

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN NURSING (PH.D.)

## Purpose

The Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing program is founded on a Christian worldview and is designed to prepare the next generation of nurse faculty at the highest level who are committed to research, educational leadership, and Christian ethical standards, and who view nursing education as a ministry.

## Program Learning Outcomes

The student will be able to:

- Synthesize nursing's philosophical and theoretical underpinnings in the practice of research.
- Contribute to the science of nursing by adding to the body of nursing knowledge through original research and scholarship.
- Apply ethical decision-making and values to the nursing profession based upon a biblical worldview.
- Advocate for policies and programs that improve health outcomes for individuals and communities.
- Act as a professional nurse leader, role model, and mentor to others who wish to pursue advancement of the nursing profession.

## Nurse Education Concentration

- The student will be able to educate the next generation of nurse scholars to add to the global community of nursing professionals.

## Program Specific Admission Procedures

All policies and procedures for admission to graduate programs as stated in this Catalog apply unless otherwise stated. The following criteria are established to encourage applications from qualified students who are highly motivated, self-directed, and academically competent to ensure selection of individuals who possess abilities that will enable them to successfully pursue graduate study in nursing. Each applicant must submit documentation to the Office of Graduate Admissions [gradadmissions@liberty.edu](mailto:gradadmissions@liberty.edu) that addresses the following criteria:

1. Conferred Master's degree in Nursing from an Accredited Institution. Accrediting bodies include: Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).
2. Minimum cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.00 on a scale of 4.00.
3. Complete a background check upon admission as per LUSON policy and when requested by Clinical/Practicum Partners.
4. Statement of Purpose: 200 words minimum.
5. Nurses educated outside of the United States must submit the following documentation in order to be considered for admission:
  - a. Proof of valid and current RN licensure based on review by the Commission on Graduates for Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) International [+1 (215) 222-8454] (must hold a valid registered nurse license issued in one of the fifty States. See #6.)
  - b. Pass the NCLEX Readiness Exam (offered by the CGFNS).
  - c. Undergraduate transcript evaluation report from the World Education System (WES) or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). This evaluation is required to determine equivalency of the applicant's nursing and

baccalaureate degrees to nursing education programs offered by schools in the U.S.

6. TOEFL Scores for students who speak English as a second language (score of 600 paper –based test; 250 computer-based test, 80 internet-based test). Additionally, the School of Nursing will require a TOEFL score for all students education outside of the United States regardless of the nursing degree obtained.
7. Current RN license in good standing with 1 year minimum experience as a practicing RN.
8. Registered Nurse Licensure verification will be conducted annually until the program is completed.
9. RN's will self-verify a minimum of one year of nursing practice. This can be collected verbally by a call center agent or via email from the student to LUO Admissions Verification.

## Evaluation of Transfer Credits

With approval from the School of Nursing Graduate Faculty Committee, students may transfer up to 30 credit hours from an appropriately accredited institution. In order to transfer credit hours, the student must have earned the minimum grade of B-, and the courses must have been completed within seven years of the start date of the program. Credits from a prior degree on the same academic level earned through Liberty University are considered transfer credits.

## Research Experience

The completion of a 90 hour research experience is required for all PhD candidates. These hours are done with an approved faculty research mentor in LUSON and/or expert nursing faculty researcher from another institution of higher learning or clinical affiliate. The purpose of this practicum is to strengthen the students understanding and application of nursing research (development, process, analytics, etc.).

## Comprehensive Examination

Students must successfully complete a comprehensive examination once all course work is completed and prior to the beginning of the dissertation phase. The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to examine student's mastery of content within the PhD in Nursing: Concentration in Nursing Education program learning outcomes.

## Dissertation

Research (Dissertation) topic must be approved prior to beginning the research experience. Approval is provided by the Program Chair, Program Director, or assigned faculty mentor.

Completion of the dissertation is partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion of the Ph.D. degree. Students are expected, with the assistance and approval of the dissertation committee chairperson, to select an appropriate topic of sufficient scope to demonstrate scholarly mastery of the program content and to make a meaningful contribution to nursing science. The dissertation is an original, rigorous research study carried out with substantial independence by the doctoral candidate. It represents a significant extrapolation from a base of solid experience or knowledge in the area of concentration. The dissertation significantly advances knowledge, improves professional practice, or contributes to understanding in the field of Nursing. Dissertation work is presented in a logical and understandable fashion. The results of the dissertation should be properly disseminated.

## Program Dismissal

Automatic dismissal without the options for extensions, to repeat courses, or to reapply to the Ph.D. program occurs when students:

- Earn more than three (3) graduate grades of C+ or lower.
- Earn more than one (1) graduate grade of D+ or lower.
- Earn a GPA lower than 3.0 for two consecutive semesters.
- Fail to report any changes, sanctions, or other updates to their RN license to the PhD program Chair.
- Are in violation of the Liberty University Online Honor Code.

## Programs of Study

### Delivery Format: Online Only

- Nursing (Ph.D.) - Nursing Education

## Career Opportunities

- Director of Clinical Services
- Director of Nursing Research
- Nurse Educator