

**MSN and APRN Post-Graduate Certificate**

**Practicum Guide Handbook**

—  
**North Park University**  
**School of Nursing**

**2025-2026**

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## Introduction

The Practicum Guide Handbook is published by North Park University's MSN and Post Graduate APRN Certificate program. This handbook provides current information on program requirements and expectations pertaining to clinical placement for the North Park University Graduate School of Nursing program. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Practicum Guide Handbook and are subject to the policy documented in the most current version of the handbook.

While the handbook is formally revised on an annual basis, the program reserves the right to change any policy, process, or procedure at any time. Students will be notified of any changes via e-mail, and the new Handbook will be available.

The School of Nursing (SON) offers two graduate programs of study at the master's level: Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Post-Graduate APRN Certificate. Program requirements are structured to maintain a high standard of scholarship within flexible program design and individualized student programming. Each program includes a clinical component known as a practicum. Students have the flexibility to design a course of study consistent with individual goals. Tailoring practicum experiences enable each student to achieve the learning outcomes articulated in the selected track while also focusing on individual professional goals.

## Clinical Coordinators

MSN Leadership and Management Coordinator:	Dr. Keith Bakken <a href="mailto:kbakken@northpark.edu">kbakken@northpark.edu</a>
NP and FNP Track Coordinator:	Dr. Christine Smith <a href="mailto:casmith@northpark.edu">casmith@northpark.edu</a>
AGPCNP Track Coordinator:	Laura Reckamp <a href="mailto:lreckamp@northpark.edu">lreckamp@northpark.edu</a>
Clinical Compliance Coordinator:	Kathleen Kudia <a href="mailto:Kkudia@northpark.edu">Kkudia@northpark.edu</a>
School of Nursing Operations Coordinator	Angela Jackson <a href="mailto:Adjackson@northpark.edu">Adjackson@northpark.edu</a>

## Practicum Course Faculty

NURS 5532 Adult Health:	Dr. Jovan Butler <a href="mailto:jlbutler2@northpark.edu">jlbutler2@northpark.edu</a>
NURS 5624 Advanced Gerontology:	Laura Reckamp <a href="mailto:lreckamp@northpark.edu">lreckamp@northpark.edu</a>
NURS 5572 Women's Health:	Dr. Christine Smith <a href="mailto:casmith@northpark.edu">casmith@northpark.edu</a>
NURS 5562 Pediatrics:	Dr. April Demito <a href="mailto:ademito@northpark.edu">ademito@northpark.edu</a>
NURS 5782 and 5783 AGPCNP Residency:	Laura Reckamp <a href="mailto:lreckamp@northpark.edu">lreckamp@northpark.edu</a>
NURS 5792 and 5793 FNP Residency:	Dr. Christine Smith <a href="mailto:casmith@northpark.edu">casmith@northpark.edu</a>

## Roles and Responsibilities

### The Program Coordinator

- Vetting of sites and preceptors (appropriate patient volume, site visit availability, hands-on experience).
- Obtaining appropriate documentation for additional or supplemental approved preceptors
- Preceptor orientation.
- Onboarding preceptors to Typhon

### School of Nursing Operations Coordinator

- Email to preceptors
  - Welcome letter and preceptor orientation to preceptors
  - Thank you letter and CME/CEU certificates
- Maintain contracts (affiliation agreements and requests)

### Clinical Compliance Coordinator

- Student Compliance Coordinator for designated clinical compliance tracker.
- Assist students with institutional onboarding at clinical sites.

### Clinical Faculty and Course Instructor

- Will facilitate questions, concerns, performance, and evaluations related to the clinical experience.
- Will monitor clinical hours/attendance and logging in Typhon.
- Review and approve students Typhon entries.
- Setting appropriate expectations and orientation to course objectives for students and Preceptors.
- Review the focus of the practicum experiences with the student and preceptor.
- Act as a resource person to both the student and preceptor.
- Provide feedback to the preceptor and student concerning the practicum experience.
- Review all evaluative data, including practicum site observations, and determine the grade for the student's practicum experience.
- Review requests for exceptions to clinical policy and process.
- Updating the practicum coordinator with necessary information surrounding student competency need
- If there are concerns at the clinical site or with the preceptor, then the clinical faculty works closely with the student and practicum coordinator to resolve the problem. If unable to resolve the problem, the Clinical Faculty escalates concern to the Course Instructor or Program Coordinator.
- Conference Calls and/or Site Visit
  - APRN: - Three conference calls will be conducted each term: beginning, mid-term, and end of term. A three-way conference call or video conference, or site visit will be scheduled between the clinical faculty, students, and preceptors.
  - Leadership & Management: Two to three meetings per semester
  - Initial Conference Call - Designed to manage the student's and preceptor's expectations and answer any questions and address any concerns.
  - Midterm and Final Conference Call - The student, preceptor, and clinical faculty will discuss the student's progress at these meetings. Prior to each meeting, the student

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will provide the clinical faculty with their Clinical Hours Log and an evaluation form for review.

- Leadership & Management:
  - Assist the student and the preceptor as needed in identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating practicum activities and project development.
  - Facilitate student's knowledge synthesis and completion of the practicum project.

### The Student

- Maintain Clinical Compliance tracker requirements (CastleBranch).
- Complete the practicum preceptor interagency agreement and submit prior to due date.
- Arrange meeting dates and times.
- Adhere to agency protocols and standards.
- Employ professional standards of care.
- Assume responsibility for your own professional actions.
- Maintain patient entries into Typhon.
- Maintain an accurate Time log signed daily by preceptor.
- Assume responsibility for professional growth and development, which includes self-assessment, integration of feedback from preceptors and faculty, and self-directed development.
- Leadership & Management Student:
  - Work with the preceptor and faculty members to identify an appropriate agency-based project.
  - Demonstrate initiative in identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating practicum learning experiences and objectives fulfillment.
  - Plan and implement the identified agency-based project.

### The Preceptor

The preceptor is a qualified health care related professional who has expertise in the area in which the graduate student wishes to focus and is, therefore, essential to the student's learning.

Leadership & Management: The preceptor possesses a leadership position within a healthcare organization and a minimum of master's level education in Nursing to precept the student in the management and leadership track.

APRN: The preceptor may include a physician, a master's prepared Advanced Practice Nurse who is nationally certified and licensed as an APRN in the state of Illinois, or a Physician's Assistant.

The preceptor will:

- Assist with orientation to the agency.
- Facilitate the implementation of the practicum.
- Help the student meet the clinical objectives and develop a plan of action to achieve them
- Assign patients who are consistent with a level of knowledge and experience
- Supervise patient health assessments, incorporating medical history
- Discuss patient needs and provide guidance in developing plans for treatment
- Oversee treatment and health management that is consistent with diagnosis
- Identify the students' strengths as well as areas for improvement.
- Challenge students to grow as clinical experts,
- scholar and leader
- Meet with students and clinical faculty at designated times throughout the clinical rotation.

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- Communicate with the student regularly to discuss practicum performance and progress toward meeting the learning objectives.
- Communicate with the practicum faculty regarding concerns during the practicum and student progress in professional development.
- Review student's time log (clinical hours) at the end of each workday and confirm the accuracy of the log.
- Leadership and Management Students:
  - Provide recommendations for professional placement.
  - Assist the student in identifying, planning, implementing, and evaluating practicum activities.
  - Assist the student in arranging contact with resources outside the agency when appropriate.
- Complete and sign the student practicum evaluation.

## Practica

- Build on previous education and professional experiences
- Facilitate student achievement of learning outcomes
- Results in developing expertise in an expanded role

The practicum experience is intentionally designed for students to build upon graduate course work and to continue integration of nursing research, theory, and practice.

### **The Leadership & Management Practica**

Proceeds over the course of three semesters, with each semester developing skills, then building expertise and finally demonstrating a synthesis of knowledge and skills in the completion of an organization-based project during the last semester.

Note, the practicum experience for the Leadership/Management students is embedded into each graded didactic course (5421, 5431, 5441). (See *Appendix G*)

### **The Nurse Practitioner (APRN) Practica**

The goal of clinical education is to produce professional advanced practice registered nurse practitioners with the knowledge and skills to provide high quality health care to diverse patients, families, and communities. For the AGPCNP student, this represents individuals from young adults (including late adolescents) to older adults. For the FNP student, this represents the care of individuals across the lifespan. Clinical courses are sequenced and scaffolded to ensure foundational clinical assessment and diagnostic reasoning skills are built before progressing to more advanced clinical expectations and requirements. There are 3 levels of practicum courses in the nurse practitioner tracks (see *Appendix F*)

**Level 1 (Novice):** Students are beginning level learners. This is the first clinical course. The student is expected to strengthen skills in obtaining history and physical exams, diagnostic reasoning, and developing management plans.

**Level 2 (Advanced Beginners):** Students at this level will build on the knowledge and skills achieved and focus on specific populations.

**Level 3 (Competent):** Students at this level are developing clinical competency in their population-specific track.

**The Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Student (AGPCNP)**

The practicum courses for the adult gerontology primary care nurse practitioner student include the following courses with practicum description.

**Level 1** (Novice): Students are beginning level learners.

- NURS 5532 Adult Health Primary Care - The focus of this rotation is on adult health. The student will have one preceptor for 255 practicum hours. Ideal settings include internal medicine or family practice settings.

**Level 2** (Advanced Beginners): Students at this level will build on the knowledge and skills achieved and focus on specific populations.

- NURS 5624 Advanced Practice in Gerontologic Nursing - The focus of this rotation is gerontology. The student will have one preceptor for 170 practicum hours. Ideal settings include gerontology and primary care.

**Level 3** (Competent): Students at this level are developing clinical competency in their population-specific track. The residences are the final and culminating courses for the nurse practitioner student.

- NURS 5782 and 5783 Adult Gerontology Primary Care Residencies – These two courses are taken over one semester. The student will complete 170 practicum hours in each course with a total of 340 hours. The ideal settings include internal medicine, gerontology, long term care settings. One of these courses can be divided between two clinical sites and up to 85 practicum hours in one specialty area. Specialty areas are listed below and require approval from the course faculty.

**The AGPCNP student must work with an APRN with expertise in the adult gerontology primary care population for at least 85 practicum hours, preferably 765 practicum hours.**

Suitable primary care sites include, but are not limited to:

- Public health departments, Community health centers, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)
- Hospital owned practices, private practices in family medicine, internal medicine, gerontology
- Senior Centers
- Long-term/post-acute care facilities

\*Acceptable outpatient specialty sites include the following:

- Convenient Care/Fast Track ED, Immediate/Urgent Care, Neurology, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Pulmonology, Gastroenterology, Mental Health, Orthopedics, Nephrology, Rheumatology, ENT, and Urology.
- Students must be able to demonstrate the relevance of the specialty site to primary care and achieve the following learning objectives for a specialty rotation to be approved and provide direct care to the patient, including history, physical exam, diagnosis, and development of the plan of care.



## The Family Nurse Practitioner Student (FNP)

The practicum courses for family nurse practitioner students include the following with a practicum description.

Level 1 (Novice): Students are beginning level learners.

- NURS 5532 Adult Health Primary Care - The focus of this rotation is on adult health. The student will have one preceptor for 255 practicum hours. Ideal settings include internal medicine or family practice settings.

Level 2 (Advanced Beginners): Students at this level will build on the knowledge and skills achieved and focus on specific populations.

- NURS 5572 Women's Health Primary Care - The focus of this rotation is OBGYN. The student will have one preceptor for 85 practicum hours. Ideal settings include an OBGYN clinic with an OBGYN physician, midwife or women's health nurse practitioner serving as a preceptor in an outpatient primary care site. Contact the course faculty for approval if considering a family practice site. *Centers where abortions are provided on site are not acceptable.*
- NURS 5562 Pediatric Primary Care - The focus of this rotation is pediatric primary care. The student will have one preceptor for 85 practicum hours. Ideal settings include a pediatric clinic with a pediatrician, pediatric nurse practitioner serving as a preceptor, or a family practice site with an FNP or physician who sees a large panel of pediatric patients.

Level 3 (Competent): Students at this level are developing clinical competency in their population-specific track. The residences are the final and culminating courses for the nurse practitioner student.

- NURS 5792 and 5793 Family Practice Residency- The focus of this rotation is family practice primary care. These two courses are taken over one semester. The student will complete 170 practicum hours in each course with a total of 340 hours. The ideal settings include internal medicine, gerontology, long term care settings. One of these courses can be divided between two clinical sites and up to 85 practicum hours in one specialty area. Specialty areas are listed below and require approval from the course faculty. \*

**The FNP student must work with an APRN with expertise in family practice primary care for at least 85 practicum hours, preferably 765 practicum hours.**

Suitable primary care sites include, but are not limited to:

- Public health departments, Community Health Centers and Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)
- Hospital owned practices, private practices in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics and OBGYN
- School based health care centers
- Long-term/post-acute care facilities

\*Acceptable outpatient specialty sites include the following:

- Convenient Care/Fast Track ED, Immediate/Urgent Care, Neurology, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Pulmonology, Gastroenterology, Mental Health, Orthopedics, Nephrology, Rheumatology, ENT, Urology.
- Students must be able to demonstrate relevance of the specialty site to primary care and achieve the following learning objectives for a specialty rotation to be approved and provide direct care to the patient; includes history, physical exam, diagnosis, and development of the plan of care.

### Placement Overview

Clinical education placement is an important part of the curriculum. In varied clinical settings, students combine the advanced nursing skills they learned in the classroom with face-to-face clinical experiences in practice. Finding a preceptor can be challenging. Students may draw from their professional network in securing a clinical site. If a student is unable to secure a preceptor, our MSN FNP/AGPCNP Practicum faculty and coordinator will help in obtaining a clinical site. While this collaborative effort prioritizes securing a quality educational experience for the student, it may not always align with the student's preferred location. In addition, securing a clinical site may include utilizing a preceptor find agency that requires an additional service fee. All clinical placement sites and preceptors must be approved by the School of Nursing.

## Practicum Planning

### When to Start Practica?

#### The Leadership & Management Student

The Leadership/Management MSN begins the second semester of the program with NURS 5421, students must complete their business courses before taking NURS 5441. Students will work with the clinical compliance coordinator at admission and before the end of the first semester to ensure they are ready for NURS 5421. NURS 5421, 5431, and 5441 practicums are sequential and completed at one clinical site.

#### The APRN Student

Practicum begins after the completion of the MSN core courses, the nurse practitioner core courses, and population specific track didactic courses. Before beginning the practicum, students will come to campus for Campus Immersion and Practicum Qualification.

#### On Campus Attendance for APRN MSN and Post Graduate Students

APRN MSN and Post Graduate students have one required on campus event.

**Campus Immersion and Practicum Qualification (NURS 5525 and NURS 5526).** This 3-day intensive course will prepare students to transition into their practicum coursework. To be eligible for this course, students must have completed all prerequisite courses. Upon successful completion of this course, students are eligible to begin their practicum courses.

**This is a required trip to campus. Each student is expected to participate fully in all activities.**

#### Practica Orientation and Planning

Students must attend a practicum orientation during the semester before their intended practicum enrollment (e.g., Fall 2025 for a Spring 2026 practicum). This session covers the procedures for planning and applying for practicum experience. For any subsequent practicum course, students should arrange a virtual meeting with either their course instructor or the practicum coordinator early in the preceding semester to discuss clinical placement needs.

Practicum orientation and planning sessions will be announced by email.

## Where to Do Practica?

The North Park University campus and surrounding area offer excellent resources for practica. Ideas about practicum placement may be derived from your network or in consultation with nursing faculty in your selected concentration. It is important to note that students cannot be precepted by their immediate supervisor or precepted in a direct area of their employment. **Students in need of assistance in securing a preceptor should contact their practicum course instructor, program coordinator, or advisor before the agreement due date (see *important information for dates*)** Practica occurs in settings that have appropriately prepared and credentialed people available to serve as preceptors. Requirements for practicum:

- Must be located in Illinois
- The physical and emotional safety of the site is evident.
- Sufficient size to foster learning & fulfillment of course requirements.
- Willing to accept NPU Graduate Nursing Students
- Qualified preceptors have the credentials and educational preparation appropriate to the type of service provided, have ***a minimum of one year of full-time experience in the role in which the student is being precepted and have unencumbered licenses to practice in Illinois.***
- The preceptor cannot be related to the student or function in a direct supervisory or subordinate capacity prior to the practicum.
  - Advanced Practice Registered Nurses
    - A minimum of a master's degree in nursing
    - A current Registered Nurse (RN) license in the state of Illinois and APRN with an unencumbered license.
    - Nationally Certified to practice in his/her population focused and/or specialty
  - Physician Assistant
    - Nationally Certified to practice as a Physician Assistant.
    - Current unencumbered license to practice IL
  - Physicians
    - Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
    - Must hold an unencumbered license to practice in Illinois.
    - Board Certified to practice in his/her population focused and /or specialty.

For the L & M students:

- Nurse preceptors must hold a minimum master's degree in nursing.
- A current Registered Nurse (RN) license in the state of Illinois and APRN with an unencumbered license.

## Planning and Proposing Practicum

### APRN Students

The protocol below is employed to guide a student through the process of proposing and securing practicum placement.

#### Planning and Proposing Practicum

1. Students must attend a mandatory Practicum Orientation Session. This orientation is offered one semester prior to your first practicum course and provides essential information about the protocol and procedures for planning, proposing, and participating in a practicum.

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2. Students should thoroughly review the MSN and Post-Graduate Certificate Handbook along with the Practicum Handbook.
3. To prepare for the practicum approval, students must gather and complete the following:
  - Name of proposed preceptor (if you have one)
  - Completion of Clinical Compliance documents to be submitted to designed document tracking system (See Appendix)
  - Updated resume
4. Students who need assistance with securing a clinical preceptor will contact their advisor or nurse practitioner coordinator. This must be done prior to the deadline for submitting agreements. The student will receive the name of a preceptor to contact.
5. ***Securing a clinical site may include utilizing a preceptor finding service that requires an additional service fee. See the Program Coordinator for information regarding recommended preceptor finding agencies.***

### Approval Process

6. Eligibility for practicum as well as the appropriateness of the proposed site and preceptor, will be determined by your track coordinator (APRN or L&M), course instructor, or academic advisor. ***Students must receive approval before contacting a proposed site or preceptor.*** The coordinator will verify the preceptor's Illinois license status (active and unencumbered), ensure the preceptor's specialty aligns with the clinical objectives, and confirm the suitability of the clinical site.
7. ***All clinical placement sites and preceptors must be approved by the School of Nursing.***

### Securing a Practicum Site

After securing approval to engage in a practicum, the student will visit the proposed practicum site. At this meeting students will request a practicum rotation.

1. Introduce self (who you are and prior practicum experience) and the purpose for the site visit.
  - 1) Present a cover letter (see Appendix B) that includes the following:
    - a. A brief introduction to who you are and your past clinical experience
    - b. The purpose of the letter; your request of the clinical site/preceptor include
    - c. Clinical practicum hours needed and the dates of the rotation.
    - d. A brief statement about why the preceptor was selected.
    - e. Include a personal statement regarding what you can offer the clinic, i.e., language skills, special interest in the patient population, etc.
  - 2) Present your CV/Resume
  - 3) Be prepared to discuss the following:
    - a. State your request for a practicum
    - b. Your interest in the selected site. (the reputation of the provider, the proximity to your home, your interest in the patient population, etc.)
    - c. The focus of the practicum and your learning goals i.e., women's health, Internal medicine, pediatrics, etc. the expectation for the rotation (see Appendix D)
    - d. The clinical practicum hours required
    - e. The dates of the practicum
2. If there is mutual interest in the practicum with minimal changes to the proposed learning activities, the student will secure consent with the course specific Interagency Agreement form (see *Completing the Interagency Agreement, p. 13*). For obtaining an agreement see: [Handbooks and Interagency Practicum Preceptor Agreements - North Park University](#)
3. The student will negotiate a tentative starting date and schedule for practicum at times mutually agreeable to the preceptor, student, and faculty.

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- The maximum number of practicum hours per day is 12 hours. ***The student is not permitted to work 8 practicum hours before the scheduled practicum.***

### Submitting the Interagency Practicum Agreement

1. The student must submit the completed Interagency Practicum Agreement to the School of Nursing Operations Coordinator by the practicum due dates *see Important Information to [practicum@northpark.edu](mailto:practicum@northpark.edu)*. See Appendix C *Completing the Interagency Practicum Agreement*. If a student cannot secure a preceptor, it is their responsibility to contact his/her advisor or NP coordinator before the Interagency Practicum Agreement due dates so that the advisor/NP coordinator can help the student secure a preceptor. A student who submits a contract after the targeted deadline will experience a delayed practicum start. ***Any student who has not submitted a signed agreement by the end of the first week of the semester will be dropped from the practicum and didactic course.***
2. The student is responsible for securing the preceptor's resume and copy of his/her national certification.
3. Note that each site must have a complete Interagency-Preceptor Practicum Agreement.
4. The student must scan the following documents in **word or pdf format** and submit it to [practicum@northpark.edu](mailto:practicum@northpark.edu). ***Photograph copies are not acceptable.***
  - a. Completed Interagency-Practicum Practicum Agreement
  - b. Copy of the ARPN/PA preceptor's national certification; physician certification not required, but encouraged
  - c. Preceptor's CV/Resume/or Bio
5. The Interagency-Preceptor Practicum Agreement will be processed by the SON. This step may take up to two weeks or more. A copy of the completed document will be emailed to the clinical agency as the official contract for the practicum. The entire process must be completed **prior** to engaging in the practicum.
6. Before beginning the practicum, the student will contact the program coordinator to discuss clinical site preparation and requirements. Some clinical sites have additional onboarding requirements.
7. If, during the semester, an NP student wishes to add a practicum site, he/she must seek written approval from both the course instructor and the Practicum Coordinator.
8. The student must submit the completed Interagency Practicum Agreement to the School of Nursing Operations Coordinator by the posted due date to [practicum@northpark.edu](mailto:practicum@northpark.edu). A student who submits a contract after the targeted deadline will experience a delayed practicum start. ***Any student who has not submitted a signed contract by the end of the first week of the semester will be dropped from the practicum and didactic courses.***

### Pre-Clinical Orientation.

Prior to the first day of clinical, the student should schedule a pre-clinical on-site orientation with the preceptor. See Appendix D for more details.

The process is repeated each semester for NP students.

## Important Information

NP Practicum Planning will be announced via email each semester. You may also reach out to your Advisor or Course Faculty at any time.

## Interagency Practicum Planning: Due Dates

For Fall Practicums: Agreements are due July 1<sup>st</sup> annually

For Spring Practicums: Agreements are due December 1<sup>st</sup> annually (for APRN students only)

For Summer Practicums: Agreements are due April 1<sup>st</sup> annually.

## Practicum Documents

Scan and send the following practicum documents to [practicum@northpark.edu](mailto:practicum@northpark.edu) (uploaded photos will not be accepted)

- Interagency Practicum Agreement
- Preceptor's Resume/CV
- Copy of National Certification.

## Practicum Institutions: Planning Ahead

Many practicum institutions require student applications for clinical rotations **6 – 9 months in advance** of the rotation, even before a preceptor is identified. These applications need to be completed each semester for consideration at their clinic site. Additionally, each site may have its own onboarding requirements which may exceed those of North Park University. Some of the institutions include:

- Lawndale Christian Health Center <https://lawndale.org/np-preceptorships>
- Endeavor Health
- Advocate
- Oak Street Health

Other sites may require applications and formal onboarding preparation. The information can be found on the institution's website. Reach out to the practicum coordinator to discuss specific site requirements.

### Telehealth: APRN Students

The student may participate in telehealth visits and must meet all board of nursing licensure requirements in the state where the patient resides.

- No more than 20% of program practicum hours may be telehealth visits.
- The nurse practitioner student may participate in any telehealth visits performed by the preceptor.
- No more than 20% of each population focused visits can be performed via telehealth.

The telehealth practicum hours will be documented on the Time Log.

### Practicum Hours per Day

- The maximum number of practicum hours per day is 12 hours. Six to eight practicum hours per day are desirable. ***The student is not permitted to work 8 hours before the scheduled practicum.***

***Students may engage in practicum only between the first and last available dates of the semester; practicum may not be scheduled during academic recesses.***

## Proposing Initial Practicum: Leadership & Management Students

Each NPU graduate nursing track includes a practicum component. Leadership and Management Students will apply for approval of a Three Semester Practicum, to be facilitated at the same clinical site over the three semesters (Summer, Fall, Spring).

### Planning and Proposing Practicum

1. Attend a Practicum Orientation session during the semester (spring) before the first of three clinical semesters. This is a mandatory session to learn the protocol and procedures for planning, proposing, and engaging in a practicum. This must be attended to in the semester before the expected start of practicum.
2. Review the MSN and Post- Graduate's Handbook and Practicum Guide carefully.
3. Gather and complete the following documents:
  - List of program classes completed.
  - Name of proposed preceptor (if you have one)
  - Clinical Compliance documents to be submitted to Certified Background (See Appendix for directions)
4. Eligibility for practicum and suitability of proposed practicum site & preceptor will be determined by the L&M Track Coordinator, or the faculty of course instructor. Prior to initiating contact with the proposed site and preceptor, the student needs faculty approval.  
NURS 5421, 5431, and 5441 Strategic Nursing: Keith Bakken, [kbakken@northpark.edu](mailto:kbakken@northpark.edu)

### Securing Approval to Engage in Practicum

1. After securing approval to engage in practicum from the L&M Track Coordinator (or course instructor), the student needs to make appointments with personnel at the proposed practicum site. At this meeting students share their request for practicum, negotiate for a practicum site & preceptor, and review the proposed practicum activities. If there is mutual interest in the practicum with minimal changes to the proposed learning activities, the student needs to secure consents for the practicum from the preceptor and the person designated to authorize participation for the agency. Also, the student will negotiate a tentative starting date and schedule for practicum at times mutually agreeable to the preceptor, student, and faculty.
  - The maximum number of practicum hours per day is 12 hours. Four to eight practicum hours per day are desirable.
  - **The student is not permitted to work 8 hours before the scheduled practicum.**
  - The student is responsible for securing the preceptor's resume, certification, and license in Illinois.
2. The student must submit the completed Interagency Practicum Agreement to the School of Nursing Operations Coordinator by the announced deadline. A student who submits a contract after the targeted deadline will experience a delayed practicum start. **Any student who has not submitted a signed contract by the end of the first week of the semester will be dropped from the practicum and didactic courses.**
3. The student must scan the following documents and submit to [practicum@northpark.edu](mailto:practicum@northpark.edu). Photograph copies are not acceptable.
  - A. Completed Interagency Practicum Agreement
  - B. Copy of the preceptor's license and resume
  - C. CV/Resume
4. The Interagency Practicum Agreement will be processed by The School of Nursing. This step may take up to two weeks or more. A copy of the completed document will be emailed to the



clinical agency as the official contract for the practicum. The entire process must be completed **prior** to engaging in the practicum.

5. Before beginning the practicum, the student will contact the program coordinator to discuss clinical site preparation and requirements.
6. ***Any student who has not submitted a signed Interagency Practicum Agreement by the end of the first week of the semester will be dropped from the practicum and didactic courses.*** If, during the semester, an NP student wishes to add a practicum site, he/she must seek written approval from both the course instructor and the Practicum Coordinator.

\*Please meet with your course instructor to discuss any proposed exception

## Clinical Compliance

### About CastleBranch

CastleBranch is a secure platform that allows you to order your background check online, fingerprint, order drug tests, and keep track of your documents.

Go to [www.CastleBranch.com](http://www.CastleBranch.com)

### Checklist of required immunizations/lab work

**Measles, Mumps, & Rubella (MMR)**-Evidence of immunity can include any of the following:

- Documentation of 2 doses of the vaccine at least 28 days apart OR
- Positive antibody IgG titer results for all 3 (Measles, Mumps, & Rubella) components (lab reports are required as evidence). If a titer is negative or equivocal for any of the components, 2 doses of the MMR vaccine scheduled at least 4 weeks apart will be required.

**Varicella (Chicken Pox)** -Evidence of immunity can include any of the following:

- Documentation of 2 doses of vaccine given 28 days apart OR
- Positive antibody IgG titer results (lab report is required as evidence). If a titer is negative or equivocal for any of the components, 2 doses of the varicella vaccine scheduled at least 4 weeks apart will be required.
- History of Disease is not adequate to meet this requirement.

**Hepatitis B** – Documentation of Hepatitis B antibody status may be provided in one of the following ways:

- Documentation of a completed 3 immunization series OR
- Positive antibody titers (lab report is required as evidence) OR
- If the titer is negative or equivocal, the student will repeat the series of either the 3 dose HepB vaccine series or Heplisav-B which is a 2 dose vaccine series.

**Tuberculosis (TB) Test-TB-free state.** Documentation of being disease free may be demonstrated by one of the following that could be clinical site specific.

- Annual negative PPD skin test. The renewal date will be set for 1 year for negative results.
- Annual negative blood tests such as QuantiFERON Gold. The renewal date for the annual blood test will be set for 1 year for negative results.
- Persons with a documented prior positive TB test, a clear Chest X-Ray (with lab report) is required one time (from any date) **PLUS** documentation of any treatment you have received, and an annual TB checklist of signs and symptoms will be used to screen for TB disease. A checklist from employer/provider will be acceptable.

**Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis) Vaccine** - Proof of Tdap vaccine within the past 10 years.



**Influenza Vaccine- Seasonal Influenza:** Annual requirement from October 1st – March 31st. One of the following is required:

- Documentation of flu shot which must include vaccine lot # OR
- Signed a declination waiver and a note from a healthcare provider. The student must submit a note signed by a healthcare provider, stating that he/she is not able to receive the influenza vaccination. Declination waivers are available through the NP coordinator.

## CastleBranch Background Check/Drug Screening Test/Fingerprint

**Criminal Background Check** – Upon purchasing your background check you will be sent an “Illinois State Police Search Criminal Record Information Release Form”. This form must be signed in ink and submitted to Castle Branch (submission instructions on form) so your background check can be processed. Electronic signatures are not accepted.

**Drug Screening Test** -A 10 panel (urine) drug screen must be completed prior to the first practicum through CastleBranch. Students will go to a CastleBranch designated location to give their drug screening sample. A negative urine drug screen is required for all students to participate in practicum.

If results come back as “dilute negative”, students will have to re-purchase and re-take the test.

***NOTE: Students must remain free from the use of alcohol or any illegal or decriminalized (marijuana) drug while participating in practicum experiences with any of NPU’s affiliated agencies.***

**Livescan Fingerprint** - Upon purchasing your account, you will be sent a form that you must complete and take with you to a facility to have your livescan fingerprinting completed. You **MUST** do the live scan fingerprint in Illinois. If you are out of state, we will request that CastleBranch switch your account to add the out-of-state instructions.

## Don’t forget to

**Register for CPR Certification-** Must be the American Heart Association BLS (Basic Life Support) for Healthcare Providers course (only if you do not have a current AHA BLS CPR card)

**Unencumbered Registered Professional Nurse Licensure in Illinois.** All students must provide a copy of their current license as an RN in Illinois and upload it to CastleBranch. If you have an APRN then you must provide a copy of your Illinois license as an APRN and A copy of your certification by a national certifying body, e.g., ANCC or AANP.

**Note: If you are enrolled in the DNP program and practice outside the state of IL you are required to include the RN license for the state in which you are currently practicing.**

**Make sure you have professional liability insurance-** Professional liability “occurrence” insurance for all students is required. Documentation of a professional liability occurrence policy with a minimum of \$1 million/\$6 million coverage is required for each semester of practicum. Students licensed and certified as APRNs must carry malpractice insurance as an APRN. Students in the nurse practitioner program must carry malpractice insurance as a nurse practitioner student. Students in the leadership and management program must carry malpractice insurance as a registered nurse. Malpractice insurance must be updated annually.

**Make sure you have personal health insurance-** Students must maintain continuous comprehensive coverage throughout time in the program - If you have out of state coverage, it must extend to providers in the state of Illinois.

**Completed HIPAA Training-Documentation** of having successfully completed HIPAA training is required. You may provide a certificate or letter from your employer stating completion of training. If you need assistance with training, contact NP Coordinator: Christine Smith  
[casmith@northpark.edu](mailto:casmith@northpark.edu)

**Completed Infection Control Training (OSHA)-Documentation** of having successfully completed OSHA/Infection control training is required. You may provide documentation from your employer. If you are unable to secure the training from your employer, you may use other internet based certifications. Here is one course available through OSHA \$39 [Blood Borne Pathogen \(BBP\) Online Certification - National OSHA Foundation](#)

Updated: 8/2025

## Practica Dress Code

All students are expected to adhere to professional-attire standards while on any practicum site.

- Students must wear the NPU Graduate Nursing Student picture ID and NPU lab coat while at the practicum site.
- Strict personal hygiene is required.
- Nails are to be maintained at a shorter length (1/4 inch from fingertip) and are to be kept in clean and healthy condition. Artificial nails are prohibited.
- Hair is off the collar or controlled by a hair-restraining device (e.g., hair tie). Un-natural hair (not occurring in the natural hair color spectrum, for example pink, fuchsia, purple, crimson, burgundy, and blue colors are not permitted.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- Jewelry is limited to a watch with second hand and minute demarcation, wedding band, and post or single-button earrings. No visible body-piercing hardware is allowed.
- Perfumes and colognes should be used conservatively.
- Business casual attire is expected on the practica sites.

### Required Equipment for APRN Practicum.

- Stethoscope: A cardiac level stethoscope (considered gold standard for advanced practice nurses)
- Tuning forks x 2, both required (512 Hz) and (256 Hz)
- Reflex Hammer- a Tromner reflex hammer is the best.
- Penlight
- Measuring tape (in both inches and centimeters)

## Practicum Behaviors & Expectations

The students will:

Design the optimal practicum experience.

- Review expectations of preceptor, site, self, and course
- Review with the preceptor the course learning objectives & activities
- Request an orientation to the site, protocols at the site, documentation system & related paperwork, routine at the site, and expectations for documentation & billing

## Practicum Guide Handbook

- Negotiate a mutually acceptable schedule for practicum (preferably plan the whole semester, but at least one month is required).

Engage in pre-clinical preparation for each day.

- Review the practicum objectives.
- Set objectives for each practicum day; articulate them to the practicum faculty.
- Engage in pre-clinical review of resources for specific rotation (i.e., if doing cardiac rotation, review cardiac assessment and common alterations).

Practicum performance demonstrates the level of education and level within the program.

- Performance matches that of the APRN or Leadership & Management student.
- Students are expected to support management plans with current evidence from professional literature. Utilize your clinic resources including UpToDate, Epocrates or other pharm book, Cash Guidelines, etc.
- Performance shows consistent progression through the semester and from one semester to the next.
- NP student's case presentation to the preceptor occurs with each patient. This should demonstrate increasing sophistication as the semester progresses.
- ***Time Logs (clinical hours verification) should be signed off by the preceptor at the end of each clinical day*** (Appendix H)
- Demonstrate a professional persona.
- Conduct self as an advanced professional.
  - Students are expected to provide care without discrimination regarding age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, disability or nature of health problems.
- Communication should reflect advanced professional standards (written, verbal, non-verbal)
- Fulfill commitments.
- Business time orientation must be followed (be on time to practice setting, review daily timeline with preceptor, manage direct and indirect time with patients)
- Adhere to a practicum schedule. If changes are necessary, they must be communicated in writing to the practicum faculty member within 24 hours of the change. Practicum hours are accumulated only during authentic direct & indirect patient encounter times, plus a meal break if more than 4 practicum hours are spent on practicum. Time waiting for the preceptor or carrying out a library review is not "counted".

Complete post-practicum activities

- NP students should enter data into the NP Data Tracking System (Typhon) preferably daily but at least weekly.
- NP and L&M students should track time in the Practicum Time Log on a weekly basis.
- Students are to engage in reflection about the practicum experience and identify self-development which must occur before the next practicum day. Reflect on the day's objectives and course objectives as well. Report this self-development to the practicum faculty through the practicum journal as required by your course faculty member.

- Complete & submit a practicum journal log per course schedule.
- Communicate immediately with the practicum faculty member about any unusual concerns or issues while at practicum, difficulty in communicating or working with the preceptor or within the setting, or inappropriate contact with patients.
- Engage in episodic performance reviews with preceptor and practicum faculty. Using the feedback, create a self-development plan for own growth.

### **Problem Identification**

If a student experiences a specific problem in either a didactic or clinical course, the student may be asked by the Course Faculty or Practicum Faculty to complete a Problem Identification sheet. (Appendix I). This student generated plan will identify the problem, the resources needed to resolve the issue, and a time frame for resolution. Examples of situations where plans may be initiated include delayed academic progress, problems with clinical skills, delayed submission of academic work, mismatched clinical goals, examination failures, or issues regarding communication. This problem identification sheet is written by the student in consultation with the Course Faculty, Practicum Faculty, or Program Director.

If the preceptor or the clinical faculty determines that appropriate student progress is not occurring or that appropriate supervision cannot take place within the current site, a student may be required to relocate to a site designated by the course faculty or practicum coordinator. To graduate, the student must be able to fulfill the clinical requirements and demonstrate safe and competent care.

### **Performance Improvement Plan**

In the event the Problem Identification could not be resolved through discussion, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) will be developed by the student, with the approval of their Course Faculty and Practicum Faculty. Such a plan may include the following: (see Appendix J). In the event this PIP is not resolved in a timely manner, this issue will be brought to the attention of the Selection and Progression Committee.

## Appendix A: NPU SON HIPAA Policy

### **HEALTH INFORMATION PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT COMPLIANCE**

School of Nursing faculty and students are committed to the protection of patients' health-related information in accordance with the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Therefore, the School of Nursing (SON) has adopted the privacy practices outlined by HIPAA law and institutional/accreditation standards regarding protected health information (PHI). PHI means any health information that could be used to identify a specific individual.

Each SON-affiliated person accessing PHI will make every reasonable effort to limit the use and disclosure of that information as necessary to accomplish the intended purpose or job. A "minimum necessary" standard will be employed. Students and faculty may share PHI with other health care providers to provide, coordinate or manage a patient's healthcare and related services. In the course of treatment, a patient's PHI may be disclosed to indirect healthcare providers (e.g., radiologists, pathologists, consulting Primary Care Providers). Similarly, PHI may be used as an educational activity related to assessment, diagnosis, management and evaluation of high-quality, cost-effective care. When PHI is used, information that identifies an individual must be removed.

This policy was drawn from the following Health Information Privacy and Accountability documents:

- Public Law #104-941 (also known as the Kennedy-Kasselbaum Act) dated Aug. 26, 1996
- Transaction Rule dated Aug. 17, 2000
- Privacy Rules dated Dec. 28, 2000

**Adopted 8/2003**

## Appendix B: Cover Letter / Email Requesting Practicum

Florence Nightingale  
1234 Reminisce Drive  
Chicago, IL 60000  
(773) 123-4567

April 10, 2050

April Lombart, MS, RN, NP

Imagination Medical Center  
123 Dream Highway  
Dreamland, IL 60111

Dear Ms. Lombart:

I am a graduate nursing student at North Park University enrolled in the Leadership and Management track. The Leadership and Management program requires two semesters of practicum experiences. I am hoping to do the practicum at Imagination Medical Center because it is a full-service acute care agency offering a wide variety of services. More importantly, the commitment to high quality health care and support of learners in their educational quest is well known. I am confident that a practicum at Imagination Medical Center will enhance my academic, personal, and professional growth.

I have enclosed a practicum proposal packet for your review. Included is a biographical sketch, tentative time frame (it may be amended as needed), and practicum objectives and learning activities being proposed. North Park University's Practicum Contract is also included for your review. The multi-page document consists of the Interagency Agreement and a description of the principal parties' roles.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. I can be reached at (773) 123-4567 if you have any questions. My practicum advisor, \_\_\_\_\_, is willing to facilitate my placement in any way possible. She can be reached at (773) 244-\_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Florence Nightingale, BSN, RN

## Appendix C: Completing the Interagency Practicum Agreement

1. Complete the Interagency Practicum Agreement. **All** information must be provided. A sample can be found in [Handbooks and Interagency Practicum Preceptor Agreements - North Park University](#)
2. The Interagency Practicum Agreements are electronically fillable forms. Please complete the form electronically. Enter the preceptor's name, Degree, Specialty. **Enter specific dates in the practicum.** Use the first day and last day of the semester dates. (See the Academic Calendar for dates), preceptor's address, phone number and email address.
3. On the line "in addition," if the agency requires other health and safety compliance items, the agency should enter that in, i.e., occasionally, agencies ask for fingerprint analysis or specific immunity evidence not listed. If an additional item is required, the student must fulfill it. Please contact your track coordinator or NP coordinator for information on how to fulfill this requirement.
4. Agency signature-. This can be signed by the site manager, student placement coordinator, or if private practice, the practice owner. If it is a private practice, the office manager or physician may sign it. There are exceptions, NorthShore and Northwestern signature not required. In these cases, the student should fill in the name of the agency across the agency line.
5. Preceptor digital signature. If you have more than preceptor. All preceptors must sign. If this is a NorthShore or Northwestern Memorial site, signature is not required, print name of preceptor.
6. Student Signature: The student must digitally sign the agreement.
7. Once completed, email the practicum agreement to [Practicum@northpark.edu](mailto:Practicum@northpark.edu) for practicum coordinator review. Once reviewed and accepted, the agreement will be signed by SON.
8. The preceptor will be sent a preceptor orientation packet including the signed Interagency Agreement, a welcome and introductory letter, evaluation tool, syllabus, and preceptor orientation tools. The student will be included in the Cc on the documents sent.
9. If your preceptor is not an employee of the clinical site (e.g., preceptor provides on-site care to patients in long-term care but is employed by another agency). The student must complete Interagency Agreements for the preceptor and clinical site.

## Appendix D: Pre-clinical Orientation Meeting with Preceptor

Before beginning the practicum, the student will schedule a pre-clinical orientation meeting with the preceptor. During this meeting, the students should discuss the following:

1. The student must be directly supervised by the preceptor or an appropriately qualified clinical designee at all times while on site. Under no circumstances should the student see patients alone or be left unsupervised with the preceptor outside the office.
2. The student should provide the preceptor with the name, contact information and email address of the student's North Park faculty member for future reference.
3. The students should discuss their background, clinical skills set, and any areas needing focused development with the preceptor. The student needs to review the objectives of the practicum. Additionally, the student should review his/her practicum level, the evaluation tool used to assess clinical performance, and the time log required to document site hours.
4. Student should plan an orientation on the first day of practicum. Students should observe the clinic and other relevant clinical areas to become familiar with the setting and workflow.
5. Students need to review with the preceptor the dress requirements in his/her practice. If no dress requirement is in place, students need to dress in business dress casually with NPU lab coat and NPU picture IDs.
6. The mechanism by which the student should communicate with the preceptor should be an illness or emergency requires a missed clinical day.
7. Practice guidelines/protocols. The student should share with the preceptor the practice guidelines recommended from the course, e.g., UpToDate, Cash Guidelines, and inquire if other office guidelines are utilized in the clinic.
8. The student needs to discuss his/her clinical schedule, start date, finish date, time in the clinic and the review with the preceptor his/her work calendar for the duration of the practicum. Clinicals will start after the first day of the corresponding didactic course.
9. The preceptor should clarify the expectations.
10. Any concerns that either the student or preceptor may have regarding clinical experience.
11. Student should discuss with the preceptor the information collected for the daily Typhon log and determine the best way to collect it. ***The student will not utilize Typhon during the workday unless it during the lunch or breaktime.***
12. The student will remind the preceptor that the clinical faculty will contact the preceptor three times during the semester and perform a site visit if needed or requested by the preceptor. Three conference calls will be conducted each term: beginning, mid-term, and end of term. A three-way conference call or video conference will be scheduled between the clinical faculty, students, and preceptors.
  - Initial Conference Call - Designed to manage the student's and preceptor's expectations and answer any questions and address any concerns.
    - Midterm and Final Conference Call - The student, preceptor, and clinical faculty will discuss the student's progress at these meetings. Prior to each meeting, the student will provide the clinical faculty with their Clinical Hours Log and an evaluation form for review



## Appendix E: CastleBranch

### Instructions for Graduate Students

#### About CastleBranch

CastleBranch is a secure platform that allows you to order your background check online, order any drug test, and keep track of your documents.

Go <https://portal.castlebranch.com/ND82/package-selection> and you need to order and pay for the following package codes.

OR53 - Background Check and Fingerprint package cost \$82

OR53dt – 10 panel Drug Test Package Cost \$38

OR53im - Document Tracker Package Cost \$24 annually

You will be directed to set up your CastleBranch Account. At the end of the order process, you will be prompted to enter your payment information.

Your results will be posted directly to your CastleBranch account. You will be notified if there is any missing information. Your school's administrator can also securely view your results. When any of your clinical requirements are about to expire, you will receive reminders from CastleBranch

#### **Clinical Requirements per section \_\_\_\_ Health and Safety Compliance Please Note:**

If student results on either the *background check* or *drug screening* raise concerns related to the nursing program, the student will be contacted by the Director of Graduate Nursing Programs for a mandatory meeting. If the concern is related to the drug screening, if the student can remain in the program, they may be asked to complete random urine drug screening for the program's duration. If a student tests positive on any follow-up random urine drug screening, the student may be asked to leave the program. The SNHS reserves the right to require additional drug screening of any student when indicated.

## Appendix F: Nurse Practitioner Student Clinical Expectations Levels of Progression

### Level One (NOVICE): First Clinical Course Activities and Outcomes

This is an adult health practicum (NURS 5532). The student has successfully completed Pharmacology, Pathophysiology and Physical Assessment, and all didactic course work which includes content that focuses on common acute and chronic illnesses of adults. This is the student's first clinical course and during this rotation, the student will spend 255 clinical hours at your site.

#### **At the beginning of this rotation, the student should perform at the following level:**

1. Obtains a history both comprehensive and problem focused
  - a. The history of the present illness is generally complete.
  - b. Review of Systems includes some pertinent positives and negatives
  - c. Past Med History/Family Med History/Psychosocial History is generally complete
2. Physical exam
  - a. This is generally complete but may require coaching from the preceptor regarding identifying normal versus abnormal findings
3. Diagnostic Reasoning
  - a. With coaching, the student can integrate basic science and clinical knowledge into the clinical setting. This is demonstrated by the integration of the HPI, ROS, Physical findings and the development of differential diagnosis.
4. Treatment plan
  - a. With coaching, the student can create an evidence-based treatment plan that includes medication, lifestyle modifications, referrals, and a plan for follow up.
5. Presentation
  - a. Able to present clinical findings to the preceptor but may lack organization and may miss some significant abnormal findings.

#### **At the conclusion of this rotation, the student should achieve the following clinic competencies:**

- The student will increase proficiency in obtaining a history and performing a physical exam
- The student will increase proficiency in diagnostic skills that include developing a list of differential diagnosis. Correctly identify normal and abnormal findings and can select the most relevant and important information when analyzing and interpreting findings to help make the diagnosis.
- The student will develop evidence-based treatment plans that include medication, lifestyle modifications, referrals, and a plan for follow up.
- The student should consult with clinical reference material and seek appropriate preceptor consultation to help with assessment, diagnosis and treatment plan.

**LEVEL Two (Advanced Beginner)  
Activities and Outcomes**

The student has successfully completed 255 practicum hours in adult health primary care and will complete 170 practicum hours over the course of this semester. There are two tracks for students: Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGPCNP).

FNP students are taking either NURS 5572 Women's Health (for 85 clinical hours) or NURS 5562 Pediatric primary care (for 85 clinical hours) and have successfully completed didactic coursework that focused on common acute and chronic illnesses of the adult, women's health (including OB) and pediatrics.

AGPCNP students are taking NURS 5624 Advanced Gerontology (for 170 clinical hours) and have successfully completed didactic coursework that includes content focused on common acute and chronic illness in adults and the older aged adult.

- **At the conclusion of this rotation, the student should achieve the following clinic competencies:**
  - Gather most of the significant information necessary to obtain a complete history.
  - Perform a physical exam without significant error.
  - Select most of the appropriate laboratory or diagnostic testing.
  - Correctly identify normal and abnormal findings.
  - Select the most relevant and important information when analyzing and interpreting findings from the presenting problem from which to make a diagnosis.
  - Develop a differential diagnosis and select diagnoses that partially explain the relationship between the problem and the findings.
  - Forms a final diagnosis from conclusions that with a few exceptions follow logically from the information collected, the presenting signs and symptoms, physical exam findings.
  - Most of the management plan elements (diagnostic studies, pharm and non-pharm treatment, health promotion and preventative health screenings, patient education/counseling, care coordination and plan for follow up) are included and appropriate.
  - The student should function correctly and accurately most of the time using clinical reference materials and seeking appropriate preceptor consultation.

**LEVEL Three (Competent)  
Activities and Outcomes**

**This is the final and culminating clinical course for the student. There are two tracks of students.**

**The Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) student** has successfully completed didactic coursework that focused on common acute and chronic illnesses of adults, women's health (including OB) and pediatrics. Additionally, the student has completed 255 practicum hours in Adult Health Primary Care, 85 practicum hours in Women's Health, and 85 practicum hours in Pediatrics. During this semester, the student will complete 340 practicum hours in the Residency (NURS 5792, 5793).

**The Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGPCNP) student** has successfully completed didactic coursework that focused on Health Promotion Disease Prevention and common acute and chronic illnesses of the adult and older adult. Additionally, the student has completed 255 practicum hours in adult health primary care and 170 practicum hours in advanced gerontology. During this semester, the student will complete 340 practicum hours over the course of the semester in the Residency (NURS 5782, 5783).

**At the conclusion of this rotation, the student should achieve the following clinic competencies:**

- History: organized, systematic, and reflects consideration of differential diagnosis. Gathers all significant information necessary to obtain a complete history & responds to patient cues that guide the assessment.
- Physical Exam: Performs physical exam accurately reflects consideration of differential diagnosis. Performs PE with little or no conscious effort. Includes pertinent aspects of the physical exam. Demonstrates mastery of physical assessment skills.
- Laboratory or Diagnostic testing: Selects appropriate testing to support or refute a tentative differential diagnosis. Correctly identify normal and abnormal findings. Identifies findings that may not fit the picture and appropriately classifies them.
- Analyzes and Interprets Findings: Selects and accurately identifies all relevant information from which to make a diagnosis.
- Differential diagnosis: Selects diagnoses that fully explain the relationship between the problem and the findings
- Forms a final diagnosis: Presents conclusions that reflect clear and logical links between the information collected, the presenting signs and symptoms, physical exam findings, and the final diagnosis or diagnoses. The rationale shows thoughtful and accurate attention to the process.
- Patient Management Plan: All the management plan elements (diagnostic studies, pharm and non-pharm treatment, health promotion and disease prevention screenings, patient education/counseling, care coordination and plan for follow up) are included and appropriate for the patient.
- Person Centered Care: The management plan is modified to include patient preferences, consideration of the patient situation, cost and Social Determinates of Health.

## Appendix G: Leadership and Management Student Clinical Progression

### **NURS 5421: Introduction to Strategic Nursing Leadership.**

#### **New Course with 23/S3**

This course is a foundation for the health care leader and manager shaping change across the continuum of care. It builds on the knowledge base, tools, and abilities essential to function as an effective nurse leader and manager in many health care systems. Students will synthesize management skills related to systems analysis, human resources, outcomes management, financial management, micro and macroeconomics, organizational development, business planning, conflict resolution, and change management. The clinical practicum is focused on applying nursing research, theory, and the essential management principles to a practice setting. The student will advance knowledge and skill through participation in an agency-based project. Students will complete an agency assessment to identify an opportunity (problem) to focus on an agency specific project. These healthcare settings may include acute care agencies, community settings, not-for-profit corporations, congregations, government agencies or education facilities. Practicum site selection and project planning and approval are done between the students, faculty, and preceptor with the goal of improving outcomes for individuals or populations. The student develops objectives specific to advancing knowledge and management skills and begins work on a capstone practicum project. **Practicum hours total 140.**

### **NURS 5431 Strategic Nursing Leadership I Practicum**

Students in this practicum are Bachelor prepared registered nurses with at least two years clinical nursing experience. The clinical practicum is focused on applying nursing research, theory and the essential principles of management to a practice setting. The student can advance knowledge and skill through participation in an agency-based project. Course projects relate to developing a business plan, analyzing a financial plan, and human resource management approaches in a healthcare setting. These healthcare settings may include acute care agencies, community settings, not-for-profit corporations, congregations, government agencies, or education facilities. Practicum site selection and project planning and approval are done between the student faculty and preceptor with the goal of improving outcomes for individuals or populations. The student develops objectives specific to advancing knowledge and management as skills and begins work on a capstone practicum project.

During this rotation, the student will spend 150 clinical practicum hours at the site. North Park faculty will meet with the student and or preceptor on site. Expectations for this rotation include the following: Note: Clinical Practicum hours will advance **24/S2 to 180.**

- The student will utilize management tools in a nursing practice setting.
- The student will analyze organization and governance in a health care organization.
- The student will evaluate human resource management in a clinical agency.
- The student will analyze financial management in an organization.
- The student will contribute to organizational development in an organization.
- The student will develop a specific project focused area in health care management.
- The student will participate in an agency-based project(s).
- The student will develop course specific objectives related to the agency-based project in collaboration with the preceptor and NPU faculty after the start of the practicum.
- The student should consult with course reference material and seek appropriate preceptor consultation during practicum activities.

## Practicum Guide Handbook

### NURS 5441 Strategic Nursing Leadership II

This course builds on NURS 5431 and provides an opportunity for students to cultivate and synthesize transformational leadership principles and capabilities in the health care environment across the continuum of care. The practicum experience provides the opportunity to develop advanced leadership competencies in interdisciplinary team building, evaluation of quality improvement initiatives, change management, and strategic decision-making. The student develops objectives that are consistent with advanced leadership knowledge and skills as well as continues to expand expertise related to the integration of research, theory, and practice as the final phase of the practicum project is completed.

During this rotation, the student will spend **180 practicum hours** on practicum activities. A North Park faculty will meet with the student and or preceptor on site.

Expectations for this practicum include the following:

- The student will participate in an agency-based project(s) intentionally designed to analyze a complex management and leadership situation and develop strategies for change in nursing practice.
- The student will complete the agency-based project during this practicum.
- The student will apply advanced leadership skills to a complex nursing issue within the context of a health care system.
- The student will synthesize the knowledge and skills required of a nursing leader practicing in a contemporary health care system.
- The student will implement team-building strategies that explore partnerships across health care disciplines.

In addition, during this semester, the student will negotiate with their preceptor to spend additional time in 1-2 departments outside of their ongoing practicum assignment. Examples include: Another inpatient or outpatient care department, Risk Management, Quality Improvement, Infection Prevention, Patient Advocacy, Scheduling, Finance, Clinical Education, Utilization Review, Transition of Care, or other departments within the organization. Students will meet with an individual from the alternative department to discuss responsibilities, goals, ongoing projects, and reporting structures. Students should discuss ongoing data collection as well as the purpose and findings. Students may attend meetings and assist in any data collection, or other activities within the department if feasible.

## Appendix H: Clinical Hours Verification

Clinical Hours Verification (Time Log)

Practicum Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Semester/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Clinic Hours	Telehealth Hours*	Preceptor Signature	Total Semester Hours

\*No more than 20% of clinic hours can be spent in telehealth.  
06/23

## APPENDIX I: Problem Identification Sheet

### Problem Identification Sheet

This sheet will help you with the basics of problem identification. The student and the preceptor should each fill one out, then meet to discuss. Sometimes simply identifying the problem, the student's level and your style will key you into effective strategies.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Briefly identify the problem:**

*Student:*

*Preceptor:*

**Do you agree that this is a problem?**

*Preceptor:*      Yes                      No

*Student:*      Yes                      No

**If NO, briefly comment:**

*Preceptor:*

*Student:*

**If you can identify the area in which the problem exists, please indicate below. Problem may be related to critical thinking, theory based, hand skills, communication skills, professional behavior, or person.**

Please be specific regarding performance/behavior observed:

**How long has this been a problem?**

**Currently, what is the student's skill level (Level 1 Novice, Level 2 Advanced Beginner, Level 3 Competent)?**

**Currently, what is the student's commitment level? Confidence? (High, variable, low).**

**What sort of progress has the student been making until now? (Rapid to moderate/slow to no progress/regressing).**



## Practicum Guide Handbook

**The Preceptor's current style is** Supervision/ Directing, instruction/ Coaching, Encouragement/ Support, or Entrustment/Delegation?

**The problems until now have been frequent, occasional, almost none.**

**Date for meeting to discuss Problem ID Sheet:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Did you reach a mutually agreed statement of the problem? If so, state here:**

What steps will resolve this problem moving forward:

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**

**Preceptor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**

**Clinical Faculty Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**

## APPENDIX J: Performance Improvement Plan

In the event the Problem Identification could not be resolved through discussion, a PIP will be developed by the student, with the approval of their Clinical Faculty, Course Faculty, and/or Preceptor. Such a plan may include the following: (see below). In the event this PIP is not resolved in a timely manner, this issue will be brought to the attention of the Selection and Progression Committee.

### Performance Improvement Plan

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinical Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills/Behaviors to Improve.	Actions to be Taken: What steps or actions need to be taken to ensure improvement.	Development Opportunities/Resources:	Date to be Completed	Success Measure
List skills, behaviors or actions that need to be improved. Be specific.		What training, resources or support are needed to improve?		What does improvement look like?

Next review date: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinical Faculty/Preceptor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_