General questions

1. **Does the MSN FNP program provide a full-time plan of study? Is there a part-time option?**
   The MSN FNP program provides a full-time course of study that allows you to earn a Master of Science in Nursing and qualify to sit for FNP certification in as few as 8 semesters. Chamberlain’s 16-week semesters are broken out into two 8-week sessions. There are 6 sessions per calendar year to support timely progression through the curriculum.

   The curriculum is designed to take one course per session with no breaks. Once you begin your FNP courses – and especially your practicum courses – we highly recommend that you do not take any breaks and you will only be allowed to take one course per session.

2. **Is it possible to work full-time while in the FNP program?**
   In planning for success, consider that at the graduate level you should be prepared to spend at least 12-18 hours per week on coursework for a 3 credit hour course. In addition to your coursework, you will be required to complete 125 practicum hours per 8-week session for each of the five practicum courses (average of approximately 16 hours per week). With family, work, and other commitments, you must find the proper balance to achieve success. Many students are unable to work full-time during their practicum courses while balancing other life responsibilities.

3. **Is a doctoral degree required to practice as a Nurse Practitioner?**
   We are unaware of any state board of nursing requiring a DNP or other doctoral degree to obtain licensure as an Advanced Practice Nurse. For more information you can contact your state board of nursing for information pertaining to the state in which you practice.

4. **What type of certification will students earn? What testing is required to become an FNP?**
   Upon graduating, you will be eligible to sit for one of two possible national certification exams:
   - American Nurses Credentialing Center
   - American Association of Nurse Practitioners
Practicums

1. **How many practicum hours does the program require in total, per course, and what plan best supports completing hours?**
   You must complete a total of 625 practicum hours, 125 hours per each of the 5 practicum courses. To best plan to complete the required hours, strive for a minimum of 16 hours per week over an 8 week session. You may only count 125 hours per practicum course and the hours do not carry over to the next course. You are encouraged to seek as many additional clinical experiences as possible.

2. **How early can I begin to plan my practicum experience?**
   You should begin planning your practicum experience as early as possible. An admission requirement is that you identify at least one practicum site and complete a Practicum Application form before you register for your first class. There are many variables in the site and preceptor selection process. Starting early will provide you with plenty of time to help ensure there is not a disruption of your studies.

3. **When should I start applying for a practicum?**
   If you start your MSN FNP program in the September 2015 session or later you must complete a Practicum Application Form and turn it into your admissions representative during the admissions process. If you are currently in the program and have not completed a practicum application, please reach out to your practicum coordinator to find out when you should turn this in. A Practicum Application form identifies the practicum site(s) where you intend to complete your practicums. You will not be able to register for your first class until this form is turned into admissions and approved by the Practicum Coordination team. Your assigned practicum coordinator will then use the application to communicate with the site to arrange a contractual agreement.

4. **How do I find a practicum experience and preceptor? What is the expectation for experience, in terms of types of sites and age groups served?**
   While it is ultimately your responsibility to locate a practicum site Chamberlain does provide resources to help you. Once you have applied you will have access to your student portal where there are tutorials and fact sheets designed to help you find and approach an appropriate site. Once you have identified a potential site the practicum coordination team will help secure the site and work through the necessary contracts on your behalf.

   When selecting a potential site, it is important to consider the patient population and type of care provided. The care and patient exposure should be focused on primary care over the lifespan. Examples of appropriate facilities include: internal medicine
offices, women’s health clinics, pediatric clinics, family practice offices, primary care offices, retail clinics, or university health clinics. You may find a site through professional networking, cold calls, or even your family health care provider. Be sure to review the materials available on your student portal before approaching a practicum site.

5. **I am not sure how to approach a site. How do I start?**
   Start by reviewing the information provided on your student portal at my.chamberlain.edu. When contacting a potential practicum site, be professional and be prepared. Familiarize yourself with the preceptor and practicum requirements, timeframe and expectations of the experience. Introduce yourself as a Chamberlain College of Nursing student and explain the reason for your call or visit. Remember these sites might look at you like a future employee—you want to put your best foot forward.

6. **When calling prospective practicum sites, who should I speak to?**
   Each location has different persons to contact. It is recommended that you speak to the staff development or education department for guidance.

7. **Can I complete my practicum hours where I work?**
   Yes. You may complete your practicum with your current employer as long as it is in a different department than you currently work in, your preceptor is not your current supervisor and the practicum site meets the requirements. Please see the MSN FNP Practicum Handbook for more information.

8. **Who should I speak to at my workplace to discuss/arrange my practicum?**
   Each location has different persons to contact. It is recommended that you speak to your supervisor as well as staff development or the education department for guidance. Your practicum coordinator is also available to make contacts at the site on your behalf.

9. **What if my proposed site requires an agreement before I can speak to a proposed preceptor?**
   Please contact your assigned practicum coordinator regarding any contractual requirements as soon as you are aware of them. Your practicum coordinator will contact the site on your behalf. It is also recommended that you have a secondary preceptor and site in mind in the event that your initial selection of a potential preceptor and site do not meet the requirements or a contractual agreement cannot be completed in time, so as to not further delay your practicum experience.
10. Does Chamberlain hold contracts with sites in my area already?
Chamberlain College of Nursing holds contracts with a small number of sites which means we do not hold agreements in every location. It is important that you speak with the practicum coordinator as soon as you need assistance or have a question about your proposed site.

11. What is a Practicum Coordinator, and how do I know who my coordinator is?
Your assigned practicum coordinator will work to approve your previously identified practicum site and preceptor and help to secure a contract agreement with them. Practicum coordinators are typically assigned by the state you reside in. Please refer to the Communicate with Your Practicum Coordinator document in the FNP toolkit on your Student Portal. Scan the table to find the state you reside in, the corresponding practicum coordinator and their contact information. It is your responsibility to reach out to your practicum coordinator to begin communication, and we recommend you do so as early in your program as possible.

12. Does the practicum coordinator set up a practicum location for me?
No, it is your responsibility to locate a proposed site and preceptor. In the event you exhaust your network you can reach out to the practicum coordinator for additional practicum location suggestions. Once a site and preceptor is identified, the practicum coordinator will reach out to the point of contact provided on the practicum application and begin the clinical affiliation process.

13. Can the practicum coordinator contact the site for me?
The practicum coordinator can contact a site on your behalf via email or phone. However, it is your responsibility to provide a point of contact and contact information to the practicum coordinator.

14. What credentials are required for a preceptor?
Preceptors must meet guidelines for appropriate clinical education and licensure. Qualified individuals include:
- Advanced Practice Nurses with a master’s degree at minimum, state licensure as APN, national certification as NP, and minimum of 1 year practice experience
- Medical Doctors (MD)s or Doctors of Osteopathy (DO)s with an active medical license
- A Physician’s Assistant cannot supervise you or serve exclusively as a your preceptor; however, you may work in tandem with Physician’s Assistants as long as you both are supervised by an MD or DO.
15. Since I am an employee of my intended practicum site, do I need to have an agreement or be required to submit items for compliance to complete my practicum?

Site required contracts and compliance vary for each site. Many locations are currently requiring a contract and compliance if you are an employee. Be sure that you have spoken to your supervisor and education department so that you are aware of what is required by your proposed site.

16. What are acceptable and non-acceptable practicum activities?

You may log practicum hours only when they are at your approved clinical site with your approved preceptor. These hours will include direct patient contact time in addition to time spent in discussion with the preceptor and researching differential diagnoses while at the practice. Practicum hours may also be logged doing other various activities such as review of lab work, calling patients, chart review, interaction with nursing and office staff and other activities related to daily practice. Essentially, you may log all of the hours you are at the office during the day by either face-to-face contact with patients or alternative practicum hours.

Appropriate alternative hours activities should be logged under the following categories:

- Lab review
- Telephone management
- Prescription refills

You may not count practicum hours for any seminars you attend, conferences, continuing education activities such as CPR or ACLS, pharmaceutical representative dinners, site-specific orientation including Electronic Medical Record training, or any other activity that is non-patient related.

17. What is clinical compliance?

In order to participate in practicum, you must submit all required documentation to the National Clinical Compliance Office no later than 120 days beginning each practicum course. This is referred to as clinical compliance. Documentation may include immunization records, CPR certification, background check, drug screen, fingerprints, proof of insurance and clinical profile. A complete list is available in the Academic Catalog or from the National Clinical Compliance Office. You can find more information on clinical compliance and practicum requirements at my.chamberlain.edu under the My Degree and Courses tab or at chamberlain.edu/catalog.
18. How quickly can I expect a contract to be completed with my proposed site?
Contract completion times vary. It can take several weeks – and sometimes months – to gain agreement from your proposed site. Once the completed agreement is received by your practicum coordinator it is then reviewed by Chamberlain’s Clinical Compliance team. If there are any requested alterations by Chamberlain or your site, it may take longer to secure the agreement.

19. My preceptor/site has questions about the practicum, who should they speak to?
All questions about the practicum experience can be addressed to your practicum coordinator. All preceptors will receive the preceptor manual and preceptor orientation link.

20. What is a Preceptor Profile and when is it due?
A Preceptor Profile identifies the preceptor(s) you wish to use for your practicums. You are encouraged to turn this into your assigned practicum coordinator once you have established communication with them in your program. You must submit your desired preceptor’s current resume or curriculum vitae, evidence of advanced practice licensure and evidence of national board certification. Your practicum coordinator will then ensure the preceptor(s) you choose will be the appropriate fit for your practicums.

21. Is it possible to have more than one preceptor per session?
Yes, it is possible to have more than one preceptor per session. In this case, each practicum site and preceptor would need a contract through Chamberlain.

22. What if my mentor is unable to complete the practicum experience?
Please inform your course instructor and practicum coordinator as soon as possible if any changes occur with your practicum site or location. A secondary preceptor will need to be located in order to complete the practicum experience.

23. What if I cannot locate a preceptor?
If you have exhausted all efforts to locate a preceptor please contact your practicum coordinator as soon as possible to discuss options in your area.

24. What if the preceptor I’ve identified asks for a payment?
If you have chosen to work with a preceptor or mentor who asks you for compensation, you may negotiate your own arrangements. Students sometimes decide to provide payment to a preceptor at a particularly desirable site or training opportunity, or because they are having difficulty finding someone to work with them.
Doing so is entirely your choice, and any agreement you make is between you and your preceptor.

25. **What if my identified site asks for site charges, administrative fees or a donation?**

If you ultimately choose a site that asks you to pay site charges, administrative fees or donations you may negotiate your own arrangements; however, check with your practicum coordinator first to be sure Chamberlain does not have a master agreement in place with your chosen site.

**Immersion Weekend**

1. **What is Immersion weekend and where does it occur?**

The Immersion weekend is the lab component of NR-509: Advanced Physical Assessment. It typically takes place during week 7 of NR-509 at the Q Center located in the western suburbs of Chicago, although location is subject to change. The Immersion Weekend provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate competence in your health assessment skills and engage in critical thinking. This helps prepare you for your first practicum experience in NR-511.

2. **Do I have to attend the Immersion Weekend in the Chicago area?**

Yes. At this point in time, this is the only location where Immersion will be offered.

3. **Will information regarding the weekend be available to allow for planning?**

Yes. Information regarding travel arrangements will be provided to you in the first week of your NR-509 course. You can also find information in the *Immersion Weekend Fact Sheet* located on the MSN FNP Immersion and Practicums page on your student portal. You can access this by hovering over the My Degree & Courses tab, locating the Post-Licensure Practicum section and clicking the MSN FNP Immersion and Practicums link. Please do not make your travel arrangements until instructed to do so during the first week of NR-509 as the location could change. For any questions about the immersion, please contact fnpimmersion@chamberlain.edu.

4. **When should I book a flight to arrive/depart?**

You should make your travel arrangements after the FNP Immersion Weekend Concierge sends you the information specific to your Immersion Weekend. You may arrive at the hotel any time on Friday, with hotel check-in starting at 3:00 PM. There are no activities planned for Friday as this is a travel day. It is recommended that you book your departing flight no earlier than 5:00 PM Central time on Sunday.
5. How are students evaluated at the Immersion Weekend?
In NR-509, you will be provided a list of skills for which you must demonstrate competence. You are expected to practice these skills on your own prior to attending the Immersion Weekend. During the Immersion Weekend, brief demonstrations of each skill will be provided. You will then engage in return demonstrations until competence for each skill is achieved.

6. What is the cost of the Immersion Weekend?
You are responsible for your travel costs while participating in the Immersion Weekend as part of NR-509. Typical costs include travel to/from Illinois, lodging and meals for 1-2 nights. Below are estimated costs for the FNP Immersion Weekend. Please note that these costs are subject to change.

- Meals (approximately $40):
  - Lunch on Friday (1 day): $15
  - Dinner on Friday (1 night): $25
  - Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner on Saturday (Included in room rate): $0
  - Breakfast on Sunday (Included in room rate): $0

- Hotel:
  - Lodging (single room for Friday and Saturday nights): $375.00 total
  - Q Center Meeting Costs (Included in your room rate): $0

- Airfare: TBD

- Ground Transportation (to/from airport): $35

- Estimated Total (excluding airfare): $450

7. What do I have to bring to Immersion Weekend?
You are required to bring a stethoscope and the Immersion Weekend worksheets provided in the course resources tab in your classroom. You may also bring any study materials you feel necessary to prepare for the assessment on Sunday. All other items will be provided on-site. You are required to dress business casual, as you would wear for your clinical.

8. What if I can’t make the Immersion weekend?
If you are unable to attend you must notify your NR-509 professor and email the event coordinator, at fnpimmersion@chamberlain.edu of the extenuating circumstance. You may be granted an extension to complete the weekend during the next session, however the Immersion Weekend must be completed before you can begin the first practicum course, NR-511.
9. **What if I arrive to the facility late on Saturday?**
   You can still attend the remainder of the day's activities, but may miss important information necessary for the Sunday assessment.

10. **What if my flight is cancelled last minute due to weather, etc.?**
    You must communicate this immediately to your NR-509 professor and the event coordinator. You will then be contacted to discuss your options.

11. **What if I don’t pass the assessment on Sunday?**
    To date, we have a 100% pass rate for the immersion weekend; however, if you are unsuccessful on your first attempt, a second attempt will be offered the same day. If the second attempt is also unsuccessful, you will fail the course and must retake NR-509 in its entirety.

12. **Do I have to stay at the hotel on-site?**
    No. You are free to stay at the lodging of your choice, but you must find your own transportation to and from the activities on Saturday and Sunday, and report this to the site to receive parking privileges when registering for the day passes. You will be required to pay a daily fee, which includes your meals for the day.

13. **Can I have a guest stay with me during the weekend?**
    Yes. When booking the stay, you will select the appropriate room size to accommodate 1, 2, or 3 people. The guest who is not attending the event will have an additional one-time fee, charged by the hotel, added to the room cost. These fees may change from time to time, and you will be notified of the current additional cost upon online check-out.

14. **Can I share a hotel room with another student?**
    Yes. However, you will each need to register yourselves separately and indicate that you are sharing a room. The overall costs will be less than staying in individual rooms (about $125 savings total over the weekend).

15. **I passed the Immersion Weekend but failed NR-509 coursework. Do I have to repeat Immersion Weekend?**
    No. If you pass the Immersion Weekend but fail the coursework, you do not have to attend the Immersion Weekend again, but you must communicate this with your NR-509 professor and the event coordinator to transfer the Immersion Weekend grade.
16. **Is the Immersion Weekend part of my overall course grade?**

No. Course points are not collected during the weekend; however, you still need to pass the Sunday assessment to receive a passing grade for the overall course.

17. **What about the 25 hours of clinical experience? Can I count these towards my practicum?**

No. The Immersion Weekend counts as 11 hours of clinical experience, the remaining 14 hours of experience will be completed through class activities during NR-509 and certified with a quiz during week 7. These hours are not transferable to your practicum experience. You must still complete 125 hours per practicum course, without exception, starting in NR-511.

**Capstone/Graduation**

1. **How does Chamberlain assist students to prepare for the certification exam?**

The NR-661 capstone course incorporates self-study review modules and practice test questions at no additional cost to you. At the end of the course you will take a practice certification exam administered by the Advanced Practice Education Associates (APEA). You must pass the final examination in the APEA course in order to successfully complete NR-661. You may retake the final exam one time at your cost. If you do not pass the course the second time you must retake NR-661.

2. **Where do I get information about graduation?**

Potential graduates will receive an email at least 4 months prior to their upcoming graduation ceremony. If there are specific questions regarding your graduation date, please email onlinegrad@chamberlain.edu. Graduation details may also be found on the student portal.

3. **Where and when does graduation occur?**

The Post Licensure graduation ceremonies occur twice each year in the Chicago, IL area. Each commencement will celebrate the accomplishments of those students who completed their course work in the designated sessions:

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