

Dear Students,

Congratulations! The practicum experiences are a significant and exciting part of the 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 15 practicum hours in simulation activities and 45 hours in on-site direct practice experience with a preceptor in the community setting. 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**

The course requires 15 practicum hours in simulation activities and 45 hours in on-site direct practice experience with a preceptor in the community setting. Below is a guideline of how those hours are met.

#### **NURS 483: Population Health**

In this course, students will continue to develop specialized knowledge and skills in advanced nursing and the delivery of population health care within the context of inter-professional practice. Students will gain a greater understanding of the use of data in planning interventions, evidence-based public health, and the role of advocacy for policy and social change. The focus of the course will be on the assessment and development of culturally competent health promotion and disease prevention targeted at community and population levels through a practicum experience.

### **Identifying a 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 RN-BSN Program (see Student handbook on the School of Nursing Resource site).

Students may identify preceptors by networking via their work environment, student peers, professional organizations (ANCC), state organizations (state RN 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.

Preceptor requirements:

- Must hold a current/active and unencumbered license to practice in the state where the practicum site is located
- Preceptor may be a RN with a BSN degree or higher. An individual RN, who does not possess a BSN, may be utilized as a preceptor if the following criteria are met:
  - The RN has had no less than three years' experience as an RN in practicum area with a minimum of one year in direct practicum experience and has the requisite higher-level skills to guide the student to meet the desired course outcomes for the specific practicum experiences (LSBN, 2019).
- Preceptor must have greater than one year (2,080 hours) of practice experience

- Preceptor must hold a position different from the student's employment role (e.g., Nurse Manager ICU vs Nurse Manager Surgical Services)
- 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

Note: 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 population health, public and/or community health focus.

### **Identifying a Practicum Site**

The School of Nursing requires that student practicum experiences occur in practicum sites that meet the criteria below. In order to meet the criteria, students should be prepared to travel to practicum sites outside of the city in which they reside.

Practicum sites must meet the following criteria for approval. The site and preceptor should provide the student with opportunities to experience at least **two** of the following:

- Investigate health problems or hazards in the community,
- Monitor public health status and arising disease or chronic illness,
- Inform, educate and empower people in the community regarding health issues and trends,
- Form relationships and mobilize community partnerships to address issues identified,
- Develop and enforce policies that support community improvement projects,
- Link people to community/ public health options and services,
- Ensure competent and adequate workforce for public health services,
- Evaluate interventions and options for improvement of services,
- Research innovative solutions to problems in communities.

Examples of approved practicum sites: public health departments and clinics; public health inspectors; outreach services; disaster preparation, services, and recovery organizations (such as the Red Cross); organizations serving migrant workers or the homeless; church or parish nurses; school system nurses; and occupational health nurses.

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.

### **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:

Dr. Jennifer Creech  
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Email: [jacreech@loyno.edu](mailto:jacreech@loyno.edu)

Best wishes for a successful practicum experience!

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