Welcome to your MSN practicum experience.

All of your previous graduate courses have led you to this moment—the application of your knowledge and skills in real-life situations and events. A practicum course is very different from your previous courses because it places responsibility on you, the learner. It is critical for you to identify and formalize arrangements for your practicum experience as early as possible. The information within this document will help you finalize practicum arrangements. Please read and implement the information carefully and completely.

There are a large number of required learning activities that are combined to produce your Professional Portfolio, providing evidence of development toward your professional goal. Review your syllabus very carefully and discuss milestones with your practicum mentor and instructor to avoid missing a deadline. The practicum coordinator will email a copy of this handbook to your mentor to ensure that you both understand course requirements.

Enjoy your practicum experience and take advantage of every opportunity to apply your new knowledge and skills.

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Comprehensive consumer information is available at chamberlain.edu/msnstudentconsumerinfo.
Practicum Guidelines & Procedures

I. General Guidelines

The culminating course of each MSN specialty track is a practicum. The practicum experience offers students an opportunity to apply newly developed skills and relate theoretical content, as presented in core and specialty courses, to real practice situations. Prior to this unique practicum experience, graduate students have demonstrated an understanding of the theoretical foundations of their nursing specialty track. This final, concentrated professional experience helps to further prepare students for an advanced practice role. On a larger scale, it allows students to enhance skills in communication, teamwork, critical thinking and professionalism.

Students are responsible for identifying an appropriate location and mentor for the practicum experience. Students must secure an acceptable site a minimum of 120 days prior to the beginning of the practicum course. Each student must select a master’s-in-nursing-prepared nurse mentor with experience in the selected specialty track to provide guidance and direction for attainment of learning goals.

Due to rules and regulations in the various states, students should not provide direct patient care in their practicum. Students must have an active and unrestricted license in the state where the practicum will be completed. In the event a student is completing the practicum in a non-resident state, proof of current RN licensure will be required.

In concurrence with the student’s assigned faculty member, a learning agreement including expectations, student learning outcomes and means of measuring success will be executed. During the practicum, students must advise their mentors of course requirements and personal learning objectives. Students are also responsible for developing a portfolio of the practicum experience including accurate reflections on activities and attainment of course outcomes and specialty competencies. Each assigned faculty member is responsible for evaluating a student’s performance and all associated assignments completed during the practicum experience. Students are responsible for making travel arrangements and incurring all related expenses.

Students must be scheduled and are responsible for completing a minimum of 100 hours of practical experience in an approved and supervised setting for each practicum course in the Educator and Executive Specialty Tracks. For the Nursing Informatics (NI) Specialty Track, there will be two hundred (200) hours of practical experience in two practicum courses. The scheduled hours will be arranged in conjunction with the practicum site to satisfy the practice experience requirement. Chamberlain allows flexibility in scheduling these hours. The requirement may be met with full days, partial days or consecutive days as agreed upon with the mentor. The Student Activities Log must be submitted to the instructor and included in the portfolio. Documentation must demonstrate activities related to course outcomes, specialty competencies and the student’s learning agreement.

Students will also participate in an online practicum class that will include weekly assignments and discussion threads in addition to their practicum hours. Up to 40 percent (40 hours) of student activities may consist of:

- Preparation for the course project
- Completing research associated with the practicum experience or course project
- Completing research requested by mentor or agency that supports practicum goals
- Preparing for and attending a professional meeting
- Meeting with mentor and/or site orientation prior to course opening

All hours must be documented on the Student Activity Log and signed off by the mentor. Travel time to and from the practicum site and time spent working on the practicum portfolio requirements cannot be included in the 100 hours or the 200 hours for the NI specialty track.

II. Eligibility for Practicum

1. Prerequisite Requirements

- Completion of all core and specialty track prerequisite courses (except NR-660)
- NI students must first complete NR-640 followed by NI-641

2. Practicum Site Selection

Students must take a proactive role in this process to assure that an acceptable site is found. Students begin the process by identifying their own learning goals. After identifying these goals, they will initiate the process of selecting a site that provides the best opportunity to promote learning.

Location for practicum experience

- Graduate students may have working relationships in the field and may use their networks to determine a location for completing the practicum.
- Students may identify a learning need that is outside of their network and may need assistance in learning about a potential practicum site. The practicum coordinator will assist students in exploring opportunities in their area. The practicum coordinator can be reached at ccmnsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu.
- It is important to remember the practicum gives facilities the opportunity to observe the student as a potential employee. Therefore, students may consider employment goals in selecting a site.
Criteria for site selection

- The site must be a healthcare-related organization or nursing institution, according to the needs of the specialty (e.g., a hospital, outpatient clinic, long-term care facility, home care services, school or college of nursing). Nursing informatics students might seek a practicum experience with a vendor of information systems or an information-systems consulting firm. Health policy students, on the other hand, may seek a nursing organization, agency or legislative office.

- The site may be in the institution where the graduate student is currently employed, but must be outside of the normal work area (e.g., The student may be a hospital staff nurse in the cardiac unit and may select a mentor who is the director of the staff development department in the same hospital).

- Graduate students cannot engage in direct patient care as part of the practicum experience. Therefore, students will not be given patient care assignments. Acceptable practicum experiences may include patient interviews, chart reviews, participation in pre-clinical conferences, post-clinical debriefings and observation of the mentor doing clinical teaching or patient care. Students may also observe and/or oversee pre-licensure students doing patient care. Students must meet the institution’s HIPAA compliance requirements prior to start of the practicum experience.

- Students must have an active and unrestricted nursing license in the state where they wish to complete the practicum. For students who are completing their practicum in a different state from where they reside, proof of proper nurse licensure will be required prior to your practicum registration.

Students may direct all questions about site selection to the practicum coordinator. Contact information for the practicum coordinator is located in Practicum Orientation found in the Student Resources/HUB. The Student Resources/HUB can be accessed at hub.chamberlain.edu or from the Student Resources link within the course.

Site requirements

The site may request various requirements of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure all site requirements are understood and completed prior to the beginning of the practicum. This can include but is not limited to: background check, drug or urine screening, immunizations, proof of health insurance, etc. Because a student must be fully compliant with all site requirements before beginning the practicum course, automatic registration for any of the practicum courses is not allowed. Once student services is notified that a student is fully compliant, the student may complete a manual course registration.

An agreement or contract between Chamberlain and the site are required. This process can take several weeks to secure; therefore it is important that the student identify the proper point of contact at the site to assist in this matter. The practicum coordinator is available to assist with contractual agreements.

All agreements must be completed prior to the beginning of the practicum course and course registration. In the event an agreement is not completed, a delay in starting the practicum will occur.
3. Mentor Qualifications

- Minimum of a master’s degree in nursing; a doctorate preferred
- Mentor must hold a master’s degree in nursing for a minimum of one year prior to your practicum course
- Holds a position in the student’s chosen specialty*
- Has a minimum of five years of nursing experience with a minimum of three years in that specialty (for NI courses, the chosen mentor will partner with student through both courses)

Note: Mentor cannot be a relative or family member. In addition, the mentor cannot be a direct supervisor or any staff member who can impact the employee evaluation.

* For the NR-630 Executive Practicum, the mentor must have fiscal responsibility (e.g., annual budgetary planning, oversight and monitoring) over a nursing unit, department, service line and/or facility or organization. The mentor must also have direct supervision of personnel (i.e., direct reports).

4. Completed Practicum Application

Once the site has been selected and mentor identified:

- Complete the Practicum Application in your Student Portal at least 120 days prior to the beginning of the practicum course
- Identify the mentor and include the mentor’s qualifying information on the Practicum Application and attach their resume/CV

If you need help submitting your Practicum Application, please review the MSN Practicum Application Guide.

5. Self-Assessment of Professional Competencies

At the beginning of the practicum, the student will complete a Self-Assessment of Professional Competencies. This assessment will help guide the development of goals for the practicum experience. The Self-Assessment of Professional Competencies may be found in Doc Sharing in the online course (e.g., NR-640; NR-641; NR-630; NR-620; NR-650).

6. Portfolio

The student will develop a Professional Portfolio throughout the practicum experience. Requirements for the portfolio are delineated in the Practicum Portfolio Guidelines, located in the online course under Doc Sharing (e.g., NR-640; NR-641; NR-630; NR-620; NR-650).

7. Ethical Behavior

Students are expected to present professional demeanor, behavior, appearance and communication at all times. Students are bound by the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics. Students also must agree to abide by all the rules and regulations of the practicum site.
III. Roles & Responsibilities

1. Faculty Role
During the course, the instructor should be available via email or telephone to provide support to the student and the mentor. It is incumbent upon the instructor to assure that the site is not misappropriating the student’s time and/or utilizing the student as it would a full-time employee but instead, is facilitating learning. Given the nature of the practicum, the role of the instructor becomes a combination of facilitator, organizer, professional-relations coordinator, role model, coach and counselor. The instructor’s role is to maintain ongoing and effective communication throughout the practicum experience. The instructor is responsible for the final evaluation of the student’s learning.

2. Responsibilities of Chamberlain College of Nursing
- Ensure students have met all eligibility requirements prior to beginning the practicum
- Define competencies to be addressed during practicum assignment
- Suggest activities to enhance the educational experience
- Provide a faculty member to act as instructor and facilitator
- Instruct students to abide by practicum-facility policies and procedures, rules and regulations
- Consider promptly any complaints by facility, mentor or student
- Maintain communication with student and mentor during the assignment
- Agree to not discriminate by race, creed, color, religion, sex or national origin
- Evaluate academic performance of students in the course

3. Responsibilities of the Practicum Coordinator
- Make contact with the site and confirm all needed compliance forms
- Confirm compliance agreement and needed requirements are in place between the site and the student prior to practicum registration
- Make contact with mentor, providing the course syllabus, mentor manual, practicum handbook and contact information of the faculty and practicum coordinator
- Be a conduit if mentor changes are requested by student
- Follow up with mentors, students and faculty about the overall practicum experience upon the completion of the course

4. Responsibilities of the Practicum Mentor
- Cooperate with Chamberlain faculty to promote student success in the practicum
- Orient the student to the facility environment and policies
- Design suitable experience situations as described in the course outcomes and student-learning agreement
- Serve as mentor for students in professional development
- Participate in initial conference call with student and practicum-course instructor during the first week of the course
- Refuse to pay students for practicum or use students to replace paid staff
- Provide constructive feedback to students about their performance in the practicum setting
- Not disclose any personal student-identifying information or records of students’ participation except as set forth by an agreement or required by law
- Agree to not discriminate by race, creed, color, religion, sex or national origin
- Respond to practicum-course faculty requests for updates during Weeks 4 and 7 as to the progress of the student
- Provide feedback to Chamberlain as requested
5. Responsibilities of the Student

- Meet eligibility and course requirements
- Be familiar with all procedures and content for practicum experience
- Meet deadline dates for all practicum coursework and activities
- Assist in the facilitation of an initial meeting between the practicum course instructor, mentor and student during the first week of their practicum
- Demonstrate competence in practicum assignments
- Abide by facility rules and regulations
- Conduct oneself in a professional manner during the practicum assignment
- Accept instruction from facility personnel as a learning opportunity
- Maintain communication with the course faculty
- Comply with all facility requirements (e.g., liability insurance, background screening, physical examination, drug screening and current immunizations)

NOTE: If you completed any program previously at one of our campuses, your compliance for that program is no longer viable. New compliance will have to be completed and submitted per the instructions noted above.

- Evaluate the practicum experience
- Perform a self-evaluation on the practicum assignment
- Fund all travel arrangements and any associated expenses
- Provide proof of active and non restricted licensure if requested
- Graduate students cannot engage in direct patient care as part of the practicum experience. Therefore, students will not be given patient care assignments. Acceptable practicum experiences may include patient interviews, chart reviews, participation in pre-clinical conferences, post-clinical debriefings and observation of the mentor doing clinical teaching or patient care. Students may also observe and/or oversee pre-licensure students doing patient care. Students must meet the institution’s HIPAA compliance requirements prior to start of the practicum experience.

6. Orientation to the Practicum

General information about the practicum is available in the MSN Student Resources/HUB. The site includes the description of the practicum, forms, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), grading rubrics and contact information.

7. Mentor Receipt of Handbook

Students should email a copy of this handbook to their mentors to ensure that both understand course requirements.

Students may direct all questions about the practicum to the practicum coordinator at ccnmsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu.
Practicum Portfolio Guidelines

I. Elements of the Portfolio

The student is responsible for the development of a practicum portfolio that includes the following five elements:

1. Self-Assessment of Professional Competencies: Completed at the beginning and the end of the practicum (form is located in Doc Sharing in your practicum course; e.g., NR-640; NR-641; NR-630; NR-620; NR-650.

2. Student’s Curriculum Vitae (CV)

3. Learning Agreement: The student is responsible for the construction of a learning agreement that includes the following elements:
   - Name, credentials and contact information of mentor
   - Student-defined practicum goals, methods planned to meet these goals and how each goal was met. Areas of concentration include:
     - Application of nursing-specialty knowledge and skills
     - Application of nursing science/theory
     - Application of nursing theory
     - Critical judgment
     - Professional development
     - Personal development
     - Human caring/diversity
     - Ethical/legal principles
     - Leadership
     - Evidence-based practice
     - Communication
   The Learning Agreement should present a rich narrative, documenting the course outcomes achieved. The initial Learning Agreement submitted in Week 1 forms the basis for the narrative. The student will write each week to add further activities and document hours and will modify the plan to meet self-identified practicum goals and show when and how goals were met.

4. Project: A nursing specialty track project that directs activities to be conducted during the practicum experience.
   Required elements include:
   - Target audience (e.g., learners)
   - Assessment of the needs of target audience
   - Objectives for the experience
   - Methods used
   - Materials developed for the specialty activity (e.g., handouts, PowerPoint, etc.)
   - Evaluation of the achievement of objectives

Students are expected to develop and implement an activity that will benefit the organization and contribute to the student’s ability to achieve the course outcomes. The practicum activity should be chosen, in conjunction with the mentor and approved by the course faculty, based on a review of the needs of the nursing specialty and facility. The student will assess the need for the activity, develop objectives for the project and identify strategies from the literature used in the development and implementation of the activity.

5. Completed Student Activities Log identifies how the required 100 hours, or 200 hours for NI specialty track, were met.

II. Portfolio Evaluation Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio Element</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Assessment of Professional Competencies</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Agreement</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Vitae (CV)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practicum Project</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Activities Log</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Possible Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>700</strong></td>
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III. Milestones required Prior to Course Opening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Practicum Element</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120 Days Prior to Course Opening</td>
<td>Practicum Information Form submitted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prior to Course Opening</td>
<td>Review course requirements with mentor:</td>
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<td>- Syllabus</td>
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<td>- Learning Agreement*</td>
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<td>- Portfolio Assignments*</td>
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<td>- Practicum Project</td>
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<td>- Student Activities Log</td>
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<td>- Initiation of Capstone Project</td>
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<td>- Professional Competencies</td>
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*These requirements are initiated and completed during the practicum experience; see syllabus.
GRADUATE LEARNING AGREEMENT

Student Information:

Student Name ________________________ Student ID (D#) ________________________

Email ________________________________ Phone ________________________________

Mentor Information:

Mentor ________________________________ Mentor Credentials ____________________

Phone ________________________________ Email ________________________________

Work Address __________________________

Directions:

For Week 1, complete the Learning Agreement with self-identified goals to meet course outcomes and initial plans to meet those self-identified goals. Review these goals and plans with mentor. The agreement should be revised each week to reflect completed goals, additional goals and changes to the plan dictated by the actual experience or revisions suggested by faculty and/or mentor. At the end of the practicum experience, evaluate success with your mentor and obtain the mentor’s signature at the bottom of the agreement. Save this form as a Microsoft Word document and enter the required information directly into it; submit the completed Learning Agreement in Week 7. See Learning Agreement Grading Rubric for grading details.

Learning Agreement Consists of Three Sections:

I. Student Learning Outcomes Table

II. Signatures approving plan (Week 1)

III. Signatures and mentor verification (Week 7)

Due Dates:

1. Initial Learning Agreement is submitted by 11:59 PM MT Sunday at the end of Week 1.

2. Completed Learning Agreement is submitted by 11:59 PM MT Sunday at the end of Week 7.

Minimum of 100 hours practicum experience or 200 hours for NI track required.
I. Student Learning Outcomes
Course objectives will be provided during Preview Week through the specific practicum course you are completing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Outcomes</th>
<th>Student-Identified Practicum Goals to Meet Course Outcomes</th>
<th>Plan to Meet Student-Identified Practicum Goals</th>
<th>Narrative Description of Attainment of Student-Identified Goals</th>
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### GRADUATE LEARNING AGREEMENT

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### II. Signature Section (Week 1)

Submitted by (Student) ___________________________ Date ______________

Mentor Signature ___________________________ Date ______________

Accepted by (Faculty) ___________________________ Date ______________

### III. Verification at Conclusion of Practicum (Week 7)

At conclusion of practicum experience, verify achievement of student-identified goals. Please explain if goals were not met.

Submitted by (Student) ___________________________ Date ______________

Mentor Signature ___________________________ Date ______________
GRADUATE STUDENT ACTIVITIES LOG

Student Name ___________________________________________ Student ID (D#) ________________________________

Session _____________________________________________________________________________

Mentor __________________________ Facility ________________________________

Instructions:
Complete information for each week, adding new rows as needed for additional activities. See Practicum Guidelines in Doc Sharing for further details.

Required Hours:
Practicum consists of 100 hours or 200 hours for NI track of supervised experience in the specialty area.

Up to 40 percent of student activities in each practicum course may consist of:
• Preparation for specialty track project
• Completing research associated with the practicum experience or specialty track project
• Completing research requested by mentor or agency that supports practicum goals
• Preparing for and attending a professional meeting
• Meeting with mentor and/or site orientation prior to course opening

All hours must be documented on the Student Activity Log and signed off by the mentor. Travel time to and from the practicum site and time spent working on practicum portfolio documents cannot be included in the 100 hours or 200 hours for NI track.

Due Dates:
Submitted each week (Weeks 1-7) by 11:59 PM MT Sunday; completed and signed Student Activities Log due by 11:59 PM MT Wednesday of Week 8. Student and mentor must sign to verify completion of hours before final submission.

Total Possible Points:
50 (graded as part of portfolio; see Practicum Portfolio Grading Rubric).
## GRADUATE STUDENT ACTIVITIES LOG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of Practicum Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Hours for Week 4:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Hours for Week 5:</strong></td>
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Comprehensive consumer information is available at chamberlain.edu/studentconsumerinfo.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of Practicum Activity</th>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>Total Hours for Week 8:</td>
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<td>Total Hours for Practicum:</td>
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Mentor Information

Thank you for agreeing to mentor a Chamberlain graduate student in this critical phase of the master’s program where previous learning is applied to the real world. The information below provides details for a mutually productive experience for both you and the student.

1. Practicum Site Selection

Students take a proactive role in this process to assure that an acceptable site is found. Students begin the process by identifying their own learning goals. By identifying these goals, students will then initiate the process of selecting a site that provides the best opportunity to promote learning.

Location for practicum experience

- Graduate students may have working relationships in the field and may use their network to determine a location for completing the practicum.

- Students may identify a learning need that is outside of their network and may need assistance in learning about a potential practicum site. The practicum coordinator will assist students in exploring opportunities in their area. The practicum coordinator can be reached at ccmsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu.

- It is important to remember the practicum gives facilities the opportunity to observe the student as a potential employee. Therefore, students may consider employment goals in selecting a site.

Criteria for site selection

- The site must be a healthcare-related or nursing-related institution (e.g., hospital, outpatient clinic, long-term care facility, home care services, information-system vendor or informatics consulting firm, school or college of nursing).

- The site may be in the institution where the graduate student is currently employed, but must be outside of the normal work area (e.g., the student may be a hospital staff nurse in the cardiac unit and may select a mentor who is the director of the staff development department in the same hospital).

- Students must have an active and unrestricted nursing license in the state where they wish to complete the practicum. For students who are completing their practicum in a different state from where they reside, proof of proper nurse licensure will be required prior to your practicum registration.
2. Practicum Hours Requirement

Students must be scheduled and are responsible for completing a minimum of 100 hours of practical experience in an approved and supervised setting for each course. For the NI specialty track, there will be 200 hours of practical experience in two practicum courses. The scheduled hours will be arranged in conjunction with the practicum site as is reasonable to satisfy the practice exposure requirement. Chamberlain allows flexibility in scheduling these hours. The requirement may be met with full days, partial days or consecutive days as agreed upon with the mentor.

Up to 40 percent (40 hours) of student activities may consist of:
- Preparation for practicum project
- Completing research associated with the practicum experience or practicum project
- Research requested by mentor or agency that supports practicum goals
- Prepare for and attending a professional meeting
- Meeting with mentor and/or site orientation prior to course opening

All hours must be documented on Student Activity Log and signed off by the mentor. Travel time to and from the practicum site and time spent working on practicum portfolio documents cannot be included in the 100 hours or 200 hours for NI track.

3. Mentor Qualifications

- Minimum of a master’s degree in nursing; doctorate preferred
- Mentor must hold a master’s degree in nursing for a minimum of one year prior to your practicum course
- Holds a position within nursing specialty track*
- Has a minimum of five years of experience as a nurse with a minimum of three years in that specialty

* For the NR-630 Executive Practicum, the mentor must have fiscal responsibility (e.g., annual budgetary planning, oversight and monitoring) over a nursing unit, department, service line and/ or facility or organization. The mentor must also have direct supervision of personnel (i.e., direct reports).

4. Responsibilities of the Practicum Mentor

- Cooperate with Chamberlain faculty to promote student success in the practicum
- Orient the student to the facility environment and policies
- Design suitable experience situations as described in the course outcomes and student learning agreement
- Mentor students in professional development
- Not pay students for practicum or use students to replace paid staff
- Provide constructive feedback to students about their performance in the practicum
- Not disclose any personal student-identifying information or records of students’ participation except as set forth by an agreement or required by law
- Not unlawfully discriminate by race, creed, color, religion, sex or national origin
- Provide feedback to Chamberlain as requested
- Verify student hours on Student Activity Log (mentor signature required)
- Verify student goals on Learning Agreement (mentor signature required)

5. Course Requirements

The syllabus and other documents in this handbook outline course requirements that students must submit to complete the course. The two graded components that demand the most time and preparation are:

Learning Agreement

The student is responsible for the construction of a Learning Agreement that includes the following:
- Name, credentials and contact information of mentor
- Student-defined practicum goals, methods planned to meet these goals and how each goal was met. Areas of concentration include:
  - Application of nursing theory
  - Critical judgment
  - Professional development
  - Personal development
  - Human caring/diversity
  - Ethical/legal principles
  - Leadership
  - Evidence-based practice
  - Communication
The Learning Agreement presents rich narrative documentation for meeting course outcomes; the initial Learning Agreement submitted in Week 1 forms the basis for the narrative. Students will write each week to add further activities, document hours, modify the plan to meet self-identified goals and show when and how goals were met.

**Project**

A nursing-specialty track project directs activities to be conducted during the practicum experience. Required elements include:

- Target audience (e.g., learners)
- Assessment of the needs of target audience
- Objectives for the experience
- Methods used
- Materials developed for the specialty activity (e.g., handouts, PowerPoint, etc)
- Evaluation of the achievement of objectives

Students are expected to develop and implement an activity that will benefit the organization and contribute to the student’s ability to achieve the course outcomes. The activity should be chosen, in conjunction with the mentor and approved by the course faculty, based on a review of the needs of the nursing specialty and facility. The student is to assess the need for the activity, develop objectives for the project and identify strategies from the literature used in the development and implementation of the activity.

**6. Evaluation of Practicum Experience**

Each mentor will be asked to complete a formal evaluation of the practicum experience; feedback is welcomed and highly valued. Mentor comments and suggestions are a driving force to refine and improve the course. The survey will be emailed to each mentor after the practicum completion. The survey results will then be compiled and reviewed. If you have specific items you would like to note, contact the practicum coordinator.

**7. Communication with Course Instructor**

The course instructor will be available via email or telephone to provide support to the student and the mentor. During the first week of the course, the instructor will email or phone the mentor to answer any initial questions and set up a communication process. Please direct any further questions during the course to the instructor.

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**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Contact Information**

Students may direct all questions about the practicum experience to the practicum coordinator at ccnmsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu.

**Practicum Handbook**

All information, forms and contact information about the practicum are located in the MSN Practicum Handbook.

**Eligibility for Practicum**

1. **When can I take the practicum?**
   Students may take the practicum course only after successful completion of all core and specialty-track courses, except for NR-660.

2. **Can I take the practicum at the same time as NR-660: Capstone?**
   No. The practicum is designed to assist the student in identifying the project that they will complete in the Capstone course, which must follow successful completion of the practicum.

3. **Can I take NR-640 and NR-641 at the same time?**
   No. NR-640 must be taken first and is a building block to the second practicum course, NR-641. You will focus on the project management process in both of these courses. In NR-640, you will learn about the entire project management process and begin planning your practicum project during this course. Then in NR-641, you will implement, monitor and close your project. We know this would be ideal but not always possible in the real world. There may not be a project that fits your practicum time frame within your chosen organization so it would be important that you are involved in all of the phases of project management that are available. You should meet with your mentor at the beginning of the first week of NR-640 to discuss possible projects. By the end of the first week of NR-640, you will meet with your faculty member and mentor(s) to discuss your practicum project ideas and experiences that will span both courses, NR-640 and NR-641.
Applying for the Practicum

4. When do I apply for the practicum?
The student will complete the MSN Practicum Application at least two sessions prior to the anticipated practicum start date. The deadline for applying for the practicum is 120 days before the practicum start date.

5. Why do I have to apply so long ahead of the practicum start date?
This allows time for Chamberlain to communicate all expectations for the practicum to the student, the mentor and the agency and to complete agreements. This also allows sufficient time for the student to complete any agency-specific requirements such as immunizations, safety orientation, drug screening, CPR, etc.

6. Where do I find the Practicum Application?
Your Practicum application can be found and completed on your student portal at my.chamberlain.edu. Please follow the steps provided in the MSN Practicum Application Guide to complete the application.

7. How do I know if the site and mentor I have selected will be appropriate for my practicum experience?
The practicum coordinator will answer any questions you have about the practicum and will help guide you in site and mentor selection as needed. Contact the practicum coordinator at ccnmsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu.

NOTE: Students must have an active and unrestricted nursing license in the state where they wish to complete the practicum. For students who are completing their practicum in a different state from where they reside, proof of proper nurse licensure will be required prior to practicum registration.

Site Selection

8. Can I do the practicum at the agency where I am employed?
Yes. Students may complete the practicum at their place of employment; however, they must select a different department. Your mentor cannot be your supervisor at your place of employment.

9. Do I have to do my practicum at a hospital or at a school of nursing?
No. While a hospital or school of nursing may provide the widest opportunity for the practicum, there are many other potential sites from which a student may choose (e.g., an out-patient clinic, home care or community health agency, a rehabilitation center or surgery center). The site must offer the student the opportunity to work with a mentor to apply the specialty skills attained in the MSN program.
**Mentor Questions**

10. **Does my mentor have to have a master’s degree?**
   Yes, the minimum requirement for a mentor is a master’s degree in nursing, with a doctorate preferred. Mentor must hold a master’s degree in nursing for a minimum of one year prior to your practicum course. Your mentor must have five years experience as a nurse, with three years in that specialty. The mentor must be currently employed in that specialty area.

11. **What happens if my mentor gets sick or has to quit during my practicum?**
   In this event, students would notify their instructor immediately. The student, instructor and practicum coordinator would work together closely to find an alternative.

12. **What are some suggestions for a practicum project?**
   Some examples for practicum projects are:

   - **Executive:**
     1. Throughput issues: designing optimal flow of patients from the emergency department to ICU and telemetry units.
     2. Implementing various best practices related to nursing operations: purposeful rounding, bedside reporting, multidisciplinary rounding.
     3. Implementing evidence-based practice council or shared leadership council for the purpose of the Magnet Designation journey.
     4. Addressing key changes related to Joint Commission surveys (e.g., improving patient satiation scores through peace and quiet time), interdisciplinary rounding and communication for optimal coordination of patient care; communication during hand-offs.

   - **Educator:**
     1. Lecture on skin care for beginning nursing students.
     2. Presentation to staff nurses on using a new piece of equipment.
     3. Presentation to faculty about issues related to remediating students who are not passing.

   - **Informatics:**
     1. e-Scheduling for unit-based chemotherapy treatment.
     2. Automating consent functionality within referral database.
     3. Integrating the Electronic Health Record (EHR) into the clinical workflow.

   - **Healthcare Policy:**
     1. Creation and/or dissemination of state legislative items; bills or new legislation (e.g., changes in policy for reporting nurses that have been terminated from organizations needing to be reported to board of nursing).
     2. Implementation of new processes related to patient care that cover broadly over all organizations caring for this type of patient (e.g., using a set of standing orders for palliative care patients that travel with them from acute care to chronic care and how to implement acceptance of these orders by outside facilities).
     3. State emergency response policies (e.g., students work to create work flows and decision trees that coordinate all types of responders in a coordinated effort to help).
GRADUATE PRACTICUM CHECKLIST

This checklist is intended as a guide to the student to assure success in planning for the practicum. For specific questions, contact the practicum coordinator at ccnmsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu.

At Least 3 Sessions Prior to the Practicum

☐ Identify a potential mentor and discuss practicum objectives
☐ Confirm availability of mentor for practicum and discuss potential dates and activities to complete practicum hours
☐ Download MSN Practicum Handbook from the HUB resource center or contact practicum coordinator
☐ Read documents in the MSN Practicum Handbook
☐ Identify goals for practicum experience to help guide site selection
☐ Identify a potential practicum site
☐ Contact the site administrator (depending upon site, this may be the director of education, the chief nursing officer or the unit director or online dean)
☐ Meet with the site administrator to determine availability of mentor and any site-specific requirements (e.g., CPR, drug testing, immunizations)

Submit Practicum Information Form to Advisor Along with Mentor Resume

To be completed at least 120 days before start of practicum session.

Any questions about practicum site or mentor selection may be addressed to the practicum coordinator at ccnmsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu. The practicum coordinator will confirm approval of the mentor and practicum site to the student.

60-90 Days Prior to Practicum

☐ Provide all site-specific documentation such as proof of CPR, immunizations, licensure, etc. to the practicum coordinator and site administrator, as requested
☐ Write first draft of goals for the practicum, following guidelines in the MSN Practicum Handbook
Our Mission:
To educate, empower and embolden diverse healthcare professionals who advance the health of people, families, communities and nations.

THE MSN DEGREE PROGRAM PRACTICUM TOOLKIT

Literature
- Catalog
- Viewbook
- MSN Curriculum Grid
- Academic Calendar

For more information, email ccnmsnpracticum@chamberlain.edu