Announcing new Nurse Anesthetist – Dual Degree MSN+DNP

The following information is provided to answer our most frequent questions about the options for the MSN degree vs. MSN+DNP dual degree for Nurse Anesthetist applicants.

**Q:** Why the change from masters degree to doctorate degree?

**A:** This is a transition within the profession for all advanced practice nurses (nurse anesthetists, nurse midwives, and nurse practitioners). While the transition deadlines are still some time off, the time and resources require to make this transition make it essential that we start the process now.

**Q:** What is the difference between the MSN degree option and the MSN+DNP dual degree option?

**A:** The MSN degree option is the same degree program we have offered since 2001. The MSN degree is a 71 credit, seven semester, full-time program that will meet the requirements for licensure and certification as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) until 2025. After that, new graduates will have to hold a doctorate to be eligible for licensure and certification. The primary focus of the MSN degree is clinical administration of anesthesia care.

FIU currently offers a DNP Completion Degree for advanced practice nurses with an MSN degree. The DNP Completion degree is a 36 credit, six semester, online part-time program. Graduates from this program already hold licensure and certification as a CRNA on the basis of their prior MSN. The primary focus of the DNP completion degree is clinical leadership in practice and nursing care.

The MSN+DNP dual degree option combines the original MSN degree for nurse anesthetists with the DNP completion degree. The MSN+DNP dual degree is a 101 credit, nine semester, full-time program that may be completed simultaneously. Upon successful completion, graduates earn both the MSN and DNP degrees and meet the requirements for licensure and certification as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA). The focus of the MSN+DNP dual degree is both clinical administration of anesthesia care and clinical leadership in practice and nursing care. The MSN+DNP dual degree option is completed in three years versus the MSN and then the DNP each completed separately over four and a half years.

**Q:** Why does the MSN+DNP dual degree versus the MSN degree only start at different times?

**A:** The MSN+DNP starts in January with the Spring semester, the courses are offered online. There are no anesthesia clinical courses during this time and limited per diem work may be possible depending upon the individual. The MSN degree only starts in August with the Fall semester. Once student begin the MSN portion of either degree option, the program of study is full-time with campus and clinical attendance required. Financial aid is available to both degree options but applicants must apply early to be eligible for full benefits.
Q: Are the requirements for admission to the MSN only degree and the MSN+DNP degree different?
A: No. For either option the requirements are the same – A baccalaureate degree, undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher, GRE scores (Verbal, Quantitative and Analytical), a minimum of one year experience as an RN in a critical care setting, completed application and interview, and admission to FIU and to the Program.

Q: Does the MSN+DNP dual degree option cost more?
A: The 2014-2015 tuition cost for the MSN degree courses is $767.42 per credit and the tuition cost for the DNP degree courses is $626.51 per credit. The tuition cost is the same whether the degrees are completed separately or combined in the dual degree option. In the MSN+DNP dual degree option, there are two courses (6 credits NGR 5110 and NGR 6970) which are substituted in place of the MSN only degree – this is why the dual degree option is 101 credits and not 107 when completed separately.

Q: I see some other programs have stopped offering the MSN and only offer the DNP. What is the difference between that and the FIU MSN+DNP dual degree option?
A: Both offer the same curricular content and end with the same eligibility qualification for licensure and certification as a CRNA. They are both paths to the nursing profession’s transition to the doctorate degree for advanced practice nurses.

Q: If I start in one option can I later decide to change to the other option during the program?
A: No. This would generally defeat the time advantage gained in the dual degree option. In addition, the logistics required in administration and planning for courses and enrollment preclude changes.

Q: When are applications due, when will interviews be held, when will I know if I am offered admission? Is it the same for both the MSN degree only and the MSN+DNP dual degree?
A: Applications are due May 1st. Interviews will be scheduled in May and offers for admission will go out the following week after the interviews. Those electing the MSN+DNP will start classes in January and those electing the MSN only will start classes in August. For both options, graduates will complete their degree(s) in December.

Q: What do I do next?
A: First decide which degree option best suits your professional interest and personal circumstances. Second, complete the Applicant Degree Plan Reply form. Third, if selected to advance in the admissions process you will need to view the Online Program Orientation and attend the Program Information and Interview Session.

**MSN and MSN+DNP Application DEADLINE: May 1st**
For more information and application package go to: cnhs.fiu.edu/anesthesiology
or email: crna@fiu.edu or phone: 305-348-7747

**Department of Nurse Anesthetist Practice**