California State University, Northern California Consortium  
Doctor of Nursing Practice  
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the DNP needed?  
a. There are several factors that have created the need for advanced nursing education at the doctoral level. The changing demands of the nation’s complex healthcare environment require the highest level of scientific knowledge and practice expertise to assure quality patient outcomes.

2. How does the DNP differ from a PhD or EdD?  
a. The PhD focuses on research; the EdD focuses on the process of education; the DNP is a practice focused doctorate.

3. Is the DNP required for practice?  
a. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) has set a standard that the DNP will be the entry level for advanced practice nursing. While there is no particular date for compliance set, it is reasonable to believe that this will happen in the future.

4. What are the unique features of the California State University, Northern California Consortium – Doctor of Nursing Practice?  
a. The program prepares students to teach in universities or community colleges and includes courses on curriculum development, teaching methods, assessment, as well as an elective opportunity for a teaching practicum.  
b. An online course format with “intensives on campus” allows for working full-time.  
c. The program is project focused. All classes are designed to contribute to the final project and lead to graduation.  
d. A three-semester integrated course series that links the student’s scholarly doctoral project (NURS 595, 596 and 597).  
e. An embedded practicum course (NURS 295) may be taken during the second through fifth semester as needed to complete the required 1000 hours of post-baccalaureate clinical hours. Practicum course hours are closely associated with the student’s doctoral project and align with AACN’s eight essentials of doctoral practice.

5. Which campus offers the DNP program in Northern California?  
While the CSU Chancellor designated Fresno State as the lead campus for the Northern California Consortium, this is a Fresno State - San Jose State collaboration and is viewed as one program with two campuses.
6. Will there be a distance education or online component?
   a. The entire program, except for the intensives (see next question), is a
distance learning/online educational experience.
   b. Online components may use such methodologies as Collaborate, Skype,
video/audio conferencing. Blackboard is the current Learning
Management System.
   c. Synchronous and asynchronous learning methods are used.
   d. Technology training is part of orientation to the DNP program.

7. Will I have to travel to Fresno and/or San Jose?
   a. Yes, one intensive will be scheduled prior to each semester of the
   program.
   b. Dependent on each instructor, one or two other on-campus requirements
   may occur.
   c. Semester intensives alternate between Fresno State’s and San Jose’s
   campuses.

8. How long is the program?
   a. Five semesters (21 months)
   b. Fall, Spring, Summer, Fall, and Spring

9. Is there a practicum component to the program?
   a. The DNP program requires documentation of at least 1000 hours clinical
   hours.
   b. Practicum requirements vary based on the number of eligible post-
baccalaureate clinical hours documented.
   c. Even if you have 1000 hours or more post-baccalaureate, you are still
   required to perform 270 hours during the DNP program.
   d. Hours are performed in conjunction with your doctoral project during the
   last four semesters.

10. Am I required to complete a doctoral project?
    a. Yes, the doctoral project is the culminating experience.
       i. The expectation is for you to have a systematic, rigorous project
   that is of interest to you and enhances health in the state of
   California. All classes are designed to assist you with developing
   your project.
       ii. Your project is expected to contribute to an improvement in
   professional practice or policy.
       iii. At the culmination of the project you will be expected to exhibit
   command of the research literature and demonstrate mastery of
   evidence-based practice at the doctoral level.

11. Who teaches in the DNP program?
    a. Consortium faculties are comprised primarily of tenure, tenure-track
faculty who teach within the CSU system. Faculties are not necessarily within the department of nursing. Each faculty member brings both practical and educational perspectives to their courses within the DNP program.

12. Can I work while attending the program?
   a. The program is designed so that the student can work full time and with the permission of your employer. The doctoral project may be completed within the students’ employment setting.
   b. There is only full-time DNP student status in the program.

13. Is the Program accredited?
   a. The program was accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) in 2014 and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 2012.

14. What will be the cost of the DNP program?
   a. Doctoral fees are set by the CSU Chancellor’s office and are subject to fee increases. The current resident tuition is $7,170.00 plus university mandatory fees of $419.50 per semester.
   b. Out-of-State, nonresident, and foreign students will be charged Non-Resident Tuition Fee at $372.00 per unit, in addition to tuition and other fees.
   c. For all tuition fees information, please check website: http://www.fresnostate.edu/adminserv/accountingservices/money/regfee-fall.html
   d. Please note financial aid is not guaranteed by the program. The program informs students of financial opportunities as they arise. Fresno State’s Financial Aid Department is willing to work with students.

15. What are the admission requirements for the program?
   a. Meet admission requirements for Fresno State Graduate Division and School of Nursing www.fresnostate.edu/chhs/nursing/degrees-programs/dnp.html
   b. MSN from an accredited institution or master’s degree in a health-related field with additional post-baccalaureate courses in nursing theories, research methods, transcultural nursing and informatics
   c. Cumulative GPA of 3.0
   d. Current, unrestricted California RN license
   e. National certification in nursing (May be obtained during the program)
   f. Preparation & experience as an APN, administrator or educator

16. When are applications available?
   a. Applications are available each fall semester for the following academic year.

Final 9/22/2015
b. Applications are accepted October 1st – June 1st.
c. Document deadline - June 15
d. Admit deadline - July 15

17. How do I obtain an application?
   a. Applications are available on Fresno State’s School of Nursing – Doctor of Nursing Practice website:
      www.fresnostate.edu/chhs/nursing/degrees-programs/dnp/html

18. How are students admitted to the program?
   a. The application is a two-step process at Fresno State:
      i. Application to the School of Nursing
      ii. Application to the Fresno State through CSU Mentor
   b. Early applications are strongly advised.
   c. Please do not send any applications materials to San Jose State University since all applications are processed at Fresno State.
   d. Approximately 30-45 students are accepted into our program as a cohort. Two sections of each course are offered each semester.
   e. Once the quota of students accepted is reached, applicants are placed on a waiting list.
   f. After completing application and all associated documents are received by Fresno State, you may be invited for an on-site interview in Fresno or San Jose, at which time you will also complete a writing assessment.

19. Can I start to prepare documents prior to the application open date?
   Yes. You can begin with preparing:

   a. **GOAL STATEMENT**
      You will be asked to send in a goal statement of 3-5 pages, double-spaced including what you expect to accomplish in the DNP program and how the DNP program will advance your nursing career and practice. You may include your potential area of focus in the program; this focus should be your primary area of exploration for your DNP Project.

   b. **Curriculum Vitae**
      Start updating your resume now. You will be asked to send in a copy of your resume or curriculum vita beginning with the most recent experience including the following information: education, all work experience including position title and description of responsibilities, membership in professional organizations and offices held, professional and academic honors, research completed or in progress, list of publications, and relevant public service activities.

      NOTE: Demonstration of sufficient preparation and practiced experience as an APN, nurse manager / administrator / executive / educator / experienced nurse is an admission requirement.
c. **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION AND REFERENCE RATING FORM**

i. A letter of recommendation will be required from your current supervisor with their contact information. There will be instructions and a reference rating form that you will download and provide or email to your supervisor. The letter and form are sent directly to the School of Nursing at Fresno State to be added to your application material. You should provide your supervisor ample time to prepare the letter and they should be aware of the required application timeline.

ii. You will also need to provide contact information of two additional references that are professional colleagues or professors from your master's degree program should the applicant review committee need to contact them.

d. **OTHER REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIAL**

i. **Self-Photo: Passport Size** - You will be asked to upload the photo with your online program application.

ii. **Unofficial Transcripts** - You may want to gather them and to have the ability to upload them to your online program application; submit after October 1st.

iii. **Official Transcripts** - You will be required to send official transcripts to the Graduate Office of Admissions at Fresno State to complete your CSU mentor application. If you have international transcripts or transcripts in archive, you may want to request them as soon as possible.

iv. **California RN License** - You will be asked to upload a copy of your current, unrestricted license.

v. **National Certification** - You must have national certification in nursing or obtain certification prior to the fifth semester if admitted into to DNP program. This is a graduation requirement.

20. **What leads to the high graduation rates of the program?**

   a. Project focus, all classes are designed to contribute to the project.

   b. Cohort model is used for student support.