

SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP, DNP

The DNP program will prepare nurses as leaders to innovate, advance, and achieve high quality outcomes for patients, families, the healthcare workforce, organizations, and communities in complex, interconnected healthcare and public health environments.

In accordance with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing¹ (AACN) The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education¹ and Penn Nursing DNP program's Practice Leadership framework, graduates of the DNP program, including all DNP majors, will demonstrate the following proficiencies:

1. Translate and apply evidence into practice and policy to equitably and ethically inform the delivery of health care that advances high quality outcomes.
2. Assess, plan, implement and evaluate person-centered initiatives with interprofessional teams that promote and sustain the health and well-being of individuals, families, communities and populations.
3. Develop, evaluate, and advocate for clinical, organizational, business, and policy practices that are just, fiscally responsible, and strategic.
4. Conduct and lead ethical, scholarly activities that advance practice knowledge.
5. Apply the principles of safety and improvement science to mitigate risks and prevent errors in the delivery of cost-effective, quality healthcare within a just workplace culture that promotes workforce well-being.
6. Use dynamic communication strategies to lead sustainable interprofessional partnerships that foster team effectiveness and promote shared values and mutual respect in learning healthcare environments.
7. Contribute to strategic organizational planning to responsibly coordinate and manage resources, demonstrate value, and mitigate systemic barriers for optimized healthcare services and delivery.
8. Engage in the design, selection, and implementation of health information systems and patient care technologies to advance data-driven decision-making and evaluation of programs, outcomes, and systems of care.
9. Embody and amplify nursing's professional identity with a constant spirit of inquiry and reflection that demonstrates individual and collective accountability, ethical leadership, advocacy and professional activism.
10. Using emotional intelligence, cultivate collaborative work environments that equitably promote health and well-being, stimulate resilience, and advance the nursing profession.
11. Develop entre/intrapreneurial acumen to advance innovative health and wellness solutions.
12. Design contextually informed, strategic, and sustainable initiatives that are effectively executed through project management.
13. Demonstrate statistical literacy and independence in conducting and interpreting quality improvement and descriptive analytics and associated data visualization practices.

The DNP Systems Leadership track prepares nurses with a master's degree in nursing (Advance Practice Nurse; Advance Practice Registered Nurse) to lead with authority to influence changes in healthcare delivery to advance, improve, and sustain outcomes while maintaining their commitment to direct patient care and clinical excellence.

Underpinned by systems leadership theory², graduates of the DNP-SL track will demonstrate the following major-specific proficiencies:

1. Lead standards of practice policy with nursing expertise and systems knowledge to influence healthcare and public health decision-making.
2. Create team cultures that build upon distributed authority with accountability to advance person-centered, high-quality care and population health using evidence-based practice innovations for systems improvement.
3. Apply principles and practice of change management in the leadership of interprofessional teams to improve care coordination and optimize health outcomes in complex, evolving healthcare environments.

References

1. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education*. American Association of Colleges of Nursing; 2021.
2. Macdonald I, Burke C, Stewart K. *Systems Leadership: Creating positive organisations*.

For more information: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/dnp/>

The Post-Master's DNP requires 10.5 course units which can be completed in two years.

Code	Title	Course Units
Requirements		
NURS 7710	Principles of Population Health: Advancing Equitable Outcomes	0.5
NURS 7720	Introduction to Healthcare Policy	0.5
NURS 7730	Fundamental Principles of Healthcare Economics and Finance	0.5
NURS 7740	Principles and Practice of Healthcare Informatics	0.5
NURS 7750	Quality Improvement and Patient Safety	0.5
NURS 8150	Advanced Nursing Leadership	1
NURS 8160	Advanced Evidence Based Practice	1
NURS 8340	Practical Applications in Health Policy, Population Health, and Healthcare Economics	0.5
NURS 8350	Principles of Contextual Inquiry and Implementation Planning	1
NURS 8360	Practical Applications in Quality Improvement	0.5
NURS 8550	DNP Project 1	2
NURS 8560	DNP Project 2	2
Total Course Units		10.5

The degree and major requirements displayed are intended as a guide for students entering in the Fall of 2026 and later. Students should consult with their academic program regarding final certifications and requirements for graduation.

Sample Plan of Study

First Year			Second Year	
Summer			Summer	
Course	Course Title	Units	Course	Units
NURS 7710	Principles of Population Health: Advancing Equitable Outcomes	0.5	NURS 8560	DNP Project 2
NURS 7720	Introduction to Healthcare Policy	0.5		2
NURS 7730	Fundamental Principles of Healthcare Economics and Finance	0.5		2.00
NURS 8160	Advanced Evidence Based Practice	1		
NURS 8150	Advanced Nursing Leadership	1		
	Course Units	3.50		
Fall				
NURS 7750	Quality Improvement and Patient Safety	0.5		
NURS 7740	Principles and Practice of Healthcare Informatics	0.5		
NURS 8340	Practical Applications in Health Policy, Population Health, and Healthcare Economics	0.5		
NURS 8360	Practical Applications in Quality Improvement	0.5		
NURS 8350	Principles of Contextual Inquiry and Implementation Planning	1		
	Course Units	3.00		
Spring				
NURS 8550	DNP Project 1	2		
	Course Units	2.00		
			Total Course Units	10.50