

Dissertation Examples: Nursing

About this document

This PDF lists 5 **nursing dissertation examples** and thesis examples (2025–2026), each a complete, openly licensed document you can read in full, with a note on what it does well and who it is useful for. Use them to see how a finished dissertation is structured and argued at your level before you write your own.

By [Derek Jansen](#) (MBA) · Reviewed by [Eunice Rautenbach](#) (DTech) · Grad Coach · October 2026

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Nursing dissertations

1. Improving Health Care Proxy Procurement Rates for Hospitalized Adults - A Nurse Led Intervention

Johanna Baldassari · Doctor of Nursing Practice, Post Master's DNP Completion · University of Massachusetts Amherst · 2026 · 39 pages

APPROACH Quality improvement, Pre/post

WHY WE PICKED IT

The shortest document in the collection, and it earns its place on one section. **"Project Site and Population" (pages 12-13) is the most concrete setting description in the collection:** a 37-bed adult medical unit in an urban community teaching hospital, 57 nurses, roughly 2,500 discharges a year, patients 65% white and 21% black, 60% aged over 65, average stay five days, medical residents rotating in two-week blocks.

It even says who chose the unit and on what basis. Students are told to "describe the setting" and produce two sentences; this shows what the instruction means, and why it matters: every one of those facts constrains what the intervention could be and what the results generalize to. The measurement section states the outcome as a formula rather than a sentence. Do not use this as a model for length; use it for the setting section.

[Read the full dissertation](#) · [Original record](#)

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2. Assessing the Effectiveness of Educational Training on Pain Management Techniques for Intrauterine Device Insertion

Jenna Bird · Doctor of Nursing Practice, Family Nurse Practitioner · University of Massachusetts Amherst · 2025 · 58 pages

APPROACH Quality improvement, Pre/post

WHY WE PICKED IT

Open this at "**Limitations**" (**page 32**) if you have been told your limitations section is too defensive or too vague. Bird does three things most students do not. She names the limitation: a small sample, despite an extended deadline and a lunch laid on to recruit.

She then identifies which specific claim in her own project is under-supported and why: nitrous oxide was the change providers most wanted, and the only evidence for it in IUD placement comes from an adolescent study, so it cannot carry an adult recommendation. And she says the whole area is under-researched and names that as a finding rather than an excuse. That is limitations written as analysis: it tells a reader exactly how far to trust the conclusion, which is the entire job of the section.

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3. The Lived Experience Of Nurses Witnessing End-Of-Life Dreams And Visions Of Dying Patients

Sherilyn L. Herron · Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) · University of Massachusetts Amherst · 2025 · 134 pages

APPROACH Phenomenology

WHY WE PICKED IT

Read this if your supervisor has written "**reflexivity?**" in your margin and you do not know what a satisfactory answer looks like. Herron's methodology chapter contains a subsection headed "Bracketed Experience of Researcher" (page 36) in which she states, in the first person, that she was raised Christian and working class, converted to Catholicism, spent eight years in a Benedictine religious community, worked two years in hospice, and believes the spirit continues after death, all while studying nurses' experiences of dying patients' visions. She is naming every prior belief that could shape what she hears, where a reader can check it against her findings.

Almost every methods textbook tells students to bracket their assumptions; almost no thesis shows what that looks like, and students end up writing a paragraph of throat-clearing. This is the real thing, and it takes about a page. Chapter 3 also argues its way to Husserl's descriptive phenomenology rather than announcing it. Nothing here for you if your work is quantitative.

[Read the full dissertation](#) · [Original record](#)

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4. De-escalating Aggressive Behavior in Patients at a Psychiatric Hospital in Central Massachusetts: A Quality Improvement Project.

Bright Ihesiene · Doctor of Nursing Practice, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) · University of Massachusetts Amherst · 2025 · 87 pages

APPROACH Quality improvement

WHY WE PICKED IT

The clearest model here of what a DNP quality-improvement project actually is, which matters because it is a different genre from a research dissertation and almost nobody explains the difference. It is not trying to discover something; it is trying to change something in one place and measure whether the change held.

Two things to copy. The intervention is driven by a named theoretical framework, Prochaska and DiClemente's Transtheoretical Model, and he walks through all six of its stages before saying how the model is applied on his units. That is the step most QI projects skip, and skipping it leaves an intervention that is a PowerPoint with no theory of why it should work. And the goals and expected-outcome sections state the target numerically before the results are in (90% of staff on two named units, within four weeks), so the results chapter has something to be judged against. He is also honest that the evidence base for de-escalation training is thin, and runs the project anyway.

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5. The Mediterranean Diet & Heart Disease: Measuring Knowledge Through Provider Education

Alexa de Villier · Doctor of Nursing Practice, Family Nurse Practitioner · University of Massachusetts Amherst · 2025 · 48 pages

APPROACH Experiment

WHY WE PICKED IT

The one to read if no validated instrument exists for what you want to measure and you are wondering whether you are allowed to build your own. She wanted to measure provider knowledge before and after an education session, found no reliable existing measure, built a 17-item pretest and posttest from her own literature review, and then **stated plainly that "reliability and precision were not confirmed in this study"** (page 12) rather than implying the instrument was validated.

That admission is why this is here, and also why to read it critically: the sample is six providers at one practice, and the defense of the Likert scale leans on a general reliability figure from an unrelated study. Read the Measurement Instruments section for how to construct and describe an instrument, and read the results knowing six responses cannot support much. A weak study honestly reported teaches more than a strong one written up as if nothing went wrong.

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How to use an example dissertation

An example is a map of how one study was put together, not a template to copy. These four steps get the most out of one.

- 1. Read the abstract and the contents first.** They show the shape of the whole document before you spend an hour in it.
Recommended reading: [Dissertation and thesis structure](#)
- 2. Read the chapter you are writing next.** Look at how it opens, how it is organized under headings, and how it ends.
Recommended reading: [How to write the methodology chapter](#)
- 3. Check the level and the field.** A doctoral thesis goes further than a master's dissertation, and fields differ in what they expect.
Recommended reading: [What is a dissertation?](#)
- 4. Follow your own handbook over any example.** Where an example and your program disagree, your program wins.
Recommended reading: [Every example in the collection](#)

Used this way, two or three good examples teach you more than any amount of general advice.