

# Doctor of Nursing Practice Project Guidelines 2024 - 2025

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https://www.uky.edu/nursing/

**July 2024** 



# **Table of Contents**

Description of DNP Project3			
DNP F	Project Committee	3	
Role d	of the DNP Project Committee	3	
>	DNP Advisor	3	
>	DNP Project Committee Members	3	
Steps	in Completing the DNP Project	3	
Cours	e Alignment of Steps in Completing a DNP Project	4	
>	Prior to or During Enrollment in NUR 909	5	
>	Prior to or During Enrollment in NUR 918	5	
>	Prior to and During Enrollment in NUR 910	6	
Timel	ine & Steps for Scheduling of DNP Project Presentation	7	
>	Step 1: Schedule Date and Time for Presentation	7	
>	Step 2: Formal Review of DNP Project Paper by Chair/Committee	7	
>	Step 3: Request for Final Project Presentation Form	8	
>	Step 4: Revisions After Public Presentation	8	
>	Step 5: Submission of Final Document to UKnowledge	8	
DNP F	Project Proposal Written Format	8	
DNP F	Project Paper Format	9	
DNP F	Project Oral Presentation Format	10	
DNP S	Student Progression Review Form	11	
Forma	ation/Revision of DNP Student Advisory Committee	12	
DNP F	Project Proposal Approval Form	12	
Reque	est to Schedule DNP Project Presentation	12	
DNP F	Project Paper Rubric	12	
DNP F	Project Oral Presentation Rubric	12	
	Project Title Page		
	atting Checklist and Sample Table of Contents		
	onic DNP Project Approval Form for Final Copy		
	ission Checklist for UKnowledge		



# **Description of DNP Project**

The DNP project demonstrates a synthesis of the DNP Program Outcomes and represents an opportunity for the student to investigate a clinical practice or systems health care issue. The focus is broad and includes not only direct care issues, but interventions and programs that indirectly influence outcomes for a defined population. Examples are evidence-based practice changes in direct clinical care, interventions designed to improve outcomes for an aggregate or population, administrative interventions to improve population health outcomes or delivery of care, and policy interventions to improve population health conditions. The project should focus on the scholarship of practice, with an emphasis on internal validity rather than external generalizability. Upon completion of the DNP Project the student will have the knowledge and experience to evaluate, synthesize and use the best available evidence to provide high quality care and promote the best patient outcomes. The DNP Project is aligned with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (2006).

# **DNP Project Committee**

The DNP Project Committee provides guidance and expertise in the successful design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of the DNP Project. The student's assigned faculty advisor will serve as the DNP advisor, unless otherwise indicated. The DNP Project Committee will consist of two doctorally-prepared faculty members and a doctorally-prepared clinical mentor. The clinical mentor should be an expert in the student's focus area, and willing to assist in student advisement and clinical coaching in collaboration with the faculty advisor and faculty committee member.

# **Role of the DNP Project Committee**

#### DNP Advisor

The advisor will guide the student through the DNP Project process to include:

- Topic and site selection;
- Selection of committee members;
- Meetings with DNP Project Committee members;
- Clinical agency site contracts and agreements;
- IRB approval and compliance;
- Project approval, development, implementation and evaluation;
- Assimilation of committee members' feedback on student work and communication to the student;
- Final project paper; and
- Final project presentation

#### > DNP Project Committee Members

The DNP Project Committee consists of a second faculty member from the College of Nursing Faculty and the third member is a clinical mentor. The clinical mentor should be doctorally-prepared, an expert in the students focus area, and willing to assist in student advisement and clinical coaching in collaboration with the faculty advisor. All will provide guidance throughout the project process including:

- Active participation in all DNP Project Committee meetings as indicated by the advisor;
- Periodic consultation in area of expertise as needed;
- Constructive and timely feedback on drafts of the student's DNP Project proposal, final project paper, and final project presentation;
- Attendance at the DNP Project Presentation.

# **Steps in Completing the DNP Project**

The steps for completing the DNP Project are aligned with DNP course work to a) assure that students complete all important steps leading up the DNP Project implementation; b) keep students focused on their DNP Projects



throughout their course work; c) provide objective checkpoints for both students and DNP advisors throughout the student's curricular progression; and d) facilitate the student's successful completion of the DNP Project.

Depending on the student's track within the DNP program, they may be taking DNP core courses in a variety of sequences. However, the courses most closely aligned with the DNP Project (NUR 924, NUR 925, NUR 915, NUR 916, NUR 909, NUR 918, and NUR 910) have clear expectations that will help doctoral students streamline and complete their DNP Project requirements. The *DNP Project Checklist* is in Appendix B of this document.

# **Course Alignment of Steps in Completing a DNP Project**

#### > Prior to or During Enrollment in NUR 925/ NUR 915 (if applicable)

Student Expectations	DNP Advisor
Initiate meeting with DNP advisor to discuss	DNP Project advisor will meet with student to review:
updates on:	DNP Project ideas.
DNP Project ideas.	Possible DNP Project site/agency.
<ul> <li>Potential clinical site/agency for DNP Project.</li> </ul>	Curriculum progress.
Curriculum progress.	
Student Expectations	DNP Advisor & Committee Members
In a meeting with DNP advisor, discuss:	DNP Project advisor will help student:
1. DNP project guidelines.	1. Review the DNP Project idea and the projected
2. A potential problem/issue in a specific site/agency	site/agency.
for the DNP Project.	2. Define scope of DNP Project.
3. Initial review of evidence.	3. Provide direction for evaluation and synthesis of
	the evidence.

#### Prior to or During Enrollment in NUR 916

Student Expectations	DNP Advisor
Initiate meeting with DNP advisor to discuss	DNP Project advisor will meet with student to review:
updates on:	DNP Project ideas.
DNP Project ideas.	<ul> <li>Possible DNP Project site/agency.</li> </ul>
Potential clinical site/agency for DNP Project.	Curriculum progress.
Curriculum progress.	
Student Expectations	DNP Advisor & Committee Members
1. Review DNP project guidelines if not done	DNP Project advisor will:
previously (eg; for MSN to DNP students)	1. Make sure the student has a copy of the DNP
2. Do an initial, evidence-based, integrative review,	project guidelines; review these guidelines with the
identify a gap and make a recommendation for	student <b>even</b> if done previously.
practice change related to the DNP Project.	2. Review and provide feedback on student's review
3. Explore potential methods of implementing and	and synthesis of evidence.
evaluating the DNP Project.	3. Provide guidance related to the DNP project topic,
4. Discuss options related to the clinical site/agency in	potential committee members, a site for project
which DNP Project will be implemented. Discuss	implementation etc.
collaboration with this site with the appropriate	
persons in the agency.	
5. Talk with selected faculty members and clinical	
mentors about potentially serving on the DNP	
Project Committee.	



### Prior to or During Enrollment in NUR 909

NOTE: Student may not register for NUR 909 until all prior student expectations (listed below) have been met and the Formation of DNP Student Advisory Committee form has been completed and submitted for approval and signature to the student's advisor, the Assistant Dean for MSN/DNP Programs and filed with the Student Services Officer – Graduate Program.

Student Expectations	DNP Advisor
Initiate meeting with DNP advisor to discuss updates on:	DNP Project advisor will meet with student to review:
DNP Project Plan.	<ul><li>DNP Project Plan.</li><li>Clinical site/agency for DNP Project.</li></ul>
<ul><li>Clinical site/agency for DNP Project.</li><li>Curriculum progress.</li></ul>	Curriculum progress.
Student Expectations	DNP Advisor & Committee Members
Prior to Enrollment in NUR 909	Prior to student's enrollment in NUR 909
<ol> <li>Develop initial DNP Project title/focus, purpose statement, goals/objectives, brief methodology plan, identification of an agency with at least verbal agreement from agency representatives and discuss with your advisor.</li> <li>Confirm the members of your DNP committee with your advisor, and complete "Formation of DNP Student Advisory Committee" form (see Appendix C). Send form to your advisor for approval and signature.</li> <li>Students may not register for NUR 909 until all of these steps have been completed and the advisor has approved of the project proposal plan and</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>DNP Project advisor will:</li> <li>Assist student in finalizing title/focus, purpose statement, goals/objectives, brief methodology plan, identification of an agency and securing necessary clinical contracts or agreements.</li> <li>Discuss options for the second CON faculty member and a clinical mentor to serve as members on the DNP Project Committee and help student finalize the selection of committee members.</li> <li>Ensure that student completes "Formation of DNP Student Advisory Committee," approve committee and content, sign form, and send to the Assistant Dean for MSN/DNP Programs.</li> </ol>
committee.	During NUID 000
<ol> <li>During NUR 909</li> <li>Select a theoretical framework/conceptual framework/process improvement model to guide the DNP Project.</li> <li>Re-review your synthesis of the literature and confirm a gap that can be addressed with an evidence-based change.</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>During NUR 909</li> <li>Assist the student as they are working on their DNP project proposal.</li> <li>Meet with student to give feedback on the first three assignments of the course prior to submission of the final project proposal for a grade.</li> <li>Coordinate a meeting with committee as indicated.</li> </ol>
<ol> <li>Develop your DNP project proposal.</li> <li>Schedule a meeting with your academic advisor to get feedback on your proposal immediately following course faculty feedback on Assignment #3. Failure to do so may result in inability to progress to NUR 918.</li> </ol>	Approve DNP project proposal prior to registration for NUR 918.

#### Prior to or During Enrollment in NUR 918

NOTE: Students may not register for NUR 918 until they have met with their advisor & DNP Project Approval Form has been signed by advisor and submitted to the **Student Services Officer – Graduate Program**.



Student Expectations	DNP Advisor
Initiate meeting with DNP advisor to discuss updates	DNP Project advisor will meet with student to review:
on:	DNP Project Plan.
DNP Project Plan.	Possible DNP Project site/agency.
Clinical site/agency for DNP Project.	Curriculum progress.
Curriculum progress.	
Student Expectations	DNP Advisor & Committee Members
1. Meet with DNP advisor at least once during NUR	DNP Project advisor will:
918.	1. Provide feedback on DNP Project IRB application.
2. Incorporate suggestions of advisor and committee	2. Include committee members as appropriate.
members in IRB application; discuss any questions	
or concerns with advisor/committee chair.	

Prior to and During Enrollment in NUR 910				
Student Expectations	DNP Advisor			
Initiate meeting with DNP advisor to discuss updates on:	<ul> <li>DNP Project advisor will meet with student to review:</li> <li>DNP Project Plan.</li> </ul>			
<ul><li>DNP Project Plan.</li><li>Curriculum progress.</li></ul>	Curriculum progress.			
Student Expectations	DNP Advisor & Committee Members			
Prior to or during NUR 910-1	DNP Advisor will:			
<ol> <li>Each student will meet with his/her DNP Project Committee as directed by DNP Project advisor.</li> <li>Finalize IRB Application for UK and DNP clinical agency, following appropriate guidelines.</li> <li>Submit completed IRB Application to DNP advisor for review. Revise, as necessary.</li> <li>Submit IRB Application to UK and DNP clinical agency.</li> <li>Obtain IRB Approval. The goal is to have the IRB application submitted in 918 or at the beginning of 910-1. The student's IRB application must be approved by the IRB to progress from NUR 910-1 to</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Guide the student in completion of:         <ul> <li>IRB Application</li> <li>Project implementation and evaluation</li> <li>Data analysis</li> <li>Final paper</li> <li>Final presentation</li> </ul> </li> <li>Schedule DNP Project Committee meetings, as necessary.</li> <li>Schedule DNP presentation practice sessions (# will vary based on project progress).</li> <li>Assure completion of all DNP Project grading</li> </ol>			
NUR 910-2. 6. Obtain full IRB approval from UK and DNP clinical agency prior to implementation.	DNP Project Committee members will:  1. Provide input to student on: a. IRB Application (if needed)			
<b>During NUR 910-1 or 910-2</b>	b. Project implementation and evaluation			
Implement DNP Project:	c. Data analysis			
1. Implement the DNP Project.	d. Final paper			
2. Collect all DNP Project data.	e. Final presentation			
<ul><li>3. Conduct DNP Project data analysis.</li><li>4. Evaluate the DNP Project.</li></ul>	<ol> <li>Attend the final DNP Project Presentation.</li> <li>Complete final DNP Project paper and presentation grading rubrics.</li> </ol>			
Prepare Final Paper and Presentation (see rubrics in				
Appendix F, G, H, & I):				
<ol> <li>Write the DNP Project final paper with continued input from the DNP advisor and DNP Project Committee members.</li> </ol>				
2. Obtain final approval from DNP Project Committee.				



Prepare final DNP Project Presentation with continued input from the DNP advisor and DNP Project Committee members.

#### **Disseminate DNP Project:**

- With the DNP advisor's approval, request to schedule a final presentation of the DNP project (See Appendix E). For specific details see the Graduate Student Handbook.
- 2. Schedule at least one rehearsal of the DNP Project presentation with DNP Project Chair.
- 3. Present the completed DNP Project to the DNP Project Committee and interested members of the academic and clinical communities.
- 4. Make requested revisions to the DNP Project final paper.
- 5. Obtain final confirmation from DNP Project Committee that the DNP project expectations for the DNP degree have been met (see Appendix J).
- Submit final paper to UKnowledge (see Appendix K and the UK Knowledge UK CON DNP Project Submission Guide

# **Timeline & Steps for Scheduling of DNP Project Presentation**

#### > Step 1: Schedule Date and Time for Presentation

Students are responsible for setting the date and time for their public DNP project presentation. Students must consult with their full committee to determine the date and time.

- 1. Review <u>DNP Semester Deadlines</u> to determine deadline for degree seeking students to present/defend their project.
- 2. Determine a date and time that works for everyone on student's committee.
- Send an email with this tentative date/time PRIOR to the deadlines communicated for the applicable semester to <u>kathy.collins@uky.edu</u> and <u>patricia.foster@uky.edu</u> to confirm an administrator can be present.
- 4. Send an email to all of committee members confirming the date, time and location of your public presentation.
- 5. Note: Zoom link for defense will be created by Kathy Collins.

#### Step 2: Formal Review of DNP Project Paper by Chair/Committee

#### Deadline: (4) weeks prior to student presentation date

DNP project paper needs to be in **final draft** before student can complete defense presentation. No later than (4) weeks prior to student's proposed DNP project defense date the **DNP paper needs to be near the final draft, from the perspective of the faculty advisor.** Minimum of four weeks prior to proposed DNP defense date student is to:

- 1. Email (a) their final draft paper to all committee members, (b) along with copy of the DNP Project Paper Rubric form.
- 2. Committee members should read the paper, complete the rubric and respond to the student within 10 days (copied to advisor). Response should include edits/recommendations for paper and a copy of completed DNP Project Paper rubric. Student will incorporate feedback from committee members into paper.



3. Student should submit revised paper to their advisor/chair a minimum of 2 weeks before their proposed defense date. If the advisor determines that the paper is in final draft form, the student will be given approval by advisor to proceed with their DNP presentation. The advisor will use the rubric to determine that the paper is in final draft form. To be final, all sections of the paper must be rated a minimum of "Average – 3".

#### Step 3: Request for Final Project Presentation Form

- A minimum of <u>TWO weeks prior</u> to the specific presentation date student MUST obtain approval from Chair/Advisor to proceed as planned with the public presentation. <u>The student</u> must submit the <u>Request to Schedule DNP Project Presentation form</u> signed by their advisor to the Office of Student Services electronically to <u>Kathy.collins@uky.edu along with all requested items as noted on the form</u>.
- 2. There will be No Exceptions to the Two Week Minimum for submitting this form to Student Services.
- 3. At least one week prior to the Public Presentation, the DNP Program Director's Office will announce to the CON faculty/staff and graduate students the name of the student, project title, date, time and location of the public presentation.

#### Step 4: Revisions After Public Presentation

Completion of any committee-recommended revisions must be submitted to all three committee members in a timely manner. Committee members should indicate how long student has to complete revisions. However, students must keep in mind the semester graduation deadlines. In order to graduate in the current semester, the FINAL copy <u>must</u> be submitted to UKnowledge for format review no later than the last day of classes. Any required formatting changes must be submitted and APPROVED by UKnowledge <u>on or prior to the last day of finals week</u>. This deadline is not flexible. Submission after 4:30 pm on the Friday of finals week will result in degree being awarded for the NEXT academic term.

#### Step 5: Submission of Final Document to UKnowledge

After successful completion of student's final project presentation, student has until the last day of the semester (last day of classes, week prior to finals week) to submit the revised DNP project paper, approved by chair/advisor for format check. There is NO FLEXIBILITY with this deadline. Students are encouraged to upload their document well in advance of this deadline to allow for formatting check. The final document must be successfully uploaded to UKnowledge. Carefully review the <a href="DNP Project Paper Formatting and Submission guide">DNP Project Paper Formatting and Submission guide</a> before finalizing document. You will receive communications regarding your submission. Students who submit or receive approval for their final document after this deadline will be awarded a degree for the following term.

#### **DNP Project Proposal Written Format**

The format of your written project proposal will be either using the format below or Revised Standards for Quality Improvement Reporting Excellence SQUIRE 2.0. Your advisor will instruct you on the format to be used with your project. Please adhere to the most recent edition of the writing guidelines as directed by your DNP Project advisor.

- 1. Title Page
- 2. Abstract
- 3. Table of Contents
- 4. Background and Significance
  - Problem statement (introduction to problem)
  - Context, scope and consequences of the problem
  - Current evidence-based interventions/strategies targeting the problem
- 5. Purpose/Objectives



- Overview of project purpose and how it addressed problem
- 6. Review of Literature
  - Summary of literature search (search strategies, keywords, inclusion/exclusion criteria)
  - How the literature supports the need for the project, including gap identification and need for proposed practice change
- 7. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework or Model
  - Discussion of the framework and how it guided/informed your project
- 8. Methods
  - Design
  - Setting
    - Agency description
    - Congruence of project to selected agency's mission/goals/strategic plan
    - Description of stakeholders
    - Site-specific facilitators and barriers to implementation (if applicable)
  - Sample
    - Describe target population (inclusion/exclusion criteria)
  - Procedure
    - IRB approval
    - Description of evidence-based intervention (if applicable)
    - Measures and instruments
    - Data collection
    - Data analysis (if applicable)
- 9. References
- 10. Appendices

# **DNP Project Paper Format**

The format of your written project proposal will be either using the format below or <u>Revised Standards for Quality Improvement Reporting Excellence SQUIRE 2.0</u>. Your advisor will instruct you on the format to be used with your project. Please adhere to the most recent edition of the writing guidelines as directed by your DNP Project advisor. Please refer to **Appendix I** for formatting specific to UKnowledge Guidelines.

- 1. Title Page
- 2. Abstract
- 3. Acknowledgements
- 4. Dedication (optional)
- 5. Table of Contents
- 6. Background and Significance
  - Problem statement (introduction to problem)
  - Context, scope and consequences of the problem
  - Current evidence-based interventions/strategies targeting the problem
- 7. Purpose/Objectives
  - Overview of project purpose and how it addressed problem
- 8. Review of Literature
  - Summary of literature search (search strategies, keywords, inclusion/exclusion criteria)
  - How the literature supports the need for the project, including gap identification and need for proposed practice change
- 9. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework or Model
  - Discussion of the framework and how it guided/informed your project
- 10. Methods
  - Design



- Setting
  - Agency description
  - Congruence of project to selected agency's mission/goals/strategic plan
  - Description of stakeholders
  - Site-specific facilitators and barriers to implementation (if applicable)
- Sample
  - Describe target population (inclusion/exclusion criteria)
- Procedure
  - IRB approval
  - Description of evidence-based intervention (if applicable)
  - Measures and instruments
  - Data collection
  - Data analysis (if applicable)
- 11. Results
  - Demographics & findings Present results of each aim and/or measure (use table, figures or narrative)
- 12. Discussion
  - Discussion of findings as it relates to existing literature
  - How project impacted project site/agency and plans for sustainability/next steps
- 13. Implications for practice, education, policy, research and finance
  - Address implications for practice, education, policy and research
  - Address cost implications and cost benefit
  - Address translation of findings
- 14. Limitations related to sample size, design, data collect
- 15. Conclusion
  - Summarize project and discuss value to healthcare and practice
- 16. References
- 17. Tables
- 18. Figures
- 19. Appendices

# **DNP Project Oral Presentation Format**

There will be a welcome and overview by either the Associate or Assistant Dean of the MSN/DNP Programs. This will include introduction of the student's DNP Project advisor and committee members. The DNP Project advisor will introduce the student. The student should provide DNP Project PowerPoint slides to all DNP Committee Members. Your presentation should be on the <u>UK College of Nursing PowerPoint template</u> of your choice and include:

- 1. Title Slide
- 2. Acknowledgements
- 3. Introduction & significance with needs justification
- 4. Purpose/Objectives
  - Overview of project purpose and how it addressed problem
- Review of Literature
  - Summary of literature search (search strategies, keywords, inclusion/exclusion criteria)
  - How findings support the need for the project, including gap identification & need for proposed practice change
- 6. Theoretical/conceptual framework or process model
- 7. Methods
  - Design
  - Setting



- Agency description
- Congruence of project to selected agency's mission/goals/strategic plan
- Description of stakeholders
- Site-specific facilitators and barriers to implementation (if applicable)
- Sample
  - Describe target population (inclusion/exclusion criteria)
- Procedures
  - IRB approval
  - Description of intervention (if applicable)
  - Measures and instruments
  - Data Collection
  - Data Analysis
- 8. Results
  - Demographics & findings Present results of each aim and/or measure (use table, figures or narrative)
- 9. Discussion
  - Discussion of findings as it relates to existing literature
  - How project impacted project site/agency and plans for sustainability/next steps
- 10. Implications for practice, education, policy, research and finance
  - Address implications for practice, education, policy and research
  - Address cost implications and cost benefit
  - Address translation of findings
- 11. Limitations related to sample size, design, data collection
- 12. Conclusion
  - Summarize project and discuss value to healthcare and practice
- 13. References

A total of (1) hour will be allotted for the presentation and subsequent meetings with the DNP Committee Members. The student's presentation should be no more than 20 minutes in length with an additional 10 minutes for questions from members of the audience. The audience will be dismissed, and there will be additional time for questions from the DNP Project Committee members. The student will be asked to step out of the room while the Committee Members discuss whether or not the student has met the guidelines for completion. Upon finalization of this discussion the student will be invited to reenter the room and will be informed of the decision of committee on his/her success.

# **DNP Student Progression Review Form**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page: <a href="https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/Appendix%20A%20-%20DNP%20Student%20Progression%20Review%20Form.pdf">https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/Appendix%20A%20-%20DNP%20Student%20Progression%20Review%20Form.pdf</a>



# Formation/Revision of DNP Student Advisory Committee

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page:

https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/03%20%20Formation-Revision%20of%20DNP%20Student%20Advisory%20Committee%2007-2022.pdf

#### **DNP Project Proposal Approval Form**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page: <a href="https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/04%20%20DNP%20Project%20Proposal%20Approval%20Form%2007-2022.pdf">https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/04%20%20DNP%20Project%20Proposal%20Approval%20Form%2007-2022.pdf</a>

#### **Request to Schedule DNP Project Presentation**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page: <a href="https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/08%20%20Request%20to%20Schedule%20DNP%20Project%20Presentation.pdf">https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/08%20%20Request%20to%20Schedule%20DNP%20Project%20Presentation.pdf</a>

## **DNP Project Paper Rubric**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page: <a href="https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/Rubric%20-06

# **DNP Project Oral Presentation Rubric**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page: <a href="https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/Rubric%20-%20DNP%20Project%20Oral%20Presentation%20Rubric%20FINAL%2008-2022.pdf">https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/Rubric%20-%20DNP%20Project%20Oral%20Presentation%20Rubric%20FINAL%2008-2022.pdf</a>



# **DNP Project Title Page** CON Required DNP Project Title Page The Title of DNP Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice at the University of Kentucky Ву **Student Name** City, State Year



# **Formatting Checklist and Sample Table of Contents**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page:

https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-

06/Formatting%20Checklist%20for%20DNP%20Project%20Paper%2007-2022.pdf

# **Electronic DNP Project Approval Form for Final Copy**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page:

https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-

06/09%20Electronic%20DNP%20Project%20Approval%20Form%20for%20Final%20Copy.pdf

# **Submission Checklist for UKnowledge**

This is form is available on the College of Nursing Academic Policies & Resources page:

https://nursing.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2023-

 $\underline{06/11\%20\%20Submission\%20Checklist\%20for\%20UKnowledge\%2008-2022.pdf}$