



III | NORTHWESTERN STATE

Doctor of Nursing Practice

Program Handbook

2026-2027

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DNP Program Handbook

This DNP program handbook is intended to provide students with information regarding Northwestern State University College of Nursing's Doctor of Nursing Practice program's overall structure, policies, guidelines and expectations. Students are encouraged to review the handbook carefully and seek clarification from faculty and advisors when and as needed. This handbook is a contract between Northwestern State University and the student, and the University reserves the right to amend or change the handbook without notice. If policies and procedures in the DNP program handbook are different from those posted in university publications, the program handbook supersedes those in other publications (University Catalog and Student Handbook).

Additional sources of information are published in the most current edition of the University Catalog at <https://www.nsula.edu/registrar/> and Student Handbook at <https://www.nsula.edu/studenthandbook/>. Students are expected to be knowledgeable about these policies.

NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA (NSU or NSULA)

UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW

Northwestern State University of Louisiana (NSU), formerly called the Louisiana State Normal School, was established in 1884 in Natchitoches, Louisiana. In 1921, the Louisiana State Normal School began offering baccalaureate programs, and the school was renamed by the State Constitution to Louisiana Normal College. In 1944, further expansion of degree offerings and statewide recognition as a quality institution of higher education led the state Legislature to change the school's name to Northwestern State College. In 1970, after the college began offering master's degrees and achieved University status, the Governor changed the name from Northwestern State College to its current name, Northwestern State University of Louisiana.

Since 1995, NSU has been a member institution of the University of Louisiana System (ULS) and is governed at the state level by two boards: the Louisiana Board of Regents and the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System.

Today, over 140 years after the Louisiana State Normal School began offering courses in higher education, Northwestern State University: (a) is a Carnegie Master's Large university, (b) is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), (c) offers over 100 degree programs and 30 certificate programs, (d) employs over 300 full-time faculty and over 200 part-time/adjunct faculty, (e) enrolled almost 8,500 students in Fall 2025, and (f) awarded approximately 2,000 degrees and certificates in the 2024-2025 academic year.

NSU's exponential program growth led to an expansion of the original campus footprint from a single building, located in Natchitoches, Louisiana, the oldest permanent settlement in the Louisiana purchase, to today's 900-acre Natchitoches campus and three off-campus learning sites. The three off campus learning sites are located 80 miles North of Natchitoches in Shreveport, Louisiana; 55 miles south of Natchitoches in Alexandria, Louisiana; and 50 miles southwest of Natchitoches in Leesville, Louisiana. The campus in Natchitoches is the oldest continually functioning higher education campus in Louisiana.

UNIVERSITY MISSION

Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

UNIVERSITY VISION

Northwestern State University will become the nation's premier regional university through the innovative delivery of transformative Student learning experiences that prepare graduates for life and career success.

UNIVERSITY CORE VALUES

Northwestern State University's guiding values are:

- **We are future focused.** We do not rest on our laurels, as we are in constant search of individual and organizational improvement. We seek opportunities to improve our students, community, and region.
- **Innovation leads the forward edge of change.** We strive to be on the forefront in all we do.
- **We honor and respect the ideals of freedom.** We protect the freedom of all members of our community to seek truth and express their views.
- **We are careful stewards.** We responsibly and sustainably manage the economic and natural resources entrusted to us.
- **Integrity is our cornerstone.** We hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards as educators, scholars, Students, and professionals.
- **We are a team.** We are a collaborative community that focuses on ensuring the success of every member.

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH (CONSAH)

COLLEGE OF NURSING (CON) OVERVIEW

In the mid-1940s, the visionary nursing community in Shreveport, Louisiana recognized the need for a collegiate-based nursing program. Following the recommendations of a national consultant, five hospitals in the Shreveport region agreed to phase-out their diploma nursing programs in preparation for nursing being offered at the collegiate level. This opened the door for NSU to create a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. In 1949, the first baccalaureate nursing students were admitted to NSU, making it the oldest state supported baccalaureate nursing program in Louisiana. In 2025, the College of Nursing (CON) celebrated 75 years of nursing education and the creation of more than ten thousand registered nurses!

During the early years NSU's CON students were given two program options. They could exit the program at the end of three years of study with a diploma or complete a fourth year and earn a baccalaureate degree. Both options allowed graduates to sit for the national registry examination. The diploma option was phased out in the late 1950's.

Today, the CON has expanded from two to four-degree programs and 3 post master's certificate concentrations. These five programs have various routes which facilitate students seamlessly entering the desired program and obtaining their degree.

- **ASN Program:** The Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) program was initiated in 1972. The program is offered on the Shreveport, Alexandria, and Leesville off-campus learning sites. The ASN program has three routes to the degree: traditional, LPN to ASN, and Paramedic/Military Medic to ASN. A large portion of the ASN program is offered via distance learning.
- **BSN Program:** The Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing (BSN) program was initiated in 1949 and is offered through three pre-licensure routes and one post-licensure route. Two pre-licensure routes (traditional, LPN to BSN) are offered to students on the university's main campus in Natchitoches and the Alexandria off-campus learning site, and three pre-licensure routes are offered in Shreveport (traditional, LPN to BSN and BS to BSN). A large portion of the BSN program is offered via distance learning. The post-licensure baccalaureate nursing route, RN to BSN, is offered entirely online.
- **MSN Program:** The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program was implemented in 1972 and has numerous roles from which students choose (Educator, Administrator, or APRN-Nurse Practitioner). Each Educator/Administrator student must choose a population focus of either Adult-Gerontology or Maternal-Child/Family. Each APRN-NP student also chooses a population focus in either Adult Gerontology Acute Care (AGACNP), Adult Gerontology Primary Care (AGPCNP), Family (FNP), Primary Care Pediatric (PCPNP), Psychiatric Mental Health Across the Lifespan (PMHNP), or Women's Health (WHNP). The FNP concentration was initiated in 1982. The WHNP and PCPNP concentrations were initiated in 1997. The AGACNP concentration began in 1998, and the AGPCNP concentration began in 2013. The PMHNP concentration began in 2017. All roles and concentrations of the MSN program are offered online.

- **PMC Program:** The Post-Master's Certificate in Nursing (PMC) program has been offered by NSU since the onset of the MSN NP programs in 1972. However, in 2014 CCNE began accrediting PMC programs, and the Louisiana Board of Regents and ULS Board both began requiring program approval prior to provision of specific PMC degree codes. These changes prompted NSU to evaluate which PMC programs enrolled enough students to meet PMC program criteria and to seek PMC program approval from the BOR and the ULS board in addition to CCNE accreditation. When CCNE accredited the BSN, MSN, and DNP programs, PMC accreditation was not offered. Upon contacting CCNE regarding program accreditation, NSU was told to apply for PMC program accreditation at the next accreditation cycle. Currently, the PMC program is composed of a single APRN role: Nurse Practitioner. Students must choose from Adult Gerontology Acute Care, Family, or Psychiatric Mental Health Across the Lifespan Concentrations/Populations. All role and concentration courses of the PMC program are offered online.
- **DNP Program:** The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program began in 2014 and received initial CCNE accreditation status in 2015. The DNP program offers two routes for DNP degree obtainment: post masters of science in nursing to DNP and post baccalaureate in nursing to DNP. The post masters of science in nursing to DNP has two concentrations, Executive Leadership (ExL) and Educational Leadership (EdL)]. The post baccalaureate to DNP route offers one concentration Nurse Anesthesia (NA). The DNP-NA concentration received initial accreditation from the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia programs (COA) in 2021.

CON PROGRAM ACCREDITATION AND APPROVAL

The ASN program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), 3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850, Atlanta, Georgia, 30326, phone number 404.975.5000, fax number 404.975.5020, <https://www.acenursing.org/>.

The BSN, MSN, PMC, programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<https://www.aacnnursing.org/CCNE>). All nursing programs and program concentrations are approved by the Louisiana State Board of Nursing (LSBN).

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program at Northwestern State University is accredited by the [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education](#), 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, nurse anesthesia role (Nurse Anesthesia Program) at Northwestern State University of Louisiana is fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA) (<http://coacrn.org>, 10275 W. Higgins Rd., Suite 906, Rosemont, IL 60018-5603, and can be reached at 224-275-9130), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education. The Nurse Anesthesia program received full accreditation in May 2021, with the next accreditation review in 2026.

CONSAH MISSION

Northwestern State University's College of Nursing and School of Allied Health (CONSAH) advances the mission of the University through innovative teaching, experiential service learning, and scholarship. The College of Nursing and School of Allied Health offers quality healthcare education to a diverse student population to achieve their goal of becoming responsible healthcare providers who improve the health of our region, state, and nation.

CONSAH VISION

The College of Nursing and School of Allied Health strives to be an innovative pacesetter in the educational preparation of highly competent healthcare providers who excel professionally and personally.

CONSAH CORE VALUES

Respect. We embrace free expression, treat people fairly and value diversity while promoting inclusion.

Caring. We empathize with those we encounter by exhibiting openness and expressing sensitivity.

Innovation. We are committed to continuous quality improvement. We are passionate about providing transformational learning environments and experiences for our students that will advance the mission of the University and College.

Excellence. We adhere to the highest standards for healthcare education to ensure the quality of our academic programs.

Professionalism. We are healthcare professionals who educate future healthcare professionals.

Therefore, we maintain professional expertise, demonstrate integrity in our professional behaviors, act ethically, and persevere when faced with challenges. We display accountability for our actions and are responsible stewards of all resources entrusted to us.

Teamwork. We are members of an interprofessional healthcare education team. We involve team members in decision-making. We communicate effectively and challenge ideas with respect.

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP) PROGRAM

DNP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Northwestern State University's College of Nursing offers the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree for nurses seeking a practice doctorate. The DNP provides a clinical doctorate for baccalaureate or master's prepared registered nurses who desire to practice at the highest level and significantly impact health care outcomes for vulnerable populations. Graduates of the DNP program are prepared to transform health care by utilizing advanced clinical skills, translating evidence into practice, implementing systems changes, establishing standards and policies that guide the safe and compassionate delivery of healthcare, and acting as professional organizational leaders.

DNP program curricula are structured around the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN, 2021) Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education and the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA) Standards for Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Programs (AACN, 2021; COA, 2024).

DNP PROGRAM GOALS

Goals of the DNP program are to:

1. Provide advanced nursing practice leaders with expertise, specialized competencies, and advanced knowledge required for evidence-based nursing practice and mastery in an area of specialization within the larger domain of nursing.
2. Prepare advanced nursing practice leaders to influence, design, direct and implement changes in healthcare practice, education, and policy through the development of collaborative alliances to improve healthcare outcomes of vulnerable populations.
3. Develop advanced nursing practice leaders who contribute to nursing's body of knowledge through professional development and scholarly inquiry to improve safety and quality healthcare outcomes of vulnerable populations.

DNP PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (Student Learning Outcomes [SLOs])

The Doctor of Nursing Practice Graduate will be able to:

1. Integrate nursing science and interdisciplinary knowledge as the foundation for the highest level of nursing practice (Aligns with Program Goals 1 and 3).
2. Engage in the provision of person-centered care within multiple complicated contexts, including family or important others. (Aligns with Program Goals 1 and 2).
3. Appraise interdisciplinary healthcare delivery initiatives and models with a focus on disease prevention and disease management of populations through collaborative activities for the improvement of equitable population health outcomes. (Aligns with Program Goals 1 and 2)
4. Systematically appraise, translate, and apply existing evidence to improve healthcare. (Aligns with Program Goals 1 and 3)

5. Integrate principles of quality and safety to improve system effectiveness of care delivery and individual performance. (Aligns with Program Goals 2 and 3)
6. Collaborate with interprofessional teams and stakeholders to optimize care, enhance the healthcare experience, and strengthen outcomes. (Aligns with Program Goal 2)
7. Evaluate resources to provide safe, quality, and equitable care to diverse populations using a systems-based approach. (Aligns with Program Goals 1 and 3)
8. Utilize informatics and healthcare technologies to enhance healthcare decision making and care delivery. (Aligns with Program Goals 1 and 2)
9. Demonstrate professionalism reflective of nursing's characteristics and values. (Aligns with Program Goal 3)
10. Engage in personal and professional leadership development to promote excellence in practice. (Aligns with Program Goal 3)

DNP PROGRAM OUTCOME MEASURES

Program outcome measures are indicative of program effectiveness, academic quality, and student achievement. DNP program outcome measures are reported annually and vary depending on the DNP concentration. Programmatic outcome measures include the following:

- The DNP Program will admit, retain, and graduate students who have the ability to benefit from a doctoral education as evidenced by:
 1. Admission Standards
 - a. The program will only admit students (100%) who demonstrate the ability to benefit from a doctoral education and as applicable, nurse anesthesia education.
 2. Graduation Rate
 - a. The program will retain at least 90% of admitted students per cohort.
 - b. The program will graduate at least 90% of students per cohort within 200% of expected program completion time (ExL and EdL= 4 years and NA= 6 years).
 - c. The cohort attrition will not exceed 10% per cohort.
- The DNP Program will adequately prepare DNP-NA graduates for the National Certification Exam (NCE) as evidenced by:
 1. Cohort Pass Rate
 - a. Cohort Pass Rate equal to or greater than the national average for first time test takers.
 - b. Eventual Cohort Pass Rate of 100% for all test takers on all attempts.
 2. Cohort Mean NCE Total Score (NA)
 - a. Cohort Mean NCE Total Score equal to or greater than the national average for first time test takers.
 3. Cohort Mean NCE Sub Scores (NA)
 - a. Cohort Mean NCE Sub Scores equal to or greater than the national average for first time test takers in all domains.
- The DNP Program will graduate students who are DNP prepared Advanced Nurse Practice Leaders in a specific role as evidenced by:
 1. Employment Rate
 - a. Of those DNP-ExL or DNP-EdL graduates seeking employment, 100% will be employed within 6 months of graduation.

- b. Of those DNP-NA graduates seeking employment, 100% will be employed as a CRNA within 6 months of graduation.
- 2. Alumni Evaluation
 - a. At 1-year post-graduation, 100% of responding alumni will report preparedness to practice as a doctorate prepared Advanced Nurse Practice Leader upon program completion.
 - b. At 1-year post-graduation, 100% of responding alumni will report preparedness to enter anesthesia practice upon program completion (NA).
 - c. At 1-year post-graduation, 100% of responding alumni will evaluate the quality of the program as favorable in relation to their preparedness to enter practice upon completion of the program.
 - d. At 1-year post-graduation, 100% of responding alumni will report the acquisition of refined communication and scholarship skills necessary to translate research findings into practice.
 - e. At 1-year post-graduation, 100% of responding alumni will report active participation in at least one professional organization.
- 3. Employer Evaluation
 - a. At 1 year of employment, 100% of responding employers will report that graduates are able to practice in their role as a doctorate prepared Advanced Nurse Practice Leader.
 - b. At 1 year of employment, 100% of responding employers of DNP-NA graduates will report that graduates are able to apply critical thinking and requisite knowledge to provide safe, ethical, evidence-based anesthesia care services to culturally diverse individuals and populations across the lifespan.

DNP PROGRAM CURRICULA AND PROGRAM DESIGN

Program requirements for the DNP degree are dependent upon the route of entry and concentration. A cohort model is used for all concentrations, meaning each cohort of students enrolls in and completes a prescribed set of courses each semester. Not all program courses are offered simultaneously. Therefore, part-time or partial semester course completion is not an option.

The DNP Program offers **two routes** for DNP degree obtainment:

- 1. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN) to DNP (BSN-DNP)
- 2. Master of Science in Nursing (RN) to DNP (MSN to DNP)

The DNP Program offers **three concentrations**:

- 1. Educational Leadership [EdL] (MSN to DNP route) (901D): 38 total credit hours
- 2. Executive Leadership [ExL] (MSN to DNP route) (901E): 38 total credit hours
- 3. Nurse Anesthesia [NA] (BSN to DNP route) (901C): 123 total credit hours

1. Nurse Anesthesia Concentration (NA) (BSN to DNP Route) [901C]

The Nurse Anesthesia curriculum pattern has nine consecutive semesters (36 months) with 123 semester credit hours, and 3,136 practicum hours (see Appendix A). Course offerings are sequential and only offered during the semester indicated on the curriculum pattern. The program curriculum occurs in two phases and is integrated in nature. The first 12 months of the program primarily focuses on didactic education while the second 24 months of the program focuses on both didactic and clinical education.

Due to the rigorous nature of nurse anesthesia education and the requirements for degree attainment, NA students do not follow the academic calendar and may not follow the emergency closure plan based on clinical obligations. The nurse anesthesia clinical practicum courses require direct patient practice on a 1:4 ratio. The DNP project practicum courses require direct and indirect clinical practice hours for an equivalent of 60 clinical practice hours per academic hour.

2. Executive Leadership Concentration (ExL) (MSN to DNP Route) [901D]

The curriculum pattern for the ExL concentration has six consecutive semesters (24 months) with a minimum of 38 credit hours. Course offerings are sequential and only offered during the semester indicated on the curriculum pattern. Courses are typically delivered via the online environment in an asynchronous format. DNP ExL students are required to obtain a minimum of 1,000 post-baccalaureate clinical hours upon degree completion (AACN, 2006). Of these 1,000 post-baccalaureate clinical hours, a minimum of 585 direct/indirect clinical hours must be obtained within the program, regardless of previously earned post-baccalaureate clinical hours. The DNP project practicum courses require direct and indirect clinical practice hours for an equivalent of 60 clinical practice hours per academic hour.

3. Educational Leadership Concentration (EdL) (MSN to DNP Route) [901E]

The curriculum pattern for the EdL concentration has six consecutive semesters (24 months) with a minimum of 38 credit hours. Course offerings are sequential and only offered during the semester indicated on the curriculum pattern. Courses are typically delivered via the online environment in an asynchronous format. DNP ExL students are required to obtain a minimum of 1,000 post-baccalaureate clinical hours upon degree completion (AACN, 2006). Of these 1,000 post-baccalaureate clinical hours, a minimum of 585 direct/indirect clinical hours must be obtained within the program, regardless of previously earned post-baccalaureate clinical hours. The DNP project practicum courses require direct and indirect clinical practice hours for an equivalent of 60 clinical practice hours per academic hour.

Student Governance: Participation and Leadership

CONSAH governance is the shared responsibility of all CONSAH members. To fulfill this responsibility, faculty, staff, and administration have established collaborative bodies known as Councils, Standing Committees, Sub-Committees, and Ad-Hoc Committees which are charged to perform specific governance duties requiring faculty, staff, administrative, student, and community of interest (COI) involvement. DNP students are invited and encouraged to participate in CONSAH, and DNP Program governance as designated below:

COMMITTEE, COUNCIL AND MEETING PARTICIPATION

DNP Program Curriculum Committee. The DNP PCC chairperson invites a minimum of one representative from each cohort to attend monthly DNP PCC meetings.

CON Advisory Council. The CONSAH Dean invites a minimum of one representative from the DNP Program to attend the Annual CON Advisory Council meetings.

Student Leadership Advisory Meetings. Cohort student leadership is encouraged to meet regularly and at least once a semester to discuss DNP program-related matters.

NURSE ANESTHESIA CONCENTRATION ELECTED POSITIONS

President. Each cohort elects their own president. The president is responsible for providing leadership to the class, serving as a representative or liaison to the program's curriculum committee and other

organizations without specific representatives, communicating class requests or concerns to the program administrator, etc.

LANA Representative. Each cohort elects a student to serve as a Louisiana Association of Nurse Anesthetists (LANA) student board member. The LANA representative is expected to attend monthly LANA BOD meetings, annual LANA fall meetings and other events as requested by the LANA BOD.

Social Vice President. Each cohort elects a social vice president. The social vice president organizes class social events/functions and communicates with program faculty regarding social events.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONCENTRATION ELECTED POSITIONS

Representative. Each cohort elects their own class representative. The representative is responsible for providing leadership to the class, serving as a liaison to the program's curriculum committee and other organizations without specific representatives, communicating class requests or concerns to the program administrator, etc.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONCENTRATION ELECTED POSITIONS

Representative. Each cohort elects their own representative. The representative is responsible for providing leadership to the class, serving as a liaison to the program's curriculum committee and other organizations without specific representatives, communicating class requests or concerns to the program administrator, etc.

Admission, Progression, and Graduation

The DNP program is a selective admissions program. Admission to the Graduate School does not imply admission to the DNP program

Admission Procedures and Guidelines

Admission to the DNP program begins with submission of an application through two systems: NursingCAS and Northwestern State University's (NSU) Graduate School website. Completion of applications through both systems (NursingCAS and NSU's Grad School) is required. Admission to the Graduate School does not imply admission to the DNP program. The DNP program is a selective admissions program.

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants seeking admission to the DNP program must meet minimum requirements for admission to the University's Graduate School. Applicants will be required to apply and submit the following application materials to Nursing CAS application portal as outlined in the admission process and by the specified deadline:

1. official transcripts reflecting a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in nursing (BSN-DNP route) or master's degree in nursing (MSN-DNP route) from a nationally accredited College or University in the United States,
2. official transcripts from all academic institutions attended, an undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale,

3. official GRE scores with a minimum total of 290 or higher when combining verbal and quantitative scores within the last five years (BSN-DNP route only),
4. GRE analytical writing score of 3.0 or higher (BSN- DNP only),
5. an Emotional Intelligence assessment, and
6. three (3) letters of recommendation (1 from a former faculty member, 1 from an immediate supervisor in the clinical setting, and 1 character reference) to the application portal (NursingCAS).

Non-native speakers of English must demonstrate sufficient English language proficiency per the University English Proficiency and TOEFL Requirement.

DNP PROGRAM SPECIFIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All DNP Applicants: In addition to meeting the University's Graduate School Admission Requirements, all DNP applicants must meet the minimum requirements specific to admission into the DNP program. Applicants are required to submit to the Nursing CAS application portal:

1. the NursingCAS application,
2. evidence of a minimum of 1-year full-time experience as a registered nurse for MSN to DNP applicants, and 1-year full-time recent critical care experience (within the last two years) as a registered nurse at the time of application for BSN to DNP Nurse Anesthesia applicants.
3. current, unencumbered Registered Nursing License in any state, and BSN to DNP Nurse Anesthesia applicants must have eligibility for Registered Nurse licensure in Louisiana or a compact state prior to enrollment.
4. completion of emotional intelligence assessment
5. curriculum vitae, and
6. attestation to the ability to meet and comply with technical performance standards (*CONSAH Essential Academic Performance and Technical Standards for Didactic and Clinical Settings*).

In addition to these requirements, all BSN-DNP (NA) applicants must submit to the Nursing CAS application portal:

1. Current American Heart Association or American Red Cross Basic Life Support (BLS), and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certifications
2. *Work Experience and Technical Skill Proficiency Record*
3. *Professional Organization Membership, Certification and Licensure Record*

All required application materials for DNP Program are due by the published deadline for the following Spring semester of anticipated enrollment, with interviews scheduled each Summer. Applicant admission to the University does not guarantee enrollment in the DNP program. Applicants who meet program admission requirements and submit required admission materials by the deadline will be evaluated for an interview with the DNP admissions committee. Once final selections are made, applicants will be notified of acceptance status. Applicants who are not selected to enter the DNP program are invited to resubmit the required documents and undergo the selection process the following year.

PROGRAM TRANSFER OF CREDIT AND ADVANCED STANDING OF CREDIT GUIDELINES

Bachelor of Science in Nursing to DNP (BSN-DNP) Route: Coursework from outside institutions will not be transferred for inclusion of BSN-DNP NA (Nurse Anesthetist Role) degree requirements. NSU Nursing courses may be accepted at the discretion of the Director of Doctoral Studies, with requests accompanied by course description and course syllabus. All coursework for the DNP degree, including advanced standing credits, must be completed within 4 years immediately prior to graduation.

Master of Science in Nursing to DNP (MSN-DNP) Route: A maximum of 12 credit hours may be earned at other nationally accredited DNP programs and transferred to NSU for inclusion of the MSN-DNP Educational or Executive Leadership degree requirements. Courses will only be accepted with grades of "B" or better. Courses for transfer may be accepted at the discretion of the Director of Doctoral Studies, with requests accompanied by course description and course syllabus. All coursework for the DNP degree, including transferred credits, must be completed within 6 years immediately prior to graduation.

PROGRAM READMISSION

A student who has withdrawn from the DNP program (withdrawn from all courses) and is in good standing with the University, may reapply for readmission to the DNP Program. Students who wish to reenter the program must meet with the DNP admissions committee with the understanding that readmission is not guaranteed. Readmission to the program is contingent on admission committee recommendations and program space availability.

PROGRAM PROGRESSION

To maintain progression status and be in good academic standing with the DNP program, the student must:

1. Maintain a current, unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse (RN);
2. Obtain a minimum final grade of "B" or higher in all courses;
3. Maintain continuous enrollment in the DNP program;
4. Meet the University and CONSAH health requirements; and
5. Meet the *CONSAH Essential Academic Performance and Technical Standards for Didactic and Clinical Settings*.

PROGRAM GRADING SCALE

The DNP Program's grading scale is a ten-point scale which is constructed as: A (90-100%), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), and F (0-59%). All graded course work is calculated to the second decimal place (hundredths column). Only the final course grade is rounded to the nearest whole number with only the first decimal place (tenths column) rounded. For example, a final course grade of 79.5 is rounded to 80 whereas a final course grade of 79.49 is not rounded to 80. The DNP Program follows procedures for assigning incomplete "I" and in progress "IP" grades as outlined in the University Catalog.

PROGRAM NON-PROGRESSION

If a student fails to meet one or more of the requirements for progression, the student is in non-progression. Students may return to progression by following the re-entry procedures, provided they have not been dismissed from the nursing program. Students will be in non-progression for:

1. Failure to obtain and maintain current, unencumbered licensure to practice as a registered nurse (RN);
2. Failure to achieve a minimum grade of "B" in all courses;
3. A student who earns a "C" in a didactic (non-practicum) course:
 - A DNP student will be allowed to progress in the program, provided the student's GPA is a 3.0 or higher. The DNP student will not have to repeat the course for credit.
 - If the student earns a second "C" in a didactic course, the student will be dismissed from the program.
4. A student who fails a practicum course (as indicated by a final grade of "C", "D", or "F"), will be dismissed from the program;
5. A student who fails a didactic course (as indicated by a final grade of "D" or "F"), will be dismissed from the program;
6. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment in the DNP program;
 - Students who are voluntarily or involuntarily withdrawn from a DNP course are considered out of progression;
7. Failure to meet the University and CONSAH health requirements;
 - Students will be withdrawn from courses if they fail to meet the requirements outlined for nursing students by Student Health Services;
 - Students who are withdrawn will not be automatically re-enrolled once they have met the requirements.
8. Failure to meet the *CONSAH Essential Academic Performance and Technical Standards for Didactic and Clinical Settings* and/or expectations for behavior outlined in the University Student Handbook and DNP Program Handbook.
 - Students must meet the *CONSAH Essential Academic Performance and Technical Standards for Didactic and Clinical Settings* for admission and continue to meet these standards throughout program enrollment.
 - A student will be withdrawn from courses and/or dismissed from the program for failure to meet *CONSAH Essential Academic Performance and Technical Standards for Didactic and Clinical Settings*.

PROGRAM DISMISSAL

As outlined in the non-progression policy, a student will be dismissed for failure of didactic, and/or clinical courses, and/or loss of unencumbered Registered Nurse licensure status. Further, a student who violates the Academic Honesty policy is subject to dismissal from the DNP program as outlined in the University Catalog and Student Handbook.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

DNP students must complete all University requirements for graduation. Additionally, students must complete all courses with a GPA of 3.00 or greater, obtain a course grade of "B" or higher,

provide evidence of a minimum 1,000 hours post- baccalaureate clinical experience, complete the development, implementation, evaluation, and satisfactory oral dissemination of their DNP scholarly project, and be in good standing with the University. Additionally, BSN-DNP NA students must complete all requirements of the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA) and the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA) for program completion and meet program required nurse anesthesia clinical hour requirements.

Each DNP student is expected to monitor their progress to ensure that degree requirements are met. If a student encounters difficulty satisfying degree requirements, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Director of Doctoral Studies. Timely notification is imperative to facilitate change and adjustments to ensure the student can meet degree requirements.

GRADUATION DEFERRAL

In extenuating circumstances, a student may be granted graduation deferral. If graduation deferral is needed, it must be approved by the Director of Doctoral Studies and the CONSAH Dean. Deferral may be granted for failure to meet graduation criteria, student on probation, extended medical leave, extended military leave (mandatory call to active duty) or an extreme circumstance. In the case a student is granted deferral of graduation, the student will have one academic semester after the original graduation date to fulfill all graduation requirements.

Advising and Registration

Upon acceptance into the DNP program, students are assigned a faculty advisor. Faculty advisors meet with advisees each semester, and as needed, providing students with guidance and continual feedback. Students will be advised of course registration needs during advising sessions.

University Policies

Important University policies are outlined in the University Student Handbook and the University Catalog. The Student Handbook can be found at <https://www.nsula.edu/studenthandbook/> and the University Catalog can be found at <https://www.nsula.edu/registrar/>. For convenience and ease of reference, some policies are outlined below.

DROPPING OR ADDING COURSES

The DNP Program follows University published policies regarding dropping or adding courses. Students should visit the NSU Registrar's website to review University guidelines (<https://www.nsula.edu/registrar/>). Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their advisor prior to withdrawing from a course.

ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

In accordance with Northwestern State University's Policy on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, information about a student generally may not be released to a third party without the student's written permission. Exceptions under the law include state and federal educational and financial institutions, and law enforcement officials. The policy also permits the student to review their educational records and to challenge the contents of those records.

STUDENT ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

If knowledge is to be properly evaluated, it must be pursued under conditions free from deceit and misrepresentation, which are incompatible with the fundamental activity of this academic institution. Northwestern State University expects students to fulfill academic requirements independently and with integrity. Academic integrity is founded on values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Violations include, for example, cheating or deception in any form, plagiarism (including duplicity), misuse of resources, falsification, and facilitating another student's academic dishonesty. Acts of academic dishonesty violate the ethical principles of the University community and compromise work completed by others. For violations of academic honesty, a student may receive a grade of zero on the assignment and/or a grade of F in the class and will be referred to the Office of Accountability & Student Conduct to create a disciplinary record and/or receive any additional sanctions. For a comprehensive description of Academic Infractions refer to the *Student Handbook*. The DNP program follows the University's Student Code of Conduct located at <http://www.nsula.edu/studenthandbook/>

CAMPUS/CLASSROOM CIVILITY STATEMENT

Northwestern State University students, staff, and faculty are expected to create an environment that promotes academic excellence, personal dignity, mutual respect, and individual responsibility in both face-to-face and electronic educational settings regardless of the content of the ideas and opinions being shared. Ideas and opinions that are controversial or in opposition to others are welcomed in the NSU environment, and this policy shall not be used to prohibit the sharing of controversial or unpopular ideas or opinions but merely to call for civility when idea and opinion sharing.

All members of the NSU community have the right to a safe environment free of disturbances and civil in all aspects of human relations. Whether in a face-to-face or online classroom, students who engage in disruptive or abusive discourse or actions may be removed from the class and subject to disciplinary sanctions. In on-campus classrooms, students who speak at inappropriate times, take frequent breaks, interrupt the class by coming to class late or leaving early, engage in loud or distracting behaviors, use cell phones or other noise-making devices, wear headphones, are distracted with computers or other electronic devices, are verbally abusive, display defiance or disrespect to others, or behave aggressively toward others during the class period may be removed from the class and may be subject to disciplinary action under the Northwestern State University Student Code of Conduct, located at <http://www.nsula.edu/studenthandbook/>

The instructor of a course may deem additional behaviors or actions inappropriate; these actions or behaviors will be outlined in the course syllabus.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Every Northwestern State University student is encouraged to help create an environment that promotes learning, dignity, and mutual respect for everyone in classrooms and on social media. Students should be aware of their association with and responsibilities to NSU while using social media, whether on official NSU sites or in personal communication. Students must also keep in mind that once digital content is created, they have very little control over how that content is shared or how permanent it becomes, and so the impact of statements and the online persona must be considered, especially regarding potential classmates and employers. Students should exercise their freedom of speech to communicate online with respect, which includes adhering to the Student Code of Conduct and reading and responding carefully to others in order to understand their point of view. Students must take responsibility for their words and criticism, they should be constructive, respect diversity, and show

tolerance of differences. Students should make it clear that they are stating an opinion and not acting as an official representative of NSU when using social media for personal communication. When that may seem unclear, it may be useful to use a disclaimer such as, “views and opinion expressed are my own and do not reflect those of NSU.”

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In accordance with Section 35.106 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), all participants, applicants, organizations, and interested individuals are advised and notified that the ADA Coordinator for Northwestern State University for facilities is the Director of University Affairs, Jennifer Kelly (318-357-4300), located in New Fine Arts, 104 Central Avenue, Ste. 102 or email andersonje@nsula.edu. For student academic services, contact the Director of Accessibility and Disability Support, Taylor Camidge (318-357-5460) located in Room 108-C Watson Memorial Library or email camidget@nsula.edu. For faculty/staff accommodations and services, contact Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources, Veronica M. Biscoe (318-357-6359), Room 111 Caspari Hall or email ramirezv@nsula.edu.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

Please refer to the following website for complete information: <https://www.nsula.edu/notalone/>

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972

This act prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. NSU is committed to equal opportunity for student success by providing access to educational programs, tuition assistance, and social and recreational activities for all students without regard to race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, age, pregnancy or parenting status, veteran status, or retirement status. Student complaints or inquiries related to Title IX should be directed to the Director of Student Advocacy/Title IX Coordinator, Julie Powell, obannanj@nsula.edu 318-357-5570, located in room #308 of the Student Services Center.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Northwestern State University defines diversity as including, but not limited to differences in age, gender identity and expression, religion, language, sexuality, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, mental and physical abilities, and geographic background. In our mission to understand our differences, we also hope to realize our commonalities and recognize how all these parts of our identities shape each of our experiences of the world. We are dedicated to fostering a community based on empathy, thoughtful dialogue, personal growth, and action.

STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Northwestern State University of Louisiana recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student’s academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from the University’s counseling services. The Counseling and Career Services provides confidential mental health counseling, career counseling and career development services, outreach services, and part-time employment services to all NSU undergraduate and graduate students.

Appointments can be made in person in Room 305 in the Friedman Student Union Building or by phone at (318) 357-5621. The Counseling and Career Services is open from 8AM-5PM, Monday through

Thursday and 8AM-12PM on Fridays. The 24-hour National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline can be reached by calling 988. The Counseling Center provides services in several formats, including personal counseling, couples' counseling, group counseling, and crisis counseling. Telehealth counseling services are offered via WebEx, Zoom, and FaceTime to students in quarantine. A 24-hour crisis service is available for students in crisis. Call or drop by the Counseling and Career Services during office hours (Monday-Thursday, 9AM-5PM; Friday, 8AM-12PM). To speak to a counselor after office hours and on weekends, contact the University Police at (318) 357-5431, and a counselor will be contacted for you. For more information about counseling and career services and resources go to [Counseling Services](#) and the [NSU Career Center](#).

DRUG POLICY

NSU CONSAH conforms to all local, state, and federal laws regarding the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs on campus or during university sponsored events. The NSU CONSAH believes that substance abuse is a danger to the well-being of faculty/staff, students, health agencies, employees, and clients. Therefore, to insure public and professional trust, safety, and to ensure fitness for duty, the unlawful and/or unauthorized use, abuse, possession, distribution, transportation, manufacture, concealment, consumption, promotion or sale of alcohol, illegal drugs, and legal drugs obtained illegally, controlled substances, or designer drugs by students will not be tolerated. Individuals found to have committed such infractions shall be subject to sanctions including suspension or dismissal from the CONSAH/University.

The DNP program follows the CONSAH Student Drug Screening policy which is located in the DNP Student Moodle shell. The CONSAH student Drug Screening policy supersedes the policies published in the NSU Student Handbook. The CONSAH drug policy reflects additional requirements for health care professionals. The CONSAH Dean, or their designee, authorizes drug or alcohol testing of students. In addition to the CONSAH drug policy, the DNP program administration reserves the right to conduct random drug testing.

POLICY ON RESEARCH OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

In compliance with policies established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), when human beings are used as subjects in research projects, safeguards must be established to protect the health, well-being, and rights of the subjects. University policy requires that all research proposals for which data is to be collected from human subjects shall be submitted to the Human Subjects [Institutional Review Board](#) to determine whether a formal review is required. It is the responsibility of the NSU faculty member to assure compliance with this policy in research conducted by either a student advisee or the faculty member.

Further information on the Protection of Human Subjects can be found at the Institutional Review Board page at [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) - Northwestern State University of Louisiana](#)

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Northwestern State University recognizes a student's need to express grievances during the college experience. The Dean of Students' Office functions to assist students in lodging and resolving such complaints.

Students may contact the Dean of Students to file a written complaint and/or for assistance in filing complaints.

Northwestern State University students who wish to lodge a written complaint about an employee of the institution (faculty or staff), another student, policies and procedures, harassment, bullying, sexual harassment, equal access, or other complaints, should contact the Dean of Students at deanofstudents@nsula.edu.

Ordinarily, complaints against students or student organizations follow the "Administration of the Student Code of Conduct" (Article V), and complaints against employees of the University or its agents follow the 'Student Grievance' Procedure found in the Student Code of Conduct. Students should seek clarification from the Dean of Students when filing a complaint.

Student Complaints may be categorized as follows:

1. Complaints about an employee (faculty or staff) of the institution or complaints against a department (its policies or procedures).
2. Complaints of sexual harassment against an employee.
3. Complaints about another student or organization of a non-sexual nature (may include bullying or harassment)
4. Complaints against another student related to sexual misconduct (Title IX)
5. Complaints about equal opportunity access

All other complaints are not included above (Contact the Dean of Students at 318-357-5285).

STUDENT APPEALS

Student Appeals are not considered complaints. However, Northwestern seeks to allow students to appeal University policy and decisions when the student believes the University failed to follow policy. Students may seek assistance at any time from the Dean of Students.

Student Appeals are categorized as follows:

Committees review all student appeals at the last level of the appeal. However, in some cases, appeals may originate and be resolved with individual employees.

Appeal/Request Forms can be found here: [Appeal and Request Forms - Northwestern State University of Louisiana](#)

1. Admission Appeals (to determine if student may have an exception).
2. Admission Access Appeals (to allow registration with balance).
3. Grade Appeals/Registration, Credits and Graduation (to change grades, issue credit).
 - a. Graduate students who receive grades they believe do not reflect the quality of their work may appeal these grades within 120 days following the academic period in which the grades were earned. Please visit the graduate school website for additional information at <https://graduateschool.nsula.edu>. The procedure for appeal is as follows:
 - b. The student should consult the instructor to see if an understanding can be reached. The student is entitled to an explanation as to how the grade was determined and to examine any tests, papers, or other information pertinent to the appeal.

- c. If the conference with the instructor is not satisfactory, the student should secure a Grade Appeal Form from the Dean of the Graduate School. The student may discuss the grade appeal informally with the Dean of the Graduate School if the student so desires.
- d. In filing a formal appeal, the student should complete the appeal form, (a) stating the nature of the appeal, (b) providing a detailed description of the justification, and (c) requesting a specific action. Since the written appeal will be the basis for the ultimate decision, the student should ensure that it is clear, complete, and inclusive of all documentation the student wishes to have considered in the appeal process. It is the student's responsibility to present written evidence that the instructor made an error or acted arbitrarily or capriciously in assigning the grade.
- e. The student should submit the completed appeal form to the instructor for review. If a solution is not found, the instructor should provide a written response to the student's appeal, providing documentation as to how the grade was determined. The instructor's response should include a copy of the course outline or syllabus provided to the student's class at the beginning of the semester or term.
- f. After having met with the instructor and obtaining his or her written response to the appeal, the student may submit the form to the head of the academic department that owns the course. Following a review of the student's appeal and the instructor's response, the department head or dean of the college should provide his or her written opinion of the appeal along with any additional, pertinent information.
- g. If the student is unsatisfied with the opinion of the Department Head or Dean of the college, he or she may submit the appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School would decide which would be final or refer the appeal to the University Graduate Council for review and recommendation. The Council's report would be a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School, whose decision would be final. The Dean of the Graduate School will notify the student of the final decision.

- 4. Financial Aid and Scholarship Appeals (to maintain aid due to drop in GPA) Financial Aid Appeal and Scholarship Appeal.
- 5. Residency Appeals (to waive out of state tuition) Residence Status Appeal.
- 6. Auxiliary Services Appeals (to waive on campus living & food service requirements)- Off Campus Living and Food Exemption
- 7. Parking and Traffic Appeals (to waive tickets or fees)- Appeals Process for Moving and Parking Tickets.
- 8. Disciplinary Appeals (to overturn sanction in conduct hearing).
- 9. All student appeals are reviewed by committees at the last level of the appeal. However, in some cases, appeal may originate and be resolved with individual employees.

The Dean of Students realizes that in certain situations, it is inappropriate for students to meet with the person against whom they wish to lodge a complaint. In such cases, the Dean's Office may act as a liaison or assist the student in meeting with the person or that person's supervisor. Complaints may be formal (written grievances) or informal. Whatever the circumstances, the Dean of Students will assist students in the process of filing complaints. NSU strives to maintain the confidentiality of the parties involved in the grievance process. However, in cases of sexual misconduct, the institution will comply with the Department of Education guidelines and investigate reported incidences.

Program Expectations

PROFESSIONALISM

All DNP students are expected to interact on a professional level with integrity, ethics, honesty, and accountability in all educational and non-educational activities.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential for successful program progression. Students are expected to check their email daily. All students are expected to use their NSU email account when communicating with faculty, staff, and students. It is expected that emails from students to faculty/staff and from faculty/staff to students will be answered within 48 hours, not including weekends and holidays. If a faculty member is out of the office for an extended period, students will be given instructions on who to contact for assistance. Email communication is preferred, but text messaging, written notification and/or forum messaging may be used as appropriate.

When communicating in person or online, it is important to be professional. Students are expected to be respectful of others' ideas, offer thoughtful, positive, constructive comments, and avoid using all capital letters, slang, or excessive punctuation in communications.

TIME COMMITMENT AND ATTENDANCE

DNP students are expected to attend all course and program related meetings and functions, including but not limited to advising sessions, didactic lecture, clinical practice experiences, clinical site meetings, evidence-based journal club meetings, morbidity and mortality conferences, and professional organization meetings.

NURSE ANESTHESIA ATTENDANCE

All NA students must attend at least one state or national professional meeting (virtual or in person) prior to graduation. Students may request vacation in accordance with the Leave Policy as outlined in the *Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Practicum Policies and Procedures*. Nurse Anesthesia students must attend the Louisiana Association of Nurse Anesthetists (LANA) Annual meetings as outlined in course syllabi. All NA students must complete off shift and/or call rotations during the program's clinical portion and submit time logs as outlined in nurse anesthesia clinical practicum expectations.

In accordance with the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Program (COA) standards, student time commitment should not exceed 64 hours per week. This consists of scheduled clinical, scheduled on-call, call-back, and formal class time. It does not include study time.

It is the student's responsibility to log time in accordance with the Clinical Case Documentation and Time Log Policy. Refer to the *Standards for Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Programs – Practice Doctorate's* definition of "Reasonable time commitment."

TARDINESS

It is the Program's expectation that all students will arrive to commitments on time. Responsibility and accountability for meeting course, clinical, and program obligations is a fundamental component of professionalism. Tardiness includes reporting late for classes, didactic commitments, journal club, clinicals, and/or any other required program obligations. It also includes taking excessive time for lunch or breaks in the clinical practice area.

If a student has knowledge that they will be late, they should make every effort to notify the course instructor, Facilitator of Doctoral Studies and Academic Operations and the Coordinator of Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Education via University email. For clinical tardiness, the student must also notify the clinical site via procedures outlined in course syllabi. Students failing to report to a scheduled program obligation within one hour of the scheduled start time will receive an unexcused absence. Tardiness during exam or graded assignment administration will be managed in accordance with the testing policy. As outlined in the *Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Practicum Policies and Procedures* and as applicable, the tardiness disciplinary matrix will be enforced.

EMPLOYMENT

The time commitment for doctoral education is significant and therefore, full-time employment may not be feasible during program enrollment, regardless of concentration. However, for the Nurse Anesthesia (NA) concentration, employment is discouraged during program enrollment after the first two semesters of coursework. Employment in the anesthesia field by NA students is prohibited by law, Program and University policies.

At no time should a student nurse anesthetist be employed as a CRNA. Under no circumstances shall a student nurse anesthetist seek employment as a Nurse Anesthetist by title or function until successful graduation from the DNP Program and achievement of state licensure as a CRNA.

LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATIONS

All DNP students must maintain current, unencumbered, unrestricted Registered Nurse (RN) licensure. All DNP Nurse Anesthesia (NA) Students must have a current, unencumbered, unrestricted Registered Nurse authorized to practice in Louisiana. All DNP NA students must also maintain current American Heart Association or American Red Cross Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) certifications while enrolled in the clinical portion of the program.

By the start of their first semester, all DNP NA students must upload proof of current RN licensure valid in Louisiana to their Typhon profile. Students must maintain proof of current licensure on their Typhon profile, including a license renewed during the student's enrollment. Enrollment and clinical privileges will be suspended immediately if a student's Typhon profile does not indicate current RN licensure. All clinical time missed because of suspension shall be counted against personal leave time and must be made up prior to the end of the current semester. Inability or failure to do so may cause the student to receive an "Incomplete" grade for that practicum, potentially making the student ineligible to register for the following semester.

All DNP students must notify the Director of Doctoral Studies immediately if: (a) license is encumbered, (b) there are changes to licensure or registration status, or (c) the student has any disciplinary action taken on the license.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Students are encouraged to maintain professional organization membership as appropriate to their role. NA students are required to maintain membership in the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology throughout the program. The cost of AANA membership for NA students is paid for by the program.

JUDICIAL DECLARATIONS

Any arrests prior to program enrollment or subsequently thereafter related to a criminal offense must be immediately reported to the Director of Doctoral Studies. Failure to notify the program of an arrest or charge is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program, regardless of whether the arrest or charges lead to conviction. Students arrested for criminal offenses may be immediately suspended from the program until charges are resolved.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The DNP program abides by the CONSAH social media policy located in the DNP Student Moodle Shell.

Student Technology

MOODLE

Moodle, the University's Learning Management System (LMS), is used when taking classes online. Note: NSU does not support the Moodle mobile app. Please use a web browser on your computer or mobile device to access your Moodle account.

Moodle orientation/Tutorials can be found at the Student Help Desk. Other student support, including assistance with email and various online issues can be found at <https://www.nsula.edu/its/student-helpdesk/>.

WEBEX

WebEx is a video conferencing system that is available for all faculty and students to use. It allows you to speak to students or distant colleagues in real time and can be utilized for a variety of different kinds of meeting. To learn more, visit documentprovider.viewer.nsula.edu/?id=13875

MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION (MFA)

Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is an electronic authentication method in which a user is granted access to a website or application only after successfully presenting two or more pieces of identifiable information (or factors). MFA protects personal data-which may include personal identification or financial assets-from being accessed by an unauthorized third party that may have been able to discover, for example, a single password.

To set up multi-factor authentication on your myNSU account you will need at least one of the following:

1. A mobile device running iOS or Android
2. A mobile phone that can receive text messages
3. A mobile or landline phone that can receive voice calls.

For more information on MFA Setup Instruction please visit the [Student Help Desk](#).

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

It is important to prepare DNP students to be technologically sophisticated in computers and computerized research. To that end, all students enrolled in the program must have a computer that

meets minimum technology requirements to participate in learning activities outlined in System Requirements found in the DNP Student Moodle shell.

NA students must have a laptop that is less than five years old with the minimum technology specifications to participate in computer-based assessments on campus.

EXAMSOFT

The program uses ExamSoft to conduct performance-based assessments via exams, quizzes, and analytical rubrics. During the program, students must meet minimum system requirements for Examplify (test taking software) installation. To ensure successful installation, students should ensure their device meets the minimum system requirements via the ExamSoft website at <https://examsoft.com/resources/examplify-minimum-system-requirements/#294>

EXAMINATIONS, TESTING PROCEDURES, AND EXAMINATION REVIEW

In class examinations will be administered via ExamSoft, a secure testing software. All DNP students must follow the Examination Testing Procedures and Review policy found in the DNP Student Moodle Shell.

CONSAH Student Dress Code

DNP Students are expected to dress professionally as outlined in the CONSAH Student Dress Code Policy found in the DNP Student Moodle shell. Uniforms are to be purchased at the student's expense during the NA program. NA students will change into the scrubs mandated by the individual clinical sites and are prohibited from taking scrub attire from a clinical site.

Clinical Privileges

As registered nurses, all DNP students must continually meet the standards of care promulgated by the Louisiana State Nursing Practice Act and the rules and regulations of Louisiana State Board of Nursing (LSBN). The Director of Doctoral Studies will report any information suggesting that a student is failing to meet these or any other regulatory requirements to the CONSAH Dean. In accordance with regulatory law, the CONSAH Dean will report to the LSBN (and/or other appropriate authorities) any conduct that violates statutory or regulatory laws of the state of Louisiana or the United States.

If the Director of Doctoral Studies determines that a student's conduct has presented concerns regarding patient safety, substandard care, or unprofessional conduct, the student's clinical privileges will be immediately suspended. The matter will then be forwarded to the CONSAH Dean for further consideration and action. Following the suspension of clinical privileges by the Director of Doctoral Studies, the student is prohibited from any patient care activities pending the outcome of the deliberations of the CONSAH Dean and University Administration.

Student Health Requirements

After being accepted into the DNP program, students receive a packet detailing all health requirements that must be met prior to the first clinical course. Failure to maintain compliance with the health requirements each semester will result in the student's inability to attend the clinical portion of the program and may result in dismissal from the program.

STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS/VACCINATIONS REQUIREMENTS

In congruency with NSU's immunization policy, Louisiana state law, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations, students are required to be immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases, with the only exemptions being for medical or religious reasons. If requesting exemption, students must use the CONSAH vaccination declination form. Because of student contact with patients or infective material from patients, students are at risk for exposure to (and possible transmission of) vaccine-preventable diseases. CONSAH's Student Immunizations/Vaccinations Requirements can be found in the DNP Student Moodle shell.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND DISEASE EXPOSURE

The Communicable Disease and Disease Exposure policy defines infectious disease conditions while providing disease and disease exposure guidance with a goal of protecting students, patients, clinical staff, faculty, and staff. The policy guides attendance and participation procedures while outlining return to campus/clinical procedures as needed. The CONSAH policy can be found in the DNP Student Moodle shell.

STUDENT MEDICAL HEALTH INSURANCE

Students enrolled in the DNP program must maintain Medical Health Insurance coverage throughout clinical rotations. If a student is personally injured in the clinical setting during assigned hours, the student is not covered by the liability insurance and is not covered by the clinical education settings' Worker's Compensation. If an injury occurs, it is the student's responsibility to consent or deny consent to medical treatment, convey the facility desired to receive medical treatment, if treatment is desired, and provide documentation of insurance or provide payment upon arrival for treatment. Regardless of fault, neither NSU nor the clinical education setting will be responsible for payment(s); the responsibility for payment is directed to the student, thus the need for personal medical insurance.

Student Health Professional Liability Insurance

Students are always required to carry professional liability insurance during program enrollment. ExL and EdL students may select a carrier of their choice for liability insurance. NA students' individual malpractice insurance is provided by the DNP Program through the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) Insurance Services.

Student Travel, Housing and Meals

All travel, housing, and meals for clinical practicum, including simulation experiences, are the student's sole responsibility.

Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Education Overview

The program establishes clinical site partnerships with a goal to provide an environment and experience that is conducive to student learning.

PRIMARY CLINICAL SITE

A primary site is a clinical site that meets one or both of the following criteria: An institution (1) where students receive 50% or more of their total clinical experience and/or (2) that is necessary to enable a program to meet accreditation standards. Primary sites will be assigned based on space availability with consideration to the student's preference.

ENRICHMENT CLINICAL SITE

An enrichment site is a nonprimary clinical site that meets one or more of the following criteria: an institution (1) where students receive less than 50% of their total clinical experiences; (2) that is not necessary to enable a program to meet accreditation standards; (3) that is unlikely to have a significant impact on a program's ability to continue complying with accreditation standards and policy/procedural requirements; and/or (4) that is utilized solely as an enriching experience. To provide optimal learning experiences, students typically rotate to the facility for a two- or four- month period. Enrichments sites will be assigned based on space availability with consideration to students' preferences.

Student rotations are assigned by program faculty, centered on enhancing the student's clinical learning experience. Clinical sites and rotations are subject to change. Students will not rotate to all sites. Out of state sites will require that the student acquire a nursing license in that state. Licensure costs, additional background checks, as well as all travel and housing expenses, are at the student's expense. The varying clinical sites are necessary to fulfill the clinical requirements as set forth by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA) requirements. Rotations outside the cities of Shreveport and Alexandria are required of each student. As noted in the *Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Practicum Policies and Procedures*, student preference will be considered when assigning rotations.

CLINICAL ADVISING EXPECTATIONS

Students are assigned a CRNA faculty advisor. Each student must meet with their advisor at the end of each semester, and as needed during Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Practicum Courses. The advisor and student will review daily evaluations, Typhon records, and case log numbers and jointly review the summative evaluation.

APPENDIX I

ATTESTATION

My initials on the following items indicate that I have read the DNP Program Handbook and other documents referenced within it and that any questions have been answered to my satisfaction with regard to the requirements for adhering to the Policies and Procedures of the DNP Program, the College of Nursing, and Northwestern State University.

ALL DNP PROGRAM STUDENTS:

- I have read and understand the academic requirements for admission to the College of Nursing.
- I understand that I may be dismissed from the DNP Program if I fail to meet or maintain the *CONSAH Academic and Technical Standards for Didactic and Clinical Settings*.
- I understand that I must self-identify and follow the procedures set forth to have accommodations for disabilities every semester.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to meet all university graduation requirements.
- I understand that professional nursing is a 24 hour/day, 7 day/week field of study; therefore, I may be scheduled for class or clinical time during day or night hours, during the week, or on weekends. I further understand that I have the responsibility to make arrangements to uphold the schedule as set forth by the faculty member for each course and clinical experience.
- I understand that the College of Nursing may require a background check and drug screening prior to engaging in clinical practicum experiences.
- I understand that as a Registered Nurse authorized to practice and obtain clinical experiences in Louisiana, I must comply with the Louisiana State Board of Nursing's policy regarding medical marijuana.
- I understand that I must report any arrests or legal convictions that occur prior to or during my nursing education. I further understand that legal arrests, convictions, or problems may cause me to be ineligible to complete my clinical experience and make me ineligible to apply for licensure from the State Board of Nursing.
- I understand that I must comply with the State Board of Nursing's acceptable behavior of nurses' rules and the Nurse Practice Act to be eligible for and/or maintain licensure as a registered nurse and/or advanced practice registered nurse.
- I understand the grading scale of the DNP Program and that earning a course grade less than "B" will result in probation. I understand that earning a second course grade of less than "B" will result in dismissal from the DNP Nurse Anesthesia track.
- I understand the grading scale of the DNP Program and that a course grade less than "C" constitutes failure of the course. Further, I understand that I will be dismissed from the DNP program if I earn a course grade of less than a "C" in any didactic course or a "Fail" in any practicum course.

NURSE ANESTHESIA TRACK STUDENTS

I understand that I must obtain specific certifications to begin clinical practicum courses and must maintain those certifications throughout the duration of the clinical portion of the curriculum.

I understand that I must submit current health data and immunization records to engage in clinical practicum courses.

I understand that I must obtain specific certifications to begin clinical practicum courses and must maintain those certifications throughout the duration of the clinical portion of the curriculum.

I understand the grading scale of the DNP Program and that earning a grade less than "B" in a didactic course will result in probation. I understand that earning a second grade of less than "B" in a didactic course will result in dismissal from the DNP Nurse Anesthesia track.

I understand that earning two (2) course grades of less than "B" will result in dismissal from the DNP Nurse Anesthesia Track. I further understand that readmission to the DNP Nurse Anesthesia track is subject to availability and will require me to repeat all nurse anesthesia-specific courses.

I understand that the College of Nursing may require a background check and drug screening prior to engaging in clinical practicum experiences

I have read, understand, and agree to the CONSAH Student Drug Screening Policy. I understand that failure to comply with this policy is grounds for dismissal from the College of Nursing and the University.

I understand that throughout the Nurse Anesthesia program I am subject to random drug screenings, with or without cause.

I understand that travel outside of the Shreveport and Alexandria areas is required to obtain the requisite clinical experiences to be eligible to sit for the National Certification Exam.

I understand that I am responsible for all travel, housing, and meal costs associated with the DNP Program didactic course requirements and clinical practicum experiences.

I understand that attendance at all class meetings and clinical experiences is expected and that the policy for absences must be followed completely.

I have read the Northwestern State University Expectations for Student Behavior and Communications, including the issue of Academic Integrity, and I attest that I agree, and I understand that I am expected to follow those guidelines.

I understand that committing fraud, deceit, or dishonesty, which may include plagiarism, falsification, or negligently making incorrect entries on records or any other written work may result in dismissal from the DNP Program College of Nursing.

I understand that neither the College of Nursing nor the various clinical agencies in which I will engage in clinical practicum experiences, are responsible for expenses incurred as a result of injury during clinical experiences.

By signing my initials to the above statements, I am indicating that I have read and understand the policies and procedures of the DNP Program, College of Nursing, and Northwestern State University.

I, _____ hereby acknowledge that I received this information and am responsible for reviewing and understanding its contents. I will clarify with faculty, administration, or staff any part(s) that I do not understand. I further understand that failure to follow the rules and regulations of the College of Nursing may result in various consequences up to and including academic probation, clinical suspension, program dismissal, or dismissal from the College of Nursing. I understand that this is a dynamic document, and I am responsible for keeping informed of any updates or revisions to the University, CONSAH, Program, or Clinical Handbooks referenced within it.

_____	_____
Student Signature	Date