

NURSING – PH.D.

The Ph.D. degree in nursing is a research-oriented degree with emphasis on the development of nursing science in the areas of vulnerable populations, health/wellness/wholeness, and health systems research. The nurse scientist who completes this program should be committed to the generation of knowledge critical to the development of nursing science and practice.

Our Ph.D. degree program is classified as an online, distance education-accessible program. Online courses incorporate virtual synchronous, asynchronous, and, on occasion when feasible, in-person methodologies of instruction.

International students living outside the United States may apply to our online program while residing in their home country. Please note: our faculty have extensive experience working with international students and know how to support them while they develop into nursing scholars and leaders.

The program completion range averages 5 years, based on less than full-time enrollment.

Students must complete the program within 7 years of the date of the first course taken for the degree.

The curriculum

The doctoral degree program provides a deep understanding of knowledge development in nursing through philosophical, theoretical, and scientific inquiry. Students are encouraged to select a specialized area of advanced research that aligns with their expertise and falls within the broad categories of vulnerable populations, health/wellness/wholeness, or health systems research. This chosen area of concentration should align with established Ph.D. research programs within the School of Nursing faculty or other University faculty members, as advised.

The department has identified approximately 20 courses within the School of Nursing that could be selected to satisfy the requirements within the course requirements as well as a variety of courses in other Loma Linda University schools and the NEXUS* consortium. Please note: if any courses taken outside the School of Nursing are 3-quarter unit courses, you will need to take another course to make up for any deficits in the required number of credits for that category to graduate. Missing units cannot be waived.

LLU has a requirement for service-learning. Students can take either RELR 540 Wholeness and Health, or NGRD 654 Social Determinants of Health. NGRD 654 would be placed in the electives category, and the student would still need to meet the RELR course requirement.

* NEXUS Nursing Education Exchange is a consortium partnership among select Western Institute of Nursing institutions to facilitate enrollment in distance education doctoral courses that may not be available on the student's home campus. NEXUS Webpage (<https://winnexus.org>).

Progression criteria

The following sequential elements are required for progression in the doctoral program:

1. Develop an area of concentration and receive approval of the proposed academic plan by the end of the first year of full-time study.

2. Complete all required courses and credit hours except for dissertation hours.
3. Pass an oral comprehensive examination.
4. Successfully defend the research proposal.
5. Advance to candidacy.
6. Conduct the dissertation research.
7. Successfully defend the dissertation.
8. Submit properly formatted dissertation and evidence of submitted manuscript for publication to the Provost's Office FGS administration.

Refer to guidelines from the LLUSN Ph.D. student handbook and the Faculty of Graduate Studies handbook for dissertation and publishable manuscript format requirements. The Faculty of Graduate Studies sets standards and policies for PhD programs at LLU.

Program learning outcomes

The learning outcomes of the Ph.D. degree program are designed to prepare nurse scientists and scholars with a Christian perspective for leadership in education, health-care administration, and research within a global community. Upon completion of the Ph.D. degree, the graduate should be able to:

1. By the end of the program, graduates should be able to:
 - a. Embrace a holistic perspective on life and demonstrate this by integrating the bio-psycho-social-spiritual dimensions in teaching, scholarship, and service.
 - b. Extend Christ-centered values to nursing scholarship and education.
 - c. Serve as a nurse scholar through the generation and dissemination of knowledge relevant to nursing science, health policy, and the nursing profession.
 - d. Clearly explain complex phenomena in spoken and written English to both professional and lay audiences.
 - e. Demonstrate advanced competency and leadership in the use of technology for the purpose of generating new knowledge in nursing.
 - f. Engage in collaborative discourse, scholarship, and leadership contributing to health care and society.
 - g. Expand the knowledge and science in the provision of nursing-related care to diverse groups.

Admissions

Interested students are encouraged to apply to our online program. We have two entry points: BS to PhD entry and the MS to PhD entry. To be qualified to apply for the BS to PhD entry, the applicant must have a BS in Nursing. To be considered for the master's to PhD entry, applicants need to hold a master's degree in nursing, or a master's degree in a closely related field, and be a professional nurse (i.e., registered nurse or the equivalent) in their country of residence.

In addition to Loma Linda University (<https://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#admissionrequirementstext>) admission requirements, the applicant to the Doctor of Philosophy degree program in nursing must also demonstrate meeting the following requirements:

1. Be registered as a professional nurse or equivalent in their country
2. G.P.A. of 3.3, both cumulative and in nursing courses
3. Current RN license before application if the applicant is from the U.S.

4. Three electronic recommendations from recent professors, current work supervisor, and/or spiritual advisor.
5. Health Science Reasoning Test (HSRT)
6. Achieve acceptable scores on a LLU approved English proficiency exam if English is not their native language. School of Nursing admissions will identify the test which the potential student must complete.
7. Applicants may be asked to submit a sample of their previous scholarly work that represents their writing abilities.

All applicants with a complete application portfolio will be scheduled for a videoconference interview by faculty members in the School of Nursing.

Application deadlines

Applicants seeking graduate admission must have the application process completed by the dates indicated in the following:

- Autumn Quarter—April 1
- Winter Quarter—August 1
- Spring Quarter—November 1

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B.S. to Ph.D. track B.S. to Ph.D.

NGRD 651	Theoretical Foundations for Evidence-Based Practice	4
NGRD 653	Health Systems Policy Development and Advocacy	4
NGRD 657	Intermediate Statistics	4
NGRD 658	Nursing Research and Translational Science	4
NGRD 626	Advanced Methods for Synthesis Science	4
NGRD 664	Advanced Statistics	4
NGRD 679	Writing for Professional Publication	4
NGRD 680	Strategies for Advanced Theory Development in Nursing	4
NGRD 681	Philosophical Foundations of Nursing Science	4
NGRD 683	Mentored Research	2
NGRD 684	Quantitative Research Methods	4
NGRD 685	Qualitative Research Methods	4
Advanced Research Methods course		4
Electives/Concentration		24
NGRD 697	Dissertation Research (1-8) ¹	20
RELR 540	Wholeness and Health ²	3
RELE 5__	Graduate-level Ethics	3
RELT 5__	Graduate-level Theological	3
Total Units		103

MASTERS to Ph.D.

NGRD 626	Advanced Methods for Synthesis Science	4
NGRD 664	Advanced Statistics	4
NGRD 679	Writing for Professional Publication	4
NGRD 680	Strategies for Advanced Theory Development in Nursing	4
NGRD 681	Philosophical Foundations of Nursing Science	4
NGRD 683	Mentored Research	2
NGRD 684	Quantitative Research Methods	4
NGRD 685	Qualitative Research Methods	4
Advanced Research Methods course		4
Electives/Concentration		12
NGRD 697	Dissertation Research (1-8) ¹	20
RELR 540	Wholeness and Health ²	3
RELE 5__	Graduate-level Ethics	3
RELT 5__	Graduate-level Theological	3
Total Units		75

¹ Requires multiple registrations.

² RELR 540 Wholeness and Health course fulfills service learning outcomes requirement.

Chosen electives are intended to enhance your expertise in the specific content area of your phenomenon of interest, and as a nurse scientist.

Examples of Advanced research methods course (but also qualify as electives):

- NGNL 642 Big Data Analytics for Healthcare Research
- NGRD 690 Mixed Methods Research (at another LLU School or, if not available at LLU, through NEXUS)
- NGRD 686 Applied Psychometrics for Health Care
- NGRD 695 Advanced Qualitative Methods
- Meta-analysis (at another LLU School or, if not available at LLU, through NEXUS)

Content Electives: Additional courses offered by LLUSN that may qualify as electives:

- NGRD 657 Intermediate Statistics
- NGRD 689 Spiritual Care: Theory, Research, and Practice
- NGNE 503 Educational Leadership (approved service learning; is face-to-face)
- NGRD 652 Healthcare Systems Leadership
- NGRD 654 Social Determinants of Health (approved service learning)
- STAT 515 Grant/Contract Proposal Writing
- Interdisciplinary Tobacco Research

Course offerings can be found through the LLU course schedule <https://llu.edu/course-schedule> (<https://llu.edu/course-schedule/>)

Courses through NEXUS Nursing Education Exchange (<https://winnexus.org>). Students may only take courses through NEXUS if the course content is NOT offered at one of the Loma Linda University Schools at the Graduate Level.

Any paper transcripts for courses taken through NEXUS must be sent directly to Records at:

Loma Linda University Records

11139 Anderson Street

Loma Linda, CA 92350

Any electronic transcripts for courses taken through NEXUS must be sent directly to Records at admissions.app@llu.edu.

Normal time to complete the program

5.5 years – based on less than full-time enrollment

M.S. to Ph.D. track

Core

NGRD 657	Intermediate Statistics ¹	4
NGRD 658	Nursing Research and Translational Science	4

PhD Role

NGRD 679	Writing for Professional Publication	4
NGRD 680	Strategies for Advanced Theory Development in Nursing	4
NGRD 681	Philosophical Foundations of Nursing Science	4
NGRD 688	Nursing Science Seminar (1) ⁴	2

Concentration/Electives

Focused courses foundational to dissertation and/or the PhD role.	12
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Cognates

RELR 5__	Graduate-level Relational	3
RELE 5__	Graduate-level Ethics	3
RELT 5__	Graduate-level Theological	3

Research and Statistics

NGRD 664	Advanced Statistics	4
NGRD 683	Mentored Research (2) ²	4
NGRD 684	Quantitative Research Methods	4
NGRD 685	Qualitative Research Methods	4
NGRD 686	Applied Psychometrics for Health Care (Advanced Methods Course) ³	4
or NGRD 695	Advanced Qualitative Research	
NGRD 697	Dissertation Research (1-8) ⁴	20

Total Units		83
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¹ Advanced standing given if the course has been taken within the last five years or a master's-level theory course in statistics.

SERVICE LEARNING REQUIREMENT

Nursing Ph.D. students may fulfill the service learning requirement by completing either RELR 540 Wholeness and Health or NGRD 654 Social Determinants of Health.

NORMAL TIME TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM

5.5 years – based on less than full-time enrollment