Table of Contents

Preamble .......................................................................................................................................................... 4
Mission, Vision and Values ............................................................................................................................... 4
  Mission and Vision of the Department of Nursing ......................................................................................... 4
Student Involvement in the University .......................................................................................................... 5
Funding for Projects and Scholarly Work to Present at Conferences ......................................................... 5
Program Communication Policies for Students and Faculty ....................................................................... 5
Financial Aid .................................................................................................................................................. 5
Assistance With Writing Skills ...................................................................................................................... 5

Section 2: Overview of The University of Massachusetts Boston Doctor of Nursing Practice Program ......................................................................................................................... 6

Nursing DNP Learning Outcomes ................................................................................................................. 6
Nursing DNP Program Goals and DNP Essentials ......................................................................................... 7
Post-Master’s Doctor of Nursing Practice Curriculum ..................................................................................... 7
  Degree Requirements ..................................................................................................................................... 7
BSN-Doctor of Nursing Practice Program (BSN-DNP) ................................................................................. 7
  Degree Requirements ..................................................................................................................................... 7
DNP Clinical Immersion Hours ...................................................................................................................... 8
Academic Policies, Procedures, and Requirements ......................................................................................... 9
Grading Policy .................................................................................................................................................. 9
Incomplete ......................................................................................................................................................... 9
Transfer Credit Policy ..................................................................................................................................... 10
Course Waiver Policy ..................................................................................................................................... 10
Independent Study NU 796 ............................................................................................................................ 11
Academic Progress .......................................................................................................................................... 11
Statute of Limitations ..................................................................................................................................... 11
Full and Part-time Status .............................................................................................................................. 11
Academic Advising and Registration ............................................................................................................ 11
Leave of Absence ........................................................................................................................................... 12
Academic standing .................................................................................................................. 12
Continuous Registration ....................................................................................................... 12
Progression Policies ............................................................................................................. 12
Course Policies .......................................................................................................................... 13
At Risk of Failure Form Policy and Procedures: ................................................................. 14
Dismissals, and Appeals .......................................................................................................... 14
  Dismissal Policies ................................................................................................................ 14
  Appeal Policies: ................................................................................................................... 14
  Readmission of Students Who Voluntarily Withdraw ....................................................... 14
  Readmission of Students who are Dismissed ................................................................. 15
Code of Student Conduct ...................................................................................................... 15

Section 4: Fulfillment of the DNP Program Requirements for Graduation ...................... 16
Successful Completion of Coursework .................................................................................. 16
Portfolio of DNP Experiences ............................................................................................... 16
DNP Capstone Scholarly Project .......................................................................................... 17

Section 5: The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project ............................................................... 18
The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project: Advancing to Candidacy ....................................... 18
Ethical Assurance ................................................................................................................... 25

Appendix A Plans of Study .................................................................................................. 26
  MS to DNP Plan of Study .................................................................................................. 26
  BS to DNP Plan of Study .................................................................................................. 27

Appendix B: Program Forms ............................................................................................... 31
  DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 1 ............................................................................... 32
  DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 2 ............................................................................... 33
  DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 3 ............................................................................... 34
Preamble
All members of the UMB community participating in or associated with the DNP Program are recognized to be capable, intelligent adult professionals, who have the responsibility to read this handbook, seek clarification of the Program Director for understanding where required, and engage collaboratively to create a community of learning that is committed to the highest levels of intellectual engagement and ethical behavior, consistent with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures contained in this handbook and all other college and university policies.

This handbook is one part of the orientation and guidance provided to students who are considered members of the DNP Program, CNHS, and UMB community. Students are strongly encouraged to seek out additional sources of academic and organizational policy and procedure documents when further clarification and detail is needed. It is the expectation of the Program Director that all students review the basic rules and policies as outlined in this handbook.

Mission, Vision and Values
The DNP Program adheres to the mission, vision and values of UMB and is a program within the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The DNP Program educates knowledgeable providers of nursing care to analyze and inform health policy and to lead the way to the future of clinical nursing. Preparing DNP graduates for leadership in health care involves incorporating curricular opportunities for public service and innovation, community engagement and policy transformation.

The DNP program of study has as its core goal and value the improvement of patient care and systems outcomes by increasing DNP graduate’s knowledge through the application of theory, applied evidenced based research, and leadership skills in the advanced clinical practice role. Graduates will learn to develop solutions to consumer barriers to health care access, how to utilize and implement practice guidelines and the analysis of health policy at the state, local and organizational level.


MISSION: The Mission of the Department of Nursing is to create an inclusive, student-centered learning environment that fosters innovation in research, scholarship, education, and service and prepares graduates to promote health equity and quality as professionals working in complex systems.

VISION: To be the premier leader in educating innovative nursing professionals committed to advancing health equity and achieving optimal population health in local, global and urban communities by the development and evaluation of health policies.

Student Involvement in the University
The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) is comprised of representatives from the graduate student body, acts as the voice of UMB students and is dedicated to enhancing the academic and professional development of graduate students. The GSA provides information about resources available to graduate students such as graduate traineeships, assistantships, funding sources, and student services. See information at https://gsaumb.wordpress.com. DNP students who may wish to become a student representative should contact the office of student activities and leadership. To learn more contact the GSA at: https://umb.edu/life_on_campus/student_involvement/activities.

Funding for Projects and Scholarly Work to Present at Conferences
The Graduate Student Assembly offers funding for students to attend conferences to present work. Please use the following link for more information http://www.umb.edu/research/info_for_students/graduate_research_opportunities_funds.

Program Communication Policies for Students and Faculty
All communications with the University must be conducted through student UMB emails and this includes communication with the DNP Program. Students are expected to check their University e-mail on a frequent and consistent basis to ensure that they are staying current with all official communications generated by not only the DNP program, but by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the University at large.

Students can find their email address by logging into WISER and selecting the link to their "Personal Portfolio" and then viewing "Email Addresses". All students receive a default email account. The link to access UMB email and how to’s regarding email are found at https://www.umb.edu/it/email.

Financial Aid
UMB graduate students may apply for assistantships, grants, loans and federal work-study jobs. Please see our web site for the most up to date information, including how to apply, at: https://finaid.umb.edu/graduate-student-aid.

Assistance With Writing Skills
Writing House (WHO) is CNHS’s dedicated academic writing support center, serving all CNHS students, in any class, from first year through graduate level. Students and faculty have access to writing, learning, and teaching resources on the Writing House Online Blackboard site.

Schedule a live tutoring session (on-campus or online) or request asynchronous written feedback on your paper via WHO’s scheduling system: https://umb.mywconline.net/

For more information, please email WritingHouse.CNHS@umb.edu, or call (617) 287-7372. Please also visit their web page for further information https://www.umb.edu/academics/cnhs/sass/who.
Section 2: Overview of The University of Massachusetts Boston Doctor of Nursing Practice Program

As an accredited program of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the UMB DNP Program uses the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) Essentials of DNP Programs as the foundation of the curriculum. For more information on the Essentials of DNP Programs, use the following link: [http://www.aacnnursing.org/DNP/DNP-Essentials](http://www.aacnnursing.org/DNP/DNP-Essentials)

Nursing DNP Learning Outcomes

The UMB DNP student is an advanced practice nurse (APRN) who is a health care leader and seeks to improve patient care and health services for all populations, especially the under-represented/underserved. At the completion of the UMB DNP Program, the student will be able to:

- Evaluate the role of the nurse in shaping health care policy and systems that provide care for individuals, communities, health professions and populations.
- Apply health care economic and finance theory, including budget preparation, utilizing economic measurements and management of the financial status of health care organizations, to analyze factors influencing health systems’ structure, function and process.
- Apply theory guided and evidenced based research to develop practice innovations and influence policy formation that will improve quality, safety, outcomes, cost and/or access to care for a specific setting or population.
- Employ the leadership skills necessary in professional practice to direct clinical policy evaluation, management of systems change, and practice improvement.
- Evaluate programs related to the use of information, information technology, communication networks, and patient care technology that monitor outcomes of care, care systems, and practice improvement to improve quality and efficiency in care delivery.
- Demonstrate leadership in the evaluation and resolution of ethical and legal issues within healthcare systems, health policy and in research with human subjects.
- Apply epidemiologic principles to analyze and interpret research data to address basic questions related to individual, aggregate, and population health at the local, state, and national levels and selected epidemiological trends related to health care disparities and inequity in health care access to populations at risk.
- Employ the knowledge of the science of improvement and process improvement methods, with a focus on structure, processes and outcomes, to advance quality and safety in health care organizations.
- Distinguish the concepts and methods of statistics, apply them in critiquing literature in the field of clinical and population-based research.
- Develop a practice improvement project that:
  - addresses a local practice gap/problem in a priority area
  - is guided by theory
  - is based on best practice evidence
  - integrates knowledge from the sciences and humanities
  - applies an appropriate implementation method
  - addresses ethical considerations
  - evaluates outcomes
  - has the potential to lead to process and/or outcomes improvements in the local setting.
Nursing DNP Program Goals and DNP Essentials
The scope of knowledge addressed in the UMass Boston College of Nursing and Health Sciences core and specialty courses reflects the student outcome competencies cited in The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (AACN, 2006) document, including:

i. Scientific underpinnings for practice
ii. Organizational and systems leadership for quality improvement and systems thinking
iii. Clinical scholarship and analytical methods for evidence-based practice
iv. Information systems/technology and patient care technology for the improvement and transformation of health care
v. Health care policy for advocacy in health care
vi. Interpersonal collaboration for improving patient and population health outcomes
vii. Clinical prevention and population health for improving the nation’s health
viii. Advanced nursing practice

Post-Master’s Doctor of Nursing Practice Curriculum

Degree Requirements
A total of 31 credits and 400 clinical immersion hours are required for this program. The program of study culminates in the Capstone Scholarly Project experience. Students are guided by faculty throughout the program in completing a Capstone Scholarly Project that demonstrates the student’s ability to analyze and guide a change in health care delivery. Students attend several in-person DNP intensive throughout their course of study.

Please see the MS to DNP program of study in the appendix A

BSN-Doctor of Nursing Practice Program (BSN-DNP)
The BS-DNP program prepares BSN nurses to excel as leaders in health care as advanced practice nurses. The student first obtains an MS degree after 48 credits and 665 clinical hours in their program of study. Students take the national certification exam as an advanced practice nurse (APRN) at the completion of the MS portion of the program. The DNP portion of study is an additional 30 credits.

The BS-DNP Program prepares the student in advance practice nursing in one of the population health tracks:

Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist, Adult/Gerontological Primary Care Nurse Practitioner and Family Primary Care Nurse Practitioner.

Degree Requirements
A total of 78 credits and 1,065 clinical hours are required to complete this program. The program of study culminates in the Capstone Scholarly Project experience. Students are guided by faculty throughout the program in completing a Capstone Scholarly Project that demonstrates the student’s ability to analyze and guide a change in health care delivery.

Please see the BS to DNP program of study in the appendix A
Electives

The purpose of electives in the DNP Program is to enhance the student’s competency in meeting the Essentials of DNP. Electives can be accepted from a certificate program, but they cannot be transferred as an elective if the course was used to meet credits for a degree requirement.

DNP Clinical Immersion Hours

Practicum hours are designed to demonstrate synthesis and application of expanded knowledge acquired within the DNP curriculum. The practicum hours signify the capability of the student to meet the core competencies of the DNP degree as established by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). Consistent with The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (AACN, 2006), all students will be required to complete a minimum of 1000 clinical hours post baccalaureate degree. The clinical hours are to be related to the scholarly project and/or to advance knowledge in the student’s area of specialization.

The practicum hours may be demonstrated through a variety of methods including but not limited to:

- In-depth work/mentorship with experts from nursing, as well as other disciplines
- Opportunities for meaningful student engagement within practice environments
- Opportunities to build and assimilate knowledge for advanced specialty practice at a high level of complexity
- An opportunity for further synthesis and expansion of learning
- Experience in the context within which the final DNP Capstone Scholarly Project is completed
- An opportunity to integrate and synthesize the essentials and specialty requirements necessary to demonstrate competency in an area of specialized nursing practice
- Programmatic efforts to address a clinical practice issue
- Data collection and analysis
- Direct care or practice experiences outside of the job description and responsibilities of the student with goals and learning outcomes
Academic Policies, Procedures, and Requirements
All graduate nursing students should familiarize themselves with the University’s Graduate Academic Policies available at http://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_policies

Grading Policy
Letter grades are given in accordance with the grading criteria indicated in the UMB Graduate Student Handbook. Students must earn a B minimum of (83 total points) to pass a graduate level course.

For graduate students, the University uses a system of letter grades that are equivalent to numerical quality points according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-72%</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Received if withdrawal occurs before the withdrawal deadline.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Audit (only permitted on space-available basis)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Not Attending (student appeared on roster, but never attended class. Student is still responsible for tuition and fee charges unless withdrawal form is submitted before deadline. NA has no effect on cumulative GPA.)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduate students may also be given grades of: NA (Not Attending), Inc (Incomplete), Y (In Progress), SAT (Satisfactory), and/or AUD (Audit).

The lowest passing grade for the DNP Program is a B grade. Grades lower than B that are submitted by faculty will automatically be recorded as F.

Incomplete
A grade of “Incomplete” (INC) for course work may be granted in certain circumstances. It is only granted to a student in good academic standing and the request must be for substantive reasons. The course instructor will determine if an incomplete will be granted, the timeframe of the incomplete and coursework to be completed during that time. The instructor will then complete the Incomplete Grade Form and submit to the Program Director for final approval. The student is required to sign the form and is asked to retain a copy for future records. A copy is placed in the student’s file.

University policy allows that a student obtain credit for INC by completing all of the required course work before the end of the semester one year from the time of enrollment in said course. However, students may be required to finish the INC during a shorter time frame if it is a pre-requisite for
subsequent courses. The student is responsible for communicating their progress in completing the course material to the faculty of record and submitting it according to the agreed upon timeframe. After the completion of the required coursework, the faculty of record will complete a Change Grade Form and submit it to the Program Director to ensure the final course grade is updated in Wiser. At the end of this 12-month period, if a grade is not submitted, an F for failure will automatically be recorded by the registrar. This grade cannot be reversed and will remain in the student’s permanent record. Please see DNP Program Handbook regarding policies around course failures.

Transfer Credit Policy
Applicants who have completed graduate course work at other accredited institutions may transfer coursework toward the completion of a UMass Boston graduate degree. Transfer credits are restricted to up to 6 credits from such courses in which the applicant received a grade of B or higher. Please note, the CNHS policy for minimum passing grades applies to all transfer courses regardless of the transferring school’s policy for minimum passing grades.

Applicants who have completed graduate course work at UMass Boston as non-degree students may transfer that coursework toward the completion of a UMass Boston graduate degree. This type of transfer credit is restricted to up to 6 credits from such courses in which the applicant received a grade of B or higher. These courses may be accepted for transfer provided that they have not been used to fulfill requirements for another degree and were earned no more than seven years before matriculation in the program.

The combined total of credits transferred from other institutions and of credits accumulated at UMass Boston as a nondegree student may not exceed 12 credits. For intercampus programs (Biology, Biomedical Engineering and Biotechnology, Marine Sciences and Technology, Nursing DNP and PhD, and Professional Science Masters), courses taken at other UMass campuses will not be subject to the 6 credit or 12 credit limit, but will require the approval of the Graduate Program Director for transfer.

The DNP Program Director and the DNP Program Committee determine what credits are eligible for transfer based on a review of the official transcript at the time of admission to the program and a review of the course description or syllabus if requested. Once enrolled in the DNP Program, students also can request transfer credit. Requests should be made to the Program Director and include a copy of the student’s transcript and a copy of the course syllabus. Transfer credit decisions for either core or elective courses are made on a course-by-course basis. Courses accepted for transfer will show in student Wiser accounts but will not be included in the student’s grade point average.

Course Waiver Policy
A student may seek a waiver from a prescribed course in the DNP Program if she/he has completed a course with substantially equivalent content at another institution or in another college of UMass Boston. If a course waiver is granted, the student will receive 0 credits towards degree requirements and must take additional courses to complete the required credits for the DNP degree.
Course waivers will be decided on a case-by-case basis, through negotiation between the student seeking the waiver and the DNP Program Director. All waived courses require a written request submitted to the Program Director. Approved waivers are documented as W on the plan of study. Appeal of a denied waiver may be made to the Graduate Program Director.

Independent Study NU 796
Students may complete an independent study to fulfill required or elective credits. Independent study credits vary from one to three depending on the scope of the project. The independent study should consist of study and work at the graduate level with a specified written product. The faculty member who agrees to work with the student in independent study must be a recognized expert in the content area. The student and faculty member must agree to the UMass Boston number of credits, scope of the work and the amount of supervision required (for example, weekly or biweekly meetings). A written agreement, signed by the student and the faculty member, must be approved by the program director or his/her designated advisor in all cases of independent studies.

Academic Progress
The office of Graduate Studies specifies that a student must make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward completion of a degree within the Statute of Limitations for the doctoral degree. The determination of SAP is based on the student’s GPA and credits completed vs. attempted. Failure to meet SAP requirements may result in the loss of eligibility for financial assistance. Please note that the determination of SAP is not a substitute for determining student academic standing.

Statute of Limitations
Each DNP matriculated student must complete all degree requirements within eight (8) calendar years of entering the program. Any semesters where a student is not enrolled in coursework requires payment of a continuation fee or the student will be removed from the program.

Full and Part-time Status
Part time students carry at least six credits per semester in the fall and spring. This is the minimum number of credits required to qualify for federal financial aid. The BSN-DNP Program of Study does include some semesters of greater than 6 credits in order to complete the program within a 5-year period. To maintain part time status, summer courses are available.

Students wishing to take less than six credits must petition the DNP Program Director for an exception during the advising process. Enrollment in nine or more credits a semester is possible and is considered full time graduate study.

Academic Advising and Registration
The DNP Program Director serves as an academic advisor to all students. A course of study for the entire program is developed and filed with the Program office. Each semester the plan will be reviewed with the student and revisions will be placed on file. Students taking courses need to meet with their academic advisor each semester. Student should access their WISER account to register for classes.
Information on dates related to drop, add, withdrawal, UMB holidays/breaks can be found posted online. The DNP Program follows the CAPS calendar, which is found at http://www.umb.edu/academics/caps

Leave of Absence

The Office of Graduate Studies requires that a student seeking a leave of absence (LOA) must petition the Program Director who provides justification for the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies. An approved LOA extends the statute of limitations for degree completion by the length of the leave.

https://www.umb.edu/editor_uploads/images/registrar/Graduate_Leave_of_Absence_Request_Form_SP16_V2.pdf

Academic standing

Academic standing is the basis for decisions regarding student progression, probation, graduation, and dismissal in the Graduate Nursing Programs. Academic standing is determined by the student’s cumulative quality point average, a measure of all the grades the student has earned at the University which are applied to the course requirements of the DNP Program.

Continuous Registration

All degree-seeking graduate students must maintain continuous registration until the degree sought by the student is formally awarded. Students can register for program fee (CAS 600) on the WISER online registration system. Continuous registration must also be maintained even when a student is on a leave-of-absence from the program.

Continuous registration requires a fee be paid to maintain matriculation. If for any reason a student does not register for courses, they must maintain continuous registration each semester

https://www.umb.edu/bursar/tuition_and_fees#program_fee

Failure to register prior to the registration deadline for the semester in which the student is registering for may result in late fees and classification as an inactive student.

Progression Policies

The following policies apply to all matriculated students in the DNP program. Policies in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences handbook may be more stringent than those of general graduate policy as stated in the University Handbook. In matters of policy difference, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences policy supersedes the University policy.

All full and part-time students must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 to graduate. All full and part-time students who fail to maintain a 3.0 GPA may be subject to academic dismissal.
Students who do not maintain a cumulative quality point average of 3.00 will be referred to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Students will be asked to submit a letter of appeal to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Based upon review of the student's record and letter of appeal, the CNHS Student Affairs Committee will recommend conditions of Probation, or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chair and Graduate Program Director.

Students must earn a grade of B (3.00) in all required courses listed on the student's program of study. Required courses include core courses, clinical concentration courses, theory courses, functional area courses, and clinical practicum's (electives are not considered required courses). Any grade below a B (3.00) is considered a failure in a required course.

Students who do not earn a grade of B (3.00) in all required courses will be referred to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Students will be asked to submit a letter of appeal with an explanation to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Based upon review of the student's record and letter of appeal the CNHS Student Affairs Committee will recommend conditions of Probation, or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chairperson and Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director will request the Dean of Graduate Studies to place the student on Academic Probation or Dismissal.

Upon the decision of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee and Graduate Program Director the student may petition to repeat up to two failed courses a total of one time for each course during their entire program of study. The student must receive a grade of B or better in the repeated course in order to meet the degree requirements. If a satisfactory grade (B) is not achieved when the student repeats the previously failed course, the student will be recommended by the Graduate Program Director to the Dean of Graduate Studies for dismissal.

Course Policies
It is an expectation that students will demonstrate the ability to meet the course objectives as stated in the course syllabus. Failure to meet course objectives as outlined in the syllabus and determined by the course evaluation strategies specified in the course syllabus, will result in course failure.

In Graduate nursing courses that have two components, theory and internships, both components must be successfully completed in order to pass the course. If the theory or practicum portion is failed, both components must be repeated.

Courses such as NU 761 DNP I, NU 762 DNP 2, NU 763 DNP 3 and NU 764 DNP VI are examples of courses with both a theory component and a practicum portion.

If at any time during a course, a faculty member in collaboration with an agency facilitator deems that a student’s academic and/or internship performance is unsatisfactory, or unsafe, a conference will be held with the student in order to identify the problem clearly and to develop a plan for resolving the student’s performance ability.
At Risk of Failure Form Policy and Procedures:
At any time during the academic program that the student is determined to be at risk of failing, the student will be advised in writing by the faculty course member. The student will be asked to meet with the course faculty to discuss his/her deficiencies and develop a plan for meeting the course objectives using the At Risk of Failure Form.

An At Risk of Failure letter details the reasons why the student is at risk of failing and describes the recommendations for meeting the course and clinical performance objectives. The letter is written by course faculty and a copy is forwarded to the Graduate Program Director.

The graduate student receives a copy of the Risk of Failure letter and a copy is placed in the student's file. Following receipt of an At Risk of Failure letter, it is recommended that the student and faculty member set up a schedule to meet and discuss the student's progress in meeting the course objectives. Ongoing communication regarding the student's progress is encouraged. If a student does not make sufficient progress in meeting course objectives, the student will receive a non-passing grade.

Dismissals, and Appeals
Graduate nursing students must comply with the conditions of academic probation as recommended by the Student Affairs Committee to the Graduate Program Director. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Dismissal Policies: Academic dismissal is an action that is taken by the Graduate Dean upon recommendation of Department Chair and Department Graduate Program Director. Refer to Academic Policies Office of the Registrar and University policies and student rights Office of the Dean of Students. Graduate students will be notified in writing by the Dean of Graduate Studies of their impending dismissal and the reasons for the dismissal.

Appeal Policies: Graduate students have the opportunity to appeal the decisions of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee: Submit a letter of appeal to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. The appeal letter should include the policy exception request, or a plan to prevent any further need for policy exceptions. Graduate students may request to appear before the CNHS Student Affairs Committee to clarify and/or to answer questions regarding their appeal. In addition, the student may bring someone with them to the meeting to lend support. The support person can only submit written materials or a letter of support, and may not disrupt committee proceedings or serve as legal counsel. Graduate students will be notified in writing of the decision of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. If dissatisfied with the decision of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee students may grieve the decision.

Readmission of Students Who Voluntarily Withdraw
In general, graduate students who withdraw from the program of study in good standing may resume their studies by completing a readmission form obtained from the Registrar's Office. Applicants will be notified in writing of their request for readmission status. Graduate students are referred to the Office of the Registrar website, https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_policies/readmission_policy concerning all policies related to graduate student readmission.
Readmission of Students who are Dismissed
All requests for readmission by dismissed students must be submitted to the student affairs committee. The letter requesting readmission should contain: New, different, and pertinent information not previously presented to the Student Affairs Committee that will assist the Committee in re-evaluating the dismissal. Students should make an appointment with the Graduate Program Director to discuss the appropriateness of an appeal.

Code of Student Conduct
All students are encouraged to review the Code of Student Conduct located at the following link:

https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/community/code

The Student Code of Conduct applies fully to the online DNP Program with adjustments made as necessary for long distance students who may require a virtual meeting. Please email the Office of the Dean of Students: dean.students@umb.edu or the DNP Program Director for any clarification of policies related to conduct.
Section 4: Fulfillment of the DNP Program Requirements for Graduation

Overview

To fulfill the DNP program requirements for graduation, the student must:

Successfully complete all coursework

Complete the portfolio and DNP clinical immersion hours

Complete the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project (oral defense, written paper, dissemination)

Successful Completion of Coursework

Successful completion of all coursework and clinical immersion experiences stipulated in the DNP Program of Study is required in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice. The program of study and required coursework and clinical experiences are detailed in earlier parts of this handbook.

Portfolio of DNP Experiences

Throughout the DNP program, students will compile evidence of acquisition of the DNP Essential Competencies. Portfolios may include (but are not limited to) course papers, projects, internship clinical logs and other sources of evidence of the student’s scholarship and knowledge/skill acquisition.

Portfolios are set up part of NU 717 then built on for the duration of the program. The portfolio is web based is created and managed by the student over the course of the program. As the student progresses through coursework and completes assignments in those courses, the student reflects on the Essentials of DNP Programs and then places the assignment in the virtual portfolio according to the Essential fulfilled.

The DNP Internship course faculty (NU 717, NU 718, NU 719) will advise students in the detailed formulation and updating of their portfolio as well as review and oversight of its maintenance. A completed portfolio is required to pass NU 719. The student is responsible for sharing the portfolio URL with the DNP Program Director, Capstone Scholarly Project Committee Chair, Capstone Scholarly Project Committee members and any other UMB faculty who request access to review.

The portfolio is not only a reflection of the attainment of the Essentials of DNP Programs, but also the process of completing the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project. The portfolio should reflect each step of the capstone process.
DNP Capstone Scholarly Project

Successful completion of the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project as evidenced by

1. A successful defense
2. Approved project final paper and
3. Approved plan for dissemination

The UMB DNP Program has created a program that provides the student with a progression through coursework that supports each step of the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project. By the end of the program, the student will have completed the final paper, successfully defended his/her Capstone Scholarly Project and have a plan for dissemination of his/her scholarly work.

The detailed explanation for the entire DNP Capstone Scholarly Project is outlined in the following section.
Section 5: The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project

The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project is the culmination of the doctoral candidate’s engagement in the DNP program, and is expected to reflect the highest levels of nursing practice competencies. The project is practice focused, evidence-based and utilizes sound quality improvement methods. To be of quality worthy of the conferral of the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, in the choice and conduct of the Capstone Scholarly Project, the doctoral candidate must demonstrate:

Advanced clinical judgment, expertise, and specialization, which demonstrates synthesis and application of the DNP essentials.

Leadership and advanced levels of systems thinking and accountability in designing, implementing, and evaluating an evidence-based intervention/innovation that is responsive to a local health need and leads to improvement in health care quality, safety, cost or access.

Leadership in the development and implementation of patient-driven, institutional, local, state, federal and/or international health policy in a select content/specialty area.

Students work on the project throughout their program of study. Each step of the Capstone Scholarly Project process will be explained in the ensuing sections of this handbook.

The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project: Advancing to Candidacy

The DNP student must demonstrate acceptable progress through the curricula coursework and internships, as defined and evaluated by course and program faculty, in order to advance to candidacy and begin the implementation phase of the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project.

Overview of the Process

Advancing to candidacy is the first step in the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project process. To advance to candidacy the student must have:

- Successfully completed required coursework
- Formulated and maintained a Portfolio of DNP Experiences (DNP Portfolio)
- Successfully completed the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Proposal Paper (NU 716)
- Formed a Capstone Scholarly Project Committee
- Had a successfully Proposal Hearing.

Once a student has advanced to candidacy, she/he is eligible to use the initials DNP(c).

Successful Completion of Coursework

The first stage of the advance to candidacy process involves the successful completion of all core-required courses and clinical experiences deemed pre-requisites for advancing to candidacy. Refer to the program of study for the specific courses and clinical experiences required throughout the program.
Formulate and Maintain a Portfolio of DNP experiences

As part of Advancing to Candidacy, it is expected that the student portfolio will be up-to-date and demonstrate that the student has progressed through the program of study. As noted previously, the portfolio will contain evidence of acquisition of the Essential of DNP Programs competencies and may include course papers, projects, internship journals and other sources of evidence of student scholarship and knowledge/skill acquisition.

DNP Capstone Scholarly Project: Proposal Paper

The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project proposal paper is written in stages. The student writes the initial draft in NU 716 EBP II under the direction of the course faculty. At the end of EBP II, the student will transition to working under the guidance of his/her Chair to revise the paper in preparation for presenting to the full committee first as a proposal and then as a finished product. The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project and paper are expected to be of sufficient quality and rigor to meet the requirements of doctoral study. At all stages of the paper the student should expect multiple iterations in response to faculty, chair and committee suggestions.

The DNP Scholarly Capstone Project paper is to be written in SQUIRE 2.0 format. Further information on this writing standard may be found at here. The expected length of the proposal paper is approximately 12-14 pages, double spaced and must contain a title page, abstract, introduction and methods section according to SQUIRE 2.0 format. After the student successfully defends the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project proposal, the student is expected to continue to work on the paper, incorporating feedback from the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Committee and editing the paper back to 10-12 pages. References and in-text citations should be in APA format. Two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled proposal defense hearing, the Capstone Scholarly Project paper must be submitted to all committee members for their review.

Forming the Capstone Committee

The Chair is chosen through a match coordinated in the NU 716 EBP II. Once the Chair has accepted the role, the Chair will then assist the student in selecting the rest of the committee members.

The committee should have three (3) members. At least two (2) members, including the Chair, should come from the UMB College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The third member should be a content expert from the practice site and need not be a nurse or have a higher degree. The Chair should be a member of the faculty who is an experienced committee member.

Once all of the committee members agree to serve, the student is responsible for completing the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Tracking Form Part I: DNP Committee (see appendix B). The Program Assistant will then obtain the Program Director’s signature and forward the completed form to the Office of Graduate Studies for their signature. A copy of these signed documents will be included in the student’s portfolio.
DNP Capstone Scholarly Project: Role of Chair and Committee

The DNP candidate will work closely with the Chair and other committee members throughout the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project, including project development, implementation, evaluation, writing phases and dissemination.

Capstone Scholarly Project Proposal Defense Hearing

The student is expected to work closely with the Chair to develop a proposal paper that is of doctoral level rigor and quality and suitable to be presented to the full committee. This is an iterative process and students should expect multiple revisions and iterations. Once the proposal paper meets the expectations of the Chair, the proposal hearing will be scheduled. Two weeks prior to the scheduled hearing, the final draft of the proposal paper will be delivered to all committee members. One week before the proposal hearing the materials to be used in the proposal defense hearing will be shared with the Chair.

The proposal defense hearing consists of a presentation that follows the proposal paper format (SQUIRE 2.0). This presentation is conducted over a web based meeting and it is expected that all committee members attend. The length of the proposal defense hearing will vary with the candidate and the topic but is generally about 30 minutes of student presentation with additional time for discussion/questions. The proposal hearing must conform to the criteria for the DNP Capstone Scholarly Proposal contained in the Syllabus for NU 716 Evidence Based Practice II and follows the SQUIRE 2.0 guidelines for reporting practice improvement/quality improvement projects. Additional information on SQUIRE 2.0 guidelines may be retrieved from [http://squirestatement.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&pageId=471](http://squirestatement.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&pageId=471)

NOTE: For the proposal hearing, the student will not have the results or conclusions/recommendation sections completed. The project results and recommendations will be incorporated into the final paper after completion of the implementation, data collection and data analysis phases of the project.

Following the student presentation, the committee meets in executive session and makes one of four determinations regarding the Capstone Scholarly Project proposal:

1. Approved
2. Approved subject to minor revisions
3. Requires major revisions
4. Not approved

In the case of approved as is, the candidate may proceed with the project.

In all other cases, within ten (10) days of the proposal hearing the Chair will provide the student with a written letter detailing the revisions required by the committee.

In the case of approved subject to minor revisions, the DNP candidate will revise their proposal in accordance with the committee instructions and submit the revised proposal to the Chair and any other committee members specified in the letter. Once the proposal is revised to the satisfaction of the Chair, the candidate may proceed with the project.
In the case of major revisions, the candidate must revise the proposal and resubmit the proposal to all committee member revisions within the designated due dates. The committee will decide if the revised proposal fulfills the requested revisions and if the student is required to orally present the project again. If not completed to the committees’ satisfaction, the student will not advance to candidacy. Without successful completion of the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project proposal and proposal paper, the student will receive an incomplete for NU 718. The student will not be allowed to continue with coursework until the incomplete is converted to a passing grade. The student will be required to register for continuation fees as a result.

In the proposal is not approved, the committee will meet with the candidate and decide how to proceed.

Once the student has fulfilled all of the requirements to Advance to Candidacy, Part 2 of the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Tracking Form must be completed submitted to the Program Assistant. Please note that tracking form part 2 requires a copy of the students abstract up to and including the methods section.

DNP Capstone Tracking Forms

The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Tracking Forms serve as the official document that chronicles the student’s progress through the process of forming a committee, advancing to candidacy, delivering the final oral defense and completing the final paper. There are three parts to the DNP Capstone Tracking form (available in Appendix B) and the fourth form is a signature page, all of which are required to be completed and submitted to the Program Assistant:

DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 1 The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Committee
DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 2 DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Advance to Candidacy
DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 3 DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Oral Defense
DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Paper Title and Signature Pages (total of 2 pages)

At each stage of the process the student is responsible for pre-populating the form with the relevant information (typed), obtaining the signature of the site champion and any accompanying information requested and sending the signed form to the Committee Chair either via mail or email. Signatures may be electronic for part 1, 2 and 3.

Once the forms are completed, they are submitted to the Program Assistant. The DNP Program Director will then sign the completed forms and forward to the Office of Graduate Studies for their signature. A copy of these signed documents should be placed in the student’s portfolio.
Completion of the Capstone Scholarly Project

The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project: Oral Defense

All students must participate in an oral defense of their project. In order to participate in the oral defense, the student must have completed their project including the data analysis, results and discussion sections to the satisfaction of his/her Chair and committee and receive approval from the Chair to defend his/her work.

The date of the oral defense for all students is held on the same day. It requires an on-campus visit and is scheduled at the end of March/first week of April. It is expected that all students in the graduating cohort attend or failure of NU719 will result.

Students will create a presentation reflecting the content of the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project paper. The presentation should follow SQUIRE 2.0 format and reflect the rigor and scope of the work completed by the student. The presentation is to be submitted to the Chair at least two weeks prior to the defense date for review and feedback. Each student is scheduled for 1 hour to complete the oral defense. The presentation should be about 30 minutes in length with 10-15 minutes for Q and A from the audience and then an additional 5-10 minutes for transition to the next student.

The audience consists of the committee members and Chair as well as other DNP students and UMB faculty. Committee members who cannot come to campus may attend via phone or other web based software provided by UMB. The session may also be recorded and may be viewed by faculty, staff and/or DNP students.

Following the student presentation, the committee will determine if the project oral defense met the requirements for presentation of the scholarly project. The student the completes Part 3 of the DNP Capstone Tracking Form. If requirements for presentation of the scholarly project are not met the student will meet with the Chair to determine next steps.

DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Paper

As noted in an earlier section, the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project paper is written under the guidance of the student’s chair and committee. The student revises the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project proposal paper to reflect the fact that the project has now been implemented and evaluated.

The DNP Scholarly Capstone Project paper is to be written in SQUIRE 2.0 format and reflect all phases of the project including the development, implementation and evaluation of the project. Further information on this writing standard may be found at [http://squire-statement.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&pagId=471](http://squire-statement.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&pagId=471). The expected length of the paper is 20 pages, double-spaced. References and in-text citations may be in either APA or AMA format.
The paper must be approved by the chair and committee before it is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Committee members are responsible for determining if the final paper is:

1. Approved
2. Approved with minor revisions
3. Major revisions
4. Not approved

If the paper is approved the student will be ready to submit the paper to the Office of Graduate Studies.

In the case of approval with minor revisions, the candidate need only resubmit the revised Capstone Scholarly Project Paper to the Chair and any other specified committee members. Once the student has made all requested changes and it is approved by the student’s committee chair, the student is ready to submit the paper to the Office of Graduate Studies.

In the case of major revisions, the candidate must resubmit the Capstone Scholarly Project paper to all committee members. The candidate must complete both minor and major revisions by the last day in April to graduate in May. Once the committee approves the paper, the student is ready to submit the paper to the Office of Graduate Studies.

If not approved, the committee will meet with the candidate and decide how to proceed.

Submission of DNP Scholarly Project final papers

The student must fill out the title/signature page and obtain original signatures from the committee members. The final copy of the Capstone Scholarly Project paper should be printed and placed in an 8x10 envelope with the completed title page. It is then mailed to the Program Assistant via U.S. Postal mail and post marked by May 15th. The Program Assistant delivers the completed paper with signature page to the Office of Graduate Studies.

If the capstone paper does not reach approval by the last day of April, then the student’s graduation date will be changed to a later date (even if the oral defense has been completed).

Capstone Scholarly Project: The Dissemination Product

The student must fulfill requirements for dissemination as part of the requirements of the DNP degree. The DNP Capstone Scholarly Project paper is required to be submitted to the UMass Boston ScholarWorks, accessed at:

[http://scholarworks.umb.edu/nursing_dnp_capstone/](http://scholarworks.umb.edu/nursing_dnp_capstone/) In addition, the student is required to have a plan for the final dissemination product. This may be a journal article, a poster that is presented at an approved professional conference, or a podium presentation at an approved professional conference. The Chair and all committee members must be made aware of the plan for dissemination and approve prior to the student disseminating the project.
Authorship, Acknowledgements and Attribution

Dissemination about work done while at UMass Boston doctoral student, including the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project, should provide attribution to UMass Boston. The project’s site affiliation is also appropriate to list, but the primary affiliation on any dissemination related to a student’s project should list the student as a DNP student (or a simply as a doctoral student) at UMass Boston.

Determination of authorship of books or manuscripts based on Capstone Scholarly Projects can be challenging. The doctoral student, as author of the capstone, holds the position of primary authorship of any subsequent publications based on it. Including co-authors, such as members of the committee, is appropriate if such persons meet the requirements of authorship set out in the International Guidelines that are abstracted below.

Authorship: Authors submitting a paper do so on the understanding that the manuscript has been read and approved by all authors and that all authors agree to the submission of the manuscript to the journal. ALL named authors must have made an active contribution to the conception and design and/or analysis and interpretation of the data and/or the drafting of the paper and ALL must have critically reviewed its content and have approved the final version submitted for publication.

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) authorship criteria state that authorship should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design of, or acquisition of data or analysis and interpretation of data, 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2 and 3.

Contributors who do not qualify as authors should be mentioned under Acknowledgements.

Acknowledgements

Under acknowledgements, students can specify contributors to the article other than the authors accredited. It is helpful to include specifications of the source of funding for the study and any potential conflict of interests if appropriate. Suppliers of materials should be named and their location (town, state/county, country) included.
Ethical Assurance

Assuring that the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project meets ethical standards is a core value of the DNP program. The range of activities involving human participants in healthcare settings comprises patient care, teaching, and research; however, not all of these activities constitute human subject research. For example, training, education, quality improvement, and review of case reports are activities in which faculty and staff are commonly engaged in addition to research. The UMass Boston Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, in collaboration with the DNP faculty, has determined that projects which meet the following criteria do not involve human subjects and therefore do not need to be reviewed by the IRB.

The project is designed to implement knowledge or assess a process or program considered standard practice that provide immediate and continuous improvement and feedback in the local setting.

While the activities described may involve accidental discoveries and/or innovative practices, they do not constitute research unless they also involve a systematic investigation with the intent to contribute to generalizable knowledge.

The project translates established evidence to practice.

The intention of the project is not theory generating or theory testing; the efficacy of new devices or drugs will not be tested.

If it has been determined that your project meets the criteria for practice improvement, then you must have an ethics section in your DNP Capstone Scholarly Project paper which includes the following statement: “The project or innovation [proposed (proposal paper); implemented (final paper)] is quality improvement and does not meet the definition of human subjects research because it is not designed to generate generalizable findings but rather to provide immediate and continuous improvement feedback in the local setting in which the project is carried out.”

If your project deviates from the above stated guidelines for practice improvement then the student will need to discuss the project with the DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Chair. In the rare case where it is determined that a student’s project meets the criteria for human subject research, the student will need to submit an application to the UMass Boston Institutional Review Board (IRB) as well as the project site IRB. Directions for completing a UMass Boston IRB application can be found on the UMass Boston website. If IRB approval is required, the student must obtain this prior to implementation of your research.

In all cases, the student should discuss the details of the DNP project with the site champion to understand the organizations process for determining whether the project fits their definition of practice improvement or would be considered human subjects research. In the case of the latter, the student will need to obtain institutional IRB approval prior to implementing the project.
## Appendix A Plans of Study

### MS to DNP Plan of Study

#### Fall Y1
- NU 765 Health Systems Leadership (3 cr)
- NU 722 Improving Outcomes: Identification, Interventions, and Evaluation of Quality Improvement Activities (3 cr)
- NU 616 Evidenced Based Practice I (3 cr)

#### Spring Y1
- NU 715 Informatics (3 cr)
- NU 716 Evidenced Based Practice II (3 cr)
- NU 618 Introduction to Health Policy, Finance and Ethics (3 cr)

#### Summer Y1
- NU 717 DNP Seminar: Project Implementation (200 hrs) (3 cr)

#### Fall Y2
- NU 718 DNP Seminar Project Synthesis (100 hours) (cr 2)
- NU 735 Clinical Immersion 150 hours or *Elective

#### Spring Y2
- NU 719 DNP Seminar Project Dissemination (100 hours) (cr 2)
- NU 745 Population Health (cr 3)

*Credits 31
Clinical hours minimum (400)
Time 2 years

*Elective should be chosen under the guidance of the Program Director or Faculty Advisor*
## BS to DNP Plan of Study

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<th>Year</th>
<th>1st Fall</th>
<th>2nd Spring</th>
<th>3rd Fall</th>
<th>4th Spring</th>
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<td>NU601 Introduction to Advanced Practice Nursing: Knowledge for Practice in the Global Community</td>
<td>NU614 Advanced Pathophysiology</td>
<td>NU615 Advanced Health Assessment (65 hours)</td>
<td>NU618 Introduction to Health Policy, Economics &amp; Ethics</td>
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<td>NU616 Evidenced Based Practice I</td>
<td>NU634 Advanced Pharmacology</td>
<td>NU637 Mental and Psychosocial Health of the Urban Family</td>
<td>NU639 Primary care of adults</td>
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<td>NU616</td>
<td>NU616</td>
<td>NU668 CNS Clinical Practicum: Nurse Educator in the Academic Setting (112 Hrs)</td>
<td>NU690: A/G Health AC Nursing</td>
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<td>NU616</td>
<td>NU616</td>
<td>NU765 Leadership and Management in Healthcare Organizations (3 credits)</td>
<td>NU640 Advanced Health Promotion: Practicum I (150 hrs- 3 lecture/1 seminar/2 practicum=6)</td>
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<td>Nu715 Informatics</td>
<td>Nu715</td>
<td>Nu691 A/G Health AC Nursing II</td>
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<td>Nu670 Practicum in Primary Care Family and Adult-Gero NP II (Adult) (225 hrs)</td>
<td>Nu664 CNS Clinical Practicum: Focus on the Patient (112 hours; 3 credits)</td>
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<td>Nu667 CNS Practicum: Nurse Educator in the Clinical Setting (112 hours -3 credits)</td>
<td>Nu681 Primary Care of Childbearing Family</td>
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<td>Biostats I</td>
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12th  100 HOURS  3
Spring  3
YR6  NU764

DNP completed  410 Practicum Hours | 30 credits  30

BS to DNP; TOTAL
Credits 78 | Practicum Hours 1,065

Total Credits 30  48 + 30= 78

*If a student chooses not to take NU 735 as an elective, then the student must still fulfill the practicum hour requirements of the program. In that case, the student must complete 105 hours in DNP 1 and DNP 2 instead of 30.
Appendix B: Program Forms

All forms must be completed in their entirety. They must be typed and printed by the student prior to committee member signatures. Signatures on the DNP Committee Form, DNP Project Proposal Hearing Form and DNP Advance to Candidacy Form may be completed electronically. All signatures on the Capstone Scholarly Project Paper Title Page must be original signatures in ink.
DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 1
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Capstone Scholarly Project Committee

Student Name ________________________________

Student ID ________________________________

Intended Date of Graduation ______________________

Tentative Title of DNP Capstone Scholarly Project ____________________________________________

Provide the names of DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Committee Members. Signature confirms agreement to participate and advise you in your project progression, scholarly writing for publication, and final review of the quality, content, and completion of your doctoral project.

The following individuals have agreed to serve on my DNP capstone project committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Member Name (Type or Print Legibly)</th>
<th>Signature of Committee Member</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. CHAIR</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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</table>

CV for each external member of the committee must accompany this form.

Approved by DNP Program Director ________________________________ Date __________

Received by the Office of Graduate Studies __________________________ Date __________
**DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 2**  
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Advance to Candidacy Form

Student Name__________________________________  
Student ID____________________________

Date of Project Proposal Hearing ________________Anticipated Graduation Date ________________

Title of DNP Capstone Project_______________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Project abstract (Append the abstract which contains all sections in the SQUIRE Guidelines up to and including the Methods Section)

Capstone Committee Approval Process: A majority approval is required to advance the student to candidate status. Under “Approval” for the Chair and each Committee Member enter “A” for Approved as is, “AR” for Approved with minor revisions, and “AM” for requires major revisions, “N” for not approved. If approved with revisions students will receive a letter from the committee chair detailing the changes to be made and the process for submitting the changes. All submissions must be completed and approved prior to the established deadline in order to graduate.

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<th>DNP Committee Members</th>
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The candidate has successfully completed required elements of the DNP program, including coursework, State of the Science paper, and submission and presentation of the DNP Scholarly Capstone Project Proposal to the satisfaction of the DNP Capstone Committee and Program Director.

Approved by DNP Program Director ______________________________Date___________

Received by the Office of Graduate Studies_________________________ Date___________
DNP Capstone Tracking Form: Part 3
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Capstone Project Oral Defense

Student Name ______________________________________  Student ID ______________________

Title of DNP Capstone Scholarly Project ____________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Date of Project Defense ______________________

DNP Capstone Scholarly Project Oral Defense Approval: A majority approval is required to approve the Capstone

Scholarly Project oral defense in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Under “Approved” for the Chair and each Committee Member enter “A” for Met the requirements for a scholarly presentation about their DNP Capstone Scholarly Project, and “N” for Did not meet the requirements for a scholarly presentation about their DNP Capstone Scholarly Project.

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Include a copy of the PP presentation with this form.

Approved by DNP Program Director ___________________________ Date ______

Received by the Office of Graduate Studies ____________________ Date ______

PAPER TITLE
A Capstone Scholarly Practice Improvement Project

By

STUDENT NAME

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, University of Massachusetts Boston, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE

Date

Department of Nursing
PAPER TITLE

A Capstone Scholarly Project Presented

By

STUDENT NAME

Approved as to style and content by

__________________________________________
Faculty name, title
Chairperson of Committee

__________________________________________
Faculty name, title
Member

__________________________________________
Name, title
Project Site Representative

__________________________________________
Name,
DNP Program Director