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BETH-EL COLLEGE  
OF NURSING & HEALTH SCIENCES

# Nurse Practitioner Student Practicum Handbook

1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918  
(719) 255-4424  
FAX (719) 255-4416

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## **Goals and Objectives of the Practicum Experience**

The goal of this program is to provide our nurse practitioner students with a broad, high quality clinical experience in primary care settings. Examples of primary care practicum sites are: family practices, pediatric or internal medicine practices, urgent care, employee health clinics as well as others. In addition, students may spend practicum time in long-term care facilities where they are able to experience more focused geriatric care.

Students are required to take a total of 600 hours of practicum prior to graduation with up to 3 credit hours or 300 actual hours maximum per semester. FNP students must have 200-250 hours of pediatrics. For Level 2 and 3 students, observation or “shadowing” should be limited to ½ to 1 day in order to promote and hands-on learning experience as soon as possible. The Level 1 student may need to focus on history-taking and physical assessment for the first few weeks. The expectation is that students will progress from requiring close supervision in the first practicum semester to seeing a full load of clients independently (with support from the preceptor) by the end of the last semester of practicum. Below you will find more specific guidelines delineated by level of student.

## **Objectives for Level 1 Practicum Students – First Semester**

- Gather comprehensive health history
- Accurately conduct physical examination techniques appropriate for comprehensive and focused examinations
- Utilize additional resources to gather pertinent information (i.e. medical record, family members)
- Beginning development of differential diagnoses for the presenting problem
- Beginning suggestions for ordering of diagnostic tests relevant to presenting problem
- Beginning suggestions for evidenced-based interventions and referrals for presenting problems
- Complete, accurate, and legible SOAP documentation
- Articulation of the role of a nurse practitioner
- Prioritization of presenting patient problems and clinical findings
- Use of practice guidelines and other resources in the care of the patient
- Maintenance of patient confidentiality
- Professional behavior, demeanor, and presentation

## **Objectives for Level 2 Practicum Students – Second Semester through semester prior to Final Semester**

- Improvement in use of time and resources
- Increased efficiency in obtaining history and physical examination
- Differential diagnosis attained with less input from preceptor
- Greater depth and breadth of clinical knowledge
- Improved ability to prioritize and coordinate care
- Greater comfort with presentation of cases to preceptor and/or consultants

## **Objectives for Level 3 Practicum Student – Final Semester**

- Performs all role functions in efficient, organized, and independent manner
- Demonstrates professionalism and grasp of nurse practitioner role
- Engages in interdisciplinary collaboration and consultation

## **Preceptor Role Differentiated by Level of Student**

### **Level 1** (First semester of practicum)

- Student initially observes the preceptor as he/she sees patients
- History-taking and physical examination skills are assessed by the preceptor
- Student's differential diagnosis requires input from preceptor
- Student's management plan needs significant guidance from preceptor
- As the student progresses, the preceptor allows the student to become more independent

### **Level 2** (Second semester through the semester prior to the last semester)

- Student requires guidance and support for complex or new cases
- Prioritizing and coordinating care requires assistance
- Student may be ready to learn additional skills

### **Level 3** (Last semester of practicum)

- Student and preceptor have a more collegial relationship
- Student is able to work through preceptor's schedule of patients with consultative support from preceptor

## **Role of the Preceptor as Clinician and Educator**

- Directs overall goals and objectives for the practicum experience based on student outcome objectives provided by the student, and/or college faculty.
- Identifies and discusses the learner's needs in order to meet the course objectives;
- Assesses the nature of particular patient-care encounters that will enable the student to meet his/her learning objectives at this level in the NP curriculum.
- Utilizes appropriate teaching methods to help the student meet his/her learning objectives.
- Evaluates whether the learner's objectives have been achieved.
- Provides the learner with feedback (DeWitt, 1996).
- Demonstrates attitudes and qualities consistent with the ethics of the health professions, including:
  - Leadership skills in the area of peer review, quality assurance, and community involvement while promoting the health of population groups; and
  - Respect for the student's faculty, curriculum, and program.

- Communicates the ability to cope with multiple variables in the clinical setting while carrying out all patient and colleague interactions.

## **Curriculum for Nurse Practitioner Students**

Courses required of all students:

- Nurs 610 Philosophy and Theory of Nursing Practice
- Nurs 611 Advanced Nursing Practice and Health Care Policy
- Nurs 612 Research and Data Management
- Nurs 702 Clinical Research Application plus Elective or Nurs 700 Thesis
- Nurs 628 Advanced Pharmacology
- Nurs 673 Advanced Assessment
- Nurs 674 Advanced Pathophysiology

Additional SPECIALTY Coursework includes:

- Nurs 627 Family Theory & Interventions
- Nurs 678 Primary Care I Adults – Acute Primary Care Problems
- Nurs 679 Primary Care II Adults – Chronic Primary Care Problems
- Nurs 622 Collaborative Healthcare Management with the Elderly
- Nurs 623 Physiological Problems of Aging
- Nurs 662 Primary Care Family I – Pediatrics
- Nurs 664 Primary Care Family II – Acute Primary Care Problems
- Nurs 667 Primary Care Family III – Chronic Primary Care Problems

## Clinical Day Issues

### Shadowing at Memorial and Penrose Hospitals in Colorado Springs

If you intend to have your nurse practitioner student shadow with you at **Memorial**

Hospital, the **Nursing** Ed office needs to be notified before the student's first day. Brandy Boley is at 365-5087 and can assist you with the process. Each student must have a Memorial student name badge (Brandy has those also). If they need computer access, the faculty member should contact Judi Blake at 365-5087 to complete the security access request (SAR) and to schedule a view class with our EClips educator.

- **Penrose** has an identification process for all students (graduate and undergraduate) who will be doing clinical hours at a Penrose facility. The purpose of this identification process is to ensure that staff recognize students and know they have completed the orientation process to Penrose. Once the student has completed the required activities listed below, the lead faculty should send the names of the student(s) along with their confidentiality statements to Kim Shockley, [kimberlyshockley@centura.org](mailto:kimberlyshockley@centura.org).
- Student must complete
  - Student orientation checklist (Safety Extravaganza Packet)
  - Current immunizations and CPR
  - Signed Confidentiality Statement
  - Completion of Red Rules In-service
  - Computer orientation if not done previously
  - Criminal Background Check

### Student attendance at scheduled clinical days

If a student is to be absent for a scheduled clinical day, due to illness or emergency, the preceptor should be notified prior to the beginning of the clinical day. On the first clinical day, students should identify the procedure for contacting the preceptor in case of absence. It is the student's responsibility to also notify the faculty of the absence and negotiate with the preceptor regarding making up time. If the student is not attending clinical as scheduled, the faculty member needs to be notified promptly by the preceptor. Students are expected to schedule clinical time with the preceptor consistent with the preceptor's availability/schedule.

### Professional dress and behavior

Students are expected to dress appropriately and behave in a professional manner at all times in keeping with the standards set forth by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). School insignia and/or student identification badges should be worn, as designated by the policies of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs and Beth-El College Graduate Student policies. A name tag may be obtained by contacting Adam Greenbrier at [ateter@uccs.edu](mailto:ateter@uccs.edu). Students usually wear college/university identification insignia and laboratory coats. The clinical site may, however, specify the dress code.

## Health and Other Records

**All MSN students** are required to complete the following **prior to admission** and must keep all information current.

1. Certified proof of two (2) MMR's or written evidence of laboratory tests showing titers of all three diseases of measles, mumps and rubella is acceptable. This is not required if born before 1/1/57. Copies of immunizations must be on file at the UCCS Health Center as well as Beth-El. The student can be blocked from registering for classes if these are not on file at the Health Center
2. Hepatitis B series or Hepatitis B titer (must show immunity)
3. TB skin test. The test must be current and cannot expire during the semester practicum hours are done
4. Tetanus (within the last 8-10 years)
5. RN licensure
6. Current CPR card. The card must be current and cannot expire during the semester clinical/practicum hours are done \*
7. Health Insurance \*
8. Student Malpractice insurance with a visible expiration date \*
9. [Background check](#)

\*Required prior to first Practicum; this information is recorded at Beth-El College of Nursing

## Guidelines for setting up a practicum rotation

1. At least 100 hours (1 credit) of practicum must be taking concurrently with each of the primary care courses. These courses include N662 (pediatrics), N678 (primary care of families during acute illness), and 667/679 (primary care of families during chronic illness). The rationale for this requirement is to provide you with opportunities to apply the didactic material to clinical situations during the learning process.
2. Only register for the number of practicum hours that you can realistically complete within the start and end dates of the semester. Consider work schedules, child care, and vacation plans.
3. Finding a preceptor may occur in several ways. You, the student, may know of someone with whom you would like to work. The NP Program Coordinator can assist you in finding a preceptor and other nursing faculty may have recommendations as well. Meet with the NP Program Coordinator *at least* one semester prior to beginning your practicum to discuss potential clinical rotations.

4. Once you have contacted a potential preceptor and he/she has agreed to be your preceptor, you must email the following information to our administrative staff person who organizes and sends contracts and agreements. Her name is Diane Busch and her email address is [dbusch@uccs.edu](mailto:dbusch@uccs.edu) You must do this for EACH rotation during your program.
  - Your name, whether you are ANP or FNP student
  - Level 1 (first rotation), level 2, or level 3 (last rotation)
  - The name and detailed contact information for the preceptor and, if necessary, the office manager who may be involved with the contracting
5. You may *not* begin practicum hours prior to the first day of the semester or prior to a contract being in place. This is due to liability coverage that is connected to registration dates for each semester.
6. If you are unable to complete all of the practicum hours that you have registered for, you must take an incomplete. These hours must be completed *before* you can register for additional practicum. An incomplete remains on your transcript permanently even after the final grade has been added to your record.
7. You may do a maximum of 2 rotations with the same preceptor as long as you have received approval to do this from the NP Program Coordinator or online Practicum instructor.

**Beth-El College of Nursing & Health Sciences**  
**Background Check Policy**  
(effective January 18, 2007)

In order to maintain the highest standards possible, Beth El College of Nursing and Health Science instituted a Background Check Policy to help protect public safety. All nursing and health science students (undergraduate and graduate) participating in a laboratory, clinical, practicum or internship course will be required to submit data for a certified background check at their expense. Background checks need to be completed online at [backgroundcheck.com](http://backgroundcheck.com) at the time of course registration. Students each have confidential access to the results of their own background check status. All background check results will be reviewed by the Beth El College of Nursing and Health Sciences Academic Standards and Professional Conduct Committee. Should there be a negative background check finding, the committee will determine if a student is eligible to participate in the course. Eligibility is based on the nature of the finding as well as the clinical site requirements. Students may submit an appeal to the committee if additional data might be of benefit to the committee. Appeal decisions will be judged on documented factual issues. Every effort will be made to place the student in an alternative site, if available. Alternatives are not always available. If a student is unable to complete the course due to an inability to participate, the student may be dismissed from the program.

To obtain a background check for practicum, go to:

<http://www.uccs.edu/~bethel/Documents/BackgroundCheckPolicyJAN07.pdf>

## Important Contact Information

If you have *any* questions or if problems occur with your preceptor or during a clinical day, please contact the nurse practitioner program faculty at Beth-El College of Nursing to discuss the matter further.

**Kathy Blair, PhD, APRN, FAANP**

**NP Program Coordinator**

Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Tel. (719) 255-3507

Fax (719) 255-4416

Email: [kblair3@uccs.edu](mailto:kblair3@uccs.edu)

**Jeff Spicher, DNP, FNP-C**

Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Tel. (719) 255-4474

Fax (719) 255-4416

Email: [jspiche2@uccs.edu](mailto:jspiche2@uccs.edu)