



NEW JERSEY

Association of State Colleges and Universities

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QuickTakes!

Thomas Edison State University Launches its First Doctoral Program

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Thomas Edison State University (TESU) has launched its first doctoral program, a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) with a specialization in systems-level leadership that is offered completely online. The 36-credit, 18-month program is designed around the needs of working nurses who want to advance to lead health systems and organizations.

“We are thrilled to introduce the DNP as the first doctoral program to be offered at the university,” said [Dr. Filomela Marshall](#), dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing at TESU. “What makes our DNP program unique is that it is offered entirely online and has no physical campus residency requirements. Our years of being a leader in providing programs for registered nurses have taught us that there is little reason for students to travel great distances to achieve their educational goals.”

Dr. Marshall said the need for DNP programs is driven by the changing demands of the nation’s complex healthcare environment, which requires nurses to possess increased levels of evidence-based knowledge and practice expertise to ensure safety and quality outcomes. Numerous professional organizations have completed studies recognizing the need for DNP programs, including the landmark 2010 study by the Institute of Medicine, [*The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*](#), which called for a push to double the number of nurses with a doctorate by the year 2020.

The TESU program, whose development was funded with a grant from the TESU Foundation, features a specialty area in Systems-Level Leadership, which will prepare nurse leaders with competencies in advanced nursing practice, organizational leadership, economics and finance, healthcare policy and technology.

“With the launch of the DNP, our students can now seamlessly transition from baccalaureate and graduate-level study to a doctoral degree,” said Dr. Marshall. “This program will set high standards of excellence in nursing education as well as help to improve our healthcare community by advancing the knowledge obtained by our nurse leaders.”

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The school plans to admit up to 10 applicants in its initial cohort in order to remain focused on intensive, doctoral-level education and ensure that students meet the program's rigorous requirements. Classes for the first cohort are scheduled to begin in October.

Earlier this month, the university officially changed its name to Thomas Edison State University from Thomas Edison State College. In that announcement, the school indicated that the launch of the DNP was an important factor in the rationale for changing from "college" to "university." George A. Pruitt, the school's president, said the university designation more accurately reflects Thomas Edison's range and quality of academic offerings. "Colleges tend to be smaller and more focused on undergraduate work and teaching, while universities are larger, more complex and offer master's and doctorate degrees," he said. Thomas Edison offers programs in more than 100 areas of study, including 13 master's degree programs and 15 graduate certificates – and now a Doctor of Nursing Practice.

Learn more about TESU's DNP Program [here](#).

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