



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**TENNESSEE**  
KNOXVILLE

Dear Prospective Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the DNP Nurse Anesthesia Concentration (NAC) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville College of Nursing. Enclosed is a description of the Nurse Anesthesia Concentration, which includes information about the DNP program and an explanation of the application procedure. **Please read these materials carefully.**

The 38-month curriculum offers registered nurses the opportunity to develop into safe, highly competent nurse anesthetists by providing a course of study that encourages lifelong learning in the practice of nurse anesthesia. Upon satisfactory completion of all didactic and clinical work, candidates are awarded the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Tennessee. Graduates will then be eligible to take the National Certification Examination and, upon successful completion, be recognized as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA).

Please be aware that the application deadline is **October 15**. **It is your responsibility to ensure all requested materials and documents are submitted by this date. Incomplete applications will not be considered.** To apply to the Graduate School online, please direct your web browser to the following URL: <http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/> or contact the Graduate Admissions office at (865) 974-3251.

The DNP NAC Admissions Committee reviews all qualified applicant files. Approximately 34 applicants are chosen for personal interviews. Interviews take place during January/February each year, and 17 applicants are selected to begin the program in the summer semester. Applicants not selected for an interview can receive guidance for subsequent application upon written request.

Applicants selected for admission will be contacted within 2 – 4 weeks following completion of the interview process. Individuals selected for admission must notify the Nurse Anesthesia Concentration office in writing regarding acceptance of the position. A non-refundable seat fee is required to secure the candidate's position in the program.

We look forward to receiving your application materials and wish you success as you complete the application procedure.

Sincerely,

Julie N. Bonom, CRNA, DNP, APRN  
Program Director/Concentration Coordinator

College of Nursing – Nurse Anesthesia Concentration  
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(865) 305-7762 (865) 305-6852 fax  
<http://gsm.utmck.edu/anesthesiology/nurseanes.cfm>

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**ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**  
DNP NURSE ANESTHESIA CONCENTRATION

**NOTE:** All application materials must be uploaded into the online graduate application. Please see <https://gradschool.utk.edu/admissions/applying-to-graduate-school/>

- Submit online application to the UT Graduate Admissions Office. Meet all admission requirements of the Graduate School, the College of Nursing, and the Nurse Anesthesia Concentration.
- Achieve a TOEFL score of at least 550 on the paper test or 80 on the Internet-based test if native language is not English.
- Hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing or Master of Science in Nursing from a regionally accredited program.
- Have a cumulative GPA for **all nursing degrees** earned (i.e. ASN and BSN) of 3.0 or higher on a 4-point scale. Only applicants with a cumulative GPA for all nursing degrees earned of less than 3.3 must take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and achieve a competitive score in the verbal and quantitative sections. A minimum combined score of 297 or greater on the two sections is suggested. No other examinations, such as the MAT, GMAT, LSAT or MCAT, are accepted.
- Have completed an undergraduate-level health assessment course.
- Hold or be eligible for licensure to practice nursing in Tennessee.
- Hold current Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) certification prior to program matriculation. *Certifications are not required to apply to the program.*

**NOTE:** A maximum of 6 hours of equivalent graduate-level courses from other institutions may be accepted. A course description and syllabus must be submitted to the program for review. In addition to equivalent content, courses must have been taken for graduate credit and must not have been used to meet the requirements of another degree. Course equivalency waiver is authorized at the discretion of the College of Nursing Director of Graduate Studies.

- Write a 3-5 page typed personal essay **addressing the question prompts in the online DNP program application**. Applicants may also choose to include long-term professional and educational goals, preparation (including your work experiences) for anesthesia education, and qualities that would make the applicant a good candidate for a career in Nurse Anesthesia.

- Participate in a personal interview (by invitation only) with the DNP NAC Admissions Committee onsite at the NAC Program Office located at UT Medical Center in Knoxville.
- Provide 3 graduate rating forms (references) from the following:
  1. A former nursing professor that is familiar with the applicant's **academic** work
  2. The applicant's immediate nursing supervisor in ICU that is responsible for completing the applicant's employee evaluation (i.e. ICU nurse manager; NOT shift/team leader or charge nurse)
  3. A physician who works directly with the applicant in the ICU

**NOTE:** Rating forms will not be accepted from medical residents, fellows, clinical preceptors, team leaders, shift leaders, or clinical nursing/unit educators. Forms are emailed to each reference via the online application portal and completed online.

- Complete at least one year of current, full-time adult ICU nursing experience prior to the start of the program. Examples of adult critical care areas that meet this requirement include but are not limited to: Surgical ICU, Trauma ICU, Cardiovascular ICU, Medical ICU, and Neuro ICU.

**NOTE:** Nursing experience in the Emergency Department, Pediatric ICU, Neonatal ICU, Operating Room, Post-Anesthesia Care Unit, and Progressive Care Unit does not fulfill this requirement. Other work history may be considered on a case-by-case basis but must include experience in units where nurses care for high acuity, critically ill patients at a 1:1 ratio who require invasive monitoring and the administration of vasoactive drugs. For example, while it cannot supersede the adult ICU requirement, flight nursing is considered highly complementary experience.

- Obtain CCRN certification prior to program matriculation. Certification is not required to apply to the program.

**NOTE:** Other certifications such as Certified Nurse Operating Room (CNOR), Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN), Certified Flight Registered Nurse (CFRN) or other specialty certification are advantageous, but they do not supersede the CCRN requirement.

### Notice to Applicants:

Meeting the minimal requirements does not guarantee admission. The Nurse Anesthesia Concentration is highly competitive. Successful applicants are highly motivated, typically have several years of critical care experience, strong GPAs, and many have taken additional courses in advanced sciences such as physiology, organic chemistry, or biochemistry.

Graduate education in nurse anesthesia is a major undertaking academically, professionally, emotionally, and financially. Applicants are strongly encouraged to research all aspects carefully. It is recommended that you shadow with practicing CRNAs to observe and discuss the practice of nurse anesthesia prior to the time of personal admission interview.

Due to the intensity and workload of the graduate curriculum and practicum, students are discouraged from working. If students elect to work part-time, they may do so as long as academic and clinical performance are not compromised.

It is a faculty expectation for beginning students to be academically prepared to undertake the advanced study of nursing, clinical, and basic sciences. The curriculum features the intensive use of informational technology for educational purposes. All students must possess basic computer skills and equipment prior to enrollment. These skills and equipment include, but are not limited to\*:

1. Use of word processing program as well as databases, and spread sheets such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
2. Capability to send and receive e-mails and attachments to e-mail
3. Access to the Internet, maintained at student cost, for the duration of the program of study
4. Use of anti-virus software, Adobe Acrobat Reader™

*\*Additional requirements may be imposed for all students with notice*



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**PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM INFORMATION**

**DNP NURSE ANESTHESIA CONCENTRATION**

**History**

The Nurse Anesthesia Concentration (NAC) at UT Knoxville was established in 2000. A nurse anesthesia educational program has been in continuous operation at our primary clinical site since 1963. Students completing the program prior to 1992 were awarded a Certificate in Nurse Anesthesia from the University of Tennessee Memorial Hospital. In 1992, a graduate curriculum was initiated in concert with the University of Tennessee, Memphis College of Nursing to award graduates a Master of Science in Nursing. The establishment of a new and autonomous program of nurse anesthesia education within the College of Nursing at the Knoxville campus was finalized in the fall of 2000, and all students transitioned to the new program in July 2001. In June 2019, the program was approved to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree for entry into practice. The inaugural DNP NAC cohort matriculated in August 2019 with an expected graduation date of August 2022. The program is fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs and will undergo its next reaccreditation evaluation in fall 2024.

**Program Design**

The DNP NAC curriculum is 38 months in duration. Students complete a triad configuration of courses from the DNP core, anesthesia concentration core, and clinical core. The program is delivered in a hybrid format, utilizing online synchronous and asynchronous activities in addition to in-person offerings.

The DNP NAC curriculum represents a front-loaded didactic format with the emphasis on clinical experiences later in the overall curriculum. The program of study begins with foundational DNP and basic sciences content. Basic anesthesia concepts are introduced in the second summer semester in the classroom alongside application of these concepts in the clinical setting. Year-2 transitions into more advanced DNP and anesthesia coursework and focuses on DNP project development and implementation. Time in the clinical setting gradually increases over Year-2, and students focus on the progression of simple to complex anesthesia clinical skills. The curriculum design encourages the student to apply didactic concepts to a wide variety of clinical experiences. Emphasis is placed upon coordinating the acuity of the individual undergoing anesthesia with the skills and abilities of the student. The number of clinical hours, experiences, and responsibilities increases over time. By the third summer semester students are fully immersed in the clinical setting. The DNP Scholarly Project is completed in Fall Year-3, and emphasis shifts to clinical experiences and CRNA professional role development as well as preparation for the National Certification Exam.

**Class Attendance Requirements**

Enrollment is full-time only, and students are engaged in didactic coursework and clinical year-round including mini-term/summer. Please note that only didactic course offerings follow the University academic calendar. Beginning in the second fall semester, clinical rotations are scheduled continuously throughout the year and do not follow the published University academic calendar.

In-person coursework begins in the first fall semester, and **students are strongly encouraged to reside in the Knoxville area at that time.** The program cannot guarantee accommodations for students electing to commute longer distances.

**In-person attendance is required at all scheduled class meetings** on UTK or UT Medical Center campus. Students should not schedule planned absences, such as routine appointments or travel, that would interfere with class attendance in-person. Please consult the UT academic calendar at <https://registrar.utk.edu/calendar/academic-calendars/> for information on scheduled University breaks. Students should contact each course coordinator with any questions related to attendance requirements prior to booking flights, vacations or other significant travel during the academic term.