Ph.D. in Nursing

The Ph.D. in Nursing program is not accepting applications for the 2026-2027 academic year.

The Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing degree program in the School of Nursing (SON) at ISU prepares the student to develop and conduct scientific research and participate actively in lifelong scholarship, leadership, and education. The research emphasis is dedicated to extending the knowledge base of nursing and improving the delivery of health care for rural and vulnerable individuals, families, and communities within existing cultural, geographical, and health care contexts. An interprofessional research focus provides an opportunity for students to advance science collaborating with other professionals in identifying research opportunities, recognition of the contribution of other disciplines to the improvement of health status, open channels of communication, and prepare graduates for leading change and advancing health and health care systems.

The ISU SON enrolls students interested in improving health status in rural and other vulnerable populations and overcoming fragmented health care systems, practices, and beliefs. The future of nursing practice requires advances in theory and research to address highly complex problems through innovative solutions. The Ph.D. program prepares graduates to be full partners in health care provision and design for improving health and health care globally.

Ph.D. Degree Program Outcomes

Each student will complete a core curriculum and work closely with faculty to complete an individualized course of study that fulfills the student's goals and develops the foundation for a program of research using online technologies integrating an interprofessional approach to communicate scientific knowledge through mentorship, collaboration, and dissemination.

- Create original research that contributes to scientific nursing knowledge
- Contribute to the development of methodologies congruent with the broad concerns of the nursing discipline
- Contribute to the discovery, application, and integration of nursing and interprofessional knowledge and leadership.

Admission Requirements

The student must apply to and meet all requirements for admission and application to the ISU Graduate School. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to the program. The SON Ph.D. Admissions committee will make the final recommendation regarding admission. This decision will be based on evaluation of established application and admission requirements. In addition to the general requirements of the Graduate School, the following are required:

1. Application through the ISU Graduate School website with payment of appropriate fees.
2. Earned Bachelor of Science (BS in Nursing or BSN) from program accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or other nationally recognized accrediting body for nursing education. A master's degree in nursing from an accredited program will be considered.
3. Cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher from a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S. or B.S.N.) program of study or 3.5 or higher GPA based on previous 60 credits of most recently completed degree. If a post-master's applicant, the GPA is calculated based upon all master's coursework and BSN until 60 credits are reached.
4. English Proficiency Exams: The School of Nursing Ph.D. program follows the Graduate School Admissions policy for students who have not graduated from an accredited college or university in the United States (at the undergraduate and/or graduate level) and whose native language is not English.
5. Verification of valid and current unencumbered Registered Nursing license.
6. Completion of a preadmission interview by the School of Nursing Ph.D. Admissions committee. If the applicant resides at a distance over 100 miles, an interview by video conference may be arranged. Being interviewed is not a guarantee of admission; the results of the interview may exclude an applicant from acceptance, despite meeting other qualification criteria.
7. Mandatory attendance at the orientation for the Ph.D. program to be held on the ISU campus in August of the year of admission.

Application Requirements:

The student must apply and meet all requirements for admission to the Graduate School. In addition to the general requirements of the Graduate School, the following are required:

1. Submission of official transcripts to the Graduate School from each institution at which they have taken any postsecondary work. Evidence of a completed BS in Nursing or BSN from an accredited nursing program must be listed in official transcripts.

2. Submission of a professional essay (3-4 pages, see application in CollegeNet for essay instructions).

3. Submission of a writing sample (professional paper).

4. Three professional references attesting to the applicant's capacity and potential for doctoral study using the form provided on the application site. At least one reference should be from an academic source and one from a professional source.

5. Submission of a professional vitae or resume.

Selection Schedule for Ph.D. Program

Application for the Ph.D. program will open in September of any academic year. Preference will be given to applications submitted by December 1 of any year. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until the class is filled. All application and admission requirements as posted on the website for the Ph.D. degree program apply. Notification of successful applicants for admission and alternates will begin in late April of any year.

Dissertation Preparation and Advancement to Candidacy Comprehensive Examination

The student must complete designated required and elective courses in order to complete the comprehensive qualifying examination requirements. If the student fails any component of the comprehensive examination, the student may retake the examination one time within established ISU and SON guidelines, policies, and procedures.

Admission to Candidacy

Each student who has successfully completed the written comprehensive examination components may apply for degree candidacy.

Dissertation

Once the student has been admitted to degree candidacy, the student enrolls in NURS 8890 (http://coursecat.isu.edu/search/?P=NURS%208890) Dissertation for completion of the dissertation until completed.

Continuous Enrollment

Students must maintain continuous enrollment in NURS 8890 (http://coursecat.isu.edu/search/?P=NURS%208890) while in the process of research and writing the dissertation. The student must maintain continuous enrollment as outlined in the Graduate School policy.

The SON website and SON Ph.D. Student Handbook provide further information about the Ph.D. program.

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses and 6 Credits of Electives		
NURS 8805	Philosophy of Nursing Science and the Role of the Nurse Researcher	3
NURS 8808	Theoretical and Conceptual Analysis in Nursing Science	3
NURS 8809	Research and Practice in Rural and Global Communities	2
NURS 8813	Qualitative Inquiry and Analysis	3
NURS 8814	Statistical Methods in Health Research I	3
NURS 8815	Statistical Methods in Health Research II	3
NURS 8816	Quantitative Inquiry and Analysis	3
NURS 8820	Ethics in Nursing Research	3
NURS 8825	Research and Grant Writing	3
NURS 8826	Approaches to Scholarly Writing	2
NURS 8830	Current Trends in Research Design and Methods	3
NURS 8840	Health Policy in Advanced Nursing Practice	3
NURS 8881	Research Seminar I	3
NURS 8882	Research Seminar II	2
NURS 8883	Research Seminar III	2
NURS 8890	Dissertation	12
Electives		6
Total Credits		**59**

Students should work with their academic advisor to plan course schedules according to full-time /part-time status.