

**NDSU CLINICAL DISSERTATION GUIDELINES  
DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE  
GRADUATE PROGRAM**

**November 2019**

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## **DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE CLINICAL DISSERTATION: Description**

Clinical doctoral degrees are distinguished by the completion of a Clinical Dissertation that demonstrates synthesis of the student's work and lays the groundwork for future practice scholarship. The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Clinical Dissertation is a scholarly experience that implements the principles of evidence-based practice and implementation science under the guidance of faculty. The Clinical Dissertation may take a number of forms. The theme that links the varied Clinical Dissertation projects is the use of evidence to improve either clinical outcomes or to resolve the gap between evidence and implementation of the evidence in clinical practices/agencies and/or community policies.

### **Clinical Dissertation Steps:**

**Step 1:** Review the clinical dissertation process and select your Clinical Dissertation committee

1. The Clinical Dissertation Chair (major advisor) must be a member of the School of Nursing faculty and a full or associate member of the graduate faculty. The remaining members of the committee must be agreed upon by the student, the Clinical Dissertation Chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. The second member must be (a) a member of the School of Nursing;
  - a. One of the two members must be a Nurse Practitioner (NP).
3. The third member can be either a faculty member or a qualified off-campus expert in the field. If this committee member is not a full or associate member of the graduate faculty, the approval of the Graduate School Dean is required. Approval by the Dean requires a recommendation from the SON Associate Dean accompanied by a rationale and a curriculum vitae.
4. The fourth member (which in the Doctoral Supervisory committee is known as the Graduate School Appointee) must be a full member of the NDSU graduate faculty from outside the SON.

Once you and your Clinical Dissertation Chair have determined committee members, formally communicate with these committee members by sending them a short introduction of yourself and your project.

**Step 2:** Determine a project site that either fits your topic or the site has specifically asked you for a certain project of need and gain support from necessary stakeholders with your Clinical Dissertation Chair's permission.

- You should include a short biography of yourself and a short project intent (overseen by your chair) to present to stakeholders.
- If the project is agreed upon, determine that an affiliation agreement is in place (if needed) between NDSU and the agency. Your committee chair will help you determine necessity and assist you in the process.

**Step 3:** Develop your full proposal.

- This process often takes several weeks to months to develop the design of the project and perfect the proposal paper.
- Assistance with writing is available from the Writing Center, an editor, or both during the writing of your clinical dissertation.
- APA guidelines are required when writing your clinical dissertation project.

**Step 4:** After the Clinical Dissertation Chair has approved the proposal schedule a proposal meeting to obtain committee approval for your clinical dissertation proposal prior to beginning the specific clinical dissertation project.

- Committee members must have the proposal draft one week before the scheduled meeting.
- Complete your proposal PowerPoint presentation for the proposal meeting.
- Once the project has received committee approval seek IRB approval (if needed) prior to implementation of the project. See IRB forms at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/research/for\\_researchers/research\\_integrity\\_and\\_compliance/institutional\\_review\\_board\\_irb/](https://www.ndsu.edu/research/for_researchers/research_integrity_and_compliance/institutional_review_board_irb/) to determine type of IRB approval required.

**Step 5:** Continue taking Clinical Dissertation courses (899S-1, 899S-2, 899S-3).

**Step 6:** Conduct the project and write the final defense Clinical Dissertation with continual supervision by the Clinical Dissertation Chair and committee.

**Step 7:** All students should file the “Intent to Graduate” form for the semester desiring to graduate. Please see [https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/)

**Step 8:** Request to schedule a DNP final examination (final defense and presentation of the clinical dissertation project).

- You will need to submit the appropriate form to the graduate school at least TWO WEEKS prior to the defense date and time.
- See the NDSU Graduate School website/guidelines at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/).
- Once the final draft has been approved by the Clinical Dissertation Chair submit the final clinical dissertation in the designated written/electronic format to committee members a minimum of one week prior to the defense.
- Present/disseminate findings from your project to DNP Dissertation committee members/stakeholders for additional feedback and thank them for their participation.

**Step 9:** Present your project, defend, and obtain approval that you have met the expectations for rigor and academic excellence commensurate with the expectations for the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice. Express appreciation to the agencies and persons with whom you have collaborated.

**Step 10:** After the DNP final examination, make corrections and work with your Clinical Dissertation Chair for final approval.

- Once Clinical Dissertation Chair has approved the final submit to Associate Dean for review/approval.
- Make any additional corrections, review with committee chair for approval and submit your final draft to the Graduate School.
- You will need to submit your approval page, IRB graduate school form, Compliance Notification to the Graduate School electronically and your payment is due at this time. Here is the site for online submission:  
[https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/graduation/theses\\_dissertations\\_papers/submission](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation/theses_dissertations_papers/submission).
- You will then wait for approval from the Disquisition Processor and make any necessary edits/changes.
- Your degree date is based on the date when your FINAL copy is submitted to the Graduate School.

## **NP CLINICAL DISSERTATION COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**

### **Overview:**

The Clinical Dissertation is an in-depth and integrative practice experience which results in a practice-related written product which is subjected to peer and/or professional scrutiny. The Candidate is required to submit a Clinical Dissertation proposal for review, which should be developed under supervision of the DNP Clinical Dissertation Chair and approved by members of the Clinical Dissertation Committee. The Clinical Dissertation must be approved by the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee of at least three members selected by the Candidate and one member appointed by the Graduate School.

### **DNP Clinical Dissertation Chair:**

By the end of the second semester of the DNP program, the student should identify their DNP Clinical Dissertation Chair. The DNP Clinical Dissertation Chair may be the student's DNP advisor or another nursing graduate faculty member. The selection of the Clinical Dissertation Chair must be communicated in writing to the Academic Assistant of the SON Graduate Program and in accordance with University policy by submitting a completed Program of Study form to the SON and Graduate School.

### **DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee:**

After the Clinical Dissertation Chair has been identified, the student should meet with that Chair to select his/her DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee members. The DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee should be constituted no later than the end of the second semester of the DNP program. The DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee will include a total of four members and must be comprised of faculty as approved by the Graduate School. At least two members (including the chair) must be from the School of Nursing; one Nursing Faculty member must be a licensed NP. A third member may be another School of Nursing Faculty member or a clinical or agency community member (see the following section). The fourth member will be appointed by the Graduate School. All members should bring expertise in the clinical nursing phenomena of interest, the methodology used in the project, or other knowledge related to the student's DNP Clinical Dissertation.

### **Appointing an Outside Clinical or Agency Committee Member (optional)**

1. Select an outside member with consultation from committee chair.
2. Outside member must be an expert in the area of scholarly inquiry providing a link from the clinical agency to the DNP committee.
3. Outside member must have academic/scholarly credentials to meet graduate school criteria. (usually MS or higher)
4. Outside member submits a curriculum vita for DNP committee chair review and approval.
5. Committee chair writes a recommendation letter describing the rationale of having the outside member on the committee.
6. Submit CV and letter of recommendation to SON Associate Dean to sign.
7. Letter and CV are forwarded to the graduate school for approval along with Plan of Study.

### **Role of the Clinical Dissertation Committee:**

#### **Role of Clinical Dissertation Chair:**

1. The faculty member who is invited to become chair of the committee may defer acceptance until the candidate has submitted a specific area of inquiry or a beginning problem which the Candidate has independently identified.
2. The Clinical Dissertation Chair will assure NDSU and agency IRB compliance (as needed); guide the preparation of the Clinical Dissertation proposal, development, implementation, and evaluative process; and the final write-up.
3. The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the entire committee meets with the student for the Candidate's Clinical Dissertation proposal for review and approval. There will be at least two meetings of the entire committee, one for the approval of the proposal and one for presentation and evaluation of the project when it is completed. Expectations are that the project will be of significant rigor to lead to a publishable product. In conclusion the project should be of use to the agency (if applicable) where the student conducted the project.

#### **Role of Committee Members:**

All materials and communication, i.e. scheduling of proposal and defense meetings, must first be approved by the Clinical Dissertation Chair.

1. Critique draft of the Clinical Dissertation proposal.
2. Participate actively in the committee meeting on the Clinical Dissertation proposal.
3. Review draft of the final Clinical Dissertation, and the final Clinical Dissertation product; share critique and concerns with the student and the Clinical Dissertation Chair prior to or at the time of final oral defense.
4. A committee member may participate in the scholarly dissemination (paper, poster, etc.) of the Clinical Dissertation project.

#### **Role of Graduate Appointee**

1. Must be a full member of the NDSU graduate faculty and outside of the SON. If the appointee is from the College of Health Professions, the faculty member must be tenured.
2. Ensures that the expectations for the student's performance are reasonable.
3. Interactions with the supervisory committee are conducted on a professional basis.
4. Ensures that students plan of study follows graduate school guidelines and that other graduate school polices are observed.

5. The fourth member should have expertise of perspective that would be beneficial to the student's efforts.
6. This individual should be chosen by the student in consultation with the Clinical Dissertation Chair.
7. The student should contact the potential outside member to determine availability and interest.



## **CLINICAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

### **DNP Qualifying Examination/DNP Clinical Dissertation Proposal Defense**

The student's successful defense of the Clinical Dissertation proposal serves as the primary component prior to initiation of the Clinical Dissertation. The members of the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee may ask additional fundamental and developmental questions, which cover the first year of DNP coursework, at their discretion. This examination is intended to determine if a student is prepared and qualified to begin work on the proposed Clinical Dissertation. To be eligible defend the Clinical Dissertation proposal, a student must have a DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee in place and have completed the first two semesters of doctoral course work as specified by the DNP Plan of Study.

The approval/conditional approval with changes/disapproval of the project by the student's DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee will serve as documentation of the student's performance. If a student does not receive approval of the project proposal by the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee, the student must correct any deficiencies as determined by the Committee. If the student receives disapproval, they must meet again with the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee. Students can repeat the Clinical Dissertation proposal defense once. If the student fails to receive approval for the Clinical Dissertation after the second attempt, the student may be dismissed from the DNP program.

Once the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee has approved the Clinical Dissertation proposal, that student is considered ready to start the Clinical Dissertation.

#### **Preparation of the Clinical Dissertation Proposal (Components on p. 12):**

1. The Clinical Dissertation proposal is characterized by logical progression of thought, good literary style, and acceptable practices of scholarly writing.
2. The Clinical Dissertation proposal should adhere to the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).

#### **Clinical Dissertation Proposal Approval Meeting:**

1. The candidate, Clinical Dissertation Chair, and members of the Candidate's Committee must participate in the proposal review meeting. The Chairperson is responsible for recording major points made during the meeting and the recommendations for revision, if any.
2. The candidate should be prepared to discuss the entire proposal.

3. At completion of the proposal review meeting, the Clinical Dissertation Chair will summarize the major points raised by the reviewers and ask for their recommendations.
4. The DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee may choose to:
  - a. Accept the proposal as is or conditionally accept with minor revisions and no re-review;
  - b. Require minor or major revisions and re-review;
  - c. Reject the proposal;
  - d. In the case of approval with minor revisions required, the candidate must submit the revised proposal to the Clinical Dissertation Chair for approval;
  - e. If a candidate does not put forth a proposal that is considered acceptable by the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee after two tries, the candidate can be dismissed from the program;
  - f. In the case of major revisions required or approval denied, the candidate must develop a significantly revised or a new proposal. The Clinical Dissertation Chair will work with the candidate on the revision. The DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee will review the new proposal and all prior steps will be repeated.

5. Required Procedures:

After DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee acceptance of the proposal, the student must apply for IRB approval, if needed and if appropriate, to the official IRB committee(s) at the site(s) of data collection/ project implementation. Approval from agency IRB must be forwarded (if applicable), along with the completed application form of the cooperating agencies, to the DNP Clinical Dissertation Chair and NDSU IRB in a timely manner. The Clinical Dissertation Project cannot be implemented until IRB approval has been obtained from both NDSU and the involved agency.

6. **Protocol for communication between the Candidate and Clinical Dissertation Chair for the Clinical Dissertation.**

For federal guidelines involving human subjects, the Clinical Dissertation Chair is considered the Principal Investigator of the Clinical Dissertation project. The candidate is the Co-investigator. In addition, any external communication or reporting about the Clinical Dissertation reflects on NDSU and the SON. Therefore, it is important that the candidate communicate with the DNP Clinical Dissertation Chair before:

- a. Submitting any research grants to fund all or part of Clinical Dissertation.
- b. Submitting any abstracts for conferences or publications that will report findings.
- c. Submitting to the public domain any materials that are an integral component of the Clinical Dissertation.
- d. Determining the appropriateness of copyrighting the Clinical Dissertation with the inclusion of any instruments (e.g. in Appendix) authored by another (whether copyrighted or not).

# WRITTEN CLINICAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL FORMAT

## Title Page

## Table of Contents

### Chapter 1: Introduction

- Background and Significance of Proposed Project/Intervention
- Problem Statement
  - Include purpose (aim)
  - Objectives (SMART) of the project

### Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

- Synthesize the current literature related to the project
- Include an evidence-based practice model and/or theoretical framework(s) used to guide the rationale for the project. There should be a clear connection between the project design and elements of the model/theoretical framework concepts.

### Chapter 3: Methods

- Overall Project Design of the Evidence-based Project/Intervention: State whether this is a practice improvement, health policy analysis, descriptive, secondary data analysis, etc. (See Types of Clinical Dissertations).
- Implementation Plan: Clearly describe how the project will be implemented step by step.
  - i. Include an evidence-based practice model to describe the process used for project implementation. A logic model can also be used to effectively describe the evaluation process.
  - ii. Setting—Where will the project take place? How will you select the project implementation sites?
  - iii. Sample / Recruitment of participants— Clearly describe the participants who will be recruited for the project. How will you recruit participants for your project? What will the inclusion/exclusion criteria for participation? Include a statement of obtaining IRB approval or institutional approval, if applicable.
  - iv. Evidence-based project activities/interventions—clearly link project activities to each objective of the project
- Evaluation/data analysis:
  - i. Describe, in specific detail, how you will evaluate each objective for the project (describe the measures/instruments that will be used, include in Appendix if available).

- ii. Provide a detailed description of how you will collect the data and how you will analyze the data.
  - iii. Data management: Describe how you will handle and store the data.
- Link theoretical framework concepts, objectives, data collection, and data analysis. Considering using a table to demonstrate the relationship between these components
  - Timeline of Project Phases
  - Resources—Personnel, technology, budget, etc.

#### **Chapter 4: Results**

#### **Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations**

## **DNP COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION/ DNP FINAL CLINICAL DISSERTATION DEFENSE**

This oral examination serves to determine that the student has met all the requirements of the Clinical Dissertation and has completed a project reflective of practice doctoral level academic and clinical work. Approval of the final defense of the Clinical Dissertation project by the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee serves as documentation that the student has met all project expectations and is eligible for graduation, once all academic and clinical requirements have been met. If a student does not pass the exam, the student must correct any deficiencies and meet again with the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee. Students can repeat the final defense once. If the student fails the project defense a second time, the student may be dismissed from the DNP program. Students who do not complete the Clinical Dissertation project or do not pass the final defense of the project before completion of DNP program coursework are required to maintain registration in a minimum of one credit of coursework each semester until the final defense of the Clinical Dissertation is completed and approved by the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee.

The DNP Comprehensive Examination and DNP Final Clinical Dissertation Defense must be completed in accordance with the NDSU Graduate School official dates and deadlines: <http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/> .

### **Preparing the Final Presentation of the Clinical Dissertation Project:**

1. The final draft of the Clinical Dissertation should be prepared in strict adherence with the NDSU Graduate School [http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating\\_students/dtp/format/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/format/) and APA guidelines and in accordance with the NDSU academic integrity policies <http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/335.pdf>
2. Once students are scheduled to defend their final dissertation, they will be referred to as candidates.
3. Upon approval from the Clinical Dissertation Chair, the student will schedule the dissertation defense. The defense will include a presentation to committee members, and may include a public presentation lasting approximately 30 minutes, including time for audience questions and candidate responses. If there is a public presentation, the DNP Dissertation Committee members will meet with the candidate after the presentation to discuss the Clinical Dissertation project, DNP courses, meeting DNP program outcomes, and role as an advance practice nurse. If no public presentation, the candidate will present to the committee
4. In addition to successfully defending the DNP Clinical Dissertation project, the candidate must complete his/her electronic portfolio documenting achievement of the program outcomes and DNP essentials listed in the graduate nursing

handbook. The candidate must satisfactorily present to the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee that he or she is qualified to receive the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice. Following the completion of DNP Clinical Dissertation defense and electronic portfolio, the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee will ask the candidate to leave as they initiate the voting process.

5. In the event of two or more negative votes, the candidate fails the Clinical Dissertation. The DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee must make recommendations to the Clinical Dissertation Chair regarding next steps. The Committee may recommend significant revisions of the Clinical Dissertation or additional study/coursework around the knowledge deficiency. A timeline will be set. The candidate will be given a second opportunity to successfully complete the project. In the event of two failures, the candidate will be dismissed from the program. Candidates who are dismissed from the program may file a grievance according the NDSU policy (<http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/337.pdf> ).
6. Once the DNP Clinical Dissertation Committee votes to confer the degree and has received the final revised Clinical Dissertation, the Comprehensive Exam Results form must be signed and Clinical Dissertation Chair is responsible for returning it to the Graduate School and the candidate SON file. The candidate is responsible for having a graduation audit done and for submitting a request to graduate with the Graduate School. The candidate is responsible for knowing the dates for submission of forms and projects to graduate ([http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/) ).
7. It is customary to give each committee member a final electronic copy of the clinical dissertation and offer the Clinical Dissertation Chair a bound copy of the Clinical Dissertation; however, some chairs may prefer an electronic copy only. The Clinical Dissertation needs to be sent to the Graduate School for final approval or publication.

## FINAL CLINICAL DISSERTATION FORMAT

The Clinical Dissertation is to be submitted electronically to the graduate school (once revisions are complete).

1. The DNP Clinical Dissertation is to be consistent with APA style.

**Format:** See NDSU Graduate School Guidelines

- a. Readable typeface using 12-point font type. The narrative body is to be printed in regular font.
- b. Page numbers are to be placed at the right upper corner, three quarters of an inch (3/4") from the top and one inch (1") from the right edge.
- c. The left margin is to be one and one-half inches (1.5") from the left edge to allow for binding.

**Please note that although the final clinical dissertation will include elements from the written proposal, it is a new and distinct paper and should be carefully edited to include only required sections and written completely in the past tense.** This final Clinical Dissertation does not include the following sections from the written project proposal: congruence of the organizations strategic plan to the project, timeline of project phases, and resources.

For help writing and organizing each section listed below, see the following reference: Resnick, B. (2013). Publishing a DNP capstone: The where, what and how. *Geriatric Nursing*, 34:95-97.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0197457213000074?via%3Dihub>

2. The DNP Clinical Dissertation should be organized and at a minimum should include:

**Title Page.** This includes the name of the project, student name and academic credentials, name of academic Institution, and the words, "in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree"; copyright.

**Abstract.** This is no more than one page long and inserted as the first page (iii) behind the title page. The abstract should contain summary elements from Sections C-G below and be 350 words or less. The summary provides an overview of the project.

[https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/graduation/theses\\_dissertations\\_papers/disquisition\\_formatting](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation/theses_dissertations_papers/disquisition_formatting)



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### Chapter 1: Introduction

- Background and significance
- Problem statement
- purpose (aim)
- Objectives (SMART) of the project

### Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

- Synthesize the current literature related to the project
- Include a theoretical framework used to guide the rationale for the project. There should be a clear connection between the project design and elements of the theoretical framework concepts.

### Chapter 3: Methods

- Overall Project Design of the Evidence-based Project/Intervention
  - i. (state whether this is a practice improvement, health policy analysis, descriptive, secondary data analysis, etc. (See Types of Clinical Dissertations).
- Implementation Plan: Clearly describe how the project was implemented step by step.
  - i. Include an evidence-based practice model or logic model to describe the process used for project implementation.
  - ii. Setting—Where did the project take place? How did you select the project implementation sites?
  - iii. Sample/recruitment—Clearly describe the participants who were in the project. How did you recruit participants for your project? What were the inclusion/exclusion criteria for participation? If not, all eligible participants were included in your sample, state the total pool of possible participants. How many were approached? Consented? Refused participation? Include a statement of IRB approval or institutional approval, if applicable. Place IRB document in appendix.
  - iv. Evidence-based project activities/interventions—clearly link project activities to each objective of the project.
- Evaluation/data analysis: Describe how you evaluated each objective for the project. Provide a detailed description of how you collected the data. Include an overview of data collection tools in the body of the paper and copies of the data collection tools in the appendix. Provide a detailed description of how you analyzed the data you collected for evaluation (e.g., what did you do to the data after you collected it to arrive at your results?).
- Link theoretical framework concepts, objectives, data collection, and data analysis. Considering using a table to demonstrate the relationship between these components.

#### **Chapter 4: Results.**

- Present the findings for each objective, including to what extent each object was met. Do not include an interpretation only of the results. What were the outcomes for each evaluation method described above? Again, in general, you should be presenting analyzed or summarized data, not individual data or raw data from individual participants. The best approach to the results chapter is to organize data in tables/graphs according to objectives and measures used.

#### **Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations.**

- First, provide a summary and synthesis of the main findings from the project.
- Discuss the findings within the context of existing literature. Be sure to include any recent literature that may have been published since you started the project
- Recommendations
  - i. Provide recommendations for use of findings in practice and for future projects.
  - ii. Discuss recommendations according to findings for the project site or organization.
- Dissemination. Describe how findings will be or have been disseminated with the project site or organization. How will findings be disseminated to the nurse practitioner or broader health care community? Plans for posters/presentations/publications.
- Discuss strengths and limitations of the project.
- Conclude by describing the significance of the project and application of project findings to the DNP role

#### **Appendix**

- Include the executive summary in an appendix

Graduate school guidelines for paging:

[https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/graduation/theses\\_dissertations\\_papers/disquisition\\_formatting](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation/theses_dissertations_papers/disquisition_formatting)

## TYPES OF CLINICAL DISSERTATIONS

### **TYPES OF CLINICAL DISSERTATION PROJECTS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:**

This list reflects a range of types of scholarly projects. This is a sample list and is not exhaustive.

- Translate research into practice application.
- Quality improvement (care processes, patient outcomes).
- Implement and evaluate evidence-based practice guidelines.
- Analyze policy: develop, implement, evaluate, or revise policy.
- Design and use databases to retrieve information for decision making, planning, and/or evaluation.
- Conduct financial analyses to compare care models and potential cost savings, etc.
- Implement and evaluate innovative uses of technology to enhance/evaluate care.
- Design and evaluate new models of care.
- Design and evaluate programs.
- Provide leadership of inter-professional and or intra-professional collaborative projects to implement policy, evaluate care models, transitions, etc.
- Collaborate with researchers to answer clinical questions.
- Collaborate on legislative change using evidence.
- Work with lay and or professional coalitions to develop, implement or evaluate health programs (such as health promotion and disease prevention programs for vulnerable patients, groups or communities).
- The scope of the project will be determined by the University's guidelines, feasibility (given time devoted to projects in the curriculum), faculty, funding, and other resources, etc. In some programs the project may evolve through courses on policy and inquiry eventually culminating in the final design of the proposed project before it is launched. By providing opportunity over a longer duration in which to explore and develop aspects of the projects, students receive feedback regarding alternatives and strategies before project implementation.

### **Examples of Projects Undertaken in Practice Doctorate Programs:**

- Evaluate interventions, innovations in care techniques.
- Obtain baseline data, design an evidence-based intervention plan and evaluate.
- Collaborate with other NPs or other professional colleagues to compare/evaluate group visits.
- Capture data on common problems and effectiveness of treatments with recommendations for change.
- Evaluate management of psychiatric patients (protocols, meds, metabolic monitoring).
- Evaluate peer-led support groups and their impact.
- Evaluate pain control in palliative care.
- Promote patient safety by reducing errors in medications • Evaluate home care comparing satisfaction with physician and NP care

### **Health Promotion & Community Health: Epidemiology and Continuity of Care:**

- Compare strategies for health promotion / disease prevention (community, schools, churches, etc.)
- Identify trends in patient visits, outreach programs
- Launch collaborative new health promotion program in vulnerable community population and evaluate it
- Develop and evaluate monitoring tools or screening programs
- Evaluate screening protocols
- Evaluate programs (care, training volunteers, education)
- Evaluate community responses to disasters
- Develop and evaluate the impact of self-care models
- Develop and test transition protocols to promote continuity of care across settings
- Evaluate high risk patients and develop approaches for risk reduction (child and elder abuse) for policy or care improvement

### **Policy-Related Scholarly Projects:**

- Implement new policy collaboratively by designing and evaluating HPV vaccination for 6th grade girls to prevent cancer (partnering with School/ Health Dept., etc.)
- Evaluate or compare nursing home policies for treating chronic pain
- Evaluate students at risk (school dropouts, depressed, substance users, pregnant) and recommend policy change, programs
- Evaluate employer policies regarding health and potential cost savings of new policies
- Evaluate the effect of evidence-based policy in NICU

- Evaluate inconsistencies in scope of practice issues and use evidence based knowledge and to recommend changes Evaluate inconsistencies in scope of practice issues and use evidence-based knowledge to recommend changes.

**Integration of Technology in Care and Informatics Related Projects:**

- Create a database for monitoring childhood injuries in urgent care and evaluate its impact.
- Use technology to improve care (telehealth consultation, interactive “home” visits, etc.) and evaluate results.
- Evaluate technology’s impact on care (information transfer to point of care, etc.)
- Establish protocols that integrate use of technology in patient assessment in urgent care and evaluate their impact.

Adapted from: NONPF Recommended Criteria for NP Scholarly Projects in the Practice Doctorate Program. Retrieved October 9, 2019, from <https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nonpf.org/resource/resmgr/imported/scholarlyprojectcriteria.pdf>

# STATEMENT OF MUTUAL AGREEMENT GUIDE

## DNP CLINICAL DISSERTATION PROJECT

### GUIDE FOR CREATING A STATEMENT OF MUTUAL AGREEMENT

The purpose of the “Statement of Mutual Agreement” is to describe the shared view between the agency and the student concerning the student’s Clinical Dissertation project. The contents of this statement will vary greatly from one student to another due to the diverse nature of both projects and agencies. This guide provides an overview of factors that should be considered in creating the statement as well as the format for the statement.

Begin the Statement of Mutual Agreement with the project title and a brief description of the project and resulting products.

With your faculty committee chairperson and the agency, discuss and consider each of the following in creating your Statement of Mutual Agreement.

1. On-site activities.
  - a. Meetings attended as well as role and level of participation.
  - b. Access to agency records.
  - c. Non-disclosure expectations.
2. Products from the Clinical Dissertation project with potential to market (intellectual property rights). If products will be produced as part of the student’s collaboration with the agency, the DNP student should contact the DNP Chair member prior to making any agreements. The ownership or intellectual property rights need to be determined in advance of commencing the project.
3. Understanding regarding written and oral communication concerning the DNP Clinical Dissertation project including final written paper, abstract, and publication or oral presentation of any aspect of the project.

### Areas for consideration.

1. Reference to agency. How should the agency be referred to within the student’s work? For example, by name or solely by general type of agency within a region?
  - a. In the student’s final Clinical Dissertation?
  - b. In the executive report?
  - c. In an abstract?
  - d. In professional presentations?
  - e. In professional publications?
2. Any restrictions in the discussion of project details?

3. Agency approval needed prior to communicating project findings in presentations or publications.

After considering the above, write the Statement of Mutual Agreement and then obtain the signatures of the student and the agency as confirmation of the agreement. The faculty Committee Chairperson's signature designates awareness of the agreement.

## **SAMPLE AGENCY LETTER OF SUPPORT**

February 25, 2019

North Dakota State University  
Institutional Review Board

To whom it may concern:

Rosewood on Broadway is writing to express its support for the proposed project: Implementing Oral Health Assessment Tool in a Nursing Home. We will provide necessary contact data as well as administrative and project support. All of the Rosewood on Broadway personnel has been trained on confidentiality and the approved IRB protocol will be followed when implementing the project.

Rosewood on Broadway nursing home is a 111-bed facility that has been providing skilled nursing care and rehabilitation services for over 60 years. Rosewood on Broadway nursing home is sponsored by the Sisters of Mary of Presentation which is a small Catholic health system.

If you have any questions, please contact Rosewood at 701-277-7958.

Sincerely,

Director of Nursing  
Rosewood on Broadway



# SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

## Memorandum of Understanding

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

|                     |  |  |
|---------------------|--|--|
| <b>Contact</b>      |  |  |
| <b>Organization</b> | <b>Rosewood on Broadway</b>              | <b>North Dakota State University<br/>Sudro 222</b> |
| <b>Address</b>      | <b>1351 Broadway<br/>Fargo, ND 58102</b> | <b>Sudro 222<br/>Fargo, ND 58108</b>               |
| <b>Phone</b>        |  |  |
| <b>Email</b>        |  |  |
|                     |  |  |

### Subject:

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) is entered by North Dakota State University (NDSU) School of Nursing and Rosewood on Broadway Nursing Home to implement a practice improvement project on oral health assessment.

### Overview:

NDSU in collaboration with Rosewood on Broadway will conduct a practice improvement project to implement an oral health assessment tool in a long term care facility. The proposed project will provide education for nursing staff about the importance of oral health, provide the tool to guide nurses in oral health assessment, and evaluate the project outcomes. The project will involve resident assistants, nurses, and residents.

### Anticipated Results and Benefits:

The participants in the oral health practice improvement project will learn skills of assessment of the oral cavity and nursing interventions for poor oral health conditions. In addition, the participants will be educated on the effects of poor oral health condition to various systems of the body with an emphasis on chronic conditions. The main anticipated benefit will be early identification and referral for patients with poor oral conditions.

### Information and Publications

Any publications and/or materials related to the activities carried out pursuant to this MOU shall be agreed upon by the two parties prior to their release and distribution.

### Project Term:

The agreement will remain in effect for the current project period of September 1, 2012 to June 1, 2013. This agreement may be terminated in writing any time by either party.

Terms of Project Agreement:

Rosewood on Broadway agrees to:

- Assist in recruiting participants for the project.
- Allocate room for presentations and meetings.
- Allow access to medical records in compliance with IRB and HIPPA.
- Follow the facility protocol for the management of poor oral health conditions.
- Assist the project staff in implementation of the project as necessary.

NDSU Department of Nursing agrees to:

- Provide logistical planning and clear direction of the project.
- Allow for voluntary participation.
- Provide education presentations and materials related to the project.
- Recruit participants.
- Share project results with Rosewood on Broadway.

For questions regarding this project, contact:

Assistant Professor  
School of Nursing, NDSU  
Fargo, ND 58108  
231-9793

SIGNED:

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Director of Nursing  
Rosewood on Broadway

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Committee Chair  
North Dakota State University

# CLINICAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL PRESENTATION FORMAT

## **Slide 1:**

Title of Project  
Student Name  
Clinical Dissertation Proposal  
North Dakota State University  
School of Nursing

## **Slide 2:**

Presentation Objectives  
•Insert 2-3 objectives of what your presentation will cover

## **Slide 3:**

Professional Introduction  
•Briefly present your professional background  
•Why are you interested in this topic?

## **Slide 4:**

Background and Significance

## **Slide 5:**

Problem Statement/Purpose  
•What is the problem statement or purpose (aim) of your project?

## **Slide 6:**

Literature Review/Synthesis  
•Suggest giving the citation for the top 3-4 articles. Briefly describe the article and why it is important to your project.

## **Slide 7:**

Theoretical Framework  
•Briefly discuss your theoretical framework.

## **Slide 8:**

EBP Model or Logic Model  
• This model describes the process used for project implementation

## **Slide 9:**

Project Objectives  
•List your project objectives (SMART).

## **Slide 10:**

Project Design  
•Briefly describe your project design including overall design, setting, sample, and interventions.

**Slide 11:**

Evaluation Plan

- Briefly describe how you will evaluate each project objective.

**Slide 12:**

Protection of Human Subjects

- Briefly discuss your plan for submitting your IRB application.