

NURSING SCIENCE, PH.D.

The PhD is a research doctorate in Nursing Science which prepares graduates to meet the critical need for nurse scientists, nursing faculty, and administrators in academic and health care settings. The program prepares graduates for scholarly roles by advancing their knowledge of theory and policy and increasing their skills in research methods. Graduates of the program focus on improving the health of individuals and communities through nursing science. Graduates will be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct research that changes lives through improving patient outcomes and reducing health disparities.

Entry into the program is available every summer. Students admitted to the program are mentored and taught by faculty from both The University of Alabama Capstone College of Nursing and the University of Alabama in Huntsville College of Nursing.

Admission Requirements

We accept BSN-prepared and MSN-prepared students into the Joint Ph.D. program. Admission requirements are the same except where noted below.

Admission to the Ph.D. program is determined by the Joint Ph.D. Oversight Committee who will assess the entire composite of information gained from a variety of sources. Each applicant must meet the following criteria and/or provide:

- An application to the Joint Ph.D. Graduate Program with GradCAS. Apply online [Opens in a new window.](#)
- Official transcripts from each university or college attended sent to: GradCAS Transcript Processing Center
PO Box 9217
Watertown, MA 02471
- BSN-prepared applicants must have evidence of successful completion of a bachelor of science in nursing degree at an accredited program. In addition, BSN-prepared applicants must provide official evidence of scores on the Graduate Record Examination taken within 5 years of application. GRE information can be obtained online [Opens in a new window.](#) The GRE requirement can be waived on a case by case basis or if applicants have earned a master's or doctoral degree in another field.
- MSN-prepared applicants must have bachelor of science in nursing degree and a master's degree in nursing or a closely related health field from accredited programs. Official evidence of scores on the Graduate Record Examination taken within 5 years of application. GRE information can be obtained online [Opens in a new window.](#) The GRE requirement can be waived with a graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher or with 5 years or more of experience in the field or with an advanced degree in the US.
- A minimum graduate Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Official transcripts must be sent to the university Graduate College.
- Resume or curriculum vitae.
- Three (3) letters of reference from professionals or professors who can adequately evaluate the applicant and the applicant's previous work or potential for success. Two of the letters are strongly preferred from nurses with doctoral degrees.
- Scientific Writing Sample — This sample of your written work should demonstrate your intellectual ability (such as logic, critical thinking, analysis, or synthesis) and your technical writing skills (composition, grammar, references, or citations). For example, you could submit an academic paper, essay, published article, or a professional report written by you. If someone other than you contributed to this document (including editing), explain your contribution and the contributions of others.
- Statement of Purpose — In four double-spaced pages respond to the following:
 - Why do you want to pursue a Ph.D. in Nursing Science?
 - What professional goals do you hope to achieve during and beyond your Ph.D. program?
 - Describe prior experiences that have prepared you for doctoral study (e.g. research, presentations, publications, leadership roles in practice, education, or professional organizations).
 - What are your research interests?
 - How might research in this area advance the science of nursing?
- RN Licensure Requirement —
 - Applicants must have an active, unencumbered license as a Registered Nurse in the United States. Applicants who hold an equivalent certification or licensure outside of the U.S. will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - Applicants who are not yet licensed will be considered for conditional admission, but proof of licensure must be submitted prior to completing 12 credit hours of Ph.D. coursework
 - Transfer applicants — Evidence of good academic standing at the current institution. Determination of whether or not credits may be transferred will be based on evaluation of comparability of requested transfer course to Ph.D. course and university policy, and is completed after admission.

After the first review of the application and at the request of the Joint Ph.D. Oversight Committee, applicants will be asked to successfully complete personal interviews with Oversight Committee members. Research interests, professional involvement, and motivation for successful completion of doctoral study in the Ph.D. program will be assessed.

Completed applications are reviewed by the Oversight Committee throughout the year for summer enrollment. Applications (with GRE scores, transcripts, etc.) must be completed by March 1 if enrollment in the program is desired for that summer. Applicants must register for courses within two (2) years of acceptance into the Ph.D. program, or the acceptance is void.

Upon admission, you will receive written notification of admission from the Deans of the Joint Ph.D. Program. You will also receive a letter from the graduate advisors at both UA and UAH outlining requirements for entry into the Ph.D. program. Admission is contingent upon providing documentation of a background check and drug screen and results were acceptable to the admission committee.

Students who are enrolled in the Joint Nursing Science Ph.D. program will be divided evenly between UA and UAH for administrative purposes. Applicants who are employees of either UA or UAH will be enrolled in the University of their employment because of the restriction that employee tuition waivers can only be used on the campus of the individual's employment.

The Joint Ph.D. program requires students to visit campus for three days in the Summer each year they are in the program for an intensive experience. This is a mandatory intensive experience and all students are expected to attend.

Students enrolled in the Joint Nursing Science PhD will have the following requirements:

1. Three, one week residencies to be hosted on alternating campuses, in the summer semesters. All residencies will be attended by faculty from both campuses
 - a. The initial residency is orientation to the program and to the first courses. This provides an opportunity to meet faculty and access student resources such as library, writing centers and financial aid.
 - b. Residency 2 is designed to integrate cohorts into the study of nursing science and provides opportunities for social support among faculty and students.
 - c. At the conclusion of coursework, this residency provides students and faculty mentors the opportunity to finalize plans for implementing the dissertation. The student will present a dissertation proposal defense.
2. Qualifying Examination. At the end of semester 6, students will be given a take home exam that will evaluate writing and critical thinking skills and to assess synthesis of knowledge of the program's core concepts.
3. Final Dissertation Defense. At the conclusion of the 24 required dissertation hours, students will be required to present the findings and implications of their dissertation.

NUS 785	R&D of Innovative Hlthcar Tech	3
Transferred elective from prior master's degree program *		3

PhD Nursing Science		Hours
BSN to PhD Required Courses		
NUS 741	BSN-PhD Research Seminar I	1
NUS 742	BSN-PhD Research Seminar II	1
NUS 743	BSN-PhD Research Seminar III	1
BSN and MSN to PhD Required Courses		
NUS 750	Philosophy of Science	3
NUS 752	Informatics	3
NUS 754	Ethical Con Legal Iss Research	3
NUS 756	Appl of Theoretical Models	3
NUS 758	Quant Resrch Methods & Designs	3
NUS 760	Statistics I	3
NUS 762	HC Policy Rural Undrsvd Popul	3
NUS 764	Scientific Writing	3
NUS 766	Epidemiology	3
NUS 768	Statistics II	3
NUS 770	Grant Writing	3
NUS 772	Qualitative Research Methods	3
NUS 776	Advanced Research Methods (Cognate)	3
NUS 799	Dissertation Hours	1 to 12
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Cognates		
NUS 780	Introduction to Omics	3
NUS 781	Omics in Nursing Research	3
NUS 782	Cur Devlp Prgm Eval Nurse Edu	3
NUS 783	Inst Meth & Assess in Nur Edu	3
NUS 784	Data Sci Emerg Tech in Health	3