



measurement, transitions of care, interprofessional communication and team leadership, risk assessment, implementation of best practices based on evidence, and quality improvement.

DNP in Nursing along with post-Nurse Leader specialization and post-graduate certificate. The new specialization is requested in response to changing standards and national trends. At the annual CNL Summit in February of 2023, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) identified the increasing need for the CNL to be prepared at the doctoral level.<sup>1</sup> With the increased complexity of healthcare, a higher level of scientific knowledge, along with clinical expertise is required.<sup>2</sup> In discussions and work groups at the meeting, the intent to establish a task force to work on the transition to a doctoral-level CNL was discussed. The CNL program at SDSU

competencies for the CNL. As AACN changes these documents to reflect the competencies at the doctoral level, it will be necessary for SDSU to also transition to the DNP to meet new standards for the current CNL program.

The larger healthcare institutions and several smaller hospitals in South Dakota currently have CNLs working in a variety of capacities, particularly in their quality improvement roles. As the role transitions to a broader scope, it will be imperative that SDSU prepare its graduates to meet the new standards. Workforce demands are expected to increase both nationally and within the state.

No significant new resources will be needed to launch and sustain the program. The Nursing (DNP) - Clinical Nurse Leader Specialization will be offered online with a field-based practicum and utilize mainly existing courses offered at SDSU in combination with newly developed courses. The College of Nursing has two faculty members with CNL specializations which would be sufficient to meet the qualifications to teach the CNL-specific coursework. The Nursing (DNP) - Clinical Nurse Leader Specialization will replace the courses offered a





completion of the CNL track, the graduate will be eligible for the Clinical Nurse Leader certification.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

South Dakota State University  
New Specialization: Nursing (DNP) site