

Dear Students,

Congratulations! The practicum experiences are a significant and exciting part of the nurse practitioner 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.

Our records indicate that you will be enrolled in a practicum course next semester. 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 Exxat® (a web-based tracking tool). This is a reminder that all components of the Exxat® 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**

This course includes 180 hours of practicum experience divided between direct patient care to enhance educator students' knowledge base of advanced nursing practice, and activities to foster educator students' design and development of teaching and learning experiences under a preceptor-mentorship model.

Ninety of the 180 practicum hours will include direct-care clinical practice experiences to enhance in-depth, graduate-level, clinical knowledge. For the direct care experience, students will advance clinical practice skills and knowledge, and incorporate advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology and advanced health assessment, in an approved focused area of clinical nursing practice in a selected setting. Students will complete practicum hours on-site with a preceptor/mentor providing direct care.

#### **NURS 980: Nurse Educator Practicum**

In this course, a preceptor-mentorship model is used in which nurse educators in educational institutions play a substantial role in facilitating the practicum. Under the guidance of a nurse faculty preceptor, the student will develop and implement teaching plans for the classroom and clinical practice settings. Online class discussions with peers provides an opportunity for further exploration of best teaching practices for classroom, clinical practice, self-evaluation, and nursing student evaluation.

### **Identifying a Preceptor**

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 hours for which you are requesting preceptorship.

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

Thoughtful selection of a preceptor is critical to a successful practicum experience. The practicum activities should address the goals and objectives of the course and MSN NE Program (see Student handbook on the School of Nursing Resource site).

**Preceptor requirements:**

- Must hold a current/active and unencumbered license to practice in the state where the practicum site is located
- Preceptor must hold a master's degree or higher (preferably a doctoral degree)
- Preceptor must hold a position as a nurse educator
- Preceptor must have the following job responsibilities:
  - o Core nursing content lectures
  - o Core nursing practice or clinical courses
- Preceptor must have greater than one year (2,080 hours) of practice experience
- Preceptor's roles and responsibilities must be at a higher level than the student
- Preceptor cannot be the student's supervisor at the student's place of employment
- Preceptor cannot be a member of the student's immediate or extended family
- Preceptor must be present in the practicum site at all times to directly supervise all practicum hours
- Preceptor must be able to provide constructive feedback
- Preceptors should be capable of helping the student expand their current level of patient care knowledge.
- Examples of a preceptor for the direct care practicum component: advancing knowledge with a master's prepared nurse in a variety of areas, such as: critical care with a master's prepared CCRN preceptor, learning advanced wound care techniques and chronic wound care with a WOCN preceptor, advancing patient care with a Clinical Nurse Specialist, enhancing knowledge of complex, long-term care such as ventilator-dependent patients, advancing in-depth knowledge of NICU nursing, community-based settings such as urgent care, home health and occupational health, advancing knowledge of mental health nursing working with an advanced practice or certified psychiatric-mental health nurse, enhancing advanced diabetes patient care with a certified diabetes educator.

Note: If necessary, the student can have more than one preceptor (e.g., one for lecture, one for clinical), however, both preceptors must meet the requirements identified and be approved via Exxat®. Practicum may occur at your place of employment, but should be direct practice experience separate from your working hours. The student will need a preceptor who can foster advanced skills and concepts related to nursing education.

### **Identifying a Practicum Site**

The School of Nursing requires that practicum sites be accredited by CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education) or ACEN (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing).

**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

### **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. In addition, pre-licensed FNP students are required to obtain a Louisiana RN license.

### **Affiliation Agreement**

An Affiliation Agreement between Loyola University New Orleans and a third-party facility selected by the student is required 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 outside (non-Loyola) Affiliation Agreements can take several months and may result in no agreement being achieved. Further details may be found in EXXAT®, where students can submit agreements and track their progress as they move through the system.

### **EXXAT APPROVE® Requirements**

Students must be fully adherent to requirements listed in EXXAT APPROVE® throughout the duration of the practicum with all items submitted to EXXAT APPROVE® in a timely fashion. The compliance documents should be uploaded into the Required Documents section under My Profile. The documents will be reviewed by the EXXAT APPROVE® team. Please note, if students are not up to date with 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>.

Best wishes for a successful practicum experience!

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