

**DNP Master Checklist**

**For all NP & Clinical Expert Students (not EHL)**

Please use this checklist to help you successfully navigate and complete all the requirements for the DNP program. Please note this includes DNP program policies and procedures, College of Nursing graduate program requirements, and University degree program requirements.

| **Item** | **Explanation** | **Action** | **Date Completed** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DPOS (Doctoral Plan of Study Form) | By the end of your first semester the DPOS form needs to be filled out and sent to your DNP Graduate Student Services Advisor. This form is simply a list of all the courses required for the degree. | Review instructions sent to you via email: “Letter to Incoming Students #5”  Follow instructions to complete this step |  |
| Doctoral Committee – Internal members | The College of Nursing assists students with forming their committee by assigning students to a Mentor Group that is facilitated by 2 faculty members. Within that group, each student will have one faculty designated as their chair, and one as their 2nd CON member to serve on the students’ committees. Students are grouped by entry level (BSN or MSN), track (FNP, AGACNP, PMHNP, EHL, Clinical Expert) and topic. Faculty are assigned to Mentor Groups based on their expertise and ability to support students in their Mentor Group(s). | During NURS 780 in the Spring:  All students are notified of their Mentor Group faculty. Once notified, students meet with their Mentor Group as an assignment in this course. An agenda / template is provided for the first meeting.  Attend first meeting; document on the agenda, submit by due date |  |
| Doctoral Committee – Outside member | The “outside” committee member is defined as someone outside the USC Columbia College of Nursing. If the external member is a USC Columbia faculty member in another department (such as School of Public Health) who is tenured or tenure track, no other approval is required. If your potential outside person is a faculty member at another university or is employed at a health care agency, they must be doctorally prepared (PhD, DNP, MD, ND, DrPH, EdD, etc.).  Typically, the outside member is an individual ideally situated at the practice site where you plan to carry out your DNP Project. | During NURS 819 in the Summer:   1. a. Request an electronic copy of the CV or resume from the potential outside member. 2. b. Complete the [Graduate-Doctoral Committee Appointment (G-DCA) form](https://powerforms.docusign.net/02708b55-b66c-4044-8b8f-aedb5d53d44c?env=na4&acct=524c5700-5693-4039-81f3-9ae191a5945c&accountId=524c5700-5693-4039-81f3-9ae191a5945c). This will include a memo of justification explaining why your outside committee member is “uniquely qualified” to serve on your committee.   Note: students meet with their Mentor Group as an assignment in this course. An agenda / template is provided for this meeting.  Attend first meeting; document on the agenda, submit by due date |  |
| DNP Project Topic Approval Form | This form is used to document that your Committee Chair has approved your DNP Scholarly Project topic and Clinical Question (PICOT).  **Students may not progress to NURS783 without an approved DNP Project Topic Approval form** | During NURS 819 in the Summer:  a. You will meet with your committee as an assignment in NURS819.  b. Once your DNP Committee Chair has approved your project topic and Clinical Question (using PICOT), complete the [DNP Project Topic Approval Form](https://powerforms.docusign.net/52386c90-027c-4d93-b2fd-ed694d7db4e3?env=na4&acct=524c5700-5693-4039-81f3-9ae191a5945c&accountId=524c5700-5693-4039-81f3-9ae191a5945c). It will route for their signature and placed in your student file. |  |
| **In preparation for**  **NURS783 –** Clinical Project Immersion and Proposal Development | NURS 783 is a clinical course for DNP students. These are typically indirect clinical hours, completed at the site where you will complete your DNP Project. At the end of this course, you will complete your DNP Project Proposal Defense. (see below – DNP Proposal Defense)  Fully approved CASE forms are required prior to completing any (indirect) clinical hours in NURS783. Once submitted by the student, CASE forms are approved by the Program Director, the clinical site, and the selected preceptor / outside committee member.  Clinical clearance is also required. | During NURS 819 in the Summer:  a. As soon as you have identified your clinical site and outside committee member, you MUST complete a **Clinical Agreement for Student Experience (CASE) form**  **electronically.** Instructions will be posted in your NURS 819 Bb course. You will include your clinical preceptor’s information and the site information on the form. Typically, the preceptor for NURS 783 is the outside DNP Committee member.  b. Respond to any requests from your graduate advisor and/or your clinical site regarding clinical clearance requirements. |  |
| DNP Scholarly Project Proposal Defense | The Proposal Defense is a verbal presentation of the proposed project after the written proposal has been approved by the DNP Committee. A template for the proposal defense presentation is posted on the DNP Virtual Community. See the process listed under the DNP Project Information tab, Proposal Defense Procedure folder.  **Note:** The student cannot proceed with the proposal defense unless the DPOS, Doctoral Topic Approval form, and the G-DCA form are complete and in the student’s file. | During NURS 783 in the Fall or Spring:  a. Detailed instructions are provided within the course.  b. **The DNP Proposal Defense must take place before you can begin the implementation of the DNP Project.**  c. If successful, you will move on to NURS897 for project implementation and evaluation, which is taken over 2-3 semesters, depending on your plan of study.  **Note:** If your chair’s assessment is that you are not ready to defend your proposal on the designated date, they will require you to delay your proposal defense until additional preparation is completed. |  |
| eIRB  (Institutional Review Board) | Evidence is required that protection of human subjects has been considered in the planning of a DNP project. In most cases, DNP projects do not involve human subjects and therefore do not require full IRB review. However, there does need to be documentation that a project has been submitted to eIRB and (does) or (does not) require IRB review. | During NURS 783 in the Fall or Spring:  a. This submission is addressed in NURS783 and occurs no later than the beginning of NURS897.  b. You should inquire if your project site has an IRB department. If so, preference is to submit with the project site’s IRB for review.  c. If the project site does not have an IRB department, you will submit it to USC’s IRB for review.  d. Some project sites require submission to their IRB and USC IRB. Please find out your project site’s requirement.  **Note: You cannot submit to IRB until after a successful project proposal defense, and you cannot begin your project implementation until you have an IRB decision.** |  |
| Doctoral Qualifying and Comprehensive Exam forms | The Graduate School requires all College of Nursing doctoral programs have qualifying and comprehensive exams. Both exams have a written and an oral component which must be successfully passed. Qualifying exams and Comprehensive Exams are completed once the DNP student successfully completes the oral defense of their DNP Scholarly project and their scholarly project paper is approved by their comps committee. Students in some DNP programs may also be required to take exams in preparation for future certification examinations, as part of their program. These forms are required for graduation. | **The DNP Scholarly Project defense serves as the Doctoral Qualifying and Comprehensive Exams. (No additional student actions are required)**  Upon successful DNP Scholarly Project defense, these forms will be completed by the DNP Graduate Student Services Advisor by obtaining signatures from the DNP Committee Chair and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and will be sent to the USC Graduate School for approval and recording. |  |
| Preparing for NURS897 – DNP Project Preparation and Residency | This course is an independent study clinical course and will be the course where you implement and evaluate your DNP Project.  Your DNP Committee Chair is your course faculty.  This course requires a graduate Independent Study Contract (G-ISC). The purpose of the contract is to document the work you and your DNP Chair have negotiated for the course.  The course also requires an individualized syllabus.  Students must complete a minimum of 6 credit hours for NURS897. (Typically, over 2 or 3 semesters, as outlined in the student’s Doctoral Program of Study – DPOS) | **Before registering for NURS 897:**  a. Confirm that your DPOS is accurate. If you have changed your POS for any reason, a [DPOS Adjustment Form](https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/forms_library/index.php) is required.  b. This is a clinical course. Confirm the number of (indirect) clinical hours you will need based on your gap analysis. Your Program Director will have this information.  c. You must complete a **Clinical Agreement for Student Experience (CASE) form and Clinical Clearance is required for enrollment** before you will be allowed to register for NURS897. Typically, the preceptor is the 3rd outside committee member. A new CASE form is required for each semester NURS897 is taken.  d. Confirm the number of credit hours you need for each NURS897 course (this will depend on you taking it for 2 or 3 semesters since a minimum of 6 credit hours is required).  e. Schedule a meeting with your DNP Chair to complete the required forms: Graduate-Independent Study Contract (G-ISC) and N897 course syllabus.  f. Once all items are approved (CASE form, Clinical Clearance, G-ISC, Syllabus), you can register for the section of NURS 897 designated to your DNP Chair.  During NURS 897 first semester:  a. Finalize your eIRB so you can begin project implementation.  b. Meet with your DNP Chair to discuss progress.  c. Complete NURS897 requirements as outlined in your G-ISC and Syllabus.  d. You grade for this course is T/U (T=thesis dissertation (passed) or U=Unsatisfactory (did not pass).  During NURS 897 final semester:  a. Schedule your final defense date (look for an email from your advisor about available dates. These usually occur in April, July, & November).  b. Analyze your project data and outcomes.  c. Meet with your DNP Chair to approve your final title of your DNP Project and discuss [Scholar Commons](https://scholarcommons.sc.edu) embargo. Scholar Commons is the repository for all CON DNP Projects.  c. Complete NURS897 requirements as outlined in your G-ISC and Syllabus (which includes completing your final paper and presentation in preparation for your final defense.)  d. Instructions for the DNP Scholarly Project paper and a template for the DNP Scholarly Project defense are posted on the DNP Virtual Community, **DNP Project Information** tab, **Final Project/Defense Procedure** Folder.  e. Send the following information to your advisor: Name, title, & email address of your 3rd/outside committee member, the title of your DNP Project, and complete the [Dissertation Signature and Scholar Commons forms](https://powerforms.docusign.net/990d99a7-62f0-4fbe-9b10-10e8dbd726a2?env=na4&acct=524c5700-5693-4039-81f3-9ae191a5945c&accountId=524c5700-5693-4039-81f3-9ae191a5945c).  f. No later than two weeks before the final defense date: Send the final draft of your **paper and presentation** to your full DNP committee members.  g. No more than three (3) days after defense, send you final DNP Scholarly Project paper with any required updates to your DNP Chair and Academic Advisor. |  |
| End of program evaluation | Each student is asked to provide feedback about the overall DNP program. This feedback is important to us to make improvements. Students will be sent an email with instructions for the semester they are scheduled to graduate. | Complete the evaluation |  |
| Graduation | Students have several steps to take to prepare for doctoral hooding and graduation.   1. **NOTE:** Students must be enrolled in at least 1 credit hour their final semester. | During your last semester:  a. Go to: [Commencement and Doctoral Hooding](https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/academics/commencement/doctoral_hooding/index.php)   1. b. Submit the graduation application to Self-Service Carolina. **Students must apply for graduation –** **this is for your degree not the ceremony**. 2. c. Complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates.   d. Complete the Doctoral Hooding Program Information Form.  e. Submit the Dissertation Signature and Approval Form.  f. Students should review the Graduation folder in the DNP virtual community.  g. Submit your Doctoral Hooding Program Information Form if you plan on attending the USC Doctoral Hooding ceremony (held in May & December).  **Note:** Convocation is a nursing-specific ceremony held in May, August, & December for undergraduate and graduate nursing students. |  |