YOUR APPLICATION FOR PHD STUDIES
FACULTY OF NURSING

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AGENDA

Why pursue doctoral studies in Nursing at the University of Alberta?

Are you ready to become a doctoral scholar?

What does the PhD program look like?

How will my application be assessed?
Why pursue graduate studies in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Alberta?

- QS World University Rankings 2022
  https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2022/nursing
• Establish relationships with top Canadian Nursing faculty
  • Award winning researchers and teachers
  • High impact programs of research (e.g. Aging, social inequity, global health) addressing current health issues
• Talented classmates become your professional network as distinguished alumni
  • Classmates bring diverse perspectives and experience of nursing
  • Build life-long professional network for mentoring, support, and opportunities
• Flexible delivery on-campus and hybrid online
  • Modest residency requirement (one academic term)
Faculty of Nursing
History and Track Record

- Nursing School at University of Alberta established in 1918
- Baccalaureate Nursing program opened in 1923
- MN program established in 1975
- PhD program established in 1991 (first PhD Nursing in Canada)
- Nursing is a key contributor to the success of the University of Alberta as a research-intensive university
Why pursue doctoral studies in Nursing?

• Re-energize your nursing career to prepare for health systems in a post-COVID world

• Advance nursing knowledge and skills needed for health system leadership and transformation.

• Excellent research training for academic, career scientist, health system leadership, and health policy/planning roles.

• Contribute to health research impacting national and international health and health system issues.

• Generate and apply research findings to analyze and solve problems in health systems.
Are you ready to become a Doctoral Scholar?

Why are YOU interested in pursuing a doctoral degree?
What is your motivation for pursuing a doctorate in Nursing?

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<th>Motivation</th>
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<td>Career advancement</td>
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<td>Desire to answer questions arising from nursing practice</td>
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<td>Interest in nursing theory, statistics, research methods</td>
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<td>Encouragement from employer</td>
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<td>Achieve personal life goals</td>
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<td>Desire for more confidence and influence when voicing opinions</td>
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https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DoctoralReadinessAssessmentDANStudentAssessment
How would your preferred career pathway be strengthened by research skills?

- Application of research findings to clinical practice
- Developing research proposals for the discovery of knowledge
- Conducting research to advance nursing science and develop nursing theory
- Conducting research to improve health systems and health outcomes
- Using evidence to inform policy and health systems planning
- Incorporating research and evidence into academic teaching roles
Is this the right time for me to pursue doctoral studies?

• Financial readiness – available means of support
• Emotional readiness – ready to tackle challenges, live with uncertainty, manage personal stress
• Time and energy to commit to demands of doctoral study
• Ability to negotiate periods of release from employment demands in order to immerse in coursework or research activities
• Previous research experience as an RA or research team member
• Beginning profile of scholarly activity (presentations, publications)
What does the PhD program look like?

- Students work closely with a graduate supervisor who has expertise in research topic / methods.
- Time to completion ~ 4 - 6 years.
- Normal course work is up to 3 courses per semester.
- Coursework is completed within first 2 years.
- Students may have opportunities to work as teaching/research assistants to gain experience and funding support.
Program requirements:

- **Coursework** – Students take a total of 7-10 doctoral level courses (numbered 600 level)

- **The number and type of courses** varies based on the student’s academic background, experience & career goals (determined in consultation with the graduate supervisor).

- **All requirements** must be completed within 6 years from the time a student first registers as a graduate student.

- **English** is the language of study.
Required Courses – 18 credits

- NURS 600 - Theory Development in Nursing
- NURS 601 - Advanced Inquiry
- NURS 609 – Synthesizing Knowledge
- INT D 690 – Topics in Knowledge Utilization
- Community of Inquiry I, II, III
- NURS 699 - Dissertation Seminar
Usual Course-taking Pattern

**Year 1**

- **Fall**
  - **NURS 600** – Knowledge Development in Nursing
  - **INTD 609** – Synthesizing Knowledge
  - Community of Inquiry I (one credit)
  - Elective or Thesis credits

- **Winter**
  - **NURS 601** – Advanced Inquiry
  - **INTD 690** – Knowledge Utilization
  - Community of Inquiry II (one credit)
  - Elective or Thesis credits

**Year 2**

- **Fall**
  - Up to 3 Electives or Thesis credits
  - Community of Inquiry III (one credit)
  - Elective or Thesis credits

- **Winter**
  - **Nurs 699** - Dissertation Seminar
  - Up to 2 Electives or Thesis Credits
## Timeline for dissertation completion

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<th>Period</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
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| 24 – 36 months | - Finalize research proposal  
                  - Prepare for doctoral oral candidacy exam (must be completed by 36 months) |
| 36 – 48 months | - Obtain ethics approval  
                  - Implement research project (data collection and analysis) |
| 48 – 60 months | - Complete data collection and analysis  
                  - Complete written dissertation  
                  - Final doctoral examination |
Residency Requirement

- Minimum residency requirement: attendance on-campus for one Fall or Winter term, or two Spring or Summer terms.

- This requirement is intended to be adopted with flexibility based on the supervisor’s expectations and needs and each individual student’s overall program of study. Considerations include
  - research training opportunities,
  - opportunities for scholarly socialization,
  - student career goals, and
  - availability of supervisor and student.

- Variations in the implementation of residency requirements should be explicitly negotiated, planned, and documented by the graduate supervisor and the student.
Option: Paper Based Thesis Format

- Format includes a minimum of three publishable papers:
  - Each paper addresses a unique objective or question
  - Collectively, the papers will form a coherent and integrated set of projects and outputs that have been outlined in the dissertation proposal.
  - Each paper must be independent of the others.

- Consult with your supervisor if you are interested in a paper-based thesis format rather than a traditional dissertation.
  - The topics, timelines, authorship and relevant journals to be targeted for submission must be clearly and jointly planned in advance.

- Prior to the final oral examination, at least one of the papers should be under consideration for publication in a peer reviewed journal. The other papers may be prepared for submission, ‘submitted’ or ‘in review’, also to peer reviewed journals.
Develop teaching skills to advance your preparation for future academic teaching roles.
Graduate student funding

• Doctoral students in Nursing are strongly encouraged to be prepared to self-fund their doctoral studies as there is no guaranteed funding for graduate students.

• Graduate student funding may be available from the Faculty of Nursing through a program of graduate teaching and research assistantships.

• The University of Alberta has a significant award and funding program for graduate students, with awards offered both by the Faculty and the University. Please consult the website of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for additional information.

• Some graduate supervisors may be able to provide funding through the external grants that support their research projects.

• Graduate supervisors will assist students to apply for funding from internal and external sources that are appropriate to the student’s program of studies and level of academic achievement.
Preparing your Application
Minimum Admission Requirements

- a Master's degree in Nursing with an admission GPA of at least 3.5 on the 4-point scale.
- Students who do not hold the equivalent to this degree may be admitted and required to undertake additional course work in nursing theory, practice and/or research.
- A GPA of 3.5 in the last two years of study.
- Graduate qualitative and quantitative (with some statistics) research courses, or one graduate course in statistics and one in research methods (or equivalent), with a final grade of B or higher.
- Completion of an interview with the prospective supervisor.
- Written agreement with a supervisor.
- Where applicable, applicants must provide proof of English Language Proficiency (refer to English Language Requirement). Any one of the following is acceptable:
  - TOEFL score of 93 (internet-based) with a score of at least 24 on speaking and writing, and 21 on reading and listening, or equivalent;
  - an IELTS overall score of 7.0 with the following minimum scores: Listening-7.5, Reading-6.5, Writing-7.0, Speaking-7.0, Overall-7.0.
Your First Step: Identify your Graduate Supervisor

1. Identify potential supervisors from the Academic Listing (tenure track faculty only).
2. Contact faculty member(s) to discuss your proposed research focus.
3. Secure the faculty member’s agreement to serve as graduate supervisor if your application for admission is successful.

As part of your application, you must identify a faculty member who has agreed to serve as your supervisor.

The graduate supervisor provides guidance & direction in development of the research topic & methods, and must have the expertise required to support your intended research project.

You must explain the “fit” between the supervisor’s expertise and your beginning research question/method as part of your application submission.
Admission Criteria and Application Process

Online applications and supporting documentation are due by January 15 for admission in the following September and can be accessed through the Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research website. To ensure the protection of personal information, applications cannot be viewed by the department until they are submitted. Please contact the Nursing Graduate Office if you have questions about your application.

Applicants are selected on the basis of academic and research potential including:

- GPA (typically 3.5 or higher);
- Background experience, research and scholarly activities, and career plans;
- Publications and presentations (particularly from the Master's Degree);
- Letters of Reference; and
- Current Curriculum Vitae
- Graduate qualitative and quantitative (with some statistics) research courses, or one graduate course in statistics and one in research methods (or equivalent), with a final grade of B or higher.

How will my application be assessed?

What is the Admissions Committee looking for?
Review of the Application:

Is the GPA on a previous degree competitive?

Do the applicant’s reference letters convey strengths, competencies and abilities suggestive of strong scholarly potential?

Has the student made a compelling case that there is strong alignment between their intended dissertation project and the proposed supervisor’s expertise and program of research?

Does the proposed research plan reflect a clear and concise conceptualization of a beginning research topic and possible methods?
Additional considerations:

- Is there a beginning or established track record of scholarly activity (i.e. publications, presentations) and/or awards that could position the applicant for successful awards and external funding?

- Does the applicant have previous research experience/training (i.e. research assistantship, research team member)?

- Has the applicant been involved in leadership, teaching, or community contributions that are aligned with their personal goals and aspirations?

- Has the applicant participated in initiatives demonstrating innovation and health impact?
How do I submit my application?

• Application deadline: January 15
  • All documents, including all reference letters must be received by this date

• Application to Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
  • Create an account and submit all required documents as pdf online
  • [https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/prospective-students/apply-for-admission/index.html](https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/prospective-students/apply-for-admission/index.html)

• Required background document for PhD Applicants
  • Entire application is reviewed by Faculty of Nursing Admissions Committee

• $135 non-refundable application fee
https://www.ualberta.ca/nursing/programs
/graduate-programs-and-admissions/doctor
al-program/admission-criteria-and-applicati
on-process.html

https://www.ualberta.ca/nursing/programs
/graduate-student-resources-and-services/fi
nding-a-supervisor.html

Contact:
Faculty of Nursing Graduate Office
Nursing.graduate@ualberta.ca