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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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 are assisted in this effort by a practicum coordinator. Students must secure an acceptable site a minimum of two sessions 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.

Graduate students in the MSN specialty tracks may not be given direct patient care assignments to supplement or replace nursing staff in any practicum setting. 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, Healthcare Policy and Executive Specialty Tracks. For the Nursing Informatics (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 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 for the Educator, Healthcare Policy and Executive tracks, up to 40 percent (40 hours) can include student activities such as:

- 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 and dated 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 NR-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. For NI students, the practicum project will be in collaboration with the mentor and organizational needs.
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 practicumcoordination@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). Please note, correctional facilities will not be accepted. 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 in MSN specialty tracks may not be given direct patient care assignments to supplement or replace nursing staff in any practicum setting. Students must meet compliance requirements and abide by the rules and policies of all facilities in which practicum contact hours are completed. 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 or from the Student Resources link within the course.

Clinical Compliance Requirements

The practicum site may have various requirements for students. It is your responsibility to ensure all site requirements are understood and completed prior to registering for the Practicum course. This may include, but is not limited to: proof of liability insurance, HIPAA training, proof of licensure, proof of CPR certification or other requirements, background screening, physical examination, drug screening, proof of health insurance and current immunizations.

Because a student must be fully compliant with all site requirements before beginning the practicum course, automatic registration for any practicum course is not allowed.
Site requirements

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 family member, relative or personal friend. 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).

For the Informatics CGE courses, the primary mentor must have direct supervision of personnel in the informatics areas within the organization (i.e., manager, director, executive director, VP, CNIO, assistant CNIO, CNO, innovation VP). In addition, the mentor should have organizational responsibility for assigning large scale organization wide projects.

4. Completed Practicum Application

Once the site has been selected and mentor identified:

- Complete the Practicum Application in your Student Portal at least two sessions 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
- Provide a copy of your mentors current nursing licensure
- Provide a copy of your current resume. This will be reviewed by faculty to meet the needs of their preparation for the upcoming practicum

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 course resources in the online course (e.g., NR-640; NR-641; NR-630; 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 course resources (e.g., NR-640; NR-641; NR-630; 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 University
- 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
- Assist in student efforts to secure a practicum site and mentor
- 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 current 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
- Students must meet the institution’s HIPAA compliance requirements prior to start of the practicum experience
- Graduate students cannot engage in direct patient care as part of the practicum experience. Therefore, students will not be given patient care assignments. A summary of acceptable practicum experiences for Nursing Informatics students include:
  - Designing/planning a project to develop web applications, completing a SWOT analysis of HIT issues with recommendations/plans to mitigate issues, identify issues with an EHR implementation, define gaps, develop workflow and create plan to resolve issues.
  - Uses analytical models and tools to facilitate assessments, identify risks to healthcare consumer health and safety, or barriers to health and security.
  - Plan/develop ways to utilize HIT to measure, record and retrieve healthcare data, develop and implement reporting processes.
  - Create NI solutions for feedback and evaluation on effectiveness of educational content associated with EHR applications.
  - Evaluate HIT resources for accuracy, readability and comprehension to assist staff and others who need access to quality health information by developing a repository for EBP related to NI and HIT.
  - Assess and develop processes to improve utilization of telemedicine and devices.
6. Orientation to the Practicum

General information about the practicum is available in the MSN Student Resources. 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 practicumcoordination@chamberlain.edu.

Practicum Portfolio Guidelines

1. 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 course resources in your practicum course; e.g., NR-640; NR-641; NR-630; 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, measurable 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 based on an evidence-based practice issue, concern or practice change appropriate to the specialty area.

Required elements include:

• Target audience
• 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 and dissemination plan

Students are expected to develop and implement a project that will benefit the organization and contribute to the student’s ability to achieve the course outcomes. The practicum project 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 project, develop objectives for the project and identify strategies from the literature used in the development and implementation of the project complete with measurement, evaluation and dissemination of outcomes.

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

II. 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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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Learning Agreement*</td>
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<td>• Portfolio Assignments*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Practicum Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Student Activities Log</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Initiation of Capstone Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Professional Competencies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*These requirements are initiated and completed during the practicum experience; see syllabus.
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. For NI students, the practicum project is in collaborations with the mentor and organizational need.

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 and nursing faculty will assist students in exploring opportunities in their area. The practicum coordinator can be reached at practicumcoordination@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) including foundations, organizations and government venues.
- 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.

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; in some cases non-nursing degree professionals may be selected with permission and at the discretion of the nursing faculty. It is recommended that students select a primary and secondary mentor and place their credentials into my.chamberlain.edu to ensure that there is no interruption of the practicum experience for unforeseen events.
- 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 and date 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
- 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 disseminated outcomes

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 project, 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.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Contact Information
Students may direct all operational questions about the practicum experience to the practicum coordinator at practicumcoordination@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 two sessions 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 practicumcoordination@chamberlain.edu. The track-based full-time faculty may assist with determination of mentor appropriateness and project.

   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. It is recommended that students select a primary mentor and a secondary mentor to ensure that if there are emergencies or vacations that the student will continue to have guidance for their project.

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 satisfaction 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. Designing/planning a project to develop web applications, completing a SWOT analysis of HIT issues with recommendations/plans to mitigate issues, identify issues with an EHR implementation, define gaps, develop workflow and create plan to resolve issues.
2. Uses analytical models and tools to facilitate assessments, identify risks to healthcare consumer health and safety, or barriers to health and security.
3. Plan/develop ways to utilize HIT to measure, record and retrieve healthcare data, develop and implement reporting processes.
4. Create NI solutions for feedback and evaluation on effectiveness of educational content associated with EHR applications.
5. Evaluate HIT resources for accuracy, readability and comprehension to assist staff and others who need access to quality health information by developing a repository for EBP related to NI and HIT.
6. Assess and develop processes to improve utilization of telemedicine and devices.

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).
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

Forms & Worksheets
- Graduate Learning Agreement
- Graduate Student Activities Log
- Graduate Practicum Checklist

For more information, email practicumcoordination@chamberlain.edu