



ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

Admission: PhD Program

Date Effective	September 1993
Date Reviewed / Revised	May 2026
Program Level	Graduate

POLICY:

Applications to the PhD program in nursing are reviewed by the PhD Program Director or designee and faculty members whose research interests are appropriate to the applicant's goals. Upon review of credentials and interviews, the PhD Program Director and faculty members decide upon an admission recommendation. The PhD Council then acts upon the recommendation.

The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran.

The University also prohibits and will not engage in retaliation against any person who makes a claim of discrimination or harassment or who provides information in such an investigation. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance these values consistent with the University's mission.

This applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs and activities. [Review additional information on the CS 07 Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action policy.](#)

Applicants to the PhD Program in nursing should meet all of the following criteria:

1. A baccalaureate or a master's degree in nursing is preferred. Applicants who do not have a baccalaureate degree in nursing or a master's degree in nursing as the first professional

degree will be considered

2. Evidence of competence in scholarly research and the ability to communicate in writing as assessed by accomplishments, recommendations, and the personal statement of the applicant addressing the reasons for selecting the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing; one's long-term professional goals and how the PhD Program will facilitate goal achievement; one's area of research interest; faculty who might be an appropriate match and why; and any professional experiences that have helped prepare the applicant for doctoral study.
3. Evidence of capacity and professional motivation for doctoral study as assessed by the personal statement, recommendations, and interviews with appropriate faculty.
4. Three letters of reference attesting to the applicant's capacity and potential for doctoral A minimum of two references should be from academic sources.
5. Evidence of a license to practice professional nursing if the student plans to be a TA/TF in a clinical course or if their planned area of research is based in a clinical area.

Note: While a Pennsylvania RN license or license from a [Nurse Licensure Compact](#) (NLC) state is **not** required for admission to the PhD Program, students who have a PA or NLC multi-state license will have more opportunities for funding throughout their PhD Program.

6. For applicants whose native language is not English, successful achievement on the TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo (see [Policy No. 201, International Student Admission](#)). For admission to Full Graduate Status, in addition to meeting the above criteria, an applicant must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale. For individuals who do not fully meet the admission criteria, Provisional Graduate status may be recommended.

[Read additional information on this Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action policy.](#)

PROCEDURE:

1. Application forms and materials are secured from NursingCAS.
2. Application materials for each applicant are reviewed by the Admissions Office to ensure all eligibility requirements are met and that applications are complete. Completed applications are reviewed by the PhD Program Director. If needed, additional information is obtained.
 - a. A minimum of three faculty (chosen on the basis of the research fit with the candidate) will interview the candidate and make a recommendation regarding admission. Each interviewer submits their evaluation to the Doctoral Program Manager. One interviewer agrees to present the candidate at the PhD Council Admissions Retreat.

- b. Following interviews, all eligible candidates are presented at the PhD Council Admission Retreat. Council members vote on the recommendations put forward by interviewers.
- c. Applicants considered by the PhD Council are notified in writing by the SON Admissions Office of their admission status within one week of the vote.
- d. Funding offers are communicated separately from admission decisions.

APPROVAL & REVISION HISTORY

Reviewed/Revised 05-02, 03-04, 12-06, 11-07, 08-09, 03-14, 03-18, 04-21, 6-22, 5/26

Revisions Approved by Total Faculty 3-99, 05-04, 07-08, 03/14, 6/22