Dear Students,

Congratulations! The practicum experiences are a significant and exciting part of the doctoral student's educational journey. The following information will serve as a guide for you. There are multiple practicum requirements that must be completed prior to starting your practicum experience. Failure to meet these requirements will result in not being able to register for a practicum course.

Students are required to complete 180 practicum hours per practicum course. Preparing for the practicum will involve selecting a practicum preceptor and site as well as submitting documentation to the School of Nursing through Meditrek® (a web based tracking tool). This is a reminder that all components of the Meditrek® application are required and must be approved before practicum hours can be started. This process may take a minimum of three months to complete so starting early is imperative.

Practicum Requirements

Students are required to complete 180 practicum hours per semester, which works out to about 12 hours per week. Below is a guideline for how hours can be met.

Distribution of practicum hours for NURS 930, 945, 960 and 965 may be the following:
- In these courses, students are encouraged to spend practicum time with experts in various fields such as healthy policy, leadership, informatics and practice management.
- Practicum hours must be augmented with experience for the student to achieve the competencies in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing DNP Essentials.
- Students will determine individual goals and learning objectives consistent with a learning contract negotiated with a preceptor and approved by faculty.

Topical areas for practicum may include:
- Processes of care
- Safety/Quality
- Organizational leadership
- Professional leadership
- Healthy policy
- Healthcare economics
- Ethical issues
- Population health
- Interprofessional care

Identifying a Preceptor

Preceptors may have a variety of skills, educational credentials, and expertise and may be selected from a variety of disciplines. The decision on what constitutes an appropriate preceptor will depend on the route and area of academic and practicum interest of the student. Students may identify preceptors by networking via their work environment, student peers, professional organizations (AANP), state organizations (state NP organization), or community contacts.

Students are encouraged to arrive at a potential practicum site in-person and dressed professionally with a resume and cover letter in-hand. The cover letter should include the name of the course and number of required practicum hours for which you are requesting preceptorship.

Additionally, it is recommended to follow-up after the initial visit. It is ideal to pursue multiple sites, rather than relying on one preceptor.

Preceptor requirements:
- Must hold a current/active and unencumbered license to practice in the state where the practicum site is located
- Preceptor must have greater than one year (2,080 hours) of practice experience
- Preceptor cannot be a member of the student's immediate or extended family
- Preceptor cannot be the student's employer or direct supervisor
- Precept must be present in the practicum site at all times to directly supervise all practicum hours
- Preceptor must be able to provide constructive feedback

Examples of potential practicum preceptors include:
- Nursing Administrator
- Director (nursing, professional practice, emergency service)
- Chief Nursing Officer/Executive
- Chief Strategy Officer
- Chief Practicum Officer
- Vice President of Patient Care Services/Operations
- Organization Administrator
- Licensed Nurse Practitioner or Physician

Identifying a Practicum Site

Students must be proactive in finding a practicum site that will ensure their success. Students will want to choose a practicum site that provides the best opportunity to promote learning. Students goals should be integrated and lead to the achievement of course outcomes and the development of competencies in the *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (DNP Essentials) as published by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

Choosing a practicum site:
- Students may use networks and working relationships in the field to determine a location for completing the practicum
- Students may be able to conduct practicum hours at their place of employment as long as those hours relate to course outcomes and are not during normal working hours
- Consider employment goals when choosing a practicum site

Practicum Compliance Requirements:
- The practicum site may have various requirements for students. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all site requirements are understood and completed prior to registering for the first project and practicum course. This may include, but is not limited to: proof of liability insurance, HIPAA training, proof of licensure, proof of CPR certification, background screening, physical examination, drug screening, and proof of health insurance and current immunizations.
- Organizations or facilities who charge additional fees are the student's financial responsibility

Examples of practice locations:
- Health policy internship
- Department of Health
- Ethics consultation/committee
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) epidemiology program
- State Nurses Association
- American Nurses Association
- State Coalition of Nurse Practitioners
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners

Nursing License

Students must provide proof of a current, unencumbered, unrestricted, and valid licensure (RN and/or APRN) in the state(s) in which they plan to complete practicum courses.

Affiliation Agreement

An Affiliation Agreement between Loyola University New Orleans and a third-party facility selected by the student is required in order to offer students nursing experience in real-world healthcare programs. The agreement establishes the terms of the relationship between the University and the facility. An Affiliation Agreement must be obtained for each practicum site the student plans to utilize. Loyola maintains a list of the hundreds of organizations with which a current active Affiliation Agreement exists. Any existing Affiliation Agreement is processed quickly as it has already been approved.

If a new agreement is needed, students must initiate the process of establishing an Affiliation Agreement with the organization. Loyola provides a standard Affiliation Agreement (see http://cnh.loyno.edu/nursing for the Affiliation Agreement form). If completed, but unmodified, this form is pre-approved by Loyola's legal department and processed relatively quickly. Extensive modifications or forms generated by the affiliate site may be used in place of the standard agreement. The approval process for these non-Loyola Affiliation Agreements can take several months and may result in no agreement being achieved. Further details may be found in Meditrek®, where students can submit agreements and track their progress as they move through the system.

Castlebranch Requirements

Students must be fully adherent to requirements listed in Castlebranch throughout the duration of the practicum with all items submitted to Castlebranch in a timely fashion. If students are not up-to-date with Castlebranch requirements, they will not be registered for the practicum course.

The entire application must be approved prior to the student being allowed to enroll in the course.

For more information about the pre-practicum requirements review the Resources page on the School of Nursing website http://cnh.loyno.edu/nursing/resources.

If you require further assistance, please contact the Affiliations Agreement Coordinator or the Affiliation Agreements Administrative Assistant.

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Best wishes for a successful practicum experience!

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