

Creighton University College of Nursing

Practicum Sites

When considering practicum sites and preceptors, the student should consider the geographical location and the patient population served. Students may select practicum sites in their local community as long as that facility can provide the diversity of age and clinical experiences necessary to best prepare the student to achieve program goals and objectives.

Students may see patients in conjunction **Guidelines for Clinical Practica**

with the preceptor in settings appropriate to the role specialty and the objectives of the course. It is the student's responsibility to identify facilities and adhere to site specific policies and procedures. Students may identify potential preceptors by networking via the work environment, professional organizations, or community contacts. Once a facility has been identified, a formal request will be submitted via eValue. eValue is available through your specific practicum, residency or DNP scholarly project course.

Prior to or during practicum courses and subsequent practicum or residency courses, the student may be responsible for identifying a qualified practicum preceptor who meets the standards of Creighton University College of Nursing. The student's immediate supervisor at his or her place of employment may not serve as the student's preceptor. A student's immediate family member may not serve as the student's preceptor. The student may not precept on a unit in which an immediate family member is employed.

Preceptor Qualifications

- See specific track qualifications below.
- The student's immediate supervisor at his or her place of employment may not serve as the student's preceptor.
- A student's immediate family member may not serve as the student's preceptor.
- The student may not precept on a unit in which an immediate family member is employed.

Preceptor Qualifications for students in Nurse Practitioner Tracks

Students in advanced practice nurse practitioner programs must meet the standards of the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF). Preceptors may be nurse practitioners (NPs), physicians (MD or DO), or physician assistants (PAs) who have graduated from an approved/accredited program and who are appropriately licensed and credentialed to practice in his/her area of practice. Other professionals may be considered. Professionals from other disciplines must be licensed and credentialed to practice in her/his area of practice. A minimum of one year of experience in the population-focused area of practice is required. Two years of experience is preferred. Over the course of the program, students must complete some clinical experiences with a nurse practitioner, preferable an NP with expertise in the population-focused area of practice. Over the course of the program, students must have the majority of their clinical experiences with preceptors in the same population-focused area of practice. Faculty approval is required for all preceptors.

Preceptor Qualifications for Students in Nursing Administration and Leadership (NAL)

Preceptors must have a master's degree or higher and be prepared and work in a specialty area (i.e.: leadership, human resources or etc.) that assists the student in meeting the practicum objectives. A minimum of one year of experience in an administrative or leadership specialty is required, and two years is preferred. Faculty approval is required for all preceptors.

Preceptor Qualifications for students in the Nurse Educator Track

For the direct patient care hours required in NUR 765 Nurse Educator Clinical Focus, preceptors may be nurse practitioners (NP's) or physicians (MD's/DO's) or physician assistants (PA's) who have graduated from an approved/accredited program and who are appropriately licensed and certified in their specialty. A minimum of one year of experience is required and two years is preferred. Preceptors may also be a Registered Nurse or Advanced Practice Nurse with a Master's Degree or higher. A minimum of one year of experience is required in the specialty area and two years is preferred.

For the remaining practicum and residency hours, preceptors must be a Registered Nurse with a Master's Degree in Nursing or Doctoral Degree in a related field who is employed as a Nurse Educator in an academic or clinical setting. If employed in a clinical setting, the preceptor's primary responsibility must focus on education. A minimum of one year of experience in the role is required and two years is preferred.

Professional Conduct, Attire, and Hygiene

The College abides by the professional appearance policies of each clinical facility. It is the right of the faculty and/or agency staff to identify what constitutes professional appearance. Graduate students in clinical settings and situations should be professionally dressed and groomed.

- Lab coat (subject to practicum site recommendation)
- CUCON name tags are required at all times when in the practicum agency or whenever the student is representing Creighton University Name tags should specify the student's name, professional credentials (RN, BSN, MSN) and either Nurse Practitioner Student or Graduate Nursing Student.
- Students should identify and abide by the facility's professional appearance policy. If an agency policy does not exist, the student should wear professional attire suitable for the setting.
- It is the right of the faculty and / or agency to identify what constitutes appropriate dress.

Each student is expected to:

- Perform in a professional and cooperative manner.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the opinions of others (i.e., faculty, staff, preceptors, peers).
- Treat faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, and patients with respect.
- Use time of self and others productively.
- Be punctual for practicum, seminars, and other appointments.
- Identify own learning needs.
- Take responsibility for meeting own learning needs.
- Assist peers in meeting their learning needs.
- Behave consistently in a professional manner.
- Seek assistance when needed.
- Negotiate changes in deadlines, when needed, in advance of the original deadline.
- Use appropriate language and medical terminology in discussions with others.
- Prepare in advance for practicum, seminars, and scheduled meetings with faculty, preceptors, staff, or peers.
- Participate actively in seminar discussion.
- Compliance with all HIPPA requirements.

Scheduling of Practicum Hours

Students are expected to schedule the required practicum hours at the convenience and availability of the preceptor. Students should not expect or ask preceptors to conform to the students' personal and/or employment needs. Students will conform their schedule to the needs of the preceptor and his or her patient population. Prior to beginning the practicum experience, students and preceptors need to agree on the days and times that the student will be in the practicum agency. Students will then share that schedule with the practicum facilitator via eValue, which is adjusted or updated as necessary to maintain currency.

The total number of direct clinical hours required for each practicum is listed on each student's Program of Study.

Attendance and Missed Practicum Practice and/or Laboratory Experience Time

Students are expected to develop a calendar of planned practicum experiences during the first week of each practicum or residency course and to submit this calendar to the preceptor and the faculty via eValue. The calendar allows the faculty to know when the student is expected to be in the practicum setting and provides a mechanism for contacting the student during practicum hours should that be necessary. The calendar should be available to the individual in the practicum setting responsible for scheduling return visits so that a patient can be scheduled for a follow-up visit, if needed, on a day when the student will be in the clinic. This allows the student to follow through with the patient and to evaluate the outcomes of diagnostic tests or prescribed therapy.

Unexpected illness of the student, family, and/or preceptor resulting in an absence from practicum should be discussed with practicum faculty and the parties involved as soon as reasonably possible. Failure to notify the preceptor of an absence from the practicum setting as negotiated is unacceptable and may place the student and practicum placement in jeopardy.

Absences resulting in lost practicum hours and/or laboratory experiences must be completed before the end of the semester and at the convenience of the preceptor and/or faculty. Extension of the practicum experience with the preceptor cannot be assumed.

Students are responsible for monitoring the number of practicum hours and for accurately documenting those hours as described in the syllabus. Students are expected to review hours and experiences with faculty at the times shown on the Schedule and Due Dates document for each course. Faculty may require a change in practicum sites to insure an adequate practicum experience. At the end of each term, students should review a summary of practicum hours to date with faculty to identify areas requiring development. The EValue system will maintain a summary of student experiences for certification purposes. Students are encouraged to retain their own personal copies of these documents for use, if needed, for documentation or verification of practicum hours and/or preceptors for State Board of Nursing and certifying agencies.

Preparation for Practicum Assignments

Students should spend at least one day prior to the beginning of the practicum experience orienting to the practicum facility. It is expected that this experience will help students to start the term positively and prepared.

Compliance Requirements

Students are responsible for remaining compliant with all College of Nursing and agency requirements. No practicum hours may be completed or applied to the course requirements until all compliance requirements have been met and recorded as such by the Compliance Specialist. If a student becomes noncompliant during a semester, they will not

be allowed to continue to earn practicum hours until the compliance issue has been resolved. Failure to do so may result in administrative withdrawal from the course.

Responsibilities of the Preceptor and Faculty of the College of Nursing Preceptor Responsibilities

The preceptor works directly with graduate nursing students and closely with faculty to facilitate the student's practicum experience and achievement of practicum objectives. Specifically, the preceptor will:

1. Precept the student on a one-to-one basis.
2. Participate in student instruction while serving as an expert, role model, and consultant during the practicum experience.
3. Provide student orientation to the facility and introduction to staff.
4. Provide space and room facilities as needed for the student's practicum experience.
5. Critique the student's practicum performance including practicum skills and knowledge.
6. Evaluate the student's practicum competency via communication with student and faculty.
7. Notify the graduate faculty immediately of any problems arising from the student's performance.
8. Provide feedback to the student about performance and progress on an ongoing basis.
9. Facilitate student experiences through evaluation of practicum experience, participation in quality management of practicum experience, and identification of new learning experiences.

Faculty Responsibilities

The faculty, in collaboration with the student and preceptor, will provide oversight of the practicum experiences to optimize the student's personal and professional development. Specifically, the faculty will:

1. Identify practicum educational requirements and objectives with the preceptor and student.
2. Orient students and preceptors to the respective roles and responsibilities.
3. Assess the adequacy of space and appropriateness of patients/clients within the preceptor environment to insure adequate student learning experiences and meeting learning objectives.
4. Ensure that appropriate agreements are signed with agencies and preceptors.
5. Respond to problems and concerns of preceptors and students.
6. Communicate periodically with preceptor and student about progress in meeting goals and devise new strategies for attaining goals if needed.
7. Evaluate the student's practicum competency and meeting of practicum learning objectives through scheduled communication with preceptor and in consideration of the written preceptor evaluation.
8. Schedule site visit as required or needed.
9. Evaluate the student's practicum competency via communication with student, preceptor, faculty, and through site visits as indicated.
10. Facilitate the student-preceptor-faculty relationship through continual constructive feedback
11. Assign the final course grade.

The agency experience is guided by the practicum preceptor at that agency. Faculty in the College of Nursing are available for consultation, assistance and evaluation. If at any time a student is determined to be unsafe by preceptor or faculty, appropriate steps according to College of Nursing policy will be initiated by faculty.

Evaluation of Practicum Experience

Post-Graduate-DNP tracks

Upon acceptance a student will be required to provide evidence of the number of practicum hours completed in their previous MSN advanced practice degree. Those hours will be added to the 375 hours required in the DNP Residency course. A student must earn 1000 hours by graduation.

Post-BSN to DNP: Documentation of Practicum Experience and Hours

Documentation of practicum experiences and hours is achieved in a variety of ways. Please see course syllabus for details.

Preceptor's Evaluation of the Student

The preceptor should take the opportunity to provide feedback to the student, both on an ongoing basis and at defined intervals. Students value receiving feedback as soon as possible. Feedback should be provided in a private setting. It is also helpful to provide both positive and negative feedback. Faculty will also solicit feedback from the preceptor. Face-to-face meetings or phone conversations can be scheduled throughout the semester. The preceptor is encouraged to contact the faculty at any time to provide feedback about the student's performance. The preceptor will submit a final evaluation of student performance.

Clinical Competency Policy

After beginning clinical work in Practicum I for the individual's specialty track, advanced practice nursing students who have an interruption in graduate clinical course work of longer than one semester may be required to demonstrate clinical competency before engaging in clinical experiences in subsequent courses. The criteria for the competency exam will be based on the last clinical course completed.

Clinical Practicum Hours

The total number of practicum hours for the various advanced practice nursing options is shown on the Program of Study for that option and on the individual student's Plan of Study. Direct patient care clinical hours refer to hours in which direct clinical care is provided to individuals and families; these hours do not include skill lab hours, physical assessment practice sessions, or a community project if it does not include provision of direct care.

Clinical Hours Between Semesters

College of Nursing students are not allowed to accumulate clinical hours between semesters.

Updated August 2020.