester 5	144 hours
DNPV 767 Project III	Trimester 3	Trimester 6	144 hours
DNPV 764 Leadership Practicum	Trimester 2	Trimester 2	96 hours
*DNPV 756 DNP Practicum (not required for all students)	After Trimester 1	After Trimester 1	1 credit= 48 hours  Number of credits needed depends upon MSN practice hours transferred into the DNP.

**Note: practice hours will NOT accrue beyond the hours required in each course. Example: 144 hours are required in DNP Project I. Student performs 200 practice hours. Only 144 hours will be counted toward degree completion.**

In all practicum courses, students will engage with a Project or Practice Mentor and key members from the inter- and intra-professional team in various integrative-practice activities with the goal of achieving program outcomes and practice-based learning to prepare them for nursing practice as a doctoral prepared nurse leader. Students are required to pursue leadership practice experiences that will address the DNP Essentials, the TUN DNP Program Outcomes, and lead to mastery of the advanced practice nursing specialty of Scholar-Practitioner and Nurse Leader. During the DNP Project courses, students will carry out a practice-application oriented DNP Project.

Students are required to build diverse practicum experiences related to the DNP Essentials and program outcomes. They should also apply scholarly evidence and other principles learned from didactic courses to their practicum activities. The Practicum Experience Guideline (Appendix E) outlines specific acceptable activities as well as unacceptable activities for practicum experience.

### **Practice Hours Transfer Policy (Appendix D)**

To be eligible for a doctoral degree in nursing, a total of 1000 post-baccalaureate practice hours are required. This DNP program has 528 practice hours embedded in the curriculum; these hours are required as a part of the DNP coursework. **Note: practice hours will NOT accrue beyond the hours required in each course. Example: 144 hours are required in DNP Project I. Student performs 200 practice hours. Only 144 hours will be counted toward degree completion.**

Each student may have up to 472 practice hours endorsed from previous graduate work. Transfer practice hours can be evaluated through various methods including:

1. An official letter confirming number of practice hours completed at the regionally accredited institution the student attended. These hours may be completed during a masters or doctorate degree in nursing.
2. Proof of national certification in an area of advanced practice nursing or certification in nursing that requires a graduate degree in nursing and additional practice hours.
  - a. Students who meet these criteria are eligible for 472 transfer practice hours.
3. Transcript evaluation may be utilized as a method of practicum hour's evaluation in the case that the transcript provides the actual number of practice hours completed.

The student needs to supply evidence of practicum hour completion. **To facilitate this process, an assignment drop-box is in DNPV 760: Introduction to DNP.** If no evidence of previous graduate practice hours is received by the end of DNPV 760, students will need to complete the additional 472 hours via enrollment in 10 credits of *DNPV 756: DNP Practicum*.

All students will receive communication from the Director of Graduate Programs regarding their practice hours transfer evaluation by the end of Trimester 1.

If a student has less than 472 practice hours for transfer, the student will be required to complete an Alternate Curriculum Plan which will be evaluated and approved by the Director of Graduate Programs. To facilitate completion of 1000 post-baccalaureate hours, this plan will include enrollment in *DNPV 756: DNP Practicum* for additional practicum hour completion. Students are eligible to enroll in DNPV 756 at any point after completion of the first trimester of coursework.

Please note that a total of 70 post-baccalaureate credit hours are required to obtain a DNP degree. This DNP Program is a minimum of 33 credit hours. As a result, a student who graduated with an MSN with 36 credit hours or less may be required to take additional credits.

## Practicum Logs

Students will be required to log their practicum hours spent in association with their project through the required forms in Canvas. To complete the required logs in Canvas, students should utilize the document located in each project course named “Practicum Hours Log”. This log should be used by the student throughout the course to record activities as they occur and to obtain electronic signatures from their PM. The “Practicum Hours Log” must be signed by the PM for approval of the hours at the end of each module. Once the “Practicum Hours Log” is submitted in Canvas, students also make note of the hours they completed via the module quiz. Hours recorded in the quiz must match the hours recorded on the paper log.

**Late or incorrect submission of practicum hours may result in loss of course points in accordance with the syllabus requirements.**

Each student should expect to complete approximately nine to ten hours each week for a total of 144 hours by the end of the course. Most students will achieve these hours through completing the activities described in the “Practicum Hours Log” for each course module. If alternative activities are utilized, this requires approval of the Project Instructor. Please see practicum hours guideline for additional information regarding qualifying practicum hours. **At the end of each module, the student must have all required hours logged for that module, or a SIP will be issued. At the end of the trimester the student must have 144 logged hours to receive a final grade in the course. Failure to complete these hours will result in an incomplete grade for the course. This may result in a delay to degree progression.**

### DNP 764 and DNP 756

DNP 764 requires successful completion of 96 practicum hours. DNP 756 is an independent study course that requires 48 practicum hours per credit the student registers for.

In DNP 764 and 756, Practicum Logs must be completed in accordance with the syllabus requirements. The “Practicum Hours Log” must be signed by the PM for approval of the hours at the end of each module. Once the “Practicum Hours Log” is submitted in Canvas, students should also make note of the hours they completed via the module quiz. Hours recorded in the quiz must match the hours recorded on the paper log.

**At the end of each module, the student must have all required hours logged for that module, or a SIP will be issued. At the end of the trimester the student must have the required hours logged to receive a final grade in the course. Failure to complete these hours will result in an incomplete grade for the course.**

## DNP Project Information

### DNP Project Overview

The DNP project reflects the scholarly work completed throughout the DNP program. The project should demonstrate the student’s competency in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (AACN, 2006). This work demonstrates that the DNP student has met and mastered the criteria necessary to be a DNP practitioner.

**AACN Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice**

	<b>The DNP program prepares the graduate to:</b>
<b>Scientific Underpinnings for Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrate nursing science with knowledge from ethics, the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, and organizational sciences as the basis for the highest level of nursing practice.</li> <li>2. Use science-based theories and concepts to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• determine the nature and significance of health and health care delivery phenomena.</li> <li>• describe the actions and advanced strategies to enhance, alleviate, and ameliorate health and health care delivery phenomena as appropriate; and evaluate outcomes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Develop and evaluate new practice approaches based on nursing theories and theories from other disciplines.</li> </ol>
<b>Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and evaluate care delivery approaches that meet current and future needs of patient populations based on scientific findings in nursing and other clinical sciences, as well as organizational, political, and economic sciences.</li> <li>2. Ensure accountability for quality of health care and patient safety for populations with whom they work.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use advanced communication skills/processes to lead quality improvement and patient safety initiatives in health care systems.</li> <li>• Employ principles of business, finance, economics, and health policy to develop and implement effective plans for practice-level and/or system-wide practice initiatives that will improve the quality-of-care delivery.</li> <li>• Develop and/or monitor budgets for practice initiatives.</li> <li>• Analyze the cost-effectiveness of practice initiatives accounting for risk and improvement of health care outcomes.</li> <li>• Demonstrate sensitivity to diverse organizational cultures and populations, including patients and providers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Develop and/or evaluate effective strategies for managing the ethical dilemmas inherent in-patient care, the health care organization, and research.</li> </ol>
<b>Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use analytic methods to critically appraise existing literature and other evidence to determine and implement the best evidence for practice.</li> <li>2. Design and implement processes to evaluate outcomes of practice, practice patterns, and systems of care within a practice setting, health care organization, or community against national benchmarks to determine variances in practice outcomes and population trends.</li> <li>3. Design, direct, and evaluate quality improvement methodologies to promote safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable, and patient-centered care.</li> <li>4. Apply relevant findings to develop practice guidelines and improve practice and the practice environment.</li> </ol>

**AACN Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice**

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Use information technology and research methods appropriately to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect appropriate and accurate data to generate evidence for nursing practice.</li> <li>• Inform and guide the design of databases that generate meaningful evidence for nursing practice.</li> <li>• Analyze data from practice</li> <li>• Design evidence-based interventions</li> <li>• Predict and analyze outcomes</li> <li>• Examine patterns of behavior and outcomes</li> <li>• Identify gaps in evidence for practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Function as a practice specialist/consultant in collaborative knowledge-generating research.</li> <li>7. Disseminate findings from evidence-based practice and research to improve healthcare outcomes.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Technology and Information for the Improvement and Transformation of Patient-Centered Health Care</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design, select, use, and evaluate programs that evaluate and monitor outcomes of care, care systems, and quality improvement including consumer use of health care information systems.</li> <li>2. Analyze and communicate critical elements necessary to the selection, use and evaluation of health care information systems and patient care technology.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate the conceptual ability and technical skills to develop and execute an evaluation plan involving data extraction from practice information systems and databases.</li> <li>4. Provide leadership in the evaluation and resolution of ethical and legal issues within healthcare systems relating to the use of information, information technology, communication networks, and patient care technology.</li> <li>5. Evaluate consumer health information sources for accuracy, timeliness, and appropriateness.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critically analyze health policy proposals, health policies, and related issues from the perspective of consumers, nursing, other health professions, and other stakeholders in policy and public forums.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate leadership in the development and implementation of institutional, local, state, federal, and/or international health policy.</li> <li>3. Influence policy makers through active participation on committees, boards, or task forces at the institutional, local, state, regional, national, and/or international levels to improve health care delivery and outcomes.</li> <li>4. Educate others, including policy makers at all levels, regarding nursing, health policy, and patient care outcomes.</li> <li>5. Advocate for the nursing profession within the policy and healthcare communities.</li> <li>6. Develop, evaluate, and provide leadership for health care policy that shapes health care financing, regulation, and delivery.</li> </ol>

<b>AACN Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Advocate for social justice, equity, and ethical policies within all healthcare arenas.</li> </ol>
<b>Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Employ effective communication and collaborative skills in the development and implementation of practice models, peer review, practice guidelines, health policy, standards of care, and/or other scholarly products.</li> <li>2. Lead interprofessional teams in the analysis of complex practice and organizational issues.</li> <li>3. Employ consultative and leadership skills with intraprofessional and interprofessional teams to create change in health care and complex healthcare delivery systems.</li> </ol>
<b>Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze epidemiological, biostatistical, environmental, and other appropriate scientific data related to individual, aggregate, and population health.</li> <li>2. Synthesize concepts, including psychosocial dimensions and cultural diversity, related to clinical prevention and population health in developing, implementing, and evaluating interventions to address health promotion/disease prevention efforts, improve health status/access patterns, and/or address gaps in care of individuals, aggregates, or populations.</li> <li>3. Evaluate care delivery models and/or strategies using concepts related to community, environmental and occupational health, and cultural and socioeconomic dimensions of health.</li> </ol>
<b>Advanced Nursing Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a comprehensive and systematic assessment of health and illness parameters in complex situations, incorporating diverse and culturally sensitive approaches.</li> <li>2. Design, implement, and evaluate therapeutic interventions based on nursing science and other sciences.</li> <li>3. Develop and sustain therapeutic relationships and partnerships with patients (individual, family or group) and other professionals to facilitate optimal care and patient outcomes.</li> <li>4. Demonstrate advanced levels of clinical judgment, systems thinking, and accountability in designing, delivering, and evaluating evidence-based care to improve patient outcomes.</li> <li>5. Guide, mentor, and support other nurses to achieve excellence in nursing practice.</li> <li>6. Educate and guide individuals and groups through complex health and situational transitions.</li> <li>7. Use conceptual and analytical skills in evaluating the links among practice, organizational, population, fiscal, and policy issues.</li> </ol>

A major assessment of learning in this program is accomplished through completion of the DNP Project. All TUN DNP students must complete an integrated evidence-based DNP Project that demonstrates a leadership practice (non-research) focus. The DNP final project is an application-oriented, scholarly document exemplifying the concept of the scholar-practitioner. Project topics may vary with student preference. DNP Projects at TUN should utilize methodology consistent with a quality improvement project or an evidence-based practice project. This project is developed sequentially throughout the three trimesters of the DNP program.

## Examples of DNP Projects

DNP projects are advanced practice focused and are meant to improve a population, health care system, or community. Typically, projects emanate from the student's clinical or professional nursing practice. Projects must be completed at a single site and involve collaboration with an organization. The DNP project must be performed in a nursing leadership practice setting. Practice settings may include but are not limited to hospitals, outpatient clinics, outpatient surgery centers, community health and public health. The project should be an evidence-based practice innovation that creates a change process. The DNP project should also include evidence of evaluation through the generation and analysis of data.

Please note that projects in an academic setting such as a school of nursing are not appropriate for this program.

The AACN (2015) states that all DNP Projects should meet the following criteria:

- Focus on a system or population
- Should be centered on changes that directly or indirectly impact healthcare outcomes
- Demonstrate a plan for future sustainability
- Provide an evaluation of the outcomes
- Serve as a foundation for future nursing practice scholarship

### **Common areas of DNP projects include:**

- Quality improvement projects
- Evidence-based practice
- Program development
- Development of new policies or revision
- Practice change initiative
- Implementation and evaluation of a technological innovation to enhance or evaluate care

## DNP Project/Practice Site

Throughout the DNP Program at TUN, students will enroll in 4 different courses which will allow an opportunity to gain practicum experiences. These courses include Leadership Practicum (96 hours), DNP Project I (144 hours), DNP Project II (144 hours), and DNP Project III (144 hours). Students are responsible for establishing a practice site for the DNP Project by week 4 of DNP Project I and will use same practice site to complete practice hours in DNP Project II and III (See Appendix F). Practice sites may include a diversity of settings including various healthcare organizations including community centers, acute care facilities, long term care facilities, prison systems, school systems, corporations (addressing employee health), non-governmental organizations and public health organizations. *DNP Project sites can not include academic centers dealing with nursing students at any level.*

Students enrolled in the Leadership Practicum course may utilize the same practice agreement established for their DNP Project or they may also utilize a new site if they choose. Students are asked to verify that a practice site has been established for this course during trimester two (See Appendix F). Students may choose to use the same practice site for Leadership Practicum as they use for the DNP Project.

## Assistance with DNP Practice Site

Students may at times have difficulty establishing a practice site. To assist with this situation, TUN maintains a current nationwide list of established affiliation agreements that may be utilized as practice sites for DNP students. If a student wishes to view the list of current affiliation agreements in a specific

state, please request this list from the Practicum Placement Specialist. TUN cannot guarantee placement at a practice site.

### **Affiliation Agreements**

Touro University Nevada does not require affiliation agreements for DNP Practicum Experiences. However, the practice site may require an affiliation agreement with Touro. If the site requires an agreement, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain the agreement. In compliance with these standards, each student must submit a signed waiver or agreement in the designated week of the appropriate courses. Should a site require an affiliation agreement, please contact your course lead faculty or Project Instructor for more details on this process.

### **Project Resources**

In completion of a successful DNP project, students will be required to seek out various internal and external resources in their professional community. In some cases, delays in the project timeline may occur when a specific resource is unavailable or difficult to obtain. Project due dates may be adapted as needed to allow for student progression where appropriate.

### **DNP Project Team**

The student will work with their project team throughout their DNP Project. This project team will consist of two doctoral-prepared nurses including the Project Instructor (PI) (an assigned TUN faculty member) and the Project Mentor (PM) (Doctoral prepared non-faculty nurse selected by the student, licensed in the same state as the project is being conducted). If the PI and/or the PM do not have expertise in the area of the DNP project, it is strongly recommended that an additional Content Expert (CE) be consulted as part of the project team. The content expert must possess expertise in the project topic, have obtained a master's degree or higher, and does not need to have a registered nurse license. Below are qualifications, roles, and responsibilities of each role.

### **Project Instructor Role**

The Project Instructor (PI) has primary responsibility over grading the students' project submissions and guiding the student in DNP Project decisions. The Project Instructor also coordinates the "Project Team Determination" which is used to determine if the student's project falls in the jurisdiction of TUN IRB as research. In rare circumstances, students may be required to submit a full TUN IRB application. Under these circumstances, the Project Instructor will be listed as the "Principal Investigator" on the IRB application. Students are encouraged to reach out to their PI with questions regarding the DNP Project at any time they feel necessary. The Project Instructor also serves as the students' academic advisor during their enrollment in the TUN DNP program.

The PI agrees to:

- Always maintain open communication with the PM and Student.
- Offer to schedule virtual meetings with the Project Mentor and Student at least once per session and as needed at other times.
- Support the student and the Project Mentor through availability and responsiveness to identified issues.

## Project Mentor Role

All students must have a Project Mentor. The Project Mentor will work with the student throughout their academic career at TUN to help them gain practical experience in a nursing leadership practice environment as well as guide the student in the DNP Project experience. The Project Mentor must meet the criteria listed in these guidelines (See Appendix F).

When selecting a Project Mentor, consider the following guidelines:

1. The individual should possess an adequate content understanding related to the DNP topic and/or practice setting. The individual is not required to be employed at the project site. The PM serves in a mentor role and may assist to:
  - Gain access to practicum experience.
  - Troubleshoot issues that arise during the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project.
  - Provide encouragement and support during the DNP project.
  - Share expertise regarding the project topic where appropriate.
  - Ideally, you will choose someone that can provide mentorship throughout the entire program.
2. The PM must have an earned doctoral degree (PhD, EdD, DNP).
3. The PM should be responsive and available to provide signatures to validate practicum experience hours completed at the site at the completion of each module.
4. The PM must have a current unencumbered RN license in the state where the DNP Project will occur. Compact license is acceptable provided both the student and the PM are authorized to practice in the state where the project will take place.
5. The PM is not responsible for grading work and is not considered a TUN faculty member.
6. The PM may not be the student's workplace supervisor.
7. The PM must possess adequate technology skills to read and respond to emails, and to communicate with the DNP student in a timely fashion.
8. The PM must provide a copy of their curriculum vitae (CV) or resume for review by the course instructor and inclusion in an assignment submission for the applicable week in the project course. The CV must reflect adequate leadership experience and a doctoral level education.
9. The PM may not be a first or second degree relative of the student.

## Content Expert Role (Optional)

Each student can identify individuals with practice expertise and/or stakeholders pertaining to their DNP Scholarly Project topic. An individual serving as a content expert needs adequate content understanding in the area related to the DNP project and agrees to mentor the student throughout the program and provide guidance with development and implementation of the DNP Project, under supervision of the project team.

### Qualifications:

- Hold a minimum of a Master's degree in a related field to the DNP Project topic from a regionally accredited University and have adequate knowledge and/or expertise related to the DNP scholarly project.
- A content expert may be a specialist or stakeholder from any discipline relating to the student's DNP Project.

- A content expert should submit a CV or resume that reflects expertise in the project topic area of the student's DNP Project. This document should be provided to the student who will submit it through Canvas for review by the Project Instructor.

**Responsibilities:**

- Support the student throughout the program or sessions they agree to participate. It is preferred that the Content Expert commit to working with the student throughout the program.
- Meet in person or virtually with the student and the Project Team as needed throughout the students' academic career at TUN.
- Mentor the student towards successful completion of the identified DNP scholarly project, under the supervision of the Project Team.
- Coach, support, and mentor the student towards success as necessary, including obtaining necessary site approvals in the identified practice setting.

**Student Role and Responsibilities**

The Student agrees to:

- Utilize the time of the project team effectively and efficiently through effective communication and respect.
- Meet in person or virtually, with the Project Team at least as needed throughout the student's academic career at TUN.
- Make consistent progress towards completion of the DNP Scholarly project and to keep the Project Team updated on their progress through submission of appropriate weekly Practicum logs and communication with all parties on an as needed basis.
- Complete all project course assignments in a timely manner.
- Reach out to the Project Instructor and/or Project Mentor with questions and for support as needed.

<b>DNP Project Team</b>		
<b>Team Member</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>Required Qualifications</b>
Project Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades the student's project submissions.</li> <li>Is listed as the principal investigator for projects requiring IRB oversight.</li> <li>Answers questions related the DNP Project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assigned Faculty Member</li> </ul>
Project Mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs weekly practicum logs on appropriate form once per module (4-5 times per trimester) to validate practicum experience completion.</li> <li>Collaborates with the student throughout their DNP program.</li> <li>Helps the student gain practical experience in a nursing leadership practice environment.</li> <li>Coach, support, and mentor the student towards success as necessary, including obtaining necessary site approvals in the identified practice setting.</li> <li>Meets in person or virtually with the student and the Project Team as needed throughout the DNP Project process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be able to provide mentorship throughout the entire program.</li> <li>Must be available to assist with the practice component of the program, which centers on completion of DNP project.</li> <li>Must possess an adequate content understanding related to your DNP Project topic area.</li> <li>The PM must have an earned doctoral degree (PhD, EdD, DNP).</li> <li>The PM may not be the student's supervisor.</li> <li>The PM must possess adequate technology skills to read and respond to emails, and to communicate with you in a timely fashion.</li> <li>The PM must provide a copy of their curriculum vitae (CV) or resume for review by the course instructor and inclusion in your assignment submission for the applicable week in the project course. The CV must reflect adequate leadership experience and a doctoral level education.</li> </ul>
Content Expert (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides practice expertise on the student's DNP Project topic.</li> <li>Provides guidance in the development and implementation of the DNP Project, under the supervision of the Project Team.</li> <li>Meets in person or virtually with the student and the Project Team as needed throughout the DNP Project process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold a minimum of a Master's degree in a related field to the DNP Project topic from a regionally accredited University.</li> <li>Must possess adequate knowledge and/or expertise related to the DNP Project Topic.</li> <li>Will need to submit a CV or resume that reflects expertise in the project topic area of the student's DNP Project.</li> </ul>

<b>DNP Project Team</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach, support, and mentor the student towards success as necessary, including obtaining necessary site approvals in the identified practice setting.</li> </ul>	
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilizes the time of the project team effectively and efficiently through effective communication and respect.</li> <li>• Meets in person or virtually, with the Project Team at least as needed throughout the students' academic career at TUN.</li> <li>• Make consistent progress towards completion of the DNP Scholarly project.</li> <li>• Communicates with the Content Expert, Project Mentor and Project Team on their project progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance into Touro's DNP program</li> </ul>

### **Additional Project Team Information**

The Project Instructor utilizes course rubrics to evaluate and grade each project submission. Project approval is determined by achieving a passing grade of 830/1000 (83%) or higher in the course. In the case that the grade on a final attempt of a project paper is determined by the Project Instructor to be less than passing (83%), the student's paper will be independently examined by a second DNP faculty member to ensure equitable grading. School of Nursing policy #1430 outlines the procedure for this process.

### **DNP Project Ethics and Human Subjects Protection**

All DNP Projects are subject to the highest standards for human subject protection, confidentiality, and ethical practice. Each student should work with their project team, and any regulatory officials at their project/practice site to ensure the highest standards for human subject protection, confidentiality, and ethical practice.

At TUN, DNP Projects should not utilize research of discovery methodology. Quality improvement design does not require IRB oversight at TUN. Determination forms are located in designated courses to ensure that research of discovery methodology is not utilized in DNP Projects.

In the rare circumstance that a student's project is determined to require IRB oversight at TUN, all appropriate policies and procedures must be followed. Students whose projects meet criteria for IRB exemption determination application or full IRB application submission will be required to submit such to the IRB for review and official determination. Criteria for each of these applications are explained in detail on designated IRB forms. The School of Nursing and DNP Project team will support any decisions and/or recommendations of the TUN IRB Committee in this regard.

Students are also subject to any regulatory requirements of the practice/project site including the possibility of additional IRB application(s) or Quality Improvement Review committees within the host

organization. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of such regulations and be compliant with these standards.

### **Institutional Review Board Process**

During DNP Project II, a Project Determination form (Appendix A) should be completed and submitted to the project team via Canvas for review. The Project Determination form will be utilized to determine if the project methodology warrants official IRB application submission through the TUN IRB committee or if the project is a “quality improvement” methodology and therefore will not require IRB oversight. Projects that require IRB application submission must also be registered to the TUN Research Committee. Students completing projects requiring research registration should work with their Project Team in completing the DNP Project Team Determination: Quality Improvement Project or Research form (Appendix B). Students should be aware that IRB approval processes may result in significant delays in implementation timelines. Students should stay in close communication with the Project Team members throughout this process to arrange for necessary timeline extensions.

Quality improvement projects will not be registered with a TUN research registration number or with TUN IRB. However, students will be required to address basic principles of ethics and confidentiality in alignment with the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics throughout their DNP Project. Further, specific steps taken to address issues of confidentiality and ethics should be clearly outlined in an appropriately labeled section of the DNP Project Paper. Specific approvals regarding confidentiality and ethics principles in quality improvement projects will be addressed on an individual basis by the project team. All necessary approvals must be in place before project implementation occurs.

If the agency where the project will be implemented requires separate IRB approval, the student should initiate this process. Send any documents to the course instructor and submit them as appendices to your DNP Project submission where appropriate. All IRB approvals, agency agreements, and final approval from the DNP Project Team and/or Graduate Curriculum Committee must be in place prior to starting project implementation.

#### **Full IRB Review**

If a student’s DNP Project is subject to full IRB review, delays may occur in the project timeline. In this situation, provided the student has completed all necessary applications in a timely fashion, the student will be permitted to continue in the DNP Program course of study. In this situation, at the end of DNP Project III, if the student’s project is not complete the student will be granted an “Incomplete” to allow the project to be completed to satisfaction. Incomplete grades are subject to the regulations of the TUN University Catalog.

### **DNPV 764: Leadership Practicum**

Students are required to enroll in *DNP 764: Leadership Practicum* during trimester two for standard and accelerated tracks. This is a structured course that requires the completion of various practice activities covering all DNP Essentials in a 16-week timeframe. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain a practice site and a practicum mentor for this course that allows for a diversity of practice experiences. Students submit paperwork to authorize practicum experiences during week 1. Specifically, the student’s personal nursing license, the practicum mentor’s license and the CV, evidence of need/or no need for affiliation agreement, rationale for selecting the practicum mentor, and a signed Practicum Mentor agreement (Appendix F).

### Practicum Activity Examples

Students should utilize the Practicum Experience Guideline (Appendix E) to determine appropriate practice activities for all practice-based courses. The following list provides examples of appropriate practice-based activities that may be completed in this DNP Program.

Practice Activity Description	Example
<p>Employ inter- and intra-professional collaboration with members of the healthcare team.</p>	<p>Attend meetings with agency/organizational/community leaders for the exploration, definition and discussion of the DNP Project problem or other identified practice issues pertaining to a specific practice-based course.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Attend agency/organization/community committee meetings to evaluate a practice protocol, guidelines, or process improvement project(s).</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Attend agency/organization/community planning meetings to determine goals and approaches for addressing the DNP Project problem or other identified practice issues pertaining to a specific practice-based course.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Attend meetings with consultants and/or content experts to learn about approaches for addressing the DNP Project problem or other identified practice issues pertaining to a specific practice-based course.</p>
<p>Interact with other doctoral student specialties including PhD, DNP, and any other applicable specialties including engineering, public health, business professionals, and healthcare administration.</p>	<p>Attend DNP Project Presentations of other students.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Consult a student from another discipline to collaborate on a practice issue pertaining to a practice-based course project or the DNP Project</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Participate in a health initiative at local, state, and regional health departments involving students from other disciplines.</p>
<p>Engage with experts in nursing and other disciplines to facilitate mentorship and meaningful student engagement and education.</p>	<p>Pursue opportunities for using data bases to evaluate outcomes of care.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Time spent engaging in leadership activities with a PM in an area of nursing leadership.</p>

Practice Activity Description	Example
<p>Participate in a wide variety of learning activities that bring about application, synthesis, and expansion of knowledge at the doctoral level.</p>	<p>Site visits to gain background or depth in the DNP Project topic or other identified practice issues pertaining to a specific practice-based course.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Create presentations or facilitate work groups related to the DNP Project or other practice-based course, e.g., planning and project development/implementation/evaluation.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Spend time carrying out the DNP Project or other practice-based course project (poster, podium, workshop, or conference presentation).</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Attend pre-approved workshops or conferences within the limits of the practicum guideline.</p>
<p>Share in meaningful learning experiences within various practice environments that utilize nurse leaders</p>	<p>Assist in writing a grant proposal with a nurse leader.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Conduct professional journal review under the guidance of an appropriate mentor.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Assist in policy review and revision at a practice site.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Collaborate with a community leader to organize a disaster preparedness movement.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Establish a mentoring relationship with a Dean/Director/CEO of an organization that supplies nursing leadership and spend time carrying out tasks related to an advanced nursing leadership role.</p>
<p>Spend practice hours in the practice environment related to the final DNP Project or other practice-based activity.</p>	<p>This can be accomplished in several ways including collaborating with a Project Mentor or stakeholders regarding the project, attending and participating in administrative meetings pertaining to the DNP Project in the practice setting, etc.</p>

### Examples of DNP Project Topics from the CCNE White Paper

Students are encouraged to develop unique DNP Projects that cover topics of interest to them in a practice setting of their choice. Below are some examples of common practice areas explored in a DNP Project with a leadership focus. Examples of appropriate evaluations of these problems are provided in the right-hand column.

<b>Organizational Systems Leadership Projects</b>	
<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Work with the Director of the local Red Cross exploring ways to improve disaster preparedness.</p> <p><i>Or</i></p> <p>Work with the System Safety Office evaluating the disaster plan incorporating national best practices and making recommendations for quality improvement of the system plan.</p> <p><b>Then</b></p> <p>Create or improve a disaster response plan guideline or protocol based on current evidence. After the protocol has been accepted by the host organization and TUN, develop a webinar on the guideline/protocol and disseminate it to the appropriate audience. (i.e., Volunteers /employees of the local red cross who would be the responders in the disaster situation.)</p>	<p><b>Formative Evaluation:</b> Perform a pre-test and posttest to evaluate learning of the participants and establish effectiveness of the presentation. In addition, collect data on the specific outcome you are trying to impact. For example, perhaps the literature reveals that healthcare worker response time/rates in a disaster impacts mortality rates. You might coordinate with the appropriate team members to collect baseline data on healthcare worker response time in a mock disaster prior to this implementation or using the previous methodology (this data would likely already be collected by the organization if it has a known impact on mortality rates. It would also need to be determined if mock disaster response rates correlate with actual disasters. You may use this data as a part of the formative evaluation.)</p> <p><b>Summative Evaluation:</b> To perform an appropriate summative evaluation, determine a realistic timeframe considering the DNP program length and organizational structure of the practice site. Collect outcome data pertaining to the desired impact area. In this example, you might conduct a disaster drill and evaluate data on healthcare worker response time/rates. Did the new protocol effect response rates? This would be appropriate outcome data.</p>

Population Health	
Project Example	Evaluation Example
Partner with community organizations that affect the health of high-risk populations to address screening or health education processes, financial challenges (including how to raise money and manage money), volunteerism, and interactions/collaborative opportunities with the healthcare system. Examples of community agencies include: Habitat for Humanity, food pantries, Catholic Charities, homeless shelters, Salvation Army, and Hope Center. Other opportunities might include collaboration with private sector companies to design healthcare facilities, or design and implement wellness/health programs in conjunction with business such as the airline or auto industry.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate outcome measures specific to a local homeless shelter before and after implementing a performance improvement plan in a homeless shelter. Appropriate outcome measures might include 1) Permanent housing at exit 2) Housing tenure 3) Employment at exit.</li> <li>2. Before and after implementing a guideline for addressing health literacy using best practices in a rural health clinic, examine staff understanding of best practices surrounding this topic. Evaluate utilization of appropriate discharge instructions that are tailored to the patient's literacy level over a period after implementation.</li> </ol>
Policy Projects	
Project Example	Evaluation Example
Evaluate evidence to develop a policy to reduce major events that trigger an ED visit, e.g., by notifying a provider that a fall has occurred, document evidence of need for the policy change; Evaluate geriatric trauma screening for triage; make a recommendation for policy change to revise criteria.	<p><b>Formative:</b> After developing/revising and implementing a policy to address fall prevention in a healthcare facility, present the new policy to staff and evaluate their understanding of it.</p> <p><b>Summative:</b> Examine fall rates before and after the policy implementation.</p>
Long Term Care Facilities	
Project Example	Evaluation Example
Evaluate and implement a quality improvement program within a long-term care facility, e.g., Evercare or a Medicare Advantage plan, to improve antibiotic selection for symptomatic UTIs in older adults without indwelling catheters and to decrease the inappropriate use of nitrofurantoin.	<p><b>Formative:</b> After developing/revising and implementing a guideline, present the new guideline to medical and nursing staff and evaluate their understanding of it.</p> <p><b>Summative:</b> Examine nitrofurantoin use related to symptomatic UTI's in patients without indwelling catheters before and after the guideline implementation.</p>

<b>Urgent Care</b>	
<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Focus on achieving the national benchmark of urgent care visit times lasting less than 60 minutes, identifying and mitigating impediments to efficient patient flow at a Family Medicine Center Walk-in Clinic.</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Implement a quality improvement project to identify measure and rectify bottlenecks impacting patient flow through the clinic while tracking total visit times.</p>	<p><b>Formative:</b> After developing/revising and implementing a guideline addressing patient flow, present the new guideline to medical and nursing staff and evaluate their understanding of it.</p> <p><b>Summative:</b> Evaluate visit times before and after the protocol is implemented.</p>
<b>Prison Systems</b>	
<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Explore the effectiveness of chronic disease management models and mental health services among the aging population in prison systems. Focus on the institution of mental health screening and care models to be integrated into the prison system of care.</p>	<p><b>Formative:</b> After developing/revising and implementing a guideline addressing mental health services, present the new guideline to medical and nursing staff and evaluate their understanding of it.</p> <p><b>Summative:</b> Evaluate specific outcome measures related to mental health treatment before and after the protocol is implemented. Outcome measures should be determined through literature review and institutional review but may include 1) Prison violent event incidence rate 2) Medication regimen compliance 3) Connection to mental health community resources on release.</p>
<b>School Systems</b>	
<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Evaluate Tobacco Free Teens program as a mobile device application, introduce the mobile application in a middle school classroom and evaluate the adolescents' satisfaction with the tool; other areas of focus may include evaluating immunizations, weight loss, and healthy eating.</p>	<p><b>Formative:</b> After developing/revising and implementing a guideline addressing smoking cessation for teens, present the new guideline to appropriate medical and nursing staff and evaluate their understanding of it. You might consider holding a school wide presentation to present the</p>

	<p>smoking cessation program and have open enrollment as well.</p> <p><b>Summative:</b> Evaluate teen smoking in the school system before and after the intervention. Or if the school already had a smoking cessation program, you could evaluate enrollment in the smoking cessation program before and after.</p>
<b>Community-based Care Network</b>	
<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Implement a quality improvement project developed to address the gaps in APRN practice and evaluate the impact of a competency-based training program on the translation of evidence in the APRNs' practice.</p>	<p>Specific outcome measures for evaluation could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase documentation of didactic training and skills validation for transvaginal ultrasounds and endometrial biopsy from 0% to 90%.</li> <li>- Increase the number of APRNs who perform transvaginal cervical length measurement in the assessment of symptomatic preterm labor patients from less than 40% to 75%.</li> <li>- Decrease the number of fetal fibronectin studies run without a corresponding cervical length measurement by 20%.</li> <li>- Decrease the number of inadequate endometrial samples from the current 25% to less than 10% by X date.</li> <li>- Increase the percent of endometrial biopsies being done by APRNs in the region to greater than 50%.</li> </ul>
<b>Rural Native American Reservation</b>	
<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Form a working group with health department personnel to discuss and address the issues of health literacy and cultural sensitivity; Develop a case management model for more complex patients that includes the development of a cost sharing plan that proposes utilizing social workers from the senior center to coordinate this service</p>	<p><b>Formative:</b> After developing/revising and implementing a program, present the new guideline to appropriate medical and nursing staff and evaluate their understanding of it.</p> <p><b>Summative:</b> Evaluate outcome measures associated with understanding/compliance to the prescribed medical regimen based on literature</p>

<p>and proposes to the community council the need to add a professional nurse FTE position to the clinic to help coordinate the effort of the social workers in ensuring regular follow up of patients;</p> <p>Implement the use of community health workers as a means of further engaging the community and as a means of increasing follow-up visits.</p>	<p>review. For example, let's say that you find research that says a patient will fill a new blood pressure medication within 48 hours or not at all. You could evaluate first time blood pressure medication fills before and after your intervention.</p>
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**Public Health Department**

<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Collaborate with state government units to improve access to health care, negotiating tribal governance, gender issues, language, and culture in a population by training lay health promoters e.g., to improve the diet and access to fresh foods or providing zinc supplementation to the under age 5 population in Guatemala.</p>	<p>Specific outcome measures for evaluation could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- X% increase in care access for diabetes management for x population.</li> <li>- X% increase in zinc supplement delivery to children under 5 in Guatemala population.</li> <li>- An x% increase in use of language services within a public health clinic.</li> <li>- An x% decrease in STD rates and healthcare access for sex workers in a legal brothel.</li> </ul>

**Non-governmental Organizations and Community Health Organizations**

<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Collaborate with in country NGOs to decrease stigmatization and increase screening for breast cancer in Zambia; or collaborate with the American Heart Association or other organization to improve outcomes in the community.</p>	<p>Specific outcome measures for evaluation could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Breast cancer screening rates increased by x% by x date.</li> </ul>

**Corporations**

<b>Project Example</b>	<b>Evaluation Example</b>
<p>Focus on decreasing the percentage of employees in a manufacturing plant with a BMI in the obese or overweight category by changing cafeteria food options, educational initiatives and a voluntary employer-based 16-week wellness program.</p>	<p>Specific outcome measures for evaluation could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change of cafeteria menu items to include x% more of healthy foods or low-calorie options.</li> <li>- X% increase in enrollment to a voluntary employer-based 16-week wellness program.</li> <li>- BMI decrease of x% in x% of employees by x date.</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX A: DNP Project Timeline**



<b>Activity</b>	<b>Course</b>
Select Clinical Site	DNP Project I
Identify Area of Interest for DNP Project	DNP Project I
Select Project Mentor	DNP Project I
Select Content Experts	DNP Project I
Complete needs assessment for DNP Project	DNP Project I
Select DNP Project	DNP Project I
Complete Review of the Literature	DNP Project I
Develop Proposal	DNP Project I & DNP Project II
Complete CITI Certification	DNP Project II
Submit Final Proposal to Project team	DNP Project II
DNP Project Team Determination: Quality Improvement Project or Research form (approval for implementation)	DNP Project II
Implement project (after approval)	DNP Project III
Complete the data collection, analysis and submit Final Paper	DNP Project III
Final Practicum Log Submission	DNP Project III
TUN Research Day poster and abstract submission	DNP Project III
DNP Student Presentation	DNP Project III
Final DNP Project Submission	DNP Project III

## APPENDIX B: DNP Project Team Determination: Quality Improvement Project or Research form

This form is to be filled out by the student at the time the IRB application is filled out. All students will fill out the IRB application as this experience will provide insight into the IRB process. This decision form will then be used to guide the student and the project team as to whether the IRB application should be submitted to IRB. Although all IRB applications should be submitted to the course drop-box, IRB applications are only submitted to the IRB for review when they are determined to be research (not quality improvement) and involve human subjects.

All DNP Projects regardless of methodology must uphold the highest standards of ethical practice including confidentiality and privacy as described in the ANA Code of Ethics. Accordingly, basic principles of ethics, confidentiality and privacy must be addressed and maintained in each phase of the DNP Project implementation. Methods for maintaining such should be described in full detail within body of the DNP Project Paper.

If the determination is made that the DNP Project is a “Quality Improvement Project”, then the project should be referred to as such in all future communications both in writing and verbally. “Quality Improvement Projects” should not be referred to as research or research projects. In addition, these projects are not subject to any form of IRB review. Additionally, the student should not make any claim in writing or verbally of IRB exemption status, acceptance, or review in such projects.

Section A should be completed and submitted by the student. Section B should be completed by the faculty.

### SECTION A:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

DNP Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

DNP Project Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

### Quality Improvement or Research Worksheet

*Rachel Nosowsky, Esq.*

ITEM	Issue and Guidance	Rating
1	Are participants randomized into different intervention groups in order to enhance confidence in differences that might be obscured by nonrandom selection? Randomization done to achieve equitable allocation of a scarce resource need not be considered and would not result in a “yes” here.	____ YES  ____ NO
2	Does the project seek to test issues that are beyond current science and experience, such as new treatments (i.e., is there much controversy about whether the intervention will be beneficial to actual patients – or is it designed simply to move existing evidence into practice?). If the project is	____ YES  ____ NO

ITEM	Issue and Guidance	Rating
	performed to implement existing knowledge to improve care – rather than to develop new knowledge – answer “no”.	
3	Are there any potential conflicts of interest (financial or otherwise) among any researchers involved in the project? If so, please attach a description of such in an attachment to this form.	___ YES  ___ NO
4	Is the protocol fixed with a fixed goal, methodology, population, and time period? If frequent adjustments are made in the intervention, the measurement, and even the goal over time as experience accumulates, the answer is more likely “no.”	___ YES  ___ NO
5	Will data collection occur in stages with an effort to remove potential bias? If so is there any potential for data skewing from this process?	___ YES  ___ NO
6	Is the project funded by an outside organization with a commercial interest in the use of the results? If the answer to this question is “Yes” please also answer question 6a and 6b. If the project is funded by third-party payors through clinical reimbursement incentives, or through internal clinical/operations funds vs. research funds, the answer to this question is more likely to be “no.”	___ YES  ___ NO
	6a Is the sponsor a manufacturer with an interest in the outcome of the project relevant to its products?	___ YES  ___ NO
	6b Is it a non-profit foundation that typically funds research, or internal research accounts?	___ YES  ___ NO

Adapted from Hastings Center, “The Ethics of Using Quality Improvement Methods to Improve Health Care Quality and Safety” (June 2006) If the weight of the answers tends toward “yes” overall, the project should be considered “research” and approved by an IRB prior to implementation. If the weight of the answers tends toward “no,” the project is not “research” and is not subject to IRB oversight unless local institutional policies differ. Answering “yes” to sequence #1 or #2 – even if all other answers are “no” – typically will result in a finding that the project constitutes research. It is important to consult with your local IRB if you are unsure how they would handle a particular case, as the analysis of the above issues cannot always be entirely objective and IRB policies and approaches vary significantly.

Obtained from:

[https://irb.research.chop.edu/sites/default/files/documents/quality\\_improvement\\_or\\_research\\_worksheet.pdf](https://irb.research.chop.edu/sites/default/files/documents/quality_improvement_or_research_worksheet.pdf)

Additional resources:

[http://humansubjects.stanford.edu/research/documents/qa\\_qi\\_faqs\\_AID03H16.pdf](http://humansubjects.stanford.edu/research/documents/qa_qi_faqs_AID03H16.pdf)

<https://irb.research.chop.edu/quality-improvement-vs-research>

#### SECTION B:

Project Classification Decision:

The project team consisting of a minimum of two faculty members will select one of the three classifications listed below.

\_\_\_\_\_ This DNP Project is a quality improvement project. Do not submit to IRB for review.

\_\_\_\_\_ This DNP Project contains research methodology, and an IRB application should be submitted to the TUN IRB committee for exemption determination and/or full IRB review.

\_\_\_\_\_ This DNP Project is not clearly delineated as quality improvement or research of discovery. Additional consultation will be obtained from the IRB committee by the project team. The advice of the IRB committee regarding the need for review will be noted in writing and the student will be informed of such (Please attach any pertinent documentation from IRB review as an Appendix to this document.)

By signing below, the project indicates that they agree with the above selection.

Printed Name of Project Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Project Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C: DNP Project Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Question:** How do I make this leadership with a patient focus? I just want to focus on patients/ I plan to stay at the bedside.

**Answer:** One way to bring a patient care project to a leadership/organizational level is to create an evidence-based guideline or protocol that addresses the phenomenon of interest. You will need to establish how the guideline or protocol addresses an institutional need and aligns with institutional/organizational goals. Perhaps the guideline may address healthcare costs or accreditation standards. You will want to fully explore this and show that you are creating evidence-based patient care guideline or protocol based on an institutional or organizational need that can produce sustainable positive change. If you can do this, you probably have a great project in front of you!

2. **Question:** I want to do a project that involves direct patient interaction. Is this acceptable?

**Answer:** A DNP leadership project is an indirect care degree and should not involve any direct patient care. Direct patient care should not be a part of the DNP student's practicum experience at any point. As such, the DNP student should not engage in any phase of the nursing process including assessment, diagnosis, planning care, implementation, evaluation, and patient education. However, students are encouraged to utilize the nursing process to indirectly improve patient outcomes and patient care processes. For example, a DNP student with a leadership focus may choose to create a protocol for a specific disease management in a clinical setting. The DNP student would write the protocol using best evidence and expert consultation and then implement the protocol into the host organization/nursing unit. Once the implementation was approved, the DNP student may choose to educate the staff regarding the new protocol and collect data before and after the implementation. The staff would then engage in patient care that the DNP student directed through the protocol. This is indirect patient care and is highly appropriate in a leadership focus project.

3. **Question:** I have wanted to make a change in a specific procedure at my work for a while. Can I utilize the DNP project to make this change?

**Answer:** Your DNP Project should have a solid foundation of scholarly evidence to support it. You may find through personal practice reflection, stakeholder interview, and literature search a problem of interest. Is the intervention based on current scholarly evidence? A common mistake made is to propose an intervention that is based on personal perspective but not founded in research. Although personal perspective and stakeholder perspectives are important to consider in project development, they can't serve as the foundation of the DNP Project without substantive evidence to support the project.

4. **Question:** I have had an idea on how to address a problem at my work for a while. I would like to explore if it would work. Would this be a good DNP Project?

**Answer:** If the idea has previously been explored and established to be "best practice standards" in the literature or via national guidelines then this would make a great DNP Project. If your idea is an original idea that you would like to research for the first time, then you should probably reconsider. A common mistake made is to suggest an intervention that has not been explored in previous research. This is considered research of discovery and would not be appropriate for the scope of the DNP Project. Research of discovery requires advanced understanding of research methodology and often takes years to accomplish using appropriate methodology. The DNP

Essentials guide the DNP student toward translating existing evidence into practice a practice setting of interest. This should be the primary focus of the DNP Project.

5. **Question:** How do I know if this is a DNP project or a master's level project?

**Answer:** A Masters level project will meet the master's level CCNE Essentials of Practice. A Doctoral level project will meet the Doctoral level Essentials of practice. In general, the doctoral level project involves a higher level of synthesis, analysis, and creation, and evaluation. Please review the DNP Essentials for further guidance.

6. **Question:** How do I write appropriate objectives to a DNP Project?

**Answer:** A DNP Project objective is a clear statement of a desired outcome. DNP Project objectives should be in APA list format and not in paragraph format. These types of objectives should be attainable and realistic regarding what the project will accomplish. Objectives should include a specific time frame, a description of those involved, the action, procedure, place, and criteria for success. If any one of these components is missing, it is not a complete objective. Example of providing realistic, attainable objectives: If the student would like to create a community health program to feed homeless people in an urban community as a DNP Project, then a realistic project objective might be something like, "Through this DNP Project, a Community Health Program will be created at the host community center in urban California that provides 3 meals to 100 homeless individuals per day by May 2018." An example of an unrealistic goal would be the following: "Through this DNP Project, a Community Health Program will be created at the host community center in urban California that resolves homeless hunger by May 2018." Resolving hunger is an admirable goal but is not measurable or realistic for the timeframe. Your DNP Project I class addresses this topic. Please complete the learning activities in the course associated with writing objectives to add further clarification to this question.

7. **Question:** How do I make the organization want my project?

**Answer:** There are several different techniques that could be used to help key stakeholders buy into your DNP Project. One of the first steps to this is establishing an organizational need. What does the project mean to your organization? How will your project improve cost? Quality of Care? Next, find out who the key stakeholders are in your organization and contact them. Set up a phone meeting or an in-person meeting and solicit their support. Present your project idea to them early on and let them know the timeframe of your project, goals, and significance to the organization and/or the individual role that the key stakeholder plays. You may also consider inviting a few key stakeholders to join in the project as "content experts". See qualifications for "content experts". Giving someone an official title and position with your project and letting them know you plan to publish your findings, will often increase their commitment to your success.

8. **Question:** If TUN IRB considers my project "Quality Improvement" or "IRB Exempt", does that mean that the institution where I am doing my project will not require me to go through IRB?

**Answer:** Each institution has their own Policies and Procedures that they follow to determine IRB involvement in quality improvement projects. As a TUN DNP student, you are subject to the review of TUN's IRB as well as the host organization's IRB where your DNP Project takes place. You are advised to work closely with your Project mentor and Course Instructor to determine appropriate actions to follow to ensure timeliness in submission of any required materials for external IRB committees.

9. **Question:** If the host site for my DNP Project is the same as my place of employment, how do I differentiate hours spent on my project?

**Answer:** Many DNP students utilize their place of employment as their host site for their DNP Project. This dynamic offers many conveniences in performing the DNP Project is in not looked down on. However, the DNP Project should not be part of regularly scheduled job duties and payment should not be received for any activities associated with the DNP Project.

10. **Question:** I have a problem I would like to explore for my DNP Project, but I am having difficulty finding up to date research. There is a lot of old research; can I still use this as my topic?

**Answer:** What is the reason for the gap in literature on this topic? Has it lost its relevance? Is it no longer a problem in most places? Consider the answers to these questions and perhaps look further at the problem you are considering. Without appropriate literature to support your topic/project, the DNP project will not meet the appropriate standards of rigor for this level of education.

11. **Question:** The outcome data that I am evaluating is already collected each month as a part of ongoing quality improvement initiatives at my DNP Project host site. Would it be appropriate to implement my project and then work with the data analyst to utilize existing outcome data before and after my implementation? Or do I need to collect the data independently and do my own statistical analysis?

**Answer:** Students are encouraged to work with existing infrastructure in the organization where the DNP Project is implemented. Many hospitals and other healthcare facilities collect ongoing data. This data can be utilized, and students would not need to independently analyze data that is already available through an established forum. For example, many nursing unit's nosocomial infection rates and report these numbers in national forums and to nursing administration. If the DNP Project were to create a protocol for preventing nosocomial infections through implementing a new protocol, the outcome data might be looked at during the time before and after implementing the new protocol. The DNP student would work with the data analyst at the hospital to access the data. Although the analysis would be done already, the DNP student would still be required to provide information on how the data was collected and analyzed in their DNP Project paper.

12. **Question:** Why can't I work with nursing students or educational processes as a part of my DNP Project?

**Answer:** The practice of educating nursing students is considered a unique and separate yet valuable specialty. CCNE does not consider this practice to be a part of doctoral level education and therefore these hours can't be counted toward DNP Practicum or Project hours.

13. **Question:** Can I use education as a part of my project?

**Answer:** In many cases, DNP Projects involve implementing a new protocol, guideline, or practice-based on best evidence. A necessary part of any successful implementation will naturally involve education of the multi-disciplinary team members involved in the practice change. This is a totally appropriate step in an implementation process but in a very complex healthcare system this will not likely be the only step involved in implementation. Specific steps to successful implementation should be determined on a need's basis for the specific host site of the DNP Project. Implementation is then followed by evaluation. Evaluation data should include information from

specific healthcare outcomes and should not include evaluation of an education module. DNP Projects can involve education of support staff and members of the interdisciplinary healthcare team but should not involve direct patient or student interaction.

## APPENDIX D: Practice Hours Transfer Policy

To be eligible for a doctoral degree in nursing, a total of 1000 post-baccalaureate practice hours are required. This DNP program has 528 practice hours embedded in the curriculum; these hours are required as a part of the DNP coursework. As such, each student may have up to 472 practice hours endorsed from previous graduate work. Transfer practice hours can be evaluated through various methods including:

1. An official letter confirming number of practice hours completed at the regionally accredited institution the student attended. These hours may be completed during a masters or doctorate degree in nursing.
2. Proof of national certification in an area of advanced practice nursing or certification in nursing that requires a graduate degree in nursing and additional practice hours.
  - a. Students who meet these criteria are eligible for 472 transfer practice hours.
3. Transcript evaluation may be utilized as a method of practicum hour's evaluation in the case that the transcript provides the actual number of practice hours completed.

The student needs to supply evidence of practicum hour completion. **To facilitate this process, an assignment drop-box is in DNP 760: Introduction to DNP.** If no evidence of previous graduate practice hours is received by the end of DNP I, students will need to complete the additional 472 hours via enrollment in 10 credits of DNPV 756 DNP Practicum.

All students will receive communication from the Director of Graduate Programs regarding their practice hours transfer evaluation by the end of Trimester 1.

If a student has less than 472 practice hours for transfer, the student will be required to complete an Alternate Curriculum Plan which will be evaluated and approved by the Director of Graduate Programs. To facilitate completion of 1000 post-baccalaureate hours, this plan will include enrollment in DNPV 756 for additional practicum hour completion. Students are eligible to enroll in DNPV 756 at any point after completion of their first trimester of coursework.

## APPENDIX E: Practicum Experience Guidelines

Throughout the DNP Program at Touro University Nevada (TUN), students are required to enroll in 4 different courses which will allow an opportunity to gain practicum experiences. An additional self-study practicum course is available to students who are unable to transfer the appropriate number of practice hours from their MSN degree. The required hours per course are outlined below:

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Trimester (Accelerated Track)</b>	<b>Trimester (Standard Track)</b>	<b>Practice Hours Required</b>
DNPV 761 DNP Project I	Trimester 1	Trimester 4	144 hours
DNPV 763 Project II	Trimester 2	Trimester 5	144 hours
DNPV 767 Project III	Trimester 3	Trimester 6	144 hours
DNPV 764 Leadership Practicum	Trimester 2	Trimester 2	96 hours
*DNPV 756 DNP Practicum (not required for all students)	After Trimester 1	After Trimester 1	1 credit= 48 hours  Number of credits needed depends upon MSN practice hours transferred into the DNP.

In all practice-based courses, students will engage with a Project or Practice Mentor and key members from the inter- and intra-professional team in various integrative-practice activities with the goal of achieving program outcomes and practice-based learning to prepare them for nursing practice as a doctoral prepared nurse leader. Students are required to pursue leadership practice experiences that will address the DNP Essentials, the TUN DNP Program Outcomes, enable the application of didactic teaching and scholarly evidence, and lead to mastery of the advanced practice nursing specialty of Scholar-Practitioner and Nurse Leader. During the DNP Project courses, students will carry out a practice-application oriented DNP Project.

In practice experiences, students are encouraged to engage in the following activities:

Employ inter- and intra-professional collaboration with members of the healthcare team.

Interact with other doctoral student specialties including PhD, DNP, and any other applicable specialties including engineering, public health, business professionals, and healthcare administration.

Engage with experts in nursing and other disciplines to facilitate mentorship and meaningful student engagement and education.

Participate in a wide variety of learning activities that bring about application, synthesis, and expansion of knowledge at the doctoral level.

Share in meaningful learning experiences within various practice environments that utilize nurse leaders.

Spend practicum hours in the practice environment related to the final DNP Project. This can be accomplished in several ways including collaborating with a Project Mentor or stakeholders regarding the project, attending and participating in administrative meetings pertaining to the DNP Project in the practice setting, etc.

Additional Information:

Students should consider the following when considering practicum experiences:

All DNP Practicum Hours must be logged using the required format for the course enrolled. All hours, including CITI modules, and doctoral level professional conference attendance, must be signed off by the Project/Practicum Mentor. Activities such as professional conferences require pre-approval from the course instructor.

If preferred, the DNP Project or Practicum site may be established in the student's place of work provided the experiences are not a part of the individual's job duties and they are not being financially reimbursed for performing such duties.

Hours spent in the DNP Project development, implementation, and evaluation can appropriately be considered practicum hours provided these hours are spent engaging with the project team and occur in the practice environment. Although many hours will be spent writing the project proposal, these hours are not considered practicum experience. Other practice activities related to the DNP Project are counted toward practicum hours provided they meet the criteria listed in section 1.

During enrollment in DNP Project I (DNP 761) practicum hours should not be logged until after the student has received approval of their selected Project Mentor and project site during week 4 of the course. The student may start logging practice activity once approval for a project site and Project Mentor has been received.

During DNP Project II, students are asked to complete CITI training. A student may take this opportunity to collaborate with their Project Mentor to apply their learning directly to their DNP Project. CITI training may count for up to 8 hours of DNP Practicum in the DNP Project II course.

Doctoral level professional conference participation may be considered by the Project Instructor for approval provided the topic presented therein pertains to the DNP Project topic of that student. To receive practicum hour credit for a professional conference, the student should submit CEU's completed. For every one CEU granted through conference attendance, 1 practicum hour will be awarded.

*Practicum Experiences may **not** include:*

Practice as a nurse educator including educating nursing students, engaging in the educational process, and experiences in academic curriculum cannot be counted toward practicum activities and cannot be the focus of a student's DNP Project.

Travel time to and from the practice site and/or professional conferences may **not** be counted toward practice hours.

Literature Review

Direct patient care is not permitted as a DNP Student. For more information on what constitutes direct patient care, please see the DNP Project & Practicum Handbook "FAQs".

## APPENDIX F: Project/Practicum Site Mentor Agreement

All students will select a Project/Practicum Mentor (PM) and a site where their DNP Project and/or Practicum experience will take place. This must be completed in Week 4 of the first practicum course, either DNPV 761 (Accelerated Track) or DNPV 764 (Standard Track).

In the DNP Project courses, students may also select up to three additional content experts in a related field to the DNP Project. Adding additional content experts is recommended to ensure the quality of the project and foster stakeholder buy-in. Please review additional information regarding the roles of these individuals and general guidelines for the practice experience found in the [DNP Project and Practicum Handbook](#).

Practicum Course	When to Submit	Resources Required	Optional Resources
DNP 761, 763, 767	Week 4 of 761	Project Site Project Mentor	Up to 3 content experts
DNP 764	Week 1 of 764	Practicum Site Practicum Mentor	n/a
DNP 756 (Self-study course)	Week 1 of 756	Practicum Site Practicum Mentor	n/a

Instructional steps to acquiring a PM or Content Expert:

1. Establish a project/practicum site in alignment with the criteria outlined in the DNP Project and Practicum Handbook.
2. Collaborate with project/practicum site leadership to determine if an affiliation agreement is required or if there is any necessary paperwork to be completed to authorize your presence as a student. Obtain documentation to be submitted in the course room as evidence of your compliance with project/practicum site requirements. If no affiliation agreement is required, an email from an organizational leader can be accepted as evidence of this. Submit a screenshot of the email to the designated LMS (Canvas) assignment.
3. Brainstorm key stakeholders involved in the proposed setting of your DNP project/practicum.
4. Consider the guideline provided for the PM or content expert. Narrow your options using these criteria.
5. Choose a potential PM and/or content expert and contact them.
6. Provide the individual with information regarding the proposed project/practicum including timeline and responsibilities.
7. Request professional CV and proof of licensure from the individual. Licensure validation may be completed through an internet search by the student provided it comes from a trusted website and can be validated. See contract agreement section below for specific guidelines on this requirement.
8. Obtain copies of your personal registered nurse license to submit in the designated LMS (Canvas) assignment drop-box. Please note that you and your PM must both be authorized to practice as a registered nurse in the state where the project/practicum site is located.
9. Submit all required elements to assignment drop-box including all applicable forms signed and dated.
10. The course instructor will review the assignment submission and approve the project/practicum site, PM, and content expert as appropriate.
11. Please note, only the PM is required and will be graded. If a student chooses to consult a content expert, the paperwork must be submitted in a similar fashion. The steps described above must be

followed but the portion of the assignment pertaining to the content expert is not graded (content expert selection only applies to DNP Project courses).

Final steps:

1. Student verifies with clinical agency if an affiliation agreement is required or if proof of enrollment and student's liability coverage is sufficient for the organization.
2. If affiliation agreement is required, student submits request to the Clinical Coordinator. (When the legal arrangement is negotiated, the course instructor is notified. The Clinical Coordinator or Director of Graduate Programs notifies student and course instructor that the clinical site is approved).

**Grading Criteria:**

Because all the activities provided above are required for successful progression through this course, all documents listed below are required for this course prior to starting practicum experiences. Failure to appropriately submit these documents may result in dismissal from the course.

1. Student submits potential PM's CV.
2. Student submits potential PM's current unencumbered RN license in the state where the project/practicum will occur AND student submits their personal RN license in the state where the project/practicum will occur. Compact license is acceptable provided both the student and the PM are authorized to practice in the state where the project/practicum will take place.
3. Student submits completed and signed agreement. Project/practicum site listed must meet the following criteria:
  - Project/practicum site is in a state where TUN is authorized to have students.
  - Both the PM and the student have current unencumbered licenses in the state where the project/practicum site is located.
  - The project/practicum site is not a nursing school.
4. Student submits verification of clinical agreement or statement that an agreement is not needed.
5. Student submits in writing the reason the PM was selected and her or his appropriateness to the topic area the student wants to pursue for his or her DNP project/practicum.

## **PM and Site Contract Agreement**

### **The Project/Practicum Mentor (PM)**

#### **Purpose**

Each student will identify an individual that has practice expertise in nursing leadership. The PM needs adequate content understanding in the area related to the DNP project/practicum and agrees to mentor the student throughout the program and provide guidance with development and implementation of the DNP project/practicum experience, under the supervision of the course instructor and academic mentor.

#### **Qualifications**

The PM must:

- Hold a doctoral degree (for example, PhD, EdD, or DNP) from a regionally accredited University and have adequate knowledge and/or expertise related to the DNP scholarly project. (The exception to this rule: DNP 756 the PM may hold a Master's degree).
- In addition, the PM must have expertise within the realms of nursing leadership that is documented in a CV or resume. This document should be provided to the student who will submit it for review by the project/practicum course instructor.
- The PM must have a current unencumbered RN license in the state where the DNP project/practicum will occur. Compact license is acceptable provided both the student and the PM are authorized to practice in the state where the project/practicum will take place.
- The PM may not be the student's supervisor.
- The PM must possess adequate technology skills to read and respond to emails, and to communicate with you in a timely fashion.

#### **Responsibilities of the PM**

The PM agrees to:

- Supervise practicum hours completed for the DNP project/practicum. This requires validation of practicum logs through providing signatures once per course module.
- Support the student throughout the program or sessions they agree to participate. It is preferred that the PM commit to working with the student throughout the program.
- Help the student gain access to practicum experience at the practice site where applicable.
- Troubleshoot issues that arise during the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the DNP project/practicum.
- Provide encouragement and support during the project/practicum phase of the student's education.
- Share expertise regarding the project/practicum topic(s).
- Meet in person or virtually with the student and the project/practicum instructor as needed throughout the students' academic career at TUN.
- Mentor the student towards successful completion of the identified DNP scholarly project and/or practicum experiences, under the supervision of the Project Instructor and/or course lead.
- Coach, support, and mentor the student towards success as necessary, including obtaining necessary site approvals in the identified project/practicum setting.

#### **Responsibilities of the Student**

The student agrees to:

- Utilize the time of the PM effectively and efficiently through effective communication and respect.

- Meet in person or virtually, with the Project Team at least as needed throughout the students' academic career at TUN.
- Make consistent progress towards completion of the DNP Scholarly project/practicum and to keep the PM and Project Team updated on their progress through submission of appropriate weekly Practicum logs and communication with all parties on an as needed basis.
- Complete all project/practicum course assignments in a timely manner.
- Reach out to the PM with questions and for support as needed.

**Responsibilities of the Project/Practicum Instructor**

The Project/Practicum Instructor agrees to:

- Always maintain open communication with the PM and Student.
- Schedule virtual meetings with the PM and Student at least once per session and as needed at other times.
- Review the weekly progress reports made by the student and identify and communicate issues that the committee must address.
- Support the student and the PM through availability and responsiveness to identified issues.
- 

The overall DNP Project/Practicum experience is monitored and approved by the Project/Practicum Mentor and DNP Project/Practicum instructor to meet the rigor and clinical requirements of said experience.

I agree to abide by the respective responsibilities stated above, both implicit and inferred.

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Signature of PM Date

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Printed Name of PM Date

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Project/practicum Site Name

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Project/practicum Site Address

---

Project/practicum Site Phone Number

---

Project/practicum Site Contact Person & Email Address

---

Signature of Student Date

---

Printed Name of Student

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Title of DNP Scholarly Project/practicum

**Affiliation Agreement Statement:**

Touro University Nevada does not require affiliation agreements for DNP Practicum Experiences. However, the project/practicum site may require an affiliation agreement with Touro. Please delegate this form to an appropriate project/practice site representative for completion. Please fill in the blanks below and check the appropriate box:

The TUN DNP student: \_\_\_\_\_ is authorized to complete practicum hours at the above listed project site.

\_\_\_\_\_ An affiliation agreement is required for completion of this practicum experience.

\_\_\_\_\_ An affiliation agreement is not required for completion of this practicum experience.

\*If an affiliation agreement is required, please insert the name and contact information of the person who will coordinate the agreement:

Name of representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information and preferred contact method: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Project Site Representative Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Optional: Form for student and Content Expert to sign:*

### **The Content Expert (optional)**

#### **Purpose**

Each student can identify individuals with practice expertise and/or stakeholders pertaining to their DNP Scholarly Project/practicum topic. An individual serving as a content expert needs adequate content understanding in the area related to the DNP project/practicum and agrees to mentor the student throughout the program and provide guidance with development and implementation of the DNP Project/practicum, under the supervision of the Project/practicum Team. The Project/practicum Team functions as a sub-committee of the Student Progression Committee and consists of the student's course instructor in the DNP Project/practicum courses and the academic mentor (AM).

#### **Qualifications**

A Content Expert must:

- Hold a minimum of a master's degree in a related field to the DNP Project/practicum topic from a regionally accredited University and have adequate knowledge and/or expertise related to the DNP scholarly project/practicum.
- A content expert may be a specialist or stakeholder from any discipline relating to the student's DNP Project/practicum.
- A content expert should submit a CV or resume that reflects expertise in the project/practicum topic area of the student's DNP Project/practicum. This document should be provided to the student who will submit it for review by the project/practicum course instructor.

#### **Responsibilities of the Content Expert**

The Content Expert agrees to:

- Support the student throughout the program or sessions they agree to participate. It is preferred that the Content Expert commit to working with the student throughout the program.
- Meet in person or virtually with the student and the Project/practicum Team as needed throughout the students' academic career at TUN.
- Mentor the student towards successful completion of the identified DNP scholarly project/practicum, under the supervision of the Project/practicum Team.
- Coach, support, and mentor the student towards success as necessary, including obtaining necessary site approvals in the identified project/practicum site.

#### **Responsibilities of the Student**

The Student agrees to:

- Utilize the time of the Content Expert effectively and efficiently through effective communication and respect.
- Meet in person or virtually, with the Project Team at least as needed throughout the students' academic career at TUN.
- Make consistent progress towards completion of the DNP Scholarly project/practicum and to keep the Content Expert, PM and Project/practicum Team updated on their progress through submission of appropriate weekly Practicum logs and communication with all parties on an as needed basis.
- Complete all project/practicum course assignments in a timely manner.
- Reach out to the PM with questions and for support as needed.

## Responsibilities of the Project Instructor

The Project/practicum Team agrees to:

- Always maintain open communication with the PM and student.
- Schedule virtual meetings with the PM and student at least once per session and as needed at other times.
- Review the weekly progress reports made by the student and identify and communicate issues that the committee must address.
- Support the student and the Project Mentor through availability and responsiveness to identified issues.

I agree to abide by the respective responsibilities stated above, both implicit and inferred.

---

Signature of Content Expert

Date

---

Printed Name of Content Expert

Date

---

Project Site Name

---

Project/practicum Site Address

---

Project/practicum Site Phone Number

---

Project/practicum Site Contact Person & Email Address

---

Signature of Student

Date

---

Printed Name of Student

Date

---

Title of DNP Scholarly Project/practicum

Date

**APPENDIX G: DNP Project Paper Template**  
**(Begins on following page)**

## **DNP PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

Use the template below for submission of your DNP Project Proposal.

For help with APA formatting and references, the APA website provides a sample student paper at the following link: <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format/student-annotated.pdf>, retrieved 5/7/2020

Full Title of the Proposal

Author's Name (no professional initials)

Touro University, Nevada

Course Title: In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice

DNP Project Team: Type your project course instructor and academic mentor's name here

Due Date

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## **Abstract**

The abstract of the proposal is a concise summary of your complete proposal (maximum of 250 words). Do not cite in this section. Any key terms that were used during the literature review should be listed in the keyword section below.

*Keywords:* example, example, example

### **Full Title**

The first paragraph of the paper should focus on problem identification at the project site.. A brief account of the problem and the resolution with implications are introduced. Build a strong case for your topic's importance and the need for a DNP project that will address the issues surrounding it. Support your case with citations from the literature.

The problem identified should clearly align with SQUIRE 2.0 guidelines for quality improvement reporting as “a meaningful disruption, failure, inadequacy, distress, confusion or other dysfunction in a healthcare service delivery [system](#) that adversely affects patients, staff, or the [system](#) as a whole, or that prevents care from reaching its full potential.”

Conclude with your problem statement. A brief statement of the problem and the resolution with implications are introduced.

### **Project Question**

The project question helps the reader understand what question you hope to answer by conducting your quality improvement initiative. Project question should be clearly and succinctly formulated. Clear connection to the project topic and site should be made. The question should answerable through project implementation and reflect the PICOT format.

### **Search Methods**

In this section, you will provide a description of the terms and search engines you used during your database search. The PICOT question in conjunction with clear and concise search methods should be utilized for review of literature. Search terms, articles available and articles selected should be clearly explained. Criteria of inclusion and exclusion of studies in the literature review should be clearly justified. An example would include: research was limited to studies conducted in the US within the last five years.

You would also include facility databases if they were used to develop your proposal. An example would include the review of related protocols if your project consisted of developing a new protocol.

### **Review of Study Methods**

The types of studies that are included in the project should be reviewed. This discussion can be integrated throughout the paper within the sub-headings or it can also be discussed separately. The following is an example of a review of study methods from a previous student paper.

Upon reviewing the study methodologies in the discussed literature, the emerging themes are relevant to this DNP project. The literature discussed included randomized controlled trials, meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials, retrospective and observational studies, mixed-methods comparative studies, multicentered cross-sectional studies, integrative reviews, systematic review of peer-reviewed research studies, retrospective cohort studies, exploratory qualitative studies, and interventional trials. These methods are relevant to the aim of the studies performed and are relevant to this DNP project. These study methods are relevant to this DNP project because they are reliable and valid since all produce the same results of decreased door to provider time, LOS, LWOBs with subsequent reduction of ED overcrowding, increasing patient safety and satisfaction.

### **Review Synthesis**

The purpose of a literature review is to provide a comprehensive review of evidence related to your proposed project problem. The literature review should provide a summary of your literature that is then used to synthesize key concepts. The goal is to analyze your literature to identify common patterns, trends, or potential gaps and determine relationships among these

studies. Ideally, literature should be current (five years or less) with the exception of older, highly significant studies.

The project should be systemically described in the context of the broader scholarly literature. The historical context of the profession should be discussed related to the relevant literature. Best practice standard as it relates to current evidence around the project problem is distinguished and the gap in quality is clearly delineated. The review of literature for your proposal should provide the context for your proposal and your future DNP project.

Next, write your findings from the literature central to your topic. Avoid describing a series of studies. Use quotes sparingly and only to emphasize or explain an important point. Also, do not make broad statements about the conclusiveness of research studies, either positive or negative. Be objective in your presentation of the facts. Each paragraph should begin with a thesis statement and describe only one key. The idea in the next paragraph should logically flow from the content of its predecessor.

Conclude the review of literature with a concise summary of your findings and provide a rationale for conducting your DNP project, based on your findings.

Every DNP Project will have different themes developed. These themes should help you to justify and guide your evidence based intervention. Below are some examples themes that could be explored through subheadings for your literature review:

### **Impact of the Problem**

The use of level-headings can greatly improve the clarity of the literature review. Develop themes that emerge as you explore the issue and then use those themes to create appropriate level headings in your literature review. For example, in this section, you should describe findings from the literature surrounding the impact of the problem.

## **Addressing the Problem with Current Evidence**

Explore 2-3 articles at a minimum per subheading. Your literature review themes should help you understand what you will need to do to address the evidence gap pertaining to the project problem. For example, if your problem is high fall rates at a long term care facility, you would want to know how to assess and prevent falls. It would also be important to understand the impact of falls and staff education needs. All of these things should be addressed in the literature review. Remember to examine national guidelines and national regulatory statements on your topic. If these exist on your topic, they should be explored in your literature review.

### ***Theme Development***

This is an example of how to use various level headings to organize your literature review.

**Use Level Headings to Explore Themes for the Project.** Use this heading to describe a subcategory of the previous section. Use level headings to organize your discussion.

***Evidence Gaps and Controversies.*** You can further expound on a topic through appropriate use of level headings.

## **Project Aims**

Specific aims of the quality improvement project clearly and concisely described. Aims are measurable and align with the gap in quality identified in the project introduction.

## **Project Objectives**

Please use SMART (Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-based) framework to develop objectives.

In the timeframe of this DNP Project, the host site will:

1. List between **3-5** objectives. When writing objectives, ensure that each objective is **measurable** and be consistent with expected outcomes.

2. Example objectives: Implement an evidence based...or something similar
3. Administer an education seminar for the multi-disciplinary team to train on this practice guideline.
4. Improve provider compliance with national standards for care pertaining to (insert project topic)
5. Improve rates of (insert patient outcomes) by xx% within a 5 week implementation frame.

### **Implementation Framework**

In this section, you will name and define the implementation framework that underpins your proposal and future DNP project. Provide a summary of project interventions utilizing either the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) model if your project is a quality improvement project or the IOWA model if an Evidence-based practice project approach is utilized. Each student should decide which approach will provide greater clarity for their project. Place a diagram of the model at the end of the paper in the appendix section, after the reference pages and refer to the diagram in this section. The framework or theory should be utilized to explain the problem and justify/guide intervention.

When developing this section of the proposal, section headings should be utilized to fully explore the framework. Use the rubric as a guide. Be sure to provide pertinent information regarding the historical development of the framework.

### **Application to DNP Project**

Provide very specific information on how you will apply the tenets of the theory or framework to the implementation process of the DNP Project at the system level. If the theory or framework will guide the formation of an evidence based guideline, you should explore that here as well. You may choose to utilize level 3, 4, and 5 headings here to explore more specifically the

major tenets of the theory.

**Major framework tenets.** This is an example of how you could organize your thoughts as you explore the tenets of the theory through the use of section headings.

### **Population of Interest**

Direct population of interest should be explored (people who will be implementing your project interventions, generally staff that will be educated). Describe the population of interest such as volume, license type, describe any population who will be excluded from the project (such as front office staff or scheduler).

Indirect population of interest should be explored (Usually the patient population that will be impacted from this project).

### **Setting**

The project setting describes the venue where the project will be implemented. It should consist of the practice type (acute care, long term care, private practice). Location of the project site in general terms (private practice in an affluent area in southern California) **Please do not use any names of the practice site**) The size of the practice should be described along with specialty. Does the practice site utilize EHR? Is the practice private or corporately owned? Include any relevant information to the project.

### **Stakeholders**

Identify key stakeholders that will be involved with the project. What is the role of these stakeholders with the project? Discuss permission to conduct project at the project site. **(The letter obtained in DNP Project I should be placed in the appendices at this time)**. Also discuss if an affiliation agreement is required between the university and the project site. **(Affiliation agreement should also be placed in the appendices at this time if applicable)**

### **Interventions**

Description of the intervention(s) in sufficient detail that others could reproduce it. Specifics of teams involved in the work. Use the timeline and write a few sentences to briefly describe your approach to your QI project. The full timeline doesn't need to be included in the paper but your general plan for intervention should be.

### **Tools**

Describe each tool that will be necessary for achieving your objectives and carrying out interventions of the QI project. Include the following information: Who will develop the tool (will you use an existing/established tool or develop your own)? How will the tool be validated (was it validated by a previous study or will you seek expert consultation through stakeholders and the project team)? If using an established tool, do you need to seek permission to use the tool? From who?

### **Tool Example**

Please use subheadings to organize this section. Each tool should be described separately under a subheading.

### **Plan for Data Collection**

Approach chosen for assessing the impact of the intervention(s) is explored. Approach used to establish whether observed outcomes were due to the intervention(s) should also be explored. What is the procedure used for collecting data and plans for maintaining confidentiality during this process. (It may be easier and more organized if you utilize the subheadings to explore data collection.)

### **Ethics/Human Subjects Protection**

Explain how you will conduct ethical and confidential implementation. Discuss IRB

process- note TUN doesn't require IRB for QI projects. Does your project site require IRB or QI Committee oversight? If so, define IRB process for the site. What are the benefits/risks for participants? Is there compensation for participants? Discuss recruitment methods (how will you get people to your training?)

### **Plan for Analysis**

Provide appropriate statistical analysis tests chosen and justify your decision. **(Please utilize the recommendation from the TUN statistics expert in the stats worksheet you completed)** Discussion of assumptions to be addressed and specific process for analysis included.

### **Analysis of Results**

In this section you will write your data analysis using the needed techniques chosen that is appropriate for the project design. When developing the analysis section make sure that the data collected is highly appropriate to your project and is organized in a way that is easily understandable. All appropriate assumptions are checked for each test, and any violations are handled accordingly. You will want to make certain that your information is a clear representation of what the findings actually were.

You will want to develop and display your data in graphs, charts, and tables that are appropriate for the type of information generated. Data visualization is the art of presenting results in a clear, understandable manner. This allows others to quickly interpret your graphic message and display data trends. Make sure any graphs and charts are clearly marked and the interpretation of the results is accurate.

In addition to any charts, etc. include a narrative form of the analysis. The analysis needs to be conducted in a way that is highly consistent with the project objectives and/or question(s), and served to address and/or answer them.

## **Discussion and Interpretation of Results**

This section will include a discussion of the results of the data analysis. The discussion should be clearly discussed and accurately interpreted including strengths of the project. In this section include appropriate inferences as to the meaning of the results and tied back to the project question and/or objectives. In this include a discussion of the project results and its alignment with previous published literature making clear connections. Discuss any unexpected findings, costs, and strategic trade-offs.

### **Limitations**

In this section discuss the limitations of the project as it relates to project design, data recruitment and collection methods, and data analysis. Discuss the limits to the generalizability of the work, factors that might limit internal validity, and efforts made to minimize limitations. Clearly describe each in a logical manner as it relates to the specific project.

### **Conclusion**

In this section, you will draw conclusions about your project. Include the following elements: Usefulness of the work, sustainability, potential for spread in other contexts, implications for practice and for further study, and suggested next steps. The table of contents should automatically populate. Please see Microsoft Website for any specific table of contents formatting section.

## References

- American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Foronda, C. L., Alfes, C. M., Dev, P., Kleinheksel, A. J., Nelson, D. A., O'Donnell, J. M., & Samosky, J. T. (2016). Virtually nursing emerging technologies in nursing education. *Nurse Educator*, *00*(0), 1-4. doi: 10.1097/NNE.0000000000000295.
- Hayden, J. (2010). Use of simulation in nursing education: National survey results. *Journal of Nursing Regulation*, *1*(3), 52–57.
- Hayden, J. K., Smiley, R. A., Alexander, M., Kardong-Edgren, S., & Jeffries, P. (2014). The NCSBN national simulation study: A longitudinal, randomized, control study replacing clinical hours with simulation in prelicensure nursing education. *Journal of Nursing Regulation*, *5*(2), S1-S64.
- Liaw, S. Y., Wong, L. F., Wai-Chi Chan, S., Yin Ho, J. T., Mordiffi, S. Z., Leng Ang, S. B., Goh, P. S., Neo, E., & Angm, K. (2015). Designing and evaluating an interactive multimedia web-based simulation for developing nurses' competencies in acute nursing care: Randomized control trial. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *17*(1), e5.

## **Appendix A**

Insert appendices in the order  
they appear in the paper