



2026 GNSA Conference

Conference Attendee Justification Toolkit

Your success as a graduate student is shaped by both your success in the classroom and your exposure to professional development opportunities that help you grow as a nurse leader, contribute knowledge and innovation to the profession, and serve the healthcare needs of patients across the continuum of care.

Attending the 2026 GNSA Conference will help you focus on developing those critical skills and flourish in your next professional role.

We have created this resource and information below to help you communicate the value of participating in the GNSA Conference to your dean or current supervisor. Throughout this toolkit, you will find resources and information that will help you demonstrate the value that attendance can bring to your personal and institutional success. If you have any questions, contact Marta Okoniewski at mokoniewski@aacnnursing.org.

JUSTIFICATION WORKSHEET FOR YOUR DEAN/SUPERVISOR

What is the cost of you attending the event?

Factor in registration fee (\$299), hotel cost (\$199/night plus tax), and travel/meals.

Who is going to be there?

Your new network of colleagues and mentors. Focus on the relationships you hope to establish with fellow attendees, student leaders, and speakers.

What answers can I find here for challenges I am currently experiencing?

Are you looking for leadership development, opportunities to share your research, or get insight on how to navigate the next stage of your career?

Are there any testimonials from people who have attended in the past?

Recaps from past conferences as well as some attendee testimonials can be found here:
<https://www.aacnnursing.org/gnsa-conference/past-conferences>

How will you value the experience of this event? The cost of the problems you are trying to solve, the answers you are looking for, the people you will meet, etc.

TEMPLATE EMAIL TO YOUR DEAN/SUPERVISOR

Subject: Requesting Support for Attending the 2026 GNSA Conference

Dear [Dean/Supervisor's Name],

To help develop my leadership skills, I would like to request approval and support to attend the **2026 Graduate Nursing Student Academy (GNSA) Conference**, as I believe it will deliver measurable value to me as a graduate nursing student and to our school/organization. This event is hosted by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing in Washington, DC on **July 30-31, 2026**.

The GNSA Conference is the only national event tailored specifically for graduate nursing students looking to develop as a nursing leader ready to shape the future of healthcare. This year's theme is focused on *Legacy of Care: Leadership and Innovation for a Sustainable Future*, and I am excited by the opportunity to explore new horizons in nursing leadership and enrichment that I can share with colleagues at schools and in the practice setting.

I am seeking sponsorship for the registration fee, travel expenses, and housing expenses during the conference. A detailed cost breakdown is included below.

In addition, this key nursing student event will offer:

Strategic Connections: Key attendees include nursing leaders and other graduate nursing students. Connecting with these individuals will allow me to excel in my graduate program and the next step in my nursing career.

Unique Value: This event offers sessions that address challenges we're currently facing and provide insights we can't easily access elsewhere. In addition, the event offers 7 Nursing Continuing Professional Development contact hours.

Impact: The knowledge and connections gained will help me [state expected outcomes—solve problems, improve processes, create connections, etc.]. I'm confident this experience aligns with my priorities as a nursing student and professional.

Estimated Costs

Item	Cost
Registration	\$299
Hotel (2 nights)	\$398 plus tax
Travel & Meals	[\$Amount]
Total	[\$Total]

This is a timely strategic opportunity for my own professional development and broader goals. Please let me know if you'd like additional details or a follow-up discussion. Thank you for considering this request.

Best regards,

[Your Name]