



How to Become an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse With the Help of Purdue Global

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Advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) are in high demand and will continue to be, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The [BLS projects](#) that employment of APRNs will grow 31% from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations.¹ These nurses must have at least a master's degree, be licensed in their state, and pass a national certification exam.

Earning an advanced nursing degree comes with a number of significant advantages, most notably:

- It prepares you to advance to the next level in your nursing career and pursue a growing number of opportunities, such as a position in leadership or management, or as an educator.
- You'll gain a deeper knowledge of a specific area of nursing, and you could help shape the future of health care in this country.
- A master's degree in nursing is also the next step toward a doctoral degree, the highest and most prestigious level of education you can attain in nursing.

This ebook explores many aspects of earning an advanced nursing degree online, including program requirements, length of study, and career outcomes.²

You'll learn about Purdue University Global's online advanced nursing programs, including:

- [Master of Science in Nursing \(MSN\)](#)
- [Post-master's graduate certificates](#)
- [Doctor of Nursing Practice \(DNP\)](#)

With the flexibility of online learning at Purdue Global, you can continue to work and meet your family obligations while going to school. Read on to learn more about your options.

Chapter 1: Online Master of Science in Nursing Program

There are two paths to a [master's degree in nursing](#) at Purdue Global:

1. Our Master of Science in Nursing program allows you to earn a master's degree with a concentration or population focus in one of the following five areas³:
 - Adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner (AGACNP)
 - Adult-gerontology primary care nurse practitioner (AGNP)
 - Family nurse practitioner (FNP)
 - Executive leader (EL)
 - Nurse educator (NE)
2. Our [Master of Science in Nursing](#)—DNP Path is for nurses who want to go on to earn a Doctor of Nursing Practice.

How long does it take to earn a master's degree in nursing?

The amount of time you need to earn a master's degree depends on how many courses you take per term (up to two courses per term) and the specialized

pathway you choose. You'll take 30 quarter credit hours in core requirements and another 30- 60 quarter credit hours in a specialty concentration for a total of 60-90 quarter credit hours.

Students typically complete the program in 1.5 to 2 years, depending on the pathway.

What are the prerequisites for the MSN program?

Different pathways have different entrance requirements. In general, you must have a bachelor's in nursing (BSN) and provide evidence of specific lengths of time spent as a registered nurse in a care setting that meets the School of Nursing's requirements (more information can be found in the [Catalog](#)).

If your BSN is from a school other than Purdue Global, you may need to take additional courses to meet program requirements.

You may also need to provide evidence of current advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) certification, which must remain current during your enrollment.

What is the typical master's in nursing program curriculum?

Core requirements include courses in advanced nursing, scientific and analytic approaches to evidence-based practice, epidemiology and health promotion, and promoting optimal models and systems for health care. Additional courses are specific to the various specialized pathways; for more details on the degree plans, [visit the University Catalog](#). Each plan also includes appropriate clinicals and practicums.

Who should enroll in the MSN program?

This program is for the nurse with a BSN who has a goal of becoming a nurse practitioner

or of progressing into nursing management, administration, or teaching. It is also helpful for nurses who aim to practice independently.

What should an MSN graduate be able to do upon graduation?

MSN-prepared nurses can continue to work as registered nurses. In addition, depending on the area of study, they may be able to work as a healthcare or nursing administrator, nurse practitioner, or nurse educator. They may also study for a Doctor of Nursing degree.

What is the difference between the MSN program and the MSN-to-DNP Path?

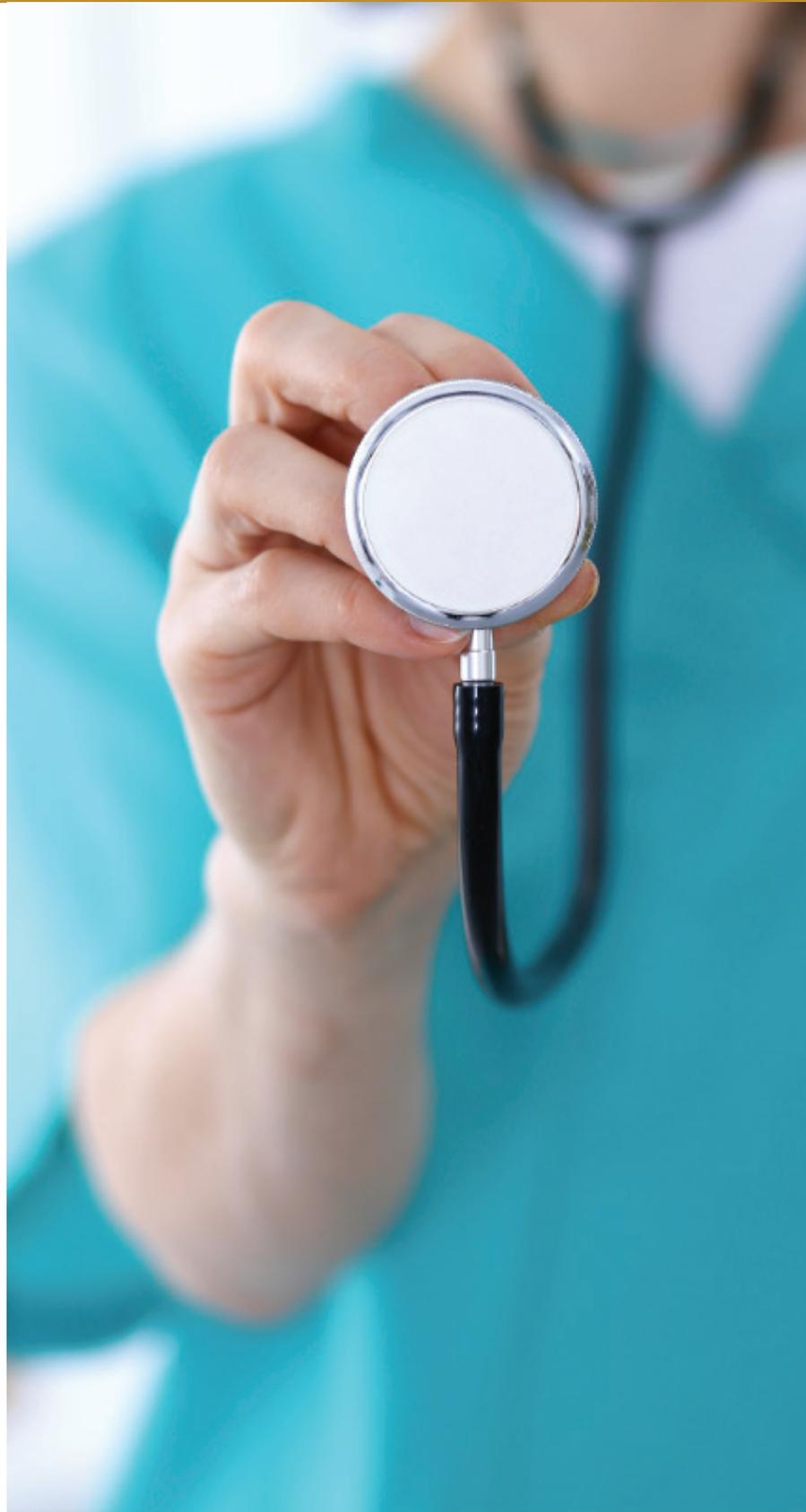
The Master of Science in Nursing—DNP Path is a bridge between a bachelor's degree and a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. If you have a bachelor's degree and plan to earn a doctorate, this is the plan to choose; completion is required to move on to the DNP degree.



Chapter 2: Online Post-Master's Degree Certificate Programs

Purdue Global offers four post-graduate certificate programs (nurses must also be licensed in their own state)³:

1. [Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Certificate](#): A program for nurses interested in working with adults of all ages, diagnosing and managing acute and chronic conditions, prescribing and monitoring medication, educating, and promoting general health and preventative medicine. The program consists of 60 quarter credit hours.
2. [Executive Leader Graduate Certificate](#): A program for nurses who plan to pursue positions in management and administration in hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other organizations. The program consists of 30 quarter credit hours.
3. [Family Nurse Practitioner, Primary Care Certificate](#): A program for nurses who want to work with all ages of patients, diagnose and manage acute and chronic conditions, promote holistic health care, and advocate for patients. Program consists of 60 quarter credit hours and participation in clinical practice settings.
4. [Nurse Educator Graduate Certificate](#): A program for nurses who want to teach others, study nursing education in theory and practice, and learn advanced nursing concepts. Program consists of 30 quarter credit hours.



Chapter 3: Online Doctor of Nursing Practice Program (DNP)

A [Doctor of Nursing Practice degree](#) is the highest nursing degree one can earn.

How long does it take to earn a DNP degree?

The DNP requires a minimum of 48 quarter credit hours, depending upon how many supervised hours you bring into the program. Students typically complete the program in 1.5 years.

What are the prerequisites for the DNP program?

You must have completed the MSN program at Purdue Global or a CCNE-, ACEN-, or CNEA-accredited Master of Science in Nursing with an advanced nursing practice specialty as defined by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Purdue Global also offers an MSN-to-DNP Path program for students who have earned a bachelor's degree but have not yet earned a master's in nursing.

What is the typical Doctor of Nursing Practice curriculum?

Students work with a DNP mentor to attain a minimum of 1,000 hours of postbaccalaureate nursing practice in their chosen concentration or population focus area. They also complete a practice-focused project that spans several semesters, demonstrating their ability to apply what they have learned to real-world situations.

Who should enroll in the DNP program?

This program is for the nurse with a master's degree who desires to expand their employment opportunities such as an advanced management role, an advanced educator role, or an advanced nurse practitioner role.

What should a DNP graduate be able to do upon graduation?

In addition to having advanced nursing practice skills, a DNP-prepared nurse may work as a nursing instructor, postsecondary teacher, registered nurse, charge nurse, director of nursing, or nurse practitioner.

“The DNP allows the student to function and to provide services at a larger level. These are the people who are responsible for directing systems and making changes to systems that improve the health of large numbers of people,” said [Deborah Adell](#), nursing faculty member at Purdue Global. “Somebody who aspires to go into upper-level management, administration, writing or changing policy—perhaps at the governmental level, at the largest hospital system level—would benefit from a DNP.”

Chapter 4: Being a Nurse Practitioner: At a Glance

Nurse practitioners are also called advanced practice registered nurses or APRNs.

- **What they do:** Coordinate patient care; depending on the specialty, they evaluate, diagnose and treat patients and prescribe medicine. Nurse anesthetists, nurse midwives, and nurse practitioners come under this BLS category.
- **Where they work:** Hospitals, doctors' offices, clinics, public health settings
- **BLS career outlook:** [31% growth](#) between 2016 and 2026 (much faster than average)
- **Typical level of education:** Master's degree, licensed in their state, and national certification exam
- **Qualities needed:** APRNs should possess superior communication and people skills and the ability to apply their education and knowledge of medicine and regulations in real-life situations. They need good



Earn an Advanced Nursing Degree Online With Purdue Global

Purdue Global offers advanced nursing degree programs including online master's degree programs, post-master's certificates, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice. Online programs offer busy nurses the flexibility to pursue an education while continuing to work and care for their families. The school's advanced nursing degrees are accredited by the [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education](#).

For more information about a specific nursing program, [request more information](#) or read more about the [Purdue Global nursing school programs](#) online.

HOW CAN PURDUE GLOBAL HELP YOU WITH YOUR NURSING CAREER?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: PLEASE READ

For comprehensive consumer and gainful employment information, visit Info.PurdueGlobal.edu.

- 1 National long-term projections may not reflect local and/or short-term economic or job conditions, and do not guarantee actual job growth.
- 2 Purdue Global cannot guarantee employment or career advancement. Additional training or certification may be required.
- 3 Graduates who pass the relevant certification exam may be academically eligible for licensure as an advanced practice registered nurse in any state in which the program is available for enrollment. Purdue Global has not made a determination with respect to the licensure or certification requirements for any other states or occupations. Refer to the University Catalog for additional information and program availability. The University cannot guarantee students will be eligible to sit for or pass exams.

Please note that most states require nurses to be nationally certified and to have completed an accredited graduate nursing program in order to obtain licensure as an advanced practice registered nurse. Each national certification provider and state Board of Nursing will have eligibility requirements in addition to these educational requirements, such as passing a criminal background check. Students are responsible for determining whether they are eligible for state Board of Nursing approval and certification as an advanced practice registered nurse in their state. Students can obtain additional information from their state's Board of Nursing, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), and the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP).

