Graduate FAQs
PhD In Nursing Science

Can I work full time and take classes in the PhD in Nursing Science Program part time, one course at a time?

Part time enrollment options are available. Programs of study will be tailored to meet individual student situations. However, UD’s PhD in Nursing Science Program is an on-site course of study and requires one year of full time study during the period of earning a PhD. All requirements of the program through dissertation defense must be completed within seven years per University policy.

If I am accepted into the PhD in Nursing Science Program as a full time student can I continue to work part time in my position outside the University?

Students who are funded and are employed as graduate assistants may seek approval from the UD Office of Graduate and Professional Education and provide a rationale for their request including evidence that their graduate studies will progress as indicated in their plan of study. Priority is given to employment associated with development as a researcher.

What financial support is available to me as a full time or part time student in UD’s PhD in Nursing Science Program?

Students accepted into the PhD in Nursing Science Program may be offered graduate assistantships that will pay a stipend in exchange for working 20 hours per week as a research assistant or a teaching assistant. See the Graduate and Professional Education website for guidelines and Graduate Funding Policy with stipend rates for the current academic year.

What is the research focus of UD’s PhD in Nursing Science?

Research foci of doctoral students must fit within one of the three broad research foci of the School of Nursing (Aging/Healthy Aging; Community Based Research/Health Disparities; Symptom Science/Self-Management) and compliment the program of research of one of the School of Nursing faculty who will serve as the doctoral student advisor/mentor.

Please visit our website for more information about our research program, a description of selected funded nursing studies and profiles of individual School of Nursing faculty.

How long will it take me to complete the PhD program?

Students enrolled full time can complete course work within two years, after which students must pass a comprehensive exam, and defend a proposal comprised of the first three chapters of their dissertation research. Depending on the timeframe of these requirements and the nature and complexity of the dissertation research the PhD program can be completed within three to four years. Time to completion for part time students will depend upon the customized plan of study determined at time of admission but must meet the UD requirement of seven years.

Can the PhD in Nursing Science Program be completed online?

UD’s PhD in Nursing Science Program is primarily an on-site course of study. At the present time one PhD level nursing science course is offered online, several courses are offered hybrid. Statistics, cognate and methodology elective courses are offered by departments outside the College of Health Sciences and may be offered online. However, to maximize on-site time allotted to course work for each cohort of doctoral students, every attempt is made to arrange course scheduling in blocks of time to best accommodate students and faculty.
I am an international student and live a long distance from the University must I complete an onsite interview?

An interview is a requirement of the PhD in Nursing Science application process. However, time, place and format of the interview will be negotiated between members of the PhD in Nursing Science Program Subcommittee (who will conduct the interview) and the applicant. Interview options include use of Skype or other telecommunications /electronic means.

What is the maximum allotted time for completing the PhD in Nursing Science Program?

Students are expected to complete the program in seven years per University policy.

Are applicants to the PhD in Nursing Science Program required to be nurses?

Yes; a copy of a current registered nurse license must be uploaded as “other documents” in the application.

Do you admit nurses with a BSN only to UD’s PhD in Nursing Science Program?

Yes. Effective for Fall 2016 admissions.

Are GREs required for admission into the PhD in Nursing Science Program?

No. Effective for Fall 2016 admissions, GREs are no longer required.

What kinds of jobs, positions and opportunities are available for PhD nurses?

There is a severe shortage of PhD nurses. Of the more than 3 million nurses in the United States less than 1% is PhD-prepared and most of the PhD prepared nurses are working in academic institutions. The Future of Nursing report (2011) by the Institute of Medicine recommends a doubling of the number of nurses with doctorates by 2020. PhD nurses are needed to fill roles in:

- Academia (e.g., clinical and research faculty),
- Acute care (e.g., research facilitators, project directors, administrators, data managers),
- Community/public health (e.g., administrator, population-based projects),
- Pharmaceutical industry (e.g., research and development, managing drug trials),
- Biomedical industry (e.g., testing new mechanisms, interventions and inventions),
- Non-profits (e.g., advisory and trustee boards), and
- Government sectors (e.g., advisor/consultant at state or federal agencies, elected roles).