

Guide to Selecting a Practicum Site and Preceptor

Update 7/19/18: This page is currently a work in progress. Contact your advisor for further info.

Thoughtful selection of a practicum site and preceptor is critical to a successful practicum experience. The type of site and preceptor that you select will depend on which program you are enrolled in and on which practicum course you are preparing for. This guide is designed to answer as many questions as possible and help you during the process of choosing and coordinating your practicum experience.

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Who should I contact if my question isn't answered here?

If you have reviewed the sections that apply to you and require additional assistance or have specific questions about your preceptor choice, please contact **your faculty advisor**. Faculty advisor information can be found in your LORA account. If you need help determining who your faculty advisor is, contact your program's administrative assistant.

Tips for Finding & Approaching Potential Preceptors

General Advice:

- Be professional and courteous in all of your interactions with potential preceptors and practicum sites.
- Always come prepared with the name of your program, the course that you are seeking a practicum experience for, the dates of your practicum, and the objectives and goals of the course and program. **Some organizations have separate departments for different programs.** You want to be sure that the correct department is managing your experience to avoid any potential complications or delays. You want to be sure that your preceptor and their organization are both comfortable with the experiences you require.
- Start with the people you know. Reach out to your professional contacts to inquire whether they know of anyone who would be willing to be your preceptor.
- Check your organization's website if they have one available. Some have a specialized process for applying for a preceptor/practicum experience. Some only accept applications during specific time frames or have deadlines for submission. Be sure that you are in compliance with any requirements posted, as it shows attention to detail.
- When requesting placement with an organization or preceptor that you do not know personally, especially if Loyola is not already affiliated with the organization, it can be helpful to introduce yourself in person.
- Alternatively, look for contact information for the education department, contracts manager, affiliations manager, director, clinical manager, etc. This will likely be the person who handles student placements.
- An organization's main phone line will likely be your last option. Explain that you are a nursing student seeking a preceptor and ask whether there is a department that handles clinical placements. Be prepared to answer any potential questions.

Key Phrases...

Organizations do not always use the same nomenclature. These terms may help the person taking your call guide you to the correct department: clinical experiences, practicum, preceptor, nursing students, contracts, affiliation agreements, office manager, observations.

What to Bring:

- A description of the program, including program objectives.
- A description of the course, including course objectives.
- A copy of the Preceptor Agreement Form, which can be found on the [SON Resources](#) webpage.
- A copy of the Practicum Plan Form, which can be found on the [SON Resources](#) webpage.
- Your contact information, both phone and email if possible.
- Loyola's contact information. The main School of Nursing phone number is 504-865-3142. The email for affiliation agreement management is sonaa@loyno.edu.

What to Leave With:

- Request a copy of your preceptor's official job description to assist with your practicum application.
- The organization and preceptor's contact information.

BSN-DNP & MSN-FNP

BSN-DNP & MSN-FNP Preceptor Requirements:

Preceptors are expected to assist you, the student, in perfecting the art of taking a patient's history and physical examination skills while applying theory to practice.

- Must be a nurse practitioner or physician with certification applicable to state of practice.
- Must hold an unencumbered license.
- Must have greater than one (1) year of practice experience.
- Must be present in the clinical site at all times to directly supervise your clinical hours.
- Must be able to give corrective feedback.
- Cannot be your direct report or supervisor.
- Cannot be a member of your family, immediate OR extended.

BSN-DNP & MSN-FNP Distribution of Practicum Hours:

- **NURS 812 Advanced Health Assessment Practicum**
Focuses on mastering a comprehensive health history of adults and performing an integrated head-to-toe physical exam
- **NURS 830 Primary Care of Pediatrics Practicum**
Focuses on the management of infants, toddlers, school, age, and adolescent children in the primary care setting
- **NURS 845 Primary Care of Adults Practicum**
Management of a variety of episodic and chronic primary care patients with illnesses that present across the adult age continuum
- **NURS 855 Primary Care of Adults & Women's Health Practicum**
Management of a variety of episodic and chronic primary care patients with illnesses that present across the adult age continuum with 90 hours focused on ob/gyn care
- **NURS 930 DNP Advanced Practicum I**
Focus is on refining physical assessment skills with diagnostic, management, and reasoning skills
- **NURS 945 DNP Advanced Practicum II**
Focus is on refining physical assessment skills with diagnostic, management, and reasoning skills
- **NURS 960 Scholarly Project Practicum**
Focus is on refining physical assessment skills with diagnostic, management, and reasoning skills

Nursing Leadership – N752

During the Nursing Leadership practicum, you will perform activities related to an education or leadership role. This practicum serves as your clinical capstone and is typically completed in the last term of the program.

You should select a preceptor that is in a role or area that you would like to learn more about and who can facilitate the accomplishment of your goals. The area or role that you select should challenge you and introduce new concepts, systems, functions, theories, and skills. Consider how the preceptor's responsibilities, activities, and decisions are impacted by internal (within the organization) and external (outside of the organization) departments, entities, policies, professions, regulating bodies, etc.

NURL Preceptor Requirements:

- Must hold a leadership position in health care and allow direct involvement in leadership activities.
- Must not be in a strictly clinical role.
- Must hold a master's degree or above. It does NOT need to be in nursing.
- Must hold a position that does NOT have the same roles and responsibilities as your current position.
- Does not need to be a registered nurse.
- Cannot be your direct report or supervisor.
- Cannot be a member of your family, immediate OR extended.