College of Health Sciences
School of Nursing

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
Program Handbook

Revised
November 2015
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School of Nursing Diversity & Inclusion Statement

By 2020, the university will be a model campus community where all students, faculty and staff feel appreciated, respected, connected, valued and engaged with the larger life of the campus and beyond (UMass Lowell Strategic Plan 2020, July 2015).

Inclusivity is a key value within the culture of the School of Nursing. We are therefore focused on fostering an environment that values the unique contribution of each member of our community.

This commitment to inclusivity requires that we appreciate and respect our varying backgrounds and viewpoints.

We are committed to recognize the intrinsic importance of each person’s role and appreciate every individual’s contribution to meeting the School of Nursing Philosophy, Mission, Vision & Goals.

We commit to treating one another with high regard and respect.

We are dedicated to performing our jobs in a courteous and professional manner.

We are committed to maintaining integrity and courtesy in our dealings with fellow members of the School of Nursing, College, University and community at large.

Communication, cooperation and teamwork are key to achieve our goal to foster a community that respects each individual’s worth and rights.

(September 22, 2015)
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program at the University of Massachusetts Lowell! The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with resources to assist you with your progression through the DNP program. If you have any additional questions not addressed within this handbook, please contact your academic advisor or Dr. Lea Dodge, DNP Program Coordinator (Lea_Dodge@uml.edu) Additional information may be found on the following UMass Lowell Websites:

DNP Program website:
http://www.uml.edu/Health-Sciences/Nursing/Programs/Doctoral/DNP/default.aspx

Graduate Student Catalog:
http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Graduate/default.aspx

School of Nursing website:
http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Graduate/Health-Sciences/Nursing/Default.aspx

University of Massachusetts Lowell website:
http://www.uml.edu/

Please note that the policies in this Handbook may be updated from time to time. You are responsible for reviewing your UMass Lowell email to keep up to date with any policy changes. If you have any additional questions, please contact your academic advisor.

General Statement of Nursing Student Responsibilities and Rights
Students are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures currently in effect. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of and to comply with current policies and procedures. Failure to stay informed is not an acceptable excuse for non-compliance. General policies can be found at http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Graduate/Policies/General-Policies.aspx Please take the time to review all the tabs and links to familiarize yourself with general graduate policies. Occasionally policies that are specific to the School of Nursing may be more stringent than general graduate policies. This handbook will describe some of those policies. Students are advised to pay particular attention to the following policies at the above link and contained in this document

In addition to the above graduate policies, all graduate students taking nursing courses are expected to adhere in both clinical and didactic settings, to the following School of Nursing Graduate Level Professional Clinical and Classroom Competencies Contract. Signed copies will be kept in your academic file.
Competencies Contract

All DNP students are expected to adhere to the following Essential Professional Competencies in both clinical and/or didactic settings. A DNP student:

1. Demonstrates effective verbal and non-verbal communication.
2. Assumes responsibility for own actions and outcomes.
3. Demonstrates acceptance of limited knowledge and experience.
4. Follows through on commitments, is dependable and punctual.
5. Demonstrates self-direction in seeking learning opportunities.
6. Shows respect for others in the classroom.
7. Accepts constructive feedback when offered.
8. Seeks validation of clinical judgments with faculty and/or preceptor.
9. Is able to separate personal issues from professional responsibilities.
10. Keeps the patient/client/resident as the priority.
11. Respects cultural and personal differences of others; is not judgmental about patients’/clients’, residents’ or other students’ lifestyles.
12. Sets priorities and reorganizes as necessary.
13. Projects a professional image/demeanor.

Grading of the School of Nursing’s Graduate Level Professional Competencies is Pass/Fail. Successful demonstration of these competencies is essential for passing any clinical or didactic course. A warning may be given at any time during the semester. Any student who is unable to demonstrate these competencies at a level that is considered to be safe to practice or potentially harmful to others, at any time during the semester, will fail the course despite academic grades earned.

CONTRACT: I have read the 13 professional competencies that are required for nursing students enrolled in courses in the graduate program. I agree that successful demonstration of these competencies is essential for my passing this nursing course at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

Student Name ____________________________________________
(Please Print)

Student Signature __________________________________________ Date: __________

Faculty Signature: _________________________________________ Date: __________
**University of Massachusetts Lowell Mission Statement**
The University of Massachusetts Lowell is a comprehensive, public institution committed to excellence in teaching, research and community engagement. We strive to transform students to succeed in college, as lifelong learners and as informed citizens in a global environment. UMass Lowell offers affordable, experience-based undergraduate and graduate academic programs taught by internationally recognized faculty who conduct research to expand the horizons of knowledge. The programs span and interconnect the disciplines of business, education, engineering, fine arts, health and environment, humanities, sciences and social sciences. The University continues to build on its founding tradition of innovation, entrepreneurship and partnerships with industry and the community to address challenges facing the region and the world ([http://www.uml.edu/About/mission.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/About/mission.aspx)).

**College of Health Sciences Mission Statement**
The mission of the College of Health Sciences is to promote human health and development to allow healthy individuals and families to live in safe and productive communities and environmentally sustainable economies. This mission assumes just, secure and sustainable social, economic and environmental systems. The curriculum is continually evaluated and revised as needed to achieve this vision. We recognize that achieving this mission requires:

- Improving our understanding of health, disease and disability and their social context
- Increasing citizens’ understanding of health problems and their environmental, social, economic causes
- Expanding community and workplace opportunities for promoting good health
- Developing environmentally sound systems of production and consumption
- Exploring the fullest understanding of our region defined by common political, social, ethnic, economic and cultural boundaries
- Addressing the determinants of social and economic disparities in our region
- Maintaining a health care system that is effective and compassionate, and promoting innovative government policies to support human health and development ([http://www.uml.edu/Health-Sciences/About/Mission.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/Health-Sciences/About/Mission.aspx))

**School of Nursing Mission Statement**
The Mission of the School of Nursing is to educate students, advance knowledge, and provide service to the University, the profession, and the community through excellence in the discovery, application, integration, and dissemination of knowledge. The health promotion needs of individuals, groups, families, and communities are emphasized.

**School of Nursing Philosophy**
The Philosophy of the School of Nursing reflects beliefs regarding person, environment, health, nursing and education. People have unique qualities and individual needs for respect, worth and recognition of personal dignity. They have the right to make choices and establish goals, which influence and are influenced by the environment. Health is a dynamic state of physiological, psychological, social and spiritual well-being. Nursing is a health care discipline guided by professional standards of care supporting individuals, families, groups and communities in the promotion of health throughout the lifespan. Education is a self-actualizing, creative lifetime endeavor involving values clarification, inclusivity, progressive systematic inquiry, critical analysis and judgment *(revised and approved 9-22-2015 at SON meeting).*
Purpose of the DNP Program
Our goal is to educate APRNs, nurse educators, and nurse leaders who will not only provide quality health care to patients, assume leadership roles in the health care system, and obtain faculty positions, but that will have the knowledge and skills necessary to propose solutions to improve the process and outcomes for patients. This can be achieved by teaching nurses, who have strong patient care knowledge and skills obtained at the MS level, additional content in evaluation research, health policy, organizational leadership and financing, evidence-based practice and health care informatics.

This program provides advanced knowledge and skills in evaluation research, health policy, organizational leadership and financing, evidence-based practice and health care informatics. The DNP graduate is expected to have a positive impact on the sustainability of the health care system by improving health care using an evidence-based approach.

DNP Program Goals
Graduates of the DNP Program are to prepared to:
1. Provide quality health care to patients and communities
2. Assume leadership roles in the health care system
3. Propose, implement and evaluate evidence-based changes in health care

DNP Program Objectives*
The DNP Program prepares nurse scholars who:
1. Integrate scientific underpinnings into the highest level of nursing practice
2. Consider organizational and systems leadership competencies to quality improvement and systems thinking activities
3. Evaluate clinical scholarship and recommend analytical methods for evidence-based practice
4. Apply information systems/technology and patient care -technology for the improvement and transformation of health care
5. Develop, implement and evaluate health care policy for advocacy in health care
6. Employ effective communication skills to lead and participate in inter-professional collaboration for improving patient and population health outcomes
7. Analyze and evaluate clinical and population health for improving the nation’s health
8. Demonstrate advanced nursing practice at the population/organizational/policy levels
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Program Goals: Graduates of the Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program are prepared to:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Student Outcomes: Indicators of Success After completion of the Doctorate in Nursing Program, graduates will:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Provide quality health care to patients and communities, | a. Achieve employment as a practice specialist/consultant/nurse leader working with diverse populations  
   b. Maintain or achieve specialty certifications |
| 2. Assume leadership roles in the health care system | a. Participate on committees, boards, or task forces at the institutional, local, state, regional, national, and/or international levels to improve health care delivery and outcomes  
   b. Lead inter-professional teams in the analysis of complex practice and organizational issues  
   c. Mentor, guide, and support other nurses in the achievement of excellence in nursing practice |
| 3. Propose, implement and evaluate evidence-based changes in health care | a. 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  
   b. Apply relevant findings to develop practice guidelines and improve practice and the practice environment  
   c. Disseminate findings from research to improve patient outcomes |

*The Program Outcomes are derived from the AACN Essentials of Doctoral Education for Nursing Practice (2006)*

**Student Physical and Mental Health Resources**
Students have access to the Student Health Services, which is located at University Crossing. Full information about their hours, physical and mental health resources can be found at the following website: [http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Health/default.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Health/default.aspx)

Please note that any emergency health issue that occurs after regular hours, will be responded to by UMass Lowell Police at 978-934-4911.

**Disability Services**
Students who have disabilities and need services, resources or academic accommodations should consult with Disability Services [http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Disability/Policies.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Disability/Policies.aspx). If you are verified to need academic accommodations then you must provide that documentation to...
every faculty teaching your courses BEFORE you will need those accommodations. Last minute request for accommodations for testing or other learning needs may not be possible.

**Matriculated Status**
This status refers to students who have met all of the requirements for admission to the program and have received a letter of acceptance from the Graduate Admissions Office. Students are generally matriculated in Fall, but may be matriculated in Spring and Summer. Non-matriculated students can take courses as a non-degree student (pending available space in the class and faculty permission) and can seek guidance for course selection at August and January Open Houses or by advice from the specialty track contact person listed on the website.

**Transfer of credits**
1. Students can transfer up to 12 credits (4 courses) from an accredited graduate program. Course grades must be a B or better. **Courses taken towards a previous BS, MS or other graduate degree cannot be transferred.**
2. Courses taken prior to matriculation must have been taken within 5 years prior to the date of matriculation and must be equivalent to required courses in the DNP degree pathway or be an acceptable elective. Those taken at another institution must be first approved by the UMass Lowell faculty of record for the corresponding UMass Lowell course before courses can be transferred for credit.
3. Transfer credit from another U.S. or Canadian institution must not exceed equivalent course credit (typically 3) at UMass Lowell, and will be based on UMass Lowell's standard of 37.5 semester contact hours being equal to 3 credits.
4. If you take courses at UMass Lowell **PRIOR** to matriculation in the graduate program, they count toward your 12-credit limit and must be transferred into your graduate program by academic petition. This also applies to Fast Track MS-DNP students who cannot apply graduate courses to their graduate degree until they are accepted.
5. Currently matriculated students should discuss proposed non-UMass Lowell coursework with their academic advisor and obtain approval of course equivalency **PRIOR** to taking the course.
6. The four DNP Scholarly Project courses (NURS.7700, NURS.7740, NURS.7720, NURS.7730) must be taken at UMass Lowell and cannot be transferred in. Transfer credit will not be granted for research seminars, clinical courses, practica, internships, or special projects.
7. Transfer credit/academic petitions should be completed upon matriculation or immediately after completing the course. Courses taken prior to matriculation in the program must be transferred in during the first semester of acceptance. Graduation requirement deadlines will not be waived for lack of petition completion.
8. A graduate academic petition must be completed with all relevant course information (the course syllabus is also needed for determination of UMass Lowell course equivalency) and an official transcript from outside institutions must accompany those academic petitions. Academic petitions need to be signed by the DNP Program Coordinator.
**Leave of Absence Policy**

Leaves of absence (LOA) from the DNP program may be requested for personal, medical or military deployment reasons.

**Types of Leaves:**

- **Military Deployment LOA** - There are no stipulations related to LOA terms for members of the U.S. military forces who have been deployed.
- **Medical LOA** – Medical conditions must be documented in a professional letter by a health care provider, which states the anticipated length of absence. Students should be cleared medically prior to their return.
- **Personal/Other LOA** - Requests for personal LOA to meet other obligations may be requested.

All LOA’s should be discussed with the student’s academic advisor and submitted via a formal written request in a graduate academic petition. This petition should be submitted to the graduate coordinator with a clear timeline for the requested LOA. There is a **two-semester limit for a leave of absence** related to medical or other personal LOA’s. Any absence from the program greater than 2 semesters (other than military-related) will result in dismissal from the program.

Students who leave for more than two semesters may re-apply to the program. Former students who re-apply will be considered as a new applicant and evaluated utilizing current admission criteria. There is a University limit to the number of credits that can be transferred back into the program. At the DNP level, only 12 credits are allowed as transfer credits. The Graduate Admissions Committee may determine which, if any, courses are allowed back in as transfer credits.

Students whose LOA application is approved are required to register for Continued Matriculation credits for each semester that they are on approved leave and pay the associated fee. All military deployment LOA’s are approved automatically but the student’s progression in the program will be affected by any leave of absence. A student’s return to the next cohort may not be guaranteed and the LOA could result in a delay of academic progression. Students will be placed on a space available basis.

If on an approved LOA, the student is required to contact the Graduate Coordinator at least **one month prior to his/her expected date of return** to confirm course progression plans. If re-admitted, placement in the next cohort of students will not be guaranteed; it will depend on space availability.

Returning students from a LOA may also be subject to compliance with any changes in the degree pathway. The Graduate Professional Review Committee will determine conditions and academic progression decisions.

**DNP Program Withdrawal Policy**

A student who wishes to withdraw from the School of Nursing DNP program must submit his/her request in writing to the Registrar's Office and the School of Nursing Graduate Coordinator. This procedure ensures that the student's academic and financial obligations are cleared before leaving.
the University. If a student officially withdraws from the University by the withdrawal date indicated in the graduate academic calendar, the permanent record will indicate a grade of W for courses in that final semester. If the student withdraws after that period, the grade will be an F. If the student is not in good standing, the student will not be permitted readmission to the DNP program.

All previous application materials will remain on file for a two-year period. At any time during this period, a student who has officially withdrawn and left in good standing may request readmission by completing and submitting only the cover page of the graduate application and paying the application fee. If re-admitted, placement in the next cohort of students will not be guaranteed; it will depend on space availability. After two years, a student must file a new, complete application and submit the appropriate fee to the Graduate Admissions Office in order to be considered for readmission.

Returning students who are re-admitted after a withdrawal may also be subject to compliance with any changes in the degree pathway. Courses that are considered outdated will not be allowed in as a transfer. The Graduate Professional Review Committee will determine conditions and academic progression decisions.

**DNP Program Grading Policy**

It is the School of Nursing’s policy that doctoral students must receive a B or better for all doctoral courses. All DNP nursing courses follow the grading scale below. Transferred course grades are not included in the GPA.

A (4.0)  A- (3.7)  B+ (3.3)  B (3.0)  B- (2.7)  C+ (2.3)  C (2.0)  D (1.0)  F (0.0)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>NOT ACCEPTABLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94 – 100</td>
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<td>90 - 93</td>
<td>77 - 79</td>
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<td>87 - 89</td>
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<td>84 - 86</td>
<td>70-75</td>
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<td>or any grade below C-</td>
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**Student Progression**

Full time enrollment requires enrollment in three courses (9 credits) per semester. Part-time students are expected to attend a minimum of two courses per semester in the first two years in order to follow the 5-year expected graduation plan for part-time students. The expected time to graduation for full-time students is three to four years. Exceptions will be made based on course availability and prior courses that have been transferred in.

Students are not eligible to progress in the DNP program if they receive lower than a B in a course or if their cumulative grade point average falls below a B. Students will receive a notice from the
School of Nursing if they have not met the requirements for continuation in the program by receiving a grade lower than a B in any course or if their semester cumulative average falls below a B. Students may appeal this process following the University appeal process found online. If the appeal is granted and the student is reaccepted to the program, the student will be on probation for a minimum of one semester and must meet with his/her academic advisor regularly to develop and implement a plan of action to be able to meet the conditions of probation and successfully continue in the program. If students receive a course grade lower than a B for a second time, they will be put on probation and will need to submit an academic petition to retake the course. If the student goes below a 3.0 for a third time, or receives a third lower than B course grade, the student cannot continue in the program.

Students who withdraw from a course after the official add/drop period (the point of time early in the semester where students are allowed to be refunded for the course) that is not a formal medical withdrawal, will receive a letter from the School of Nursing dismissing them from the program. The student may appeal the decision following the University appeal process for dismissals as a result of academic issues, not grade related dismissals. If the appeal is granted and the student is reaccepted to the program, the student will be on probation for a minimum of one semester and must meet with his/her academic advisor regularly to develop and implement a plan of action to be able to meet the conditions of probation and successfully continue in the program.

Incomplete grades
If, because of unusual circumstances, a student is unable to meet all the requirements of the course by the end of a semester, and if the faculty member is in agreement, the grade of Incomplete (INC) may be given. Responsibility for making arrangements with an instructor to complete all outstanding coursework rests entirely with the student, who must complete all outstanding coursework by the date listed on the Graduate Academic Calendar during the subsequent academic semester. If an incomplete is given in a pre-requisite course, the student will not be able to register for the subsequent course until the pre-requisite course coursework has been completed. This may result in a change in the projected graduation date for the student.

DNP Program Degree Pathway
The majority of classes are taught in a blended format with some online and some face-to-face classes offered on Saturdays and some evenings beginning in Fall 2014. Students may attend the program full time or part time. The total amount of time allowed for completion of the program is five years. If the student does not complete the program in this time period, they will be dismissed from the program. Please see the tables on the following pages for sample full-time and part-time course plans.
## YEAR 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credit</th>
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<tr>
<td>PUBH.5120 Operations Analysis for Quality Improvement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NURS.7170 Evaluation Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS.7700 Evidence Appraisal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NURS.7740 Scholarly Project Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBH.5060 Quantitative Methods in Health Management</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>XXXX.xxxx Elective</td>
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**TOTAL CREDITS: 33**

## YEAR 2

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<td>PUBH.6070 Healthcare Information Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS.7720 Scholarly Project Implementation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NURS.7730 Evidence Dissemination, Advocacy and Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS.7710 Advanced Nursing Leadership</td>
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## POST-MS DNP & MS-DNP FAST TRACK DEGREE PATHWAY

### PART-TIME PLAN

#### YEAR 1

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<td>PUBH.5060 Quantitative Methods in Health Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUBH.5120 Operations Analysis for Quality Improvement</td>
<td>NURS.7170 Evaluation Research</td>
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<tr>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURS.7710 Advanced Nursing Leadership</td>
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#### YEAR 2

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<th>Fall</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>NURS.7700 Evidence Appraisal</td>
<td>NURS.7740 Scholarly Project Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUBH.6070 Healthcare Information Systems</td>
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<td>XXXX.xxxx Elective</td>
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3

#### YEAR 3

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<th>Fall</th>
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<tr>
<td>NURS.7720 Scholarly Project Implementation</td>
<td>NURS.7730 Evidence Dissemination, Advocacy and Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
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3

**TOTAL CREDITS: 33**

*Courses for Scholarly Project must be taken in sequence.*

**MS-DNP Fast Track students see MS-DNP Fast Track Option under Recommended Electives**
Course Descriptions

**PUBH.5060 Quantitative Methods in Health Management**
This course focuses on the application of statistical techniques to management of health care information, including descriptive data and statistical inference. SPSS, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, is used for data analysis. Pre-requisite: An elementary statistics course.

**PUBH.5120 Operations Analysis for Quality Improvement**
This course presents an interdisciplinary approach to quality management in health care, including disciplines such as operations management, organizational behavior, and health services research. We focus on improving performance and patient safety in a variety of health-related organizations, including hospitals, public health departments and pharmaceutical companies.

**PUBH.6070 Health Care Information Systems**
This course provides health care professionals with a practical understanding of health care information systems sufficient to work effectively with and support information systems design, development and implementation within a variety of health care settings. The course includes analysis and discussion of actual case examples.

**NURS.7070 Epidemiology of Health Promotion**
This course provides an in-depth exploration of the concepts and methods of epidemiological research. Students will critique the principles of epidemiology with an emphasis on health promotion research. Students will analyze and develop epidemiological approaches, which seek to promote health and prevent disease.

**NURS.7170 Evaluation Research**
The course focus is on the basic concepts of evaluation research and their application to education, health, and social programs. Specific design and analytic approaches that affect quality evaluation research will be examined. Students will design a mock evaluation study.

**NURS.7700 Evidence Appraisal**
This course the students will explore the role of the DNP, in evaluating evidence to inform practice. The student will also identify a critical issue within the health care system that impacts healthcare delivery. Methods relevant to reviewing, analyzing, synthesizing, and applying evidence from the scientific literature will be discussed. Models of systematic reviews of the literature will be explored and implemented. Decisions will be made relative to the student’s topical interest and identification of the Scholarly Project Chair.

**NURS.7710 Advanced Nursing Leadership**
This course consists of a seminar and leadership experience. The seminar will explore the major concepts in leadership and management and their application in the healthcare setting. The role of the DNP will also be discussed in the terms of leadership in health policy, education, and clinical settings. A leadership project will be completed by the end of the semester.
NURS.7720 Scholarly Project Implementation (Pre-requisites: NURS.7700, NURS.7740)
In this course, the student will implement the Scholarly Project according to DNP Scholarly
Project guidelines. Building on the previous semester’s course work and proposal design, students
will meet in seminar every other week on campus to share progress on the project and to discuss
issues related to implementation. Seminars will serve to guide students through the phases of the
scholarly project implementation and evaluation.

NURS.7730 Evidence Dissemination, Advocacy and Policy (Pre-requisites: NURS.7700,
NURS.7740, NURS.7720)
This course will include a weekly seminar. The students will complete the Scholarly project by
undertaking dissemination activities. The student will analyze policies influencing DNP practice
and quality, cost and access to healthcare and participate in the policy making process.

NURS.7740 Scholarly Project Design (Pre-requisite: NURS.7700)
In this course the student will design and present the scholarly Project proposal. Students will meet
biweekly with the scholarly project chair to develop the DNP scholarly project using the
knowledge acquired in previous course work. Students will complete a University of
Massachusetts Lowell Institutional review Board application that considers ethical and cultural
issues related to the scholarly project.

Recommended Electives

One graduate level 3-credit elective course may be taken either from within the College of Health
Sciences, another UMass Lowell graduate program or another university with the approval of your
advisor. If you are interested in teaching after you graduate, 33.713 Curriculum and Teaching in
Nursing is strongly advised. The following are examples possible electives but not all are offered
every year or in a blended format:

NURS.7130 Curriculum and Teaching in Nursing
NURS.5580 Geropsychiatric and Mental Health Nursing
NURS.5520 Social, Cultural and Policy Issues in Health Care (if not a graduate
of the MS program at UML)
NURS.5540 Palliative and End-of-Life Nursing Care
NURS.6020 Clinical Psychopharmacology
NURS.7010 Philosophy of Science
NURS.7020 Theoretical Foundations for Health Promotion
NURS.7030 Research in Nursing and Health Promotion
NURS.7060 Measurement in Health and Behavioral Research
NURS.7160 Qualitative Research Methods
PUBH.5150 Health Economics
PUBH.5140 Health Care Management
PUBH.5110 Health Care Finance
**MS - DNP Fast Track Option for UMass Lowell Students**

UMass Lowell Master’s students can take up to 6 credits of graduate-level (500 or higher) courses which can be counted toward both Master’s and DNP degrees as stipulated below. These courses will satisfy both DNP and MS degree requirements.

1. The course of study for the Master’s program allows for one elective. This elective must be used to take one of the following DNP courses: PUBH.6070 Healthcare Information Systems or PUBH.5120 Operations Analysis for Quality Improvement.

2. The Master’s program also requires NURS.5520 Social, Cultural, and Policy Issues in Health Care. This course will fulfill the elective requirement in the DNP course of study.

3. MS students who enrolled in BS-MS Fast Track Program and took NURS.5520 Social Cultural Policy as an undergraduate for graduate credit, then NURS.6010 Evidence Based Research would fill the DNP elective requirement.

4. In order to enroll in the MS-DNP Fast Track Option, students need to apply and be accepted before graduation from the MS program. If the application is received for the DNP program after graduation from the MS program, students will need to apply to the Post MS-DNP program and credit will not be awarded for NURS.5520 Social, Cultural, and Policy Issues in Health Care, PUBH.6070 Healthcare Information Systems, or PUBH.5120 Operations Analysis for Quality Improvement.

5. Any course that is to be counted towards the MS and the DNP program (NURS.5520 Social, Cultural, and Policy Issues in Health Care, and PUBH.6070 Healthcare Information Systems, or PUBH.5120 Operations Analysis for Quality Improvement), will require a graduate academic petition to be completed, signed by the DNP Coordinator, and submitted to the registrar’s office to ensure credits are awarded to both the MS and DNP programs.

6. Accepted MS-DNP Fast Track students may defer enrollment into the DNP portion of their program for up to one year post Masters. To ensure a place in the program, students with deferrals must contact the DNP program coordinator and graduate admissions in the semester prior to enrollment.
DNP PRACTICE HOURS

Practice Hours

Practice hours are individualized to assist the DNP students in meeting doctoral competencies. Hours may include practice with populations, systems (including information systems), organizations and/or policy foci or clinical practice.

The post-Masters DNP requires sufficient practice hours so that the total number of DNP and prior MS or post baccalaureate certificate nursing practice hours will equal 1000. For example, at UMass Lowell, MS students achieve 600 hours during their clinical practicum experiences. These hours are applied to the total number of DNP hours resulting in an additional 400 hours required during the DNP program. Prior to matriculation, students from other MS Nursing programs must submit evidence of practice hours from their respective MS programs. If a student with APRN certification cannot document these hours then the MS/Certificate practicum hours will be credited as 500 hours.

Practice Hours/Clinical Coordination

Most students complete their practice hours at their place of work. Even though the student may be an employee, he/she may need a contract in place to complete practice hours. Practice hours usually begin in NURS.7710 or NURS.7740. Students will work with the faculty of record in these courses to determine if a contract is needed. For the most part, UMass Lowell has contracts with major health care employers and generally a new contract is not needed. If a contract is needed, the student will send the clinical resources coordinator the contact information for the agency contract person.

Tracking Practice Hours, Key DNP Assignments and Scholarly Project

Students are responsible for documenting practice hours by semester. All Post-Masters DNP students will be using Typhon software (Typhongroup.net) to track practice hours and other important assignments. Students will be informed of tracking and posting requirements in each class or by an advisor. Students will pay a one-time fee ($80 in 2015) for access to the Typhon website during their DNP program. Students will have access to their information for 2 years after graduation. However, it is recommended that students download their files and store them in a secure location prior to graduation to ensure access for future use.
DNP SCHOLARLY PROJECT

The scholarly project reflects the culmination of academic studies completed throughout the DNP program that demonstrates the ability of the student to effect positive change in a health care setting/arena through the careful synthesis of evidence as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of the change.

Criteria for DNP Scholarly Project

The DNP Scholarly Project should:
- Focus on a change that impacts healthcare outcomes either through direct or indirect care
- Have a systems (micro-, meso-, or macro-level) or population or aggregate focus
- Demonstrate implementation in the appropriate arena or area of practice
- Use a systematic approach and collect data using methods and tools that meet accepted standards
- Be conducted according to ethical principles and is approved by UMass Lowell Institutional Review Board if applicable
- Include a plan for sustainability (e.g., financial, systems, or political realities)
- Include an evaluation of processes and/or outcomes (formative or summative)
- Be disseminated to the appropriate audiences

Types of Scholarly Projects

Some examples of scholarly projects include, but are not limited to:
- Quality improvement projects to address gaps in practice
- Evaluation of implementation of evidence-based practice guidelines
- Development of models of care or programs
- Evaluation of financial analyses to compare models of care
- Analysis of policies related to health care practice
- Development of inter-professional and/or intra-professional collaborative projects to implement policy or evaluate care models

Scholarly Project Guidelines

- During the course NURS.7700 Evidence Appraisal, students will complete a systematic review of the literature in an area of interest. Additionally, the student will choose a doctorally prepared nursing faculty member as the Scholarly Project Chair, who agrees to meet regularly with the student throughout the following semesters and guide the student in development of the scholarly project proposal and final scholarly project. The Scholarly Project Chair should have the knowledge relevant to the subject area and/or methods of the student’s project. Additionally, the student will choose a Community Mentor from the practice site who will facilitate the student’s work in the setting.
course faculty of record will also guide the students in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the scholarly project.

- The Scholarly Project Chair provides guidance in the development of the scholarly project proposal, assumes role of Primary Investigator (PI) for the purposes of the UMass Lowell IRB application, and provides advice on the implementation of the scholarly project, the written paper, and the final presentation.

- The DNP student, in consultation with the Scholarly Project Chair, will choose a second team member, the Community Mentor. The Community Mentor should represent the health care setting in which the scholarly project is to be completed. This person also sits on the committee for advisory purposes. When the Team has been formalized, a copy of the DNP Scholarly Project Team Request Form (Appendix A) must be completed and submitted to the Coordinator of the DNP Program for approval. Upon approval, the form will be signed by the Coordinator and filed in the student’s record.

- If a DNP Scholarly Project Chair leaves the UMass Lowell as faculty after a student’s successful proposal hearing but consents to remain as Chair, the graduate program director or designee may invite the faculty member to remain in this role.

**Scholarly Project Proposal**

- The Scholarly Project Proposal must be approved by the Scholarly Project Team. A proposal hearing should be planned by the student to present and discuss the project prior to approval. The written proposal must be submitted to team members two weeks prior to the formal hearing. The DNP Scholarly Project Proposal Approval Form (Appendix B) with signatures from both team members is placed in the student’s record. The corrected proposal is filed on Typhon by the student within two weeks of approval. The proposal hearing will be approximately 30-45 minutes. The Chair is required to attend and Community Mentor’s are strongly encouraged to attend.

**IRB Approval**

- IRB Approval - The IRB review is conducted after the successful proposal hearing. The Scholarly Project Chair is considered the PI in all student IRB proposals. However, it is the DNP student who completes the IRB application and then submits to the Chair for review and approval before the Chair submits the application to the IRB. If the student is doing secondary data analysis, the student must fill out the IRB Exempt status form and submit to the Chair who will submit the form. This is generally a very fast and relatively easy process. Most DNP projects that are not secondary data analyses are typically categorized as “Expedited” reviews. This may take several months back and forth during the process of review; students need to be prepared for this. Students should be encouraged to read carefully all the IRB materials on Human Subjects Research to minimize returned proposals. A “full review” is required if the student is conducting a
study with vulnerable populations or involved in a study that could potentially cause harm. This review may take several months - up to 6 months in some cases. These types of projects are not recommended for DNP students due to the timeline allotted for completion of the DNP Scholarly Project. The student should read all the related information on the IRB website prior to starting to write the IRB application. 


In addition, before students even start the IRB process – they must ensure that their NIH or CITI human subjects research certificate is up-to-date (every 3 years needs renewal). This process is covered in NURS.7740 Scholarly Project Design since this is the first step prior to IRB submission as it is required. The Chair’s certificate must also be up-to-date, as the application requires his/her date of completion as well. If students are working on data that have been approved by an outside IRB, then they can apply to have the original IRB as the lead IRB agency. There is a specific form, the Collaborative Institutional Agreement form for this available on the IRB webpages. It requires IRB signatures from both IRB’s – UMass Lowell and the outside agency.


Sample Outline of Scholarly Project Proposal

Title of Project
I. Abstract
II. Introduction
III. Background/Problem Statement,
   A. Summarized and synthesized review of the literature on the problem
   B. Purpose of the project
   C. Significance (to health care, nursing, etc.)
IV. Methods
   A. Study Design
   B. Sample
   C. Setting
   D. Procedure/Plan for implementation
   E. Plans for Analyses
   F. Limitations

• Specific guidelines to the proposal and presentations are presented in NURS.7740 Scholarly Project Design
### DNP Project Guidelines and Four Semester Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Scholarly Project Outcomes by End of Corresponding Semester</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Fall, 1**   | NURS.7700 | 1. Conduct Systematic Literature Review  
2. Identify Scholarly Project Chair, Community Mentor early in the semester.  
3. Identify key stakeholders at organization site and discuss scholarly project idea.  
4. Develop a two page Abstract of Scholarly Project Proposal [Title, Introduction, Purpose, Significance, Methodology (sample, setting, procedure, analysis plan, limitations)]. |
| **Spring, 1** | NURS.7740 | 1. Develop Scholarly Project proposal based on approved abstract, guidelines in this handbook and coursework.  
2. After the scholarly project Chair and Community Mentor provide input to proposal, schedule Scholarly Project Proposal Hearing according to the NURS.7740 class calendar. A draft of the proposal is sent to all team members at least two weeks before the hearing date.  
3. An approved and corrected copy of proposal is posted on Typhon before the end of the semester.  
4. An IRB Application is submitted to either UMass Lowell or the host agency in accordance with the NURS.7740 class calendar. You will receive guidance for completing the IRB in NURS.7740.  
a. The Scholarly Project Chair is the PI for the UMass Lowell IRB, and must also sign and submit the final application and consent form. However, the DNP student is responsible for filling out the application and creating the consent form. |
| **Summer, 1** |           | 1. Depending on project timeline-- may begin implementation of Scholarly Project  
2. This is contingent upon IRB approval and Scholarly Project Chair approval  
3. Communicate progress with Scholarly Project Chair at agreed upon intervals. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall, 2</th>
<th>NURS.7720</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly Project Implementation</td>
<td>NURS.7720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Complete implementation of scholarly project.</td>
<td>1. Complete implementation of scholarly project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. If IRB approval is not received by September 1, notify the Scholarly Project Chair and the faculty of record for NURS.7720.</td>
<td>2. If IRB approval is not received by September 1, notify the Scholarly Project Chair and the faculty of record for NURS.7720.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If IRB approval is not obtained in a time frame to permit implementation of project, student may not progress to NURS.7730.</td>
<td>3. If IRB approval is not obtained in a time frame to permit implementation of project, student may not progress to NURS.7730.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Spring, 2</th>
<th>NURS.7330</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence Dissemination Advocacy &amp; Policy</td>
<td>NURS.7330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Evaluate results of project</td>
<td>1. Evaluate results of project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Finalize write-up of the Project in APA format, following journal manuscript guidelines</td>
<td>2. Finalize write-up of the Project in APA format, following journal manuscript guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. An oral presentation of project with approval from the Scholarly Project Chair and Community Mentor will be scheduled according to the Spring academic calendar to insure clearance for graduation.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Disseminate results through submission of a poster or paper presentation to an external conference. Each year, one DNP student has the opportunity to present at the ENRS conference. In addition, students complete a poster presentation during a Nursing Research Day to be held at UMass Lowell each spring. Students are strongly encouraged to seek publication to an appropriate journal based on the project topic. Also, the Chair will be listed as an author on the publication as well as possibly the Community Mentor.</td>
<td>4. Disseminate results through submission of a poster or paper presentation to an external conference. Each year, one DNP student has the opportunity to present at the ENRS conference. In addition, students complete a poster presentation during a Nursing Research Day to be held at UMass Lowell each spring. Students are strongly encouraged to seek publication to an appropriate journal based on the project topic. Also, the Chair will be listed as an author on the publication as well as possibly the Community Mentor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Submit final IRB report</td>
<td>5. Submit final IRB report</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Finish submission of your ‘Portfolio’ on Typhon to include but not be limited to: a. Systematic Literature Review b. Practice Hours (direct and indirect) c. Abstract d. Manuscript e. Copy of poster/presentation slides</td>
<td>6. Finish submission of your ‘Portfolio’ on Typhon to include but not be limited to: a. Systematic Literature Review b. Practice Hours (direct and indirect) c. Abstract d. Manuscript e. Copy of poster/presentation slides</td>
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**Note:** All Scholarly Project courses (NURS.7700, NURS.7740, NURS.7720, and NURS.7730) must be taken consecutively and must be completed as outlined in the syllabus for each course. This does not negate the university policy for incompletes and the student, if agreed upon by faculty for each course, may opt to complete on that timeline.
**Scholarly Project Manuscript**

The format of the final paper should adhere to journal guidelines where the manuscript is being submitted. Below is an example of an outline of a scholarly project manuscript but may differ according to project and team guidance. Below is a sample outline of the final manuscript.

**Title of Project**

I. Abstract  
II. Introduction  
III. Background/Problem Statement  
   A. Summarized and synthesized review of the literature on the problem  
   B. Purpose of the project  
   C. Significance (to health care, nursing, etc.)  
IV. Methodology  
   A. Study Design  
   B. Sample (who, number, inclusion criteria)  
   C. Setting (describe the setting in which intervention to take place)  
   D. Procedure for implementation (spell out your intervention plans step-by-step)  
   E. Data analysis/evaluation  
V. Results (summarize findings)  
VI. Limitations  
VII. Discussion/Conclusion/Recommendations and Implications for health care/nursing practice

**Completing the Scholarly Project**

- On completion of the project, the written report in manuscript form (approximately 15 pages) that follows APA format should be presented to the DNP Scholarly Project Team for review.

- On approval of the written report, the student will present an oral presentation of the DNP Scholarly project (see below), which will be open to the academic community and attended by the DNP Scholarly Project Team. The oral presentation should adhere to the DNP Scholarly Project Final Oral Presentation Guidelines.

- After successful completion of the oral presentation, members of the DNP Scholarly Project Team must sign the DNP Scholarly Project Approval Form (Appendix C). The form is then signed by the Coordinator of the DNP Program and filed in the student’s record.

- When the DNP Scholarly Project is completed, the student must submit a corrected copy to the DNP coordinator and post an electronic copy in their electronic portfolio.

- If IRB approval was obtained, a final report must be submitted to the IRB on the appropriate form. Failure to submit a final report to the IRB will delay graduation.
• Requirements for the DNP Scholarly Project must be completed prior to clearance for graduation. Graduation Clearance Form applications are available on the Graduate website at www.uml.edu/grad. A signed copy of the Scholarly Project Approval Form must be attached to the Graduation Clearance Form prior to obtaining signatures.

DNP Scholarly Project Final Oral Presentation Guidelines

• The student in conjunction with faculty will set a time and location for the oral presentation. The Scholarly Project Chair must be in attendance, and ideally the Community Mentor will be able to be present.

• The oral presentation with PowerPoint slides should be prepared to address key aspects of the project and should be approximately 45 minutes in length.

• Following the formal presentation, the Team will ask questions. Guests will be allowed to ask questions if time permits. The Scholarly Project Chair will guide the question and discussion period.

• The DNP Scholarly Project Team will privately discuss the results of the oral presentation. If the student is not successful in completing the oral presentation, the student may orally present the scholarly project a second time addressing the revisions and recommendations of the Team, upon approval of the DNP Program Coordinator. Graduation may be deferred if a second oral presentation is needed.
SAMPLE DNP STUDENT PORTFOLIO

The DNP Portfolio is a collection of student accomplishments achieved while in the DNP program. These documents are kept on the student’s Typhon account and can be downloaded up to 2 years after graduation.

Examples of documents included in the portfolio are:

1. Systematic Literature Review
2. Documentation of Direct and Indirect Practice Hours achieved in MS and while in DNP program (for the latter, setting(s), activities, and total by semester)
3. Complete Manuscript
4. Poster or presentation slides and where presented
5. Acceptance letters for presentation or publication
6. Documentation of other presentations/papers done while in the program
7. Self-Evaluation/reflection in relation to the DNP Competencies
GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE CLEARANCE PROCEDURE

1. Complete the Declaration of Intent to Graduate Form
   - This form is available at http://www.uml.edu/docs/clearance-form_tcm18-3565.pdf
   - Student completes the form, obtains the signature of the Graduate Program Director and mails/faxes back to Registrar’s office.
   - For Spring completion, the deadline to complete and submit this form is April 1.

2. Complete the DNP Competencies
   - Review and complete your DNP Competencies Handbook. Share this with your academic advisor when you meet.

3. End of Program Survey and Contact Information
   - All students are required to participate in an outcome evaluation of the DNP program. This is accomplished through the use of a Survey Monkey online survey. The information entered in the survey is strictly confidential and no identifying information will be collected. Please remember to print up the last page of the survey as evidence of completing the survey. Access to this survey will be obtained through the link provided in the Graduate Clearance Email sent out by the Graduate Administrative Assistant.
   - In the same Graduate Clearance Email, preferred contact information is collected for future alumni outreach.

4. Scholarly Project Completion
   - Post a copy of the completed Scholarly Project manuscript with all correction to the student’s Typhon account.
   - Submit a copy of the abstract for the inclusion in the School of Nursing Research/Preceptor Day in late Spring.
   - Print out a copy of the abstract and title page to be submitted to the Graduate Administrative Assistant HSSB Suite 200.

5. Final Checklist of Graduation Requirements
   - Provide attestation that you have completed the following to the Graduate Administrative Assistant HSSB Suite 200:
     - Declaration of Intent to Graduate Form
     - Signed DNP Competencies by advisor
     - Signed DNP Scholarly Project Approval Form
     - End of program survey completion (printed last page of survey only)
     - Final DNP Scholarly Project manuscript uploaded to Typhon
     - Print out of completed hours from Typhon
     - Final meeting with academic advisor
DNP Scholarly Project Team Request Form

Name______________________________________________________________

Student ID Number___________________________________________________

Committee Membership Composition

Scholarly Project Chair________________________________________________

Community Mentor___________________________________________________

Agency Name________________________________________________________

Approval:_____________________________________________      __________

Coordinator of the DNP Program                    Date
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF NURSING

DNP Scholarly Project Proposal Approval Form

Name_________________________________________________________________________

Student ID_____________________________________________________________________

DNP Scholarly Project Title_______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Date of Proposal Hearing_________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Results of Proposal Hearing:

Approved___________       Approved with Corrections _________   Not Approved___________

Team Members

Signatures:
_________________________________________ Scholarly Project Chair
_________________________________________ Community Mentor

Recommendations:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Coordinator of DNP Program_______________________________   Date________________
DNP Scholarly Project Approval Form

Name_________________________________________________________________________
Student ID_____________________________________________________________________
DNP Scholarly Project Title_______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
Date of Oral Presentation_________________________________________________________

Written paper:
Pass___________        Fail___________
Team Member Signatures:
___________________________________________ Scholarly Project Chair
___________________________________________ Community Mentor

Oral Presentation:
Pass___________   Fail___________
Team Member Signatures:
___________________________________________Scholarly Project Chair
___________________________________________Community Mentor

Second presentation required: Yes___________       No___________

Recommendations:

Coordinator of DNP Program_____________________________________    Date___________
IMPLEMENTING AN INTENSIVE DISCHARGE PLAN WITH DAY SURGERY PATIENTS

(14 pt.)

BY GAIL SMITH
(12 pt.)

SCHOLARLY PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORATE IN NURSING PRACTICE DEGREE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
{INSERT CURRENT YEAR} (12 pt.)

Scholarly Project Chair: Lea Dodge, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC

Community Mentor: Richard Jones, MD
IMPORTANT INTERNET LINKS

UMass Lowell Graduate Policies

DNP “Back to College” Guide

American Association of Colleges of Nursing DNP Essentials

National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty DNP Tool Kit
# SCHOOL OF NURSING
## FACULTY AND STAFF DIRECTORY
(Fall 2015)

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<tr>
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<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Office #</th>
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<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
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