

AC 2025-2026 Assessment

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program (901)

Division or Department: College of Nursing

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Northwestern State University's (NSU) 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.

NSU College of Nursing and School of Allied Health (CONSAH) Mission.

Northwestern State University's College of Nursing and School of Allied Health 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.

DNP Program Mission Statement. The DNP Program follows the mission of the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health.

DNP Program Goals:

1. Provide advanced practice nurse 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 practice nurse leaders to influence, design, direct, and implement change in healthcare practice, education, and policy through the development of collaborative alliances to improve healthcare outcomes and decrease morbidity and mortality in vulnerable populations.
3. Develop advanced practice nurse leaders who contribute to nursing's body of knowledge through professional development and scholarly inquiry into practice, processes, or outcomes which affect morbidity and mortality in vulnerable populations.

Methodology: The assessment process for the DNP program is as follows:

1. Course reports are completed by lead faculty at the end of each term in which the course is taught. Course reports include enrollment and completion data, aggregate grade distributions, relevant Student Learning Outcome measures, actual results, and identified trends.
2. Course reports are stored electronically in the DNP Teams Assessment folder and reviewed by the DNP Program Director.

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3. DNP faculty review and analyze assessment results annually by calendar year. Faculty compare actual results with established expected outcomes and identify actions for the following assessment cycle.
4. Course reports and related curriculum matters are discussed during DNP Curriculum Review meetings. Faculty who taught the courses and invited student or alumni representatives may provide feedback regarding course delivery, student learning, and opportunities for improvement.
5. Student Learning Outcome measures, results, analyses, and decisions are incorporated into the annual DNP program assessment report and submitted to the CONSAH Director of Assessment, Evaluation, and Planning for review.
6. The DNP Program Curriculum Committee reviews the annual assessment findings and discusses any proposed curricular or programmatic changes.
7. The completed assessment report is submitted to the CONSAH Dean for review and approval. Following approval, the report is forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School for review. Significant findings and actions requiring broader programmatic consideration are presented to the CONSAH Academic Leadership Council.

Program Structure Note: Through calendar year 2025, the DNP program offered two routes and two concentrations. The MSN-to-DNP route included the Organizational Systems Leadership concentration, and the BSN-to-DNP route included the Nurse Anesthesia concentration. Beginning in calendar year 2026, the Organizational Systems Leadership concentration was replaced by the Educational Leadership and Executive Leadership concentrations.

Program Assessment Note: During the 2025 assessment cycle, the DNP program continued assessing student achievement using the 8 Student Learning Outcomes and associated measures in effect during the reporting period. The program subsequently adopted 10 revised Student Learning Outcomes to align the DNP curriculum and assessment process with *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2021) and the revised DNP concentration structure. Therefore, the 2025 assessment results are reported under the 8 outcomes applicable to that assessment cycle. Beginning in 2026, the program will implement the 10 revised Student Learning Outcomes and corresponding assessment measures. Measures that are substantially revised or newly established will serve as baseline data for future trend analysis.

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1. Integrate nursing science with knowledge from ethics, biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, and organizational sciences as the foundation for the highest level of nursing practice.

Measure 1.1. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze philosophical and theoretical foundations of nursing knowledge and apply those foundations to advanced nursing practice. This outcome is assessed through the Midterm Examination in NURG 7000: Scientific Underpinnings for Practice. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the examination.

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Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 27 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the NURG 7000 Midterm Examination. The results demonstrated that students were able to analyze philosophical and theoretical foundations of nursing knowledge and connect those foundations to advanced nursing practice.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) updated the required textbook to the fifth edition to incorporate revised doctoral-level competencies; 2) revised PowerPoint presentation audio recordings to reflect the updated course content; 3) added two question-and-answer sessions to increase student engagement with faculty and peers; 4) required students to critique theory presentations and apply selected theories to a clinical or practice-focused question; and 5) provided updated exemplars for the theory-to-practice presentation.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 24 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Midterm Examination. Achievement remained consistent with the 2024 results and demonstrated that students continued to integrate nursing theory and interdisciplinary knowledge as a foundation for advanced nursing practice.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (24/24) of students scoring 80% or higher on the NURG 7000 Midterm Examination.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) continue structured course discussions using available written, audio, or video formats; 2) collaborate with Information Technology staff to identify a reliable platform for interactive audio and video discussions; 3) convert one or two guided-reading assignments into quizzes to provide additional formative assessment; 4) develop an ExamSoft rubric for the Midterm Examination so that questions can be linked to specific program outcomes and competencies; and 5) develop or revise grading rubrics for major course assignments to strengthen alignment among course objectives, program outcomes, and the revised DNP curriculum.

These actions will improve student engagement, strengthen alignment between assessment and program outcomes, provide more specific evidence of student achievement, and support continued integration of nursing and interdisciplinary knowledge into advanced practice, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 1.2. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply leadership theory and interdisciplinary knowledge to advanced nursing practice through completion of the Leadership Paper in NURG 7004: Organizational Theory and Systems Leadership. The assignment requires students to analyze leadership scenarios and examine the role of the DNP-prepared nurse as an interprofessional collaborative leader within healthcare systems. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

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Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. Of the 20 students assessed, 17 students (85%) scored 80% or higher on the Leadership Paper, while 3 students (15%) scored below the benchmark. Although the expected outcome was achieved, the results identified an opportunity to strengthen students' application of leadership concepts across varied organizational and clinical scenarios.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) added additional case studies to the Leadership Paper to expose students to a broader range of leadership situations; 2) revised presentation rubrics to include criteria related to professional dress, communication, environment, and presentation style; 3) updated quiz questions to maintain academic rigor and increase use of objective question formats; and 4) continued returning graded assignments within one week to provide timely feedback.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 33 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Leadership Paper. This represented an increase of 15 percentage points from 2024 and demonstrated stronger student performance in applying leadership theory, evaluating organizational scenarios, and articulating the role of the DNP-prepared nurse as an interprofessional leader.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (33/33) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Leadership Paper.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) continue using faculty-developed module videos to clarify assignment expectations; 2) maintain a sequence of module assignments, graduate-level writing activities, and a final presentation to support progressive development of leadership competencies; 3) continue reinforcing professional writing and APA 7th edition expectations; 4) revise the Module 1 and Module 2 discussion-forum rubrics to include content-specific performance criteria; and 5) review the Leadership Paper and related rubrics for alignment with the revised course objectives, program outcomes, and curriculum.

These actions will strengthen assignment clarity, professional communication, leadership analysis, and alignment between course assessments and program outcomes, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 2. Critically analyze health care delivery models based on contemporary nursing science and organizational and systems perspectives to eliminate health disparities and promote patient safety and excellence in practice.

Measure 2.1. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze organizational and systems factors and develop strategies to improve healthcare outcomes through completion of the Systems Outcomes Improvement Assignment in NURG 7004: Organizational Theory and Systems Leadership. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 24 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Systems Outcomes Improvement Assignment. The results demonstrated that students were able to integrate organizational, systems, business, finance,

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economics, and health-policy concepts when developing plans for practice-level or system-wide improvement.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) added additional case studies to strengthen application of leadership and systems concepts; 2) revised assignment rubrics with presentation components to include professionalism criteria; and 3) updated quiz questions and increased the number of objective questions to maintain academic rigor and provide broader assessment of course content.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 33 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Systems Outcomes Improvement Assignment. Achievement remained consistent with 2024 and demonstrated that students continued to analyze complex healthcare systems and propose evidence-informed strategies to improve quality, safety, and cost-effectiveness.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (33/33) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Systems Outcomes Improvement Assignment.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) align revised course objectives, assignments, and competency measures with the new program goals, Student Learning Outcomes, and concentration curricula; 2) refine the assignment rubric to distinguish systems analysis, outcome improvement, resource considerations, and sustainability; and 3) add an artificial-intelligence disclosure statement and related expectations to support academic integrity and transparent use of generative tools.

These actions will strengthen alignment, clarify performance expectations, and improve students' ability to analyze healthcare systems and propose sustainable improvements, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 2.2. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze healthcare delivery models and their effects on patients and the United States healthcare system through completion of the Module 6 Discussion Forum in NURG 7007: Healthcare Policy: Analysis, Advocacy, and Transformation. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. Of the 19 students assessed, 18 students (94.7%) scored 80% or higher on the Module 6 Discussion Forum, while 1 student (5.3%) scored below the benchmark. The results demonstrated that most students were able to analyze healthcare delivery models and discuss their implications for patients, populations, costs, and the broader healthcare system.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revised course assignments and module instructions to maintain an appropriate three-credit-hour workload; 2) replaced outdated PowerPoint presentations and prior-instructor video lectures with guided-reading assignments in Modules 1 through 4; 3) completed Quality Matters review and approval of the course; and 4) encouraged participation in Nurses Day at the Capitol as a practicum opportunity to strengthen political engagement and advocacy.

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As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 27 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Module 6 Discussion Forum. This represented an increase of 5.3 percentage points from 2024 and demonstrated stronger and more consistent student performance in analyzing healthcare delivery models and their effects.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (27/27) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Module 6 Discussion Forum.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revise the Module 6 rubric to clarify required topics, cross-post expectations, levels of achievement, and use of scholarly evidence; 2) revise the assignment to include a more explicit analysis of healthcare costs and delivery-model outcomes; 3) add clear APA, file-naming, and originality expectations to module instructions and rubrics; and 4) complete remaining Quality Matters recommendations, including refinement of module objectives.

These actions will improve assignment clarity, strengthen scholarly analysis, and provide more precise evidence of students' ability to evaluate healthcare delivery models, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 3. Systematically appraise existing literature, outcomes of practice, practice patterns, systems of care, and health organizations to design and generate best practice evidence to improve practice and health care outcomes.

Measure 3.1. Students will demonstrate the ability to systematically appraise quantitative and qualitative research and summarize findings through completion of the Literature Synthesis Table in NURG 7002: Clinical Scholarship. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 26 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Literature Synthesis Table. The results demonstrated that students were able to appraise individual research studies and organize study characteristics, methods, findings, and limitations in a format that supported evidence synthesis.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty maintained the current textbook and core assignment structure in 2025 because both remained current and supported achievement of the outcome. Faculty also continued providing guidance related to literature searching and research appraisal.

As a result, in 2025, the target was met. All 22 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Literature Synthesis Table. Achievement remained consistent with 2024 and demonstrated that students continued to appraise and organize research evidence successfully.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (22/22) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Literature Synthesis Table.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) simplify student access to librarian-developed instructional videos on literature-search strategies; 2) review the grading

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rubric to ensure points reflect demonstrated research-appraisal skills rather than attendance at a library session; and 3) clarify expectations for appraisal quality, synthesis accuracy, and use of evidence.

These actions will reduce access barriers, improve alignment between grading and student performance, and strengthen students' ability to appraise research systematically, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 3.2. Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize current evidence related to a selected practice outcome through completion of the Literature Review Synthesis Paper in 7002: Clinical Scholarship. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 26 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Literature Review Synthesis Paper. The results demonstrated that students were able to describe search strategies, evaluate study methods, synthesize findings across sources, and identify implications for practice.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) maintained the current textbook because the edition remained current; 2) continued using an instructional video to guide the literature-search process; and 3) revised the process for accessing librarian-developed videos after students experienced confusion related to required permissions.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 22 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Literature Review Synthesis Paper. Achievement remained consistent with 2024 and demonstrated that students continued to synthesize evidence effectively.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (22/22) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Literature Review Synthesis Paper.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) provide direct access to librarian videos through the library website; 2) continue using instructional guidance for literature searching and synthesis; 3) revise the finding-the-evidence activity and rubric if proof of video viewing cannot be uploaded reliably; and 4) review rubric criteria for alignment with the revised DNP competencies.

These actions will improve access, reduce unnecessary technical barriers, and strengthen students' ability to locate, evaluate, and synthesize evidence for advanced nursing practice, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 4. Utilize information systems technology to implement and evaluate healthcare resources, quality improvement initiatives, and programs of care that support practice decisions.

Measure 4.1. Students will demonstrate the ability to plan a health-information-technology initiative that addresses a healthcare practice need through completion of the Health Information Technology Systems Initial Planning Paper in NURG 7005: Information Systems Technology. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of

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students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 20 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Initial Planning Paper. The results demonstrated that students were able to identify a practice need, select an appropriate health-information-technology approach, and develop an initial plan for using technology to improve care or outcomes.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) maintained the assignment structure; 2) placed Navigate 2 PowerPoint presentations within each course module for students who experienced difficulty accessing the external online course; and 3) updated the required textbook to the most current edition.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 31 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Initial Planning Paper. Achievement remained consistent with 2024 and demonstrated that students continued to plan technology-supported practice improvements successfully.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (31/31) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Health Information Technology Systems Initial Planning Paper.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) discontinue NURG 7005: Information Systems Technology as a separate course and integrate its health-information-technology content into NURG 7004: Organizational Leadership and Health Informatics; 2) revise course objectives, assignments, and assessment measures to preserve evaluation of health-information-technology planning; and 3) align the revised assessment measures with the new DNP program outcomes, competencies, and concentration curricula.

These actions will maintain assessment of informatics competence while integrating organizational leadership and health-information-technology content more intentionally, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 4.2. Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and apply best practices for implementing a health-information-technology system through completion of the Health Information Technology Systems Best Practices Paper in NURG 7005: Information Systems Technology. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 20 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Best Practices Paper. The results demonstrated that students were able to identify a nursing practice issue and articulate an evidence-informed process for implementing a health-information-technology system to address the issue.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) maintained the assignment structure; 2) placed Navigate 2 PowerPoint presentations within each module to improve access; and 3) updated the required textbook to the most current edition.

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As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 31 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Best Practices Paper. Achievement remained consistent with 2024 and demonstrated that students continued to apply informatics best practices to healthcare improvement.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (31/31) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Health Information Technology Systems Best Practices Paper.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) integrate the relevant content from NURG 7005: Information Systems Technology into NURG 7004: Organizational Leadership and Health Informatics; 2) develop a revised assessment measure that evaluates implementation planning, evidence-based informatics practices, and evaluation of technology-supported outcomes; and 3) align the revised assignment and assessment criteria with the new DNP program outcomes, competencies, and concentration curricula.

These actions will preserve the intent of the measure within the revised curriculum and strengthen alignment between informatics assessment and program outcomes, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 5. Advocate for health care policy which addresses social justice and equity in all health care settings.

Measure 5.1. Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for healthcare policy through completion of the Political Advocacy Elevator Speech in NURG 7007: Healthcare Policy: Analysis, Advocacy, and Transformation. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. Of the 24 students assessed, 23 students (95.8%) scored 80% or higher on the Elevator Speech, while 1 student (4.2%) scored below the benchmark. The results demonstrated that most students were able to develop concise, evidence-informed advocacy messages with clear talking points, anticipated outcomes, calls to action, and closing statements.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) updated course assignments and module instructions to maintain an appropriate three-credit-hour workload; 2) replaced outdated instructional materials with guided-reading assignments; 3) completed Quality Matters review and approval; and 4) encouraged participation in Nurses Day at the Capitol as a practicum opportunity for political engagement and advocacy.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 27 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Elevator Speech. This represented an increase of 4.2 percentage points from 2024 and demonstrated more consistent student achievement in healthcare-policy advocacy.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met with 100% (27/27) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Political Advocacy Elevator Speech.

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Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revise the Elevator Speech rubric to address topic appropriateness, scholarly evidence, delivery, engagement, and cross-post requirements; 2) clarify APA, file-naming, and originality expectations; 3) update related policy assignments and rubrics for consistency; and 4) complete remaining Quality Matters recommendations.

These actions will clarify expectations, strengthen evidence-based advocacy communication, and improve consistency in evaluation, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 5.2. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze ethical dimensions of healthcare policy and construct evidence-based arguments through completion of the Ethical Debate in NURG 7007: Healthcare Policy: Analysis, Advocacy, and Transformation. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 24 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Ethical Debate. The results demonstrated that students were able to analyze ethical issues, select and defend a position, use evidence to support arguments and rebuttals, and communicate through an asynchronous technology-supported format.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) updated course assignments and module instructions; 2) replaced outdated instructional materials with guided-reading assignments; 3) completed Quality Matters review and approval; and 4) encouraged participation in policy and advocacy activities.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 27 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Ethical Debate. Achievement remained consistent with 2024 and demonstrated that students continued to apply ethical reasoning and scholarly evidence to healthcare-policy issues.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (27/27) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Ethical Debate.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revise the debate rubric to specify evidence, rebuttal quality, professional delivery, engagement, and cross-post expectations; 2) clarify scholarly-reference, APA, file-naming, and originality requirements; and 3) review the assignment for continued alignment with the revised DNP outcomes.

These actions will strengthen ethical analysis, professional communication, and consistency in assessment, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 6. Employ consultative and leadership skills to function on inter- and intra-professional multidisciplinary teams that work collaboratively to improve vulnerable populations' health outcomes.

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Measure 6.1. Students will demonstrate consultative, leadership, conflict-resolution, and interprofessional collaboration skills through completion of the Leadership Paper in NURG 7004: Organizational Theory and Systems Leadership. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. Of the 20 students assessed, 17 students (85%) scored 80% or higher on the Leadership Paper, while 3 students (15%) scored below the benchmark. The results demonstrated that most students were able to analyze leadership scenarios, apply conflict-resolution and team-building principles, and examine the DNP-prepared nurse's role in interprofessional collaboration.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) added additional leadership case studies; 2) revised presentation rubrics to include professionalism criteria; and 3) updated quiz questions to strengthen academic rigor and broaden assessment of leadership content.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 33 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Leadership Paper. This represented an increase of 15 percentage points from 2024 and demonstrated stronger performance in leadership analysis and interprofessional collaboration.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (33/33) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Leadership Paper.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) align the Leadership Paper, course objectives, rubric criteria, and competency measures with the revised program outcomes and the Educational Leadership and Executive Leadership curricula; and 2) add an artificial-intelligence disclosure statement to support academic integrity and transparent use of generative tools.

These actions will strengthen alignment, leadership assessment, and professional accountability, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 6.2. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop a collaborative, population-focused prevention initiative for a vulnerable population through completion of the Population-Focused Prevention Project in NURG 7001: Clinical Prevention and Population Health. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met using the Health Systems and Collaboration Health Disparities TED Talk in NURG 7009: Global Healthcare, with all 4 students assessed (100%) scoring 80% or higher. Because NURG 7009 was removed from the curriculum, the measure changed in 2025 to the Population-Focused Prevention Project in NURG 7001: Clinical Prevention and Population Health.

In 2025, faculty implemented the revised measure. The project required students to identify a vulnerable population, analyze disparities and policy implications, identify stakeholders, and develop an interdisciplinary prevention plan.

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In 2025, the target was met. All 24 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Population-Focused Prevention Project. Because the assessment method changed, the 2025 result establishes a new baseline for this measure rather than a directly comparable trend with 2024.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (24/24) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Population-Focused Prevention Project.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revise NURG 7001 to integrate global health, epidemiology, and population-health content; 2) review the Population-Focused Prevention Project and grading rubric for alignment with the revised course objectives, DNP program outcomes, and competencies; and 3) monitor future results using the 2025 findings as baseline data because the assessment method changed during the 2025 assessment cycle.

These actions will strengthen evaluation of collaborative population-health planning and establish a valid basis for future trend analysis, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 7. Synthesize data relevant to clinical prevention and health promotion for individuals, aggregates, and populations to guide the implementation of the highest level of nursing practice.

Measure 7.1. Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize population-health data and develop an evidence-informed prevention initiative through completion of the Population-Focused Prevention Project in NURG 7001: Clinical Prevention and Population Health. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the assignment.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. All 27 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Population-Focused Prevention Project. The results demonstrated that students were able to analyze vulnerable-population characteristics, disparities, resources, risks, and health status; formulate a PICO question; identify stakeholders; and develop an interdisciplinary prevention plan.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) adjusted the length of later course modules to allow students to receive feedback on major written assignments before submitting subsequent work; and 2) added an instructor-developed video to guide completion of the Prevention Project.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 24 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the Population-Focused Prevention Project. Achievement remained consistent with 2024 and demonstrated that students continued to synthesize population-health data and develop prevention strategies successfully.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (24/24) of students scoring 80% or higher on the Population-Focused Prevention Project.

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Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revise NURG 7001 to incorporate global health, epidemiology, and population-health content; 2) align the Population-Focused Prevention Project, grading rubric, and assessment criteria with the revised DNP curriculum, program outcomes, and competencies; and 3) continue monitoring student performance to ensure that the measure provides meaningful evidence of students' ability to synthesize population-health data and develop evidence-informed prevention initiatives.

These actions will strengthen population-health analysis and maintain clear alignment between the assessment and the revised curriculum, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 7.2. Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize project data and communicate findings for practice change through completion of the DNP Project Oral Dissemination in NURG 7012: DNP Project Practicum III. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 80% of students to score 80% or higher on the dissemination.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. Of the 19 students assessed, 18 students (94.7%) scored 80% or higher on the DNP Project Oral Dissemination, while 1 student (5.3%) scored below the benchmark. The results demonstrated that most students were able to synthesize project findings, interpret implications, and communicate evidence supporting practice change.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) changed the assignment title from oral defense to oral dissemination to reflect the purpose of the presentation; 2) created a digital abstract flip book to share project results with external stakeholders; and 3) updated the presentation template to promote a consistent and professional format.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 27 students assessed (100%) scored 80% or higher on the DNP Project Oral Dissemination. This represented an increase of 5.3 percentage points from 2024 and demonstrated more consistent student performance in synthesizing and communicating project findings.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (27/27) of students scoring 80% or higher on the DNP Project Oral Dissemination.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) require Major Professors to review initial dissemination presentations before evaluation by the full committee; 2) establish a process to ensure dissemination to the project site after initial approval; and 3) revise the scholarly-project paper and presentation templates in collaboration with course faculty and students.

These actions will strengthen preparation, consistency, and dissemination of DNP project findings to relevant stakeholders, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

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SLO 8. Demonstrate advanced practice expertise, specialized knowledge, and expanded responsibility and accountability in the care, management, and evaluation of individuals, families, and communities in a specialty practice area within the domain of nursing.

Measure 8.1. Students will demonstrate synthesis of doctoral coursework and practice application through successful completion of the final Scholarly Project Paper in NURG 7012: DNP Project Practicum III.. The expected outcome (target) is for at least 90% of students to receive a rating of satisfactory or satisfactory with revisions.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In 2024, the target was met. Of the 19 students assessed, 18 students (94.7%) received a rating of satisfactory or satisfactory with revisions, while 1 student (5.3%) did not meet the benchmark. The results demonstrated that most students successfully integrated evidence, project methodology, results, and implications for advanced nursing practice.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty implemented the following changes in 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revised the DNP project written and oral presentation rubrics to improve alignment with the project template; 2) changed the terminology from oral defense to initial oral dissemination; 3) created a digital abstract flip book for stakeholders; and 4) updated the dissemination PowerPoint presentation template.

As a result of these changes, in 2025, the target was met. All 27 students assessed (100%) received a rating of satisfactory or satisfactory with revisions on the Scholarly Project Paper. This represented an increase of 5.3 percentage points from 2024 and demonstrated more consistent achievement of scholarly-project expectations.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (27/27) of students receiving a rating of satisfactory or satisfactory with revisions on the Scholarly Project Paper.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) require Major Professors to review dissemination materials before committee evaluation; 2) revise the scholarly-project paper template in collaboration with course faculty and students; 3) clarify expectations for alignment among the paper, rubric, and dissemination presentation; and 4) establish a process for documented dissemination to the project site.

These actions will strengthen consistency, scholarly quality, and translation of project findings into advanced nursing practice, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 8.2. Students will demonstrate responsibility and accountability for achievement of required doctoral practicum experiences and competencies through completion of the Scholarly Project Practicum Portfolio in NURG 7012: DNP Project Practicum III. The expected outcome (target) is for 100% of students to receive a rating of pass.

Finding. Target was not met.

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Analysis. In 2024, the target was not met. Of the 19 students assessed, 18 students (94.7%) received a rating of pass on the Scholarly Project Practicum Portfolio, while 1 student (5.3%) did not meet the benchmark. The results indicated that the program did not achieve the required 100% completion rate.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 results, faculty revised the DNP project written and oral presentation rubrics and updated terminology related to dissemination in 2025. However, these changes were not directly focused on the practicum-portfolio requirements, documentation of hours, or mapping of experiences to course, program, and doctoral competencies.

In 2025, the target was not met. Of the 27 students assessed, 26 students (96.3%) received a rating of pass, while 1 student (3.7%) did not meet the benchmark. Performance improved by 1.6 percentage points from 2024, but the required outcome of 100% was not achieved. Criterion-level information was not provided to identify the specific portfolio deficiency.

Decision. In 2025, the target was not met, with 96.3% (26/27) of students receiving a rating of pass on the Scholarly Project Practicum Portfolio.

Based on the analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) establish required portfolio checkpoints in NURG 7010: DNP Project Practicum I, NURG 7011: DNP Project Practicum II, and NURG 7012: DNP Project Practicum III; 2) require Major Professors to verify practicum hours, cumulative totals, required documentation, and competency mapping before final submission; 3) provide students with a standardized portfolio template, completion checklist, and exemplar; 4) revise the portfolio rubric to identify specific required elements and performance criteria; and 5) track criterion-level deficiencies so targeted remediation can occur before graduation.

These actions will provide earlier identification of missing or inaccurate documentation, strengthen accountability for practicum requirements, and increase the likelihood that all students will successfully complete the portfolio, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results

Analysis of the 2024 assessment results led DNP faculty to implement targeted improvements during the 2025 assessment cycle. These actions focused on strengthening alignment among course objectives, DNP program Student Learning Outcomes, and doctoral-level competencies; improving assignment clarity and rubric consistency; enhancing student engagement and scholarly development; expanding leadership, policy, informatics, and population-health learning; and preparing the program for implementation of the revised DNP curricula and concentration structure.

Curriculum and Program Alignment

During 2025, the DNP program completed major curriculum revisions associated with implementation of the revised program goals, Student Learning Outcomes, and concentration structure. The former Organizational Systems Leadership concentration was replaced by the Educational Leadership and Executive Leadership concentrations,

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and the Nurse Anesthesia curriculum was revised to align with the updated DNP core curriculum. Faculty mapped the revised curricula to the new program outcomes and doctoral-level competencies and prepared revised courses and assessment measures for implementation beginning in 2026.

Strengthening of Course Design and Student Engagement

Faculty revised instructional materials, updated required textbooks and recorded course content, added guided-reading assignments and question-and-answer sessions, provided assignment exemplars, and expanded the use of instructor-developed videos. These changes clarified assignment expectations and increased opportunities for students to engage with theory, leadership, policy, population health, and scholarly inquiry.

Improvement of Leadership, Systems, and Policy Learning

In NURG 7004, faculty added leadership case studies, revised presentation rubrics to include professionalism criteria, and updated quiz formats to strengthen academic rigor and assessment of course content. Student achievement on the Leadership Paper increased from 85% in 2024 to 100% in 2025. In NURG 7007, faculty revised assignments and module instructions, completed the Quality Matters review process, and encouraged participation in Nurses Day at the Capitol. Student achievement reached 100% on the healthcare-delivery discussion, Political Advocacy Elevator Speech, and Ethical Debate.

Enhancement of Evidence Appraisal and Population-Health Learning

Faculty maintained effective evidence-appraisal and synthesis assignments in NURG 7002 and improved access to instructional resources related to literature searching. In NURG 7001, faculty adjusted module timing so students could receive feedback before completing subsequent major assignments and added an instructor-developed video for the Population-Focused Prevention Project. All students met the established benchmarks for the literature-synthesis and population-health measures.

Expansion of Informatics and Scholarly Dissemination

Faculty improved access to NURG 7005 instructional resources by placing Navigate 2 materials within the course modules and updating the required textbook. All students met the established benchmarks for both health-information-technology measures. In NURG 7012, faculty revised dissemination terminology, created a digital abstract flipbook for stakeholders, and updated the DNP Project presentation template. Student achievement on the DNP Project Oral Dissemination and Scholarly Project Paper increased from 94.7% in 2024 to 100% in 2025.

Overall Evidence of Improvement

The target was met for 15 of the 16 DNP assessment measures in 2025, with most measures demonstrating 100% achievement. The only target not met was the Scholarly Project Practicum Portfolio measure, for which 96.3% (26/27) of students received a rating of pass against an expected outcome of 100%. Overall, the 2025 results demonstrated strong student achievement while identifying the need for earlier and more systematic monitoring of practicum-portfolio completion.

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Plan of Action Moving Forward

Based on analysis of the 2025 assessment results, DNP faculty will implement targeted actions during the 2026 assessment cycle to support successful implementation of the revised curricula, strengthen alignment with the 2021 AACN Essentials, improve consistency in assessment and grading, enhance scholarly and professional development, and continue the cycle of program improvement. Faculty will also review the 2026 edition of the AACN Essentials to determine whether additional curricular, assessment, or programmatic revisions are needed (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2026).

Implementation of the Revised Curriculum

During 2026, faculty will implement the revised Educational Leadership, Executive Leadership, and Nurse Anesthesia curricula. Course objectives, assignments, rubrics, and assessment measures will be reviewed for alignment with the revised program goals, Student Learning Outcomes, and doctoral-level competencies. Because several courses and measures are changing, faculty will identify baseline data for new or substantially revised measures before interpreting trends. Faculty will also review the 2026 edition of the AACN Essentials and determine whether additional revisions are needed to the DNP program goals, Student Learning Outcomes, curricula, course mapping, assignments, competency assessments, or evaluation measures (AACN, 2026).

Assessment Alignment and Rubric Development

Faculty will develop or revise rubrics for major assignments and examinations, link assessment criteria to specific program outcomes and doctoral-level competencies and collect criterion-level data when available. New and revised measures will be reviewed through the DNP Program Curriculum Committee to confirm that each assessment directly measures the intended Student Learning Outcome.

Course-Specific Improvements

Faculty will continue structured discussions and formative quizzes in NURG 7000: Scientific Underpinnings for Practice; revise leadership, systems, and informatics assignments in NURG 7004: Organizational Leadership and Health Informatics; improve direct access to librarian-developed instructional resources and refine evidence-appraisal rubrics in NURG 7002: Clinical Scholarship; revise policy, advocacy, and ethical-debate rubrics in NURG 7007: Healthcare Policy: Analysis, Advocacy, and Transformation; and integrate relevant content from NURG 7005: Information Systems Technology into the revised NURG 7004 course.

Scholarly Project and Dissemination

Faculty will ensure that the Major Professor reviews dissemination materials before committee evaluation. Scholarly-project templates will be revised, expectations across NURG 7010: DNP Project Practicum I, NURG 7011: DNP Project Practicum II, and NURG 7012: DNP Project Practicum III will be clarified, and a process will be established for documenting dissemination of approved project findings to project sites and other relevant stakeholders.

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Practicum Portfolio Improvement

Faculty will implement required portfolio checkpoints across the three practicum courses, use a standardized portfolio template and checklist, verify practicum hours and competency mapping before final submission, and analyze criterion-level deficiencies when students do not meet established requirements. Earlier feedback and corrective guidance will be provided when portfolio deficiencies are identified. These actions directly address the only 2025 assessment measure for which the target was not met.

Expected Impact

Collectively, these actions are expected to strengthen alignment among the revised curricula, program outcomes, doctoral-level competencies, and assessment measures; improve consistency in grading and feedback; support successful implementation of the revised concentrations; and improve completion of scholarly-project and practicum requirements. DNP faculty will review the 2026 assessment results to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented actions and determine priorities for the next assessment cycle.