PATHWAY TO A DOCTORAL DEGREE IN NURSING

You pass the NCLEX-RN exam ▸ You obtain a bachelor's degree in Nursing or a related field ▸ You obtain a master's degree or enroll in a combined BS to PhD or DNP program ▸ You enroll in a PhD or DNP program
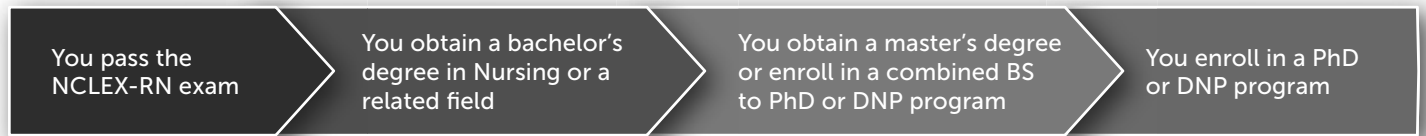
1 **You are not a nurse and are enrolled in a nursing program and expect licensure within 18 months and the awarding of a degree in nursing.**

- Achieve the best GPA possible.
- Consider Specialty/Area.
- Get involved with a nurse faculty member.
- Work on a special project or independent study.
- Obtain letters of references.
- NCLEX review and evaluation
- GRE preparation
- Seek advisement for:
  a. Masters with clinical focus
  b. Masters without APRN focus
  c. Masters to PhD or Master to DNP program

2 **You are presently a nurse but do not have a bachelor's degree (associate degree or enrolled in an accelerated MS program that does not award the bachelors).**

- Achieve the best GPA possible.
- Get involved with a nurse faculty member.
- Work on a special project or independent study.
- Obtain letters of references.
- In general, you must be an RN and hold at least one degree in nursing to apply to doctoral programs.

3 **You are presently a nurse with a bachelor's degree in a health-related field (not nursing)**

- Apply to a MS program in nursing.
- Apply to a combined MS to PhD or DNP program.
- Make sure ALL prerequisites are complete.

4 **You are presently a nurse with a bachelor's degree in nursing.**

- Apply to a MS or a combined MS to PhD or MS to DNP program.
- Consider GRE review.

5 **You are presently a nurse with a master's degree in a health-related field (not nursing).**

- Apply to a PhD or DNP program accepting applications with non-nursing degrees.
- Clarify degree admission requirements.
- If you plan a career in academia, there may be limitations on your faculty role if the master's degree is not in nursing.

6 **You are presently a nurse with a master's degree in nursing.**

- Apply to a post-masters PhD or DNP program.
- Seek advice regarding GPA and GRE admissions.