

What is the difference between the DNP and PhD in Nursing programs?

	DNP (Practice Doctorate)	PhD (Research Doctorate)
Overview	“Designed for those in direct clinical practice and areas that support clinical practice-administration, organizational management and leadership, and policy.” AACN	Designed to provide skills for scientific investigation. “Research doctorates are a critical resource for supplying the evidence base for nursing practice.” AACN
Objectives	Goal: To provide leadership for evidence-based practice and to apply and translate research into practice.	Goal: To conduct or generate new knowledge that can be applied to practice and advance the theoretical foundations of nursing and health care globally.
Emphasis	Practice-focused doctoral programs are designed to prepare experts in specialized advanced nursing practice. They focus heavily on practice that is innovative and evidence-based, reflecting the application of credible research findings.	Research-focused doctoral programs are designed to prepare nurse scientists and scholars, with a focus on scientific content and research methodology necessary for generating new knowledge and advance nursing science.
Outcome	Leadership and clinical expertise in practice arena.	Nurse scientist prepared for career in research in academia or other research-intensive environment.
Hallmarks	An intensive practice immersion and mentorship with expert clinical faculty.	An intensive mentored research experience with faculty investigators. Establishing the foundation for a program of research.
Final Project	A practice application-oriented scholarly capstone inquiry.	Dissertation based on original research.

References:

- American Association of Colleges and Nursing (AACN). (2006). The essentials of doctoral education for advanced nursing practice. Washington, DC: AACN.
- AACN. Frequently asked questions. Position Statement on the Practice Doctorate in Nursing. aacn.nche.edu/dnp/about/frequently-asked-questions.