DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN NURSING

The PhD program prepares graduates to function in faculty positions in college and university settings; conduct independent research and scholarly endeavors in nursing; generate and expand the theoretical, empirical, and philosophical bases for nursing practice; provide leadership to the profession; and interpret nursing to society. Students have opportunities to expand their theoretical knowledge and research skills in a minor area; develop expertise in nursing theory development; expand research skills; and gain a historical and philosophical perspective that broadens their professional orientation and provides a basis for understanding changing social expectations, cultural perspectives, and economic and political trends.

Nurses engaged in doctoral study are adult learners with unique perspectives gained from personal, professional, and educational experiences. These individuals tend to be self-directed, goal-oriented, highly motivated and capable of abstract, original thinking. Individual interests are explored through study in a related discipline, i.e., minor area of study. Learning is achieved through independent study and research, as well as instructed courses.

The KU School of Nursing’s baccalaureate, master’s, and doctor of nursing practice (DNP) programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (http://www.aacn.nche.edu), One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 887-6791. This organization is a nationally recognized professional accrediting body for collegiate nursing programs. The baccalaureate, master’s, and DNP programs also are approved by the Kansas State Board of Nursing (http://www ksbn.org). The Nurse Midwifery Program is accredited by the Accreditation Division of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (http://www.midwife.org), 8403 Colesville Rd., Suite 1550, Silver Spring, MD 20910, (240) 485-1800.

Admission Criteria

New students are accepted to the PhD degree program once a year, for instruction that begins in June during the summer semester. The application deadline is December 1st for admission the following summer. Prospective students can apply using the KU Medical Center application at: https://www.applyweb.com/apply/kumc/

1. Completion of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or Master of Science in nursing degree from a nationally accredited program (NLNAC or CCNE)
2. Current registered nurse licensure in at least one state in the United States. This requirement may be waived for international students who will not engage in patient care while in the program
3. Preference is given to applicants with a 3.5 GPA in a BSN program or 3.25 GPA in a master’s program
4. Potential for leadership and scholarship in nursing
5. Prerequisite preparation must include a graduate statistics course in Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
6. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. Preferred scores are a minimum combined score of 297 on verbal and quantitative sections, and at least 5 on the analytical section
7. Satisfactory criminal background check (completed once an offer of admission has been extended to applicant); it may affect the student’s eligibility to enter the program

English Language Requirements: All applicants for study at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) whose native language is not English must demonstrate an established level of English language proficiency through either the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or the academic format of the IELTS (International English Language Testing System). The test must have been taken within two years of the first semester of enrollment.

Applicants who do not meet the admission criteria for regular admission status may be considered on an individual basis for provisional admission status as either degree-seeking or nondegree-seeking students.

See also Admission in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Program Options

Students may apply to the doctoral program after completing a master’s degree in nursing or a baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing. The post-baccalaureate entry option is for exceptionally well-qualified BSN graduates whose career goals are research-oriented and who wish to progress as rapidly as possible toward the research doctorate in nursing.

Course Requirements

The PhD degree requires 65 credit hours; 50 coursework credit hours and 15 dissertation credit hours. Post-BSN students complete an additional 6 credit hours from the graduate nursing core. The PhD program is offered through a combination of formats, including:

- Three on-campus one-week summer intensives at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, Kansas
- Online coursework throughout the year, including web-based conferencing on a regular basis
- On-campus and e-mentoring by faculty for research and career advisement and scholar development

Coursework includes three primary curriculum components: theory, empirics, and leadership (33 credit hours), a minor concentration (11 credit hours) and support courses (6 credit hours).

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Preparing for Doctoral Leadership
NRSG 949 Synthesis Workshop II 1
Dissertation (15)
NRSG 999 Dissertation (minimum 15 credit hours required - up to 6 credit hours in one semester) 6
NRSG 999 Dissertation 6
NRSG 999 Dissertation 3
Total Hours 48

Students admitted in the post-BSN to PhD program must also complete the following two courses:

NRSG 748 Theories for Practice and Research 3
NRSG 754 Health Care Research 3
Total Hours 6

Minor
The Minor includes 11 coursework credit hours in the student's area of choice. Minor courses must support the student's research interest area; e.g., American studies, anatomy, anthropology, biochemistry, business, child development, communication, economics, education, history, pathology, pharmacology, philosophy, physiology, political science, psychology, sociology, or any other graduate area offered by KU. One of the 11 minor credit hours is taken through enrollment in NRSG 970 - Minor Synthesis, taken after completion of other minor coursework and requiring completion of a scholarly paper synthesizing content taken throughout the minor course sequence.

Support Courses
Regression Analysis (e.g., BIOS 730) - 3 credit hours
Multivariate Analysis (e.g., BIOS 740) - 3 credit hours

Dissertation
Each PhD student must complete a study that shows the planning, conduct, and results of original research. See Doctoral Degree Requirements, Dissertation, in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog. The minimum number of post-comprehensive dissertation credit hours is 15.

The program also requires satisfactory completion of the University's research skills and responsible scholarship requirement, and two qualifying examinations: comprehensive oral (dissertation proposal defense) and final oral (Dissertation defense).

Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing

I. Introduction
All individuals admitted to the University of Kansas School of Nursing will be asked to verify that they can meet the following Technical Standards, with or without accommodation(s). In courses or programs without clinical components, or involving no direct client care, the Technical Standards may be modified by the Student Admission and Progression Committee (SAPC). After acceptance, but before admission to the School of Nursing, students in all programs must be able to document current certification/evidence of completion of a course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation for healthcare providers. This requires being able to successfully complete both the written and practical test for certification. In addition, with or without accommodation, the following abilities and expectations must be met by all students, undergraduate and graduate, admitted to the School of Nursing.

II. Standards
A. Observation/Sensory-motor: Applicants must be able to observe demonstrations and learn from experiences in the basic sciences, including but not limited to, physiology and pharmacology, microbiology and pathophysiology laboratory situations. Applicants must be able to observe and learn from experiences in the clinical nursing laboratory such as the following examples: accurately read gradients/calibrations on a syringe; measure medications accurately; accurately recognize color changes on chemical reaction strips; assess heart, breath, abdominal sounds; assess normal and abnormal color changes in the skin; observe pupil changes; and observe digital or waveform readings.

B. Communication: Communications include not only speech but also reading, writing, and computer usage, including handheld digital access. Applicants must be able to communicate accurately and effectively with patients, caregivers, physicians, other health professionals, clinical facility staff, faculty and staff, peers, and the community in general in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications.

C. Psychomotor: Applicants should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. Applicants should be physically able to collect specimens and perform basic tests (such as glucose finger stick, urine dipstick). Applicants should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of nurses are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medication, application of pressure to stop bleeding, and assist in moving and lifting patients using proper body mechanics. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and using tactile and visual senses.

D. Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative: Applicants must be able to comprehend and interpret documents written in English. Applicants should have cognitive abilities including measurements, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Critical thinking is the ability to synthesize knowledge and integrate the relevant aspects of a client's history, physical exam findings and diagnostic studies. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of nurses, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, the applicant should be able to comprehend three dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures in order to understand normal and abnormal anatomy and physiology.

E. Behavioral and Social Attributes: Applicants must possess the emotional health required to utilize their intellectual abilities fully, exercise good judgment, complete all responsibilities attendant to the nursing diagnosis and care of patients promptly, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients and their families. Applicants must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal communication skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that should be assessed during the admissions and education process. As a component of nursing education, a student must demonstrate ethical behavior including adherence to the professional nursing and
student honor codes. The honor code at the KU School of Nursing is the Professional Integrity System (PROFITS). KU PROFITS is a peer-oriented integrity system to promote an environment where academic honesty is valued and expected.

III. Reasonable Accommodation

Applicants who disclose a disability are considered for admission if they are otherwise qualified so long as such accommodation does not significantly alter the essential requirements of the curriculum and the educational program, or significantly affect the safety of patient care or others. When applicants or students disclose a disability, the provision of reasonable accommodations will be considered in an attempt to assist these individuals in meeting these required technical standards. Applicants whose response indicates that they cannot meet one or more of the expectations will be reviewed further by the University’s Office for Academic Accommodations, with applicant and faculty input, to determine if any reasonable accommodations are possible to facilitate successful completion of the nursing curriculum and preparation for the national registry examination.

It is important to give persons interested in enrolling in nursing a realistic view of the vigorous demands of the School of Nursing’s theoretical and practicum curriculum while at the same time investigating reasonable accommodations. Whether or not a requested accommodation is reasonable will be determined on a case by case basis. Interested individuals may schedule an orientation visit to the nursing skills laboratory and actual sites of the University of Kansas Hospital and/or University of Kansas Medical Center. These orientation visits enable persons to assess their interest and ability to function in the actual clinical areas and in learning and demonstrating manual skills.

Revised: May 9, 2014