

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



BAKERSFIELD

December 2, 2011

CHANNEL ISLANDS

MEMORANDUM

CHICO

DOMINGUEZ HILLS

TO: CSU Presidents

EAST BAY

FROM: Charles B. Reed
Chancellor

FRESNO

FULLERTON

SUBJECT: Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree Programs—Executive Order 1067

HUMBOLDT

LONG BEACH

Attached is a copy of Executive Order 1067 relating to Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree programs. This executive order is issued in conformity with the California Education Code and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. The requirements, policies, and procedures specified within this executive order shall apply only to all DNP degree programs offered solely by the California State University. Additional guidance for the development of DNP programs is available at <http://www.calstate.edu/app/dnp/>.

LOS ANGELES

MARITIME ACADEMY

MONTEREY BAY

NORTHRIDGE

In accordance with policy of the California State University, the campus president has the responsibility for implementing executive orders where applicable and for maintaining the campus repository and index for all executive orders.

POMONA

SACRAMENTO

If you have questions regarding this executive order, please call Academic Programs and Policy at (562) 951-4722.

SAN BERNARDINO

CBR/clm

SAN DIEGO

Attachment

SAN FRANCISCO

SAN JOSÉ

c: Executive Staff, Office of the Chancellor
Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs
Associate Provosts/Associate Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs
Deans of Graduate Studies
Deans of Health and Human Services
Directors of Admission and Records
Directors/Chairs of Nursing

SAN LUIS OBISPO

SAN MARCOS

SONOMA

STANISLAUS

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
Office of the Chancellor
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California 90802-4210
(562) 951-4722

Executive Order: 1067
Effective Date: December 2, 2011
Supersedes: No Prior Executive Order
Title: Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree Programs

This executive order is issued in conformity with Sections 66600, 89030, 89030.1, 89035, and 89280 through 89284 of the California Education Code, and Sections 40050, 40100.1, 40513, 40514 and 41021 of Title 5 of the *California Code of Regulations*. This executive order establishes minimum requirements, policies, and procedures that shall apply to all Doctor of Nursing Practice degree programs offered solely by the California State University (CSU). This executive order does not address requirements of Doctor of Nursing Practice programs offered jointly with institutions outside of the California State University. Campuses may establish policies in addition to those stated herein.

Article 1. Authorization

In accordance with Education Code Section 89281, 89283 and 89284, and Title 5 of the *California Code of Regulations* Section 40050.1, the California State University is authorized to award the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree through three pilot degree programs, with coursework to be completed on or before July 1, 2018. These programs shall not supplant CSU Master of Science in Nursing degree programs.

Article 2. Admission

- 2.1** Each campus offering a program leading to a DNP degree shall establish admission requirements that at minimum meet the requirements established in Title 5 of the *California Code of Regulations*, Section 41021. Admission shall be granted on a competitive basis; meeting the minimum requirements qualifies an individual for but does not guarantee admission to the program. Requirements for admission shall apply to all DNP applicants and shall include, at minimum, the following:
- a. The applicant holds an acceptable master's degree earned at an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association and a national professional accrediting association, as applicable. The applicant has completed equivalent academic preparation as determined by the appropriate campus authority.

- b. The applicant has attained a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in an acceptable master's degree program as determined by the appropriate campus authority.
- c. The applicant maintains active licensure to practice as a registered nurse in the state in which practicum experiences will be completed.
- d. The applicant meets all requirements for credentialing or certification eligibility as appropriate to the nursing specialty area.
- e. The applicant has demonstrated sufficient preparation and experience pertinent to advanced nursing practice to be successful in doctoral education.
- f. Evidence considered in the admission process shall include but not be limited to:
 - i. three letters of recommendation from professional persons knowledgeable about the applicant's advanced nursing practice experience and the applicant's potential for scholarship and leadership.
 - ii. a written statement of purpose reflecting what the applicant expects to accomplish in the DNP program and how the DNP program will advance the applicant's nursing career and practice.
- g. A personal interview may be required prior to admission.
- h. The applicant shall meet any additional requirements established by the chancellor in consultation with faculty and any additional requirements prescribed by the appropriate campus authority.

2.2 Classified Standing

Per Title 5 Section 41011, an applicant who has met all admission criteria and who has been recommended by the program for admission shall be placed in classified graduate standing.

2.3 Admission by Special Action

Per Title 5 Section 41001, an applicant who does not qualify for admission under the provisions of Article 2.1 of this executive order may be admitted by special action if on the basis of acceptable evidence the applicant is judged by the appropriate campus authority to possess sufficient academic and professional potential.

2.4 Admission with Conditionally Classified Graduate Standing

Per Title 5 Section 41010, an applicant who under the provisions in Article 2.1 of this executive order is ineligible for admission because of deficiencies in prerequisite preparation may be admitted with conditionally classified graduate standing if, in the opinion of the program faculty, the deficiencies may be rectified by specified additional preparation, including examinations. The student shall be granted classified graduate standing upon rectification of the deficiencies and upon fulfillment of any other requirements as specified by the appropriate campus authority.

Article 3. Curricula

- 3.1** CSU DNP degree programs shall enable professionals working full time to earn the degree within three calendar years (including fall through spring terms and summer study).
- 3.2** Programs shall be consistent with the requirements of a professional nursing accrediting body and the regional accrediting association.
- 3.3** DNP curricula may be organized as cohort-based programs and shall include learning experiences that balance research, theory, and practice.
- 3.4** Student work in support of the doctoral project shall be embedded throughout the DNP program curriculum.
- 3.5** The core curriculum for each DNP program shall provide professional preparation in advanced nursing practice, including but not be limited to theory, research methods and evaluation, curriculum development, professional practice, management and leadership, and essential curricular concepts for advanced nursing at the doctoral level, as identified in Attachment A.

Article 4. Degree Requirements

4.1 Program of Study

To be eligible for the DNP degree, the candidate shall have completed a program of study, including a qualifying assessment and a doctoral project that is both consistent with Title 5 Section 40513 and is approved by the appropriate campus authority. Requirements for the qualifying assessment and doctoral project are specified, respectively, in Articles 5 and 8.3 of this executive order. Each campus shall establish policies and procedures for creating and amending a student's doctoral study plan and shall disseminate those policies and procedures in a DNP program student handbook or manual, pursuant to Article 10.3.

4.2 Unit Requirements

The pattern of study for the post-master's DNP degree program shall be composed of at least 36 semester units (54 quarter units) earned in graduate standing. At least 27 semester units (40.5 quarter units) required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students, and the remaining units required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students or courses organized primarily for master's and doctoral students. No more than 12 semester (18 quarter) doctoral project units shall be allowed toward the degree program requirements.

4.3 Academic Residence

At least 24 semester units (36 quarter units) shall be completed in residence at the campus awarding the degree or campuses jointly awarding the degree. The appropriate campus authority may authorize the substitution of credit earned by alternate means for part of this residence requirement. The campus may establish a policy allowing the transfer of relevant courses and credits completed as a matriculated student in another graduate program, on the condition that the other program is appropriately accredited.

4.4 Transfer of Units

The DNP program shall establish a policy allowing transfer of units earned in relevant graduate courses. At a minimum the policy shall require that the student completed courses in an accredited post baccalaureate program.

4.5 Petitions for Variance in Academic Requirements

Each DNP degree program shall establish and implement policies regarding student petitions for variance in academic requirements. Student handbooks or manuals shall specify policies and procedures by which a student may petition for a variance in academic requirements.

Article 5. DNP Qualifying Assessment

5.1 DNP degree programs shall require that students successfully complete a rigorous qualifying assessment of the student's knowledge. The qualifying assessment may be written, oral, or both.

5.2 Requirements of the DNP Qualifying Assessment

5.2.1 In order to continue in the program students shall be required to pass the qualifying assessment within two attempts.

5.2.2 Content

Members of the DNP program faculty shall determine the content of the qualifying assessment.

5.2.3 Timing

5.2.3.1 The student shall be required to pass the qualifying assessment prior to advancement to candidacy.

5.2.3.2 The qualifying assessment shall be administered at a time in the program sequence when the student's mastery of essential elements of the core advanced nursing practice concepts may be fairly evaluated and when the student is considered ready to begin the doctoral project.

5.2.4 Function of the Qualifying Assessment Committee

A qualifying assessment committee shall evaluate student performance in the assessment process. Agreement of the qualifying assessment committee is required for the candidate to pass the qualifying assessment.

5.2.5 Membership of the Qualifying Assessment Committee

The qualifying assessment committee shall have a minimum of three members, including the chair. The qualifying assessment committee chair shall be a tenured or tenure-track member of the nursing program faculty. The committee membership may include someone who holds an appropriate professional, rather than faculty, position.

Article 6. Doctoral Project Proposal

A student shall submit a doctoral project proposal to the doctoral project committee for approval, following the procedures and format established by the DNP program faculty and the campus.

6.1 Doctoral Project Proposal Requirements

The doctoral project proposal shall contain, at a minimum, a description of the problem, a review of the relevant literature, a statement of the research question, a description of the research methodology, and Institutional Review Board documentation.

6.2 Institutional Review Board Approval Requirements

Appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval shall be obtained to conduct any research involving human subjects. Failure to obtain required IRB approval prior to collection of data on human subjects may disqualify a student from further use of those data. The doctoral project committee chair shall advise the student regarding human subjects review requirements and regarding compliance with IRB regulations. The proposal shall contain either:

- a. human subjects research documents that have been submitted to the IRB regarding the proposed doctoral project research, if applicable or;
- b. required materials pertaining to human subjects research that have been completed but not yet submitted to the IRB, if applicable.

6.3 Doctoral Project Proposal Committee

The committee shall be made up of a chair who is either tenured or tenure-track nursing faculty, shall include at least one additional doctorally prepared nursing faculty member, and may include one member who holds an appropriate professional position. The campus program director may approve an exception to membership criteria.

6.4 Decision Regarding the Doctoral Project Proposal

The doctoral project proposal committee shall communicate formally its decision in writing to the student, indicating “approval,” “approval with modifications,” or “lack of approval.” In order for the student to proceed with the formal conduct of the doctoral project research, the student shall have received written approval of the proposal by the doctoral project proposal committee and, if applicable, written Institutional Review Board notification that human subjects review requirements have been met.

6.5 Resubmission of a Doctoral Project Proposal

If the doctoral project proposal committee decision is “approval with modifications” or “lack of approval,” the committee shall communicate to the student in writing the process and expectations for resubmission. The committee shall review the revised and resubmitted proposal and communicate to the student in writing the committee’s decision.

Article 7. Advancement to Candidacy

For advancement to candidacy for the DNP degree, the student shall have achieved classified graduate standing and met such particular requirements as the chancellor and the appropriate campus authority may prescribe. The requirements shall include a qualifying assessment.

Article 8. Doctoral Project and Oral Defense

8.1 Doctoral Project Committee

The doctoral project committee shall provide guidance and supervision for development, completion, and approval of the project.

8.2 Membership of the Doctoral Project Committee

The committee shall be made up of a chair who is tenured or tenure-track nursing faculty, shall include at least one additional doctorally prepared nursing faculty member, and may include one member who holds an appropriate professional position. The campus program director may approve an exception to membership criteria.

8.2.1 Doctoral Project Committee Chair

The doctoral project committee chair shall provide primary supervision for doctoral project. The chair shall be a tenured or tenure-track CSU nursing faculty member approved by the appropriate campus authority.

8.2.2 Appointment of Doctoral Project Committee

The student and advisor together shall propose the membership of the student's doctoral project committee. The proposed membership shall be forwarded to and determined by the campus official authorized to approve composition of the committee. The DNP program director may allow the replacement of a committee member, based on the evaluation of a rationale provided by the student or committee member making the request.

8.3 Doctoral Project Requirements

8.3.1 The doctoral project shall be the written product of systematic, rigorous research on a significant advanced nursing practice issue. It shall evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. The doctoral project shall reflect a command of the research literature and shall demonstrate the student's mastery of evidence-based practice at the doctoral level. Focused on the use of evidence to improve professional practice, policy and or patient outcomes, the doctoral project format shall be approved by the doctoral project committee.

8.3.2 In accordance with Section 40513 of Title 5 of the *California Code of Regulations*, CSU DNP programs shall require the completion of a doctoral project conforming to the following minimum criteria: The doctoral project shall identify the research problem and question(s), state the major theoretical

perspectives, explain the significance of the undertaking, relate it to the relevant scholarly and professional literature, set forth the appropriate sources for and methods of gathering and analyzing the data, and offer a conclusion or recommendation. It shall include a written abstract that summarizes the significance of the work, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation.

8.3.3 A successful oral defense of the doctoral project shall be the final process for the acceptance of the candidate's doctoral project.

8.4 Final Examination: Oral Defense of Doctoral Project

The final examination shall be an oral defense of the doctoral project, administered by the doctoral project committee. Approval of the doctoral project and recommendation that the DNP degree be conferred shall require agreement of the doctoral project committee. In the event that the committee requires substantive changes to the doctoral project, the final vote of the committee will be postponed until the changes are completed.

8.5 Submission of the Approved Doctoral Project

The student shall be required, after successful completion of the oral defense and approval of the doctoral project, to submit the approved doctoral project to the appropriate campus entity in conformity with campus policy and formatting requirements. For the degree to be conferred in a particular term, the doctoral project shall be submitted by the deadline specified by the program and campus.

Article 9. Satisfactory Progress, Probation, and Disqualification

9.1 Requirement for Satisfactory Progress

Each DNP student shall be required to maintain satisfactory progress toward degree requirements. The student shall be expected to complete satisfactorily all courses and examinations and shall be expected to advance to candidacy within the time frame specified by the DNP program faculty.

9.2 Criteria for Satisfactory Progress

In accordance with campus policy, the DNP program faculty and the campus shall establish criteria for satisfactory progress in the program. The criteria shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- a. the student shall maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average in courses taken to satisfy the requirements for the degree; and

- b. a course in which no letter grade is assigned shall not be used in computing grade point average.

9.3 Time to Degree

9.3.1 While the DNP program shall be designed to allow completion of all requirements within three years, the student shall have completed all requirements for the degree within five years of matriculation to the doctoral program. The appropriate campus authority, consistent with campus policy, may extend by up to two years the time allowed for completion of the requirements under the following circumstances:

- a. the student is in good standing;
- b. the extension is warranted by compelling individual circumstances; and
- c. the student demonstrates current knowledge of research and practice in advanced nursing practice, as required by the campus.

9.3.2 The DNP program faculty shall establish, in conformity with campus policy, criteria for granting further extension under special circumstances. The criteria shall include, at a minimum:

- a. the student is in good standing;
- b. the extension is warranted by compelling individual circumstances; and
- c. the student demonstrates current knowledge of research and practice in advanced nursing practice, as required by the campus.

9.3.3 At the conclusion of each term of enrollment during an extension exception, the DNP program faculty shall determine whether the student has made satisfactory progress.

9.4 Credit/No Credit

The DNP program shall establish a policy regarding credit/no credit in graduate work conducted toward satisfaction of degree requirements.

9.5 Probation

A student who falls below a 3.0 grade point average in any one term shall be placed on academic probation and notified of this placement in writing.

9.6 Disqualification

A student who fails to make satisfactory progress may be officially disqualified from the program based on the recommendation of the DNP program faculty, in accordance with policies and procedures established by the campus.

9.6.1 A student may be disqualified only after a thorough review of the case, including appropriate consultation and submission of a written recommendation by the DNP program faculty. The student shall be notified in writing of the disqualification. The student shall have the opportunity to appeal the decision.

9.6.2 A student who has been disqualified from the DNP program shall not be allowed to enroll in doctoral-level courses in the program or otherwise continue in the DNP program without formal re-application and re-admission.

Article 10. Doctoral Advising and Mentoring

10.1 Definitions

Academic advising and professional mentoring shall be arranged by the DNP program and conducted by campus faculty members to address:

- a. promoting a well-planned and efficient DNP course of study that can be completed within three years by a working professional;
- b. guidance and information that foster academic and professional development;
- c. assisting students as they apply what is learned in coursework toward improving nursing practice and client outcomes;
- d. advocacy on behalf of students and their academic needs; and
- e. creating a doctoral culture typified by:
 - i. scholarly discussion and dialogue that foster critical inquiry and clinical reasoning;
 - ii. expert supervision of DNP candidates in the conduct of a doctoral project; and
 - iii. fostering informal assessment and feedback designed to enhance student reflection on their doctoral role in advanced nursing practice.

10.2 Advising and Mentoring Policies

Each campus offering a DNP degree program shall establish and implement advising and mentoring policies designed to enhance the academic and professional development of students in the program. Policies shall address but are not limited to objectives of advising, roles of faculty advisors, assignment of faculty advisors (including the student role in assigning faculty advisors), and advising responsibilities of doctoral project committee chairs.

10.3 DNP Student Handbook

Each program shall make available to enrolled students a graduate student handbook. In addition to information and policies specific to the program, the handbook shall expressly advise program participants that they are also governed by the campus catalog, which includes policies and other information applicable to all CSU students.

Article 11. Required Annual Report

11.1 Campuses with administrative responsibilities for the DNP programs shall collect and report data as available to the executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer on an annual basis by October 1 beginning in 2013. The following data shall include at minimum:

- a. enrollment attrition, per cohort, per year;
- b. information on students' place of employment;
- c. subsequent job placement of graduates;
- d. sources of funding used to finance the program; and
- e. pilot program costs;
 - i. calculation of cost per degree awarded;
 - ii. costs of the degree pilot program to students;
 - iii. amount of financial aid offered; and
 - iv. student debt levels at time of graduation.



Charles B. Reed, Chancellor

Dated: December 2, 2011

**The California State University
Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree Programs
Essential Curricular Concepts**

California State University Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree programs shall include a core curriculum providing professional preparation for: (1) advanced practice nursing, including but not limited to scientific underpinnings for practice, clinical scholarship, advanced nursing practice, theory and research methods, and improving outcomes; and (2) development of postsecondary nursing faculty. The model below lists key concepts that campuses are expected to include in DNP degree programs. If core concepts are not included in a program proposal, the campus should indicate why the concepts are not addressed.

This three-part organization of concepts is an example of how DNP program components might be organized, but campus proposals may organize the core concepts differently than they appear here. The AACN *Essentials of Doctoral Education for Nursing Practice* (2006) constitute the CSU DNP Essential Core Concepts related to advanced nursing practice.

- A. Essential Core Concepts for Doctoral Education in Advanced Nursing Practice
 - 1. Scientific Underpinnings for Practice
 - 2. Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking
 - 3. Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice
 - 4. Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care
 - 5. Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care
 - 6. Inter-professional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
 - 7. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health
 - 8. Advanced Nursing Practice

- B. Essential Core Concepts for Postsecondary Faculty Preparation
 - 1. Research and scholarship
 - 2. Pedagogical theory
 - 3. Curriculum development
 - 4. Pedagogy for distinct learning audiences
 - 5. Academic technology
 - 6. Assessment of learning goals

- C. Essential Core Concepts (as Defined for Nursing Specializations)