NURSING

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https://nursing.yale.edu/academics/phd-program-nursing
M.Phil., Ph.D.

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FIELDS OF STUDY
Fields include chronic illness (diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS); self- and family management; maternal and child health; sleep and sleep disorders; global health; health equity and care of vulnerable populations; acute and critical care; end-of-life and palliative care; genetic and environmental influences on health; gerontology and long-term care; and school- and community-based interventions.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Course Work
Completion of fourteen core courses and four cognates in the student’s area of specialization (including one advanced analysis course) is required. Successful completion of the dissertation seminar (NURS 906 in the fall and NURS 907 in the spring) every term for years 1–4 is also required. The required core courses are: NURS 901, Research Methods I: Quantitative Methods for Health Research; NURS 902, Research Methods II: Qualitative Methods for Health Research; NURS 903, Research Methods III: Measurement of Health Variables; NURS 904, Research Methods IV: Mixed Methods; NURS 905, Research Methods V: Intervention Development; NURS 908, Science, Scholarship, and Communication of Knowledge I; NURS 909, Science, Scholarship, and Communication of Knowledge II; NURS 910, Science, Scholarship, and Communication of Knowledge III; NURS 911, Science, Scholarship, and Communication of Knowledge IV; NURS 912, Foundations of Scientific Inquiry I: Philosophical and Theoretical Basis for Nursing Science; NURS 913, Foundations of Scientific Inquiry II: Theories of Health, Symptom Management, and Self-Management; NURS 917, Advanced Statistics for Clinical Nursing Research; NURS 929, Ethical Conduct of Clinical Research; and NURS 941, Health Policy, Leadership, and Systems.

The grading system includes Honors, High Pass, Pass, and Fail. Students must maintain a High Pass average and achieve a grade of Honors in at least two core courses to remain in good standing. High Pass is required in all core courses in the first year for a student to be eligible to take the Preliminary Examination. After the first year, no more than one grade of Pass in a core course will be permitted. A grade of Pass or better is required for all cognates, including the required advanced analysis course.

In addition to all other requirements, students must successfully complete NURS 929, Ethical Conduct of Clinical Research, prior to the end of their first year of study. This requirement must be met prior to registering for a second year of study.

Graduate Research Assistant and Teaching Fellow Experience
During the first two years of the program, students are Graduate Research Assistants with faculty mentors and participate in the mentor’s ongoing research.

Teaching experience is also considered to be an integral part of graduate education. Therefore, two terms as a Teaching Fellow are required. Teaching Fellows assist with the teaching of larger master’s-level courses, typically during their third year of doctoral study.

Examinations
Successful completion of three examinations is required.

1. The Preliminary Examination is taken in June after the first year of course work has been completed. A grade of High Pass or better in each core course is required. The Preliminary Examination is intended to allow the student to demonstrate mastery of doctoral course work. Passing the Preliminary Examination is a prerequisite for continuing in the second year of doctoral study.

2. The Qualifying Examination typically takes place at the end of the second year of study, when required course work is completed. If the Qualifying Examination is not completed by the end of the sixth term, the student will be placed on Academic Probation. If not completed by the end of the seventh term, the student will be dismissed from the program. The student prepares a comprehensive dissertation proposal containing a statement of the problem to be studied, conceptual framework, critical review of relevant literature,
design, methods, and plan for analysis. The oral Qualifying Examination typically lasts 1 to 1.5 hours. The student gives a 15-minute formal presentation of the proposed study and answers questions regarding the research and related topics. Successful completion of the Qualifying Examination is required for candidacy for the doctoral degree.

3. The Final Oral Examination is based on the dissertation. The dissertation is intended to demonstrate that the student is competent in the chosen area of study and has conducted independent research. The Final Oral Examination typically lasts 1.5 to 2 hours. The student gives a 15- to 20-minute formal presentation of the dissertation and answers questions. Successful completion of the Final Oral Examination is required before the Ph.D. can be awarded.

**M.S.N./Ph.D. JOINT-DEGREE PROGRAM**

The joint-degree program combines the two-year M.S.N. degree from the School of Nursing and the four-year Ph.D. in Nursing. The joint program allows students to complete requirements for both degrees in five years. Applicants for admission to the joint program must be admitted to both schools. Students typically enter the joint program at matriculation, but M.S.N. students who are completing the Research Concentration may apply to the Ph.D. program while enrolled in the fall of year two of the M.S.N. degree. Students will be assigned a Ph.D. adviser upon enrollment in the joint program; the adviser will work closely with the student to determine a plan of study, course selection (aligned with the student's research interests), and the development of research ideas. The first two years of the program are spent in the School of Nursing, completing all requirements for the M.S.N. degree. In the second year, students will complete the Research Concentration, which provides mentored research experience and the development of a research proposal. The M.S.N. Research Concentration will fulfill one half of the first-term Research Assistantship in the Ph.D. program. Students are eligible to take Graduate School courses while enrolled at the School of Nursing, with up to three courses counting toward both degrees. Students may have the opportunity to undertake additional mentored research experiences in the summers following years one and two, including research assistantship hours.

The minimum residence requirement in the program is five years. The tuition requirement is two years in the School of Nursing, and three years in the Graduate School. Financial aid is awarded by each school according to its own criteria. While enrolled at the School of Nursing, students are eligible to compete for financial aid available to master's students, but are not eligible for Graduate School aid. Once they have completed the M.S.N. degree and are enrolled in the Graduate School in year three, students in the joint-degree program receive a full doctoral financial aid package, including up to three years of tuition, stipend, and a Health Award to cover the cost of Yale Health Hospitalization/Specialty Coverage. Students are expected to complete the joint-degree program within five years.

The M.S.N. and Ph.D. degrees are awarded separately, upon completion of the M.S.N. requirements (at the end of the second year of study in the M.S.N. program by the School of Nursing), and upon completion of the requirements for the Ph.D. by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. To qualify for the M.S.N. and Ph.D. degrees, students must satisfy all degree requirements of both schools. Any exception to this pattern of study must be approved by the DGS and the appropriate associate dean.

Applications to the M.S.N./Ph.D. joint-degree program are not being accepted for the 2021–2022 academic year.

**MASTER'S DEGREE**

**M.Phil.** This degree will be granted to Ph.D. students who successfully complete two years of course work, but do not progress to the dissertation stage. To be awarded the M.Phil. degree, students need to complete all core courses, four cognates (may include independent study with faculty), and two years of Graduate Research Assistant experience, and must pass the Preliminary Examination. This degree is normally granted only to students who are withdrawing from the Ph.D. program.

For information on the terminal master's degree offered by the Yale School of Nursing (Master of Science in Nursing), please visit the School's website, http://nursing.yale.edu.

**REQUIRED COURSES**

All Ph.D. students are required to take the following courses. Not all required courses are offered every year; only courses offered in 2020–2021 are listed below. For a complete list of Nursing courses, see the School of Nursing bulletin, online at https://bulletin.yale.edu; and Yale Course Search at https://courses.yale.edu.

**NURS 903b, Research Methods III: Measurement of Health Variables** Jane Dixon

This course focuses on theory of measurement and reliability and validity of research instruments—with emphasis on interaction of conceptual, methodological, and pragmatic considerations. An integration of seminar and lecture is employed. Required of all second-year Ph.D. students in nursing. Open to advanced graduate students in other schools of the University. Three hours per week for seven weeks.

**NURS 904a, Research Methods IV: Mixed Methods** M Tish Knobf

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of mixed methods research. This overview consists of the history, philosophical foundations, purpose, data collection, analysis, and evaluation of the common mixed methods designs. Required of all Ph.D. students in nursing. Three hours per week for seven weeks.

**NURS 905a, Research Methods V: Intervention Development** Lois Sadler

This seminar focuses on the research methods necessary for the understanding, developing, and testing of interventions to improve outcomes in health and illness. Content includes the use of various approaches to the development of biobehavioral interventions. The
second half of the module deals with methodological issues in carrying out clinical intervention research. Required of all second-year Ph.D. students in nursing. Open to others with permission of the instructors. Three hours per week for seven weeks.

**NURS 906a, Dissertation Seminar I**  Jane Dixon
This required doctoral course provides the student with advanced study and direction in research leading to development of the dissertation proposal and completion of the dissertation. Students are guided in the application of the fundamentals of scientific writing and criticism. All Ph.D. students in nursing are required to take this seminar every term. Three hours per month.

**NURS 907b, Dissertation Seminar II**  Nancy Redeker
This required doctoral course provides the student with advanced study and direction in research leading to development of the dissertation proposal and completion of the dissertation. Students are guided in the application of the fundamentals of scientific writing and criticism. All Ph.D. students in nursing are required to take this seminar every term. Three hours per month.

**NURS 910a, Science, Scholarship, and Communication of Knowledge III**  Margaret Grey
This is the third course in a four-course sequence designed to socialize the student into the roles and responsibilities of a Ph.D.-prepared nurse scientist. Students develop specific beginning competencies necessary to engage in a career as an independent nurse scientist, including intermediate principles and processes of grant writing and communicating research results. The NURS 908, 909, 910, 911 seminar series accompanies the research practicum and is required of all Ph.D. students in nursing. One hour every other week.

**NURS 911b, Science, Scholarship, and Communication of Knowledge IV**  Margaret Grey
This is the fourth course in a four-course sequence designed to socialize the student into the roles and responsibilities of a Ph.D.-prepared nurse scientist. Students develop specific beginning competencies necessary to engage in a career as an independent nurse scientist, including advanced principles and processes of grant writing and communicating research results. The NURS 908, 909, 910, 911 seminar series accompanies the research practicum and is required of all Ph.D. students in nursing. One hour every other week.

**NURS 941b, Health Policy, Leadership, and Systems**  Lisa Summers
The course addresses salient issues in health policy and the challenges to linking research and clinical care with public and private policy agendas. The course covers the following topics: health care delivery systems; policy and political factors that affect access to care and its financing, delivery, and quality; challenges to evidence-based policy and the dissemination of research findings to policy and community-based leaders. It also includes theories of leadership and policy change relevant to students’ research topics. Critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and research-based analysis are integrated throughout the course. A major written assignment suitable for submission to a peer-reviewed journal (or that can be easily modified for same) is a course requirement. Prerequisite: students must pass a test based on the online Yale University School of Nursing Health Policy Module. Required of all Ph.D. students in nursing. Three hours per week.

**ELECTIVES**

**NURS 916a, Advanced Qualitative Research Methods**  Holly Kennedy
This course provides the opportunity for doctoral students to engage more deeply in all aspects of qualitative research. Guided seminars examine methodological issues in qualitative research and explore emerging methodologies. Students gain knowledge in sampling strategies, data collection, analysis, and writing. Students gain skill with the ATLAS.ti software program to analyze data. This course is appropriate for Ph.D. students planning to employ qualitative methods in research. Three hours per week (two in class; one in project).

**NURS 922b, Introduction to Clinical Research Informatics**  Julie Womack
This course provides an introduction to informatics, focusing on clinical research informatics. There are lectures and discussion on data science and big data storage, including relational databases as well as some of the newer approaches to data storage. The course explores the use of the electronic health record as a source of data and investigates issues that impact data quality and analysis. It also covers data standards, metadata, and provenance, and it briefly introduces the uses of natural language processing, machine learning, data mining, and ontologies. Hands-on sessions include an introduction to Structured Query Language (SQL) and the use of SAS for visualizing data. Optional for second-year Ph.D. students. Open to others with permission of the instructor.