Mission of the Program

Within a research-intensive context, the Faculty of Nursing’s PhD Program exists to prepare nursing scholars for the 21st century who are able to generate new knowledge and facilitate change to advance healthcare outcomes and nursing within a global context.

Vision of the Program

Students in the PhD Program are engaged in and educated for excellence in the development, organization and evaluation of new knowledge. The program is characterized by rigor, flexibility and relevance: rigor in the quality of scholarship and flexibility within and relevance to the discipline of nursing and the student's career goals and research interests.

The graduate will exhibit competencies in each of the following core qualities:

- Advancing nursing
- Enhancing scholarship
- Mobilizing knowledge
- Extending inquiry
- Leading change

Program Requirements

Coursework

Normally, first year PhD students (on-campus) register in NURS 600 (Theory Development in Nursing), NURS 699 Dissertation Seminar and INTD 690 (Topics in Knowledge Utilization) in Fall term. NURS 601 (Advanced Inquiry) and NURS 609 (Synthesizing Knowledge) are taken in Winter term. Students may elect to take up to three 600 level courses per term.

Please refer to the following link for information on course and class information: http://www.registrarsoffice.ualberta.ca/Registration-and-Courses.aspx

After consulting with your supervisor and developing an agreed upon plan of studies, you can register online for your other courses using the Bear Tracks link on the University of Alberta website (https://www.beartracks.ualberta.ca/)

The Faculty of Nursing offers a number of advanced research methods courses and other electives. Typically, students take a total of 7-10 courses which could include nursing history, research methods, statistics and philosophy of science as well as courses in the student’s substantive area. The number and type of courses will vary according to the student’s academic background, experience and career goals. Doctoral level courses are numbered 600 (see Graduate Course listings in the U of A calendar for descriptions: §231 under the subject heading Nursing (NURS). Course work in areas other than nursing may be part of the student's program of study. Examples include physiology, moral philosophy, anthropology, educational psychology, business, sociology, and philosophy of science.

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Examinations
Students in the PhD program are required to write a comprehensive examination at the completion of their coursework. All doctoral students are also required to pass an oral candidacy examination by the end of the third year. Candidates for the PhD prepare a dissertation and are examined orally both on the proposal (at the time of the oral Candidacy Examination) and completed thesis (Final Oral Examination). English is the only language requirement for the degree, and all requirements for the degree must be completed within six years of the time a student first registers as probationary graduate students or as provisional candidates for the doctoral degree. Please refer to the FoN Graduate Forms Cabinet for more information pertaining to these examinations.

Thesis
Doctoral students are required to prepare a thesis and are examined orally both on the proposal and completed thesis. The proposal is defended at the time of the oral candidacy examination and the completed thesis is defended at the time of the final oral examination.

The purpose of the thesis is to allow students to increase their research skills and to develop in-depth knowledge of a substantive area within the nursing discipline.

It is generally expected that doctoral students will collect and analyze their own data. However, depending on the nature of the project, utilization of an available database is possible.

Students and supervisors must ensure that the magnitude or scope of the research is such that the thesis can be completed within a reasonable period of time. As students are responsible for the cost of their thesis research, it is also essential that the Supervisory Committee and student review the budget thoroughly before the project is undertaken to ensure that costs are reasonable.

Policies Regarding Thesis Research:
Following successful completion of the Candidacy Examination, the supervisor and student are ready to submit the thesis proposal to the Health Research Ethics Board (HREB). All health research involving human subjects must be reviewed and receive ethical clearance on behalf of the University before any data collection is initiated and prior to submitting any applications for funding to a funding body and/or health care agency. Ethics review guidelines and forms are available from the HREB website.

The student, in consultation with the Thesis Supervisor, may obtain a letter or letters of support in principle from potential agencies where data collection may be carried out. It is emphasized that such documentation from an agency does not constitute a commitment on the part of the agency, nor does it constitute ethical approval.

Students cannot be listed as Principle Investigators on ethics of funding applications. The Supervisor applies on the student’s behalf.

Institution/Agency Research Review:
In addition to University ethical clearance, a health care agency review of the proposal is required if the sample is to be drawn from or the research is to be conducted in an agency. The student, in consultation with the Thesis Supervisor, should investigate carefully the protocol and time frame of the agency research review process. Normally, the Thesis

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Supervisor will accompany the student if appearance before an agency review committee is required. In the case of agencies that do not have a formal review process, a letter of support and/or permission to access respondents or records must be obtained.

Applications for funding:
After the thesis proposal has passed ethical review, the Candidate may submit applications for research funds. All grant applications must be submitted to the Faculty of Nursing Research Office.

**Residency**
The minimum residence requirement for the PhD (Nursing) program is attendance on-campus for one Fall or Winter term, or two Spring or Summer terms.

**Registration**
All PhD students are required to register in at least 18 units of course weight at the University of Alberta in each September-April period. The course weights may be a combination of coursework and thesis research. (Note: a standard seminar course of 3 hours/week over a 4-month term = 3 course weights.)

Please note that in order to earn a PhD degree at the U of A each student must register in and be assessed fees for a minimum of 36 course weights over the duration of her/his program. The course weights may be a combination of coursework and thesis research. Please refer to the University of Alberta Academic Schedule for important dates and deadlines.

The opportunity for interdisciplinary study also exists at the U of A and inquiries from students interested in pursuing such an arrangement are welcome.

Students are advised to consult the FGSR Graduate Manual for additional information pertaining to graduate studies at the University of Alberta.

**Ethics Training Requirement**
Graduate students are required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) to fulfill at least eight hours of structured academic activity in academic integrity and ethics education prior to convocation. More information is available on the FGSR website.

Ethics options for nursing graduate students: Faculty of Nursing Completion of Ethics Training form

**Professional Development Requirement**
Professional development is the active acquisition of skills, knowledge, and mindset to realize one’s strengths and potential in all environments. It sets up individuals for success in achieving their goals while giving them the ability to meet, exceed and adapt to personal, career and societal responsibilities within the context of a changing world. The University of Alberta Professional Development Requirement includes an individualized career plan document called an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and the completion of eight hours of professional development activities inspired by your career plan. More information is available on the FGSR website.
Faculty Expertise
In choosing a graduate program, it is important to examine not only the "program" itself but the qualifications of Faculty members, including the range and types of their research and scholarly endeavours, and their skills as practitioners, researchers, and teachers. Faculty members can also be contacted directly via email or telephone to further identify their research or other expertise.

Funding your Education
The University of Alberta has a wide array of awards, scholarships and prizes to assist in funding your graduate studies. Awards, scholarships and prizes, which are awarded to outstanding applicants, are funded by a variety of sources including the Government of Canada, Government of Alberta, and the generosity of the university's many donors. Some awards are exclusive to specific programs. Please spend some time exploring the many scholarship options available to you at the University of Alberta.

View each award's description, eligibility, nominations and application criteria by clicking on the respective award opportunity on the left. For information on holding awards and award policies, please consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Scholarships & Awards Manual.

All award competitions are adjudicated by the Graduate Scholarship Committee (GSC), which is a standing committee of the FGSR Council. For information on the GSC Policies and Procedures, please consult the GSC Handbook.

If you have any additional questions regarding Awards or Financial Support, please contact Anita Green (anita.green@ualberta.ca).

Graduate Teaching and Learning Program
The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and the University Teaching Services have collaborated in developing the Graduate Teaching and Learning Program to provide opportunities for graduate students to develop an ethical, philosophical, and practical basis for careers in post-secondary teaching and to record this on their transcripts. The Faculty of Nursing is pleased to participate in this endeavour and will assist students to complete the various activities required within the program.