The mission of the doctoral program of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing is to develop scholars of the discipline of Nursing capable of building a program of research that advances nursing knowledge and contributes to the health of individuals, families, and communities.

Graduates of this program will serve as leaders at the forefront of nursing research and its translation into practice locally, nationally, and globally. These nurse scientists will create new knowledge and be informed by a nursing perspective to enhance health and to develop and test innovations to improve outcomes of healthcare, with a priority on populations at greatest need.

The foundation of program success is the substantive match between the student and the faculty advisor. The educational experience focuses on the processes of exploring and examining substantive bodies of knowledge. The researcher’s development is fostered through exposure to an array of philosophic and methodological aspects of nursing and related basic and applied disciplines.

Our full-time PhD students are fully funded for the first three years, which includes a living stipend and covers tuition, fees, and health insurance.

For more information: https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/academics/doctor-of-philosophy-in-nursing-phd/

View the University’s Academic Rules for PhD Programs (http://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/academic-rules-phd/).

Curriculum

To earn the PhD, students must complete the 14 course units (CUs) in addition to satisfying several non-credit milestones.

The below requirements apply only to PhD students entering Fall 2018 and later. Students who entered in Fall 2017 and earlier should refer to the PhD Student Handbook (http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/resources/handbooks-forms-policies/phd-handbook/degree-requirements/) for a complete listing of degree requirements.

Most students complete their coursework within three years and then will be on dissertation status until the final dissertation defense.

Select five courses in consultation with the faculty advisor 5

Total Course Units 14

Program Milestones

- Qualifying Examination/MS-General Examination
- Candidacy Examination
- Dissertation Status
- Dissertation Defense

The degree and major requirements displayed are intended as a guide for students entering in the Fall of 2023 and later. Students should consult with their academic program regarding final certifications and requirements for graduation.

Sample Plan of Study

Students will take 3 - 4 courses per semester for the first two to three years before moving into the dissertation phase of the program.


The Hillman Scholars Program in Nursing Innovation (http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/academics/accelerated-options/bsn-phd-hillman-scholars/) is an integrated BSN-to-PhD program designed to educate a new cadre of nurse scientists and leaders to develop innovative solutions in healthcare. The program is available for current Penn Nursing undergraduate students, as well as students applying to the Accelerated Second Degree BSN program.