



**ASPEN**  
UNIVERSITY ...*Education - Delivered*



# **Master of Science in Nursing**

## **AY2020-21 Handbook for Students, Faculty, and Preceptors**

*Aspen University*  
1-800-373-7814 or 303-333-4224

Updated: 9/15/2020

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We understand the demands and constraints associated with trying to fit education into an already busy work and life schedule. Harnessing the power of the Internet and online collaboration, Aspen has created interactive, flexible, facilitated, online courses designed to fit around your lifestyle. Education is a journey of professional growth. The starting point is you, here and now. The ending point is you, with the skills and knowledge to compete and win in a world where business and technology are inextricably intertwined.

Re-create yourself at Aspen University - the award-winning, accredited University where you can earn your degree online – without setting foot in a classroom.

## **Introduction to Aspen University**

Aspen University has always been an online University-effectively leading the way in online education. By reaching the learner in his or her real world, and real work environment, distance learning programs enhance the way individuals learn best: through experience, reflection, implementation, and experiment. By stepping out of the known environment of classroom-centered instruction, Aspen University's distance learning programs consider what needs to be gained or changed through the learning process. Aspen's programs provide its graduates with an advantage to excel in the challenging professional work environments of today and tomorrow.

Aspen University understands your educational needs as a working professional and your desire to have relevant opportunities for lifelong learning. We also understand the pride you have in your accomplishments, in your proven capabilities to direct your own life, and in your potential as someone who can grow in today's rapidly-changing work environments.

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### **Flexible**

Log on day or night and you're in class. Network as you learn. Interact with respected technology leaders and fellow professionals from around the globe, or opt for even more flexibility with courses facilitated with the instructor. Then apply what you've learned right away in your professional environment.

### **Tailored for the Adult Learner**

Aspen University understands your educational needs as a working professional in this business climate and your need to have relevant opportunities for lifelong learning. All Aspen courses are facilitated by industry-expert instructors with advanced degrees, so you can be assured of a high level of relevant and meaningful feedback.

### **Discover Aspen University**

Join us at Aspen University. Apply online at <https://aspen.edu> or call our Enrollment Office at: 800-373-7814

"Earning my Master degree in Nursing has been a goal that I've always wanted to accomplish for more than twenty years and I just never had the right combination of time, money and motivation at the same time. Aspen University made that possible by assisting with two of those barriers. Combined with my self-motivation and Aspen's low cost and flexibility to accelerate, I obtained a high-quality education and achieved my goal."

"The program was affordable and self-paced. Specifically, what I liked about Aspen University's program was I could take two courses at the same time, so I finished my degree quicker."

**Dr. Marcos Gayol, RN**  
MSN Alumnus  
Nursing Education specialty  
(2012)

## Philosophy/Mission

Aspen University is dedicated to offering any motivated college-worthy student the opportunity to receive a high quality, responsibly priced distance-learning education for the purpose of achieving sustainable economic and social benefits for themselves and their families. This is accomplished by achievement of the following goals:

The **Academic Achievement Goal** is to transition motivated learners to higher levels of productive citizenship by providing a readily accessible education that teaches knowledge and skills of enduring value.

The **Economic Responsibility Goal** is to offer tuition rates low enough that a majority of our students will not incur debt through utilization of federal financial aid, and ensure alumni have achieved a return on investment benefit following earning a degree from Aspen University.

## Accreditation

Aspen University is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC). DEAC is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency, and is a recognized member of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.



Distance Education Accrediting Commission  
1101 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 808  
Washington D.C. 20036

The baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees in nursing at Aspen University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Officially recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a national accreditation agency, the CCNE is an autonomous accrediting agency contributing to the improvement of the public's health. CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate and graduate education programs preparing effective nurses.

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)  
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530  
Washington, DC 20036  
(<http://www.aacnursing.org/CCNE>)



# Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)



## SONHS Mission Statement

The mission of the Aspen University School of Nursing and Health Sciences is to enhance the health and quality of life for individuals, families, and communities at local, state, and national levels through excellence in teaching, scholarship and practice.

## Program Description

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program prepares nurses to assume leadership roles in management, education, forensics, public health, informatics and clinical practice within a diverse society and across a spectrum of healthcare settings.

Theory courses combine the basic foundation of traditional education in a convenient distance-learning format, enabling practicing nurses to meet their academic, professional and personal goals. Practicum courses are performed in a clinical practice or academic setting allowing students to apply learned concepts under the supervision of a Preceptor.

## MSN Program Learning Goals

**The goals of the MSN and RN-to-MSN Bridge program are to prepare nurse leaders, educators, and advanced practitioners who emulate the following characteristics and behaviors:**

- 1. Background for Practice from Sciences and Humanities:** Integrates scientific findings from nursing, biopsychosocial fields, genetics, public health, quality improvement, and organizational sciences for the continual improvement of nursing care across diverse settings.
- 2. Organizational and Systems Leadership:** Demonstrates leadership skills that emphasize ethical and critical decision making, effective working relationships, and a systems-perspective because organizational and systems leadership are critical to the promotion of high quality and safe patient care.
- 3. Quality Improvement and Safety:** Articulates methods, tools, performance measures, and standards related to quality, and applies quality principles within an organization.
- 4. Translating and Integrating Scholarship into Practice:** Applies research outcomes within the practice setting, resolves complex practice problems, works as a change agent, and disseminates results.

- 5. Informatics and Healthcare Technologies:** Using patient-care technologies, delivers and enhances care and using communication technologies, integrates and coordinates care.
- 6. Health Policy and Advocacy:** Intervenes at the system level through the policy development process and employs advocacy strategies to influence health and health care.
- 7. Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes:** As a member and leader of inter-professional teams, communicates, collaborates, and consults with other health professionals to manage and coordinate care.
- 8. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving Health:** Applies and integrates broad, organizational, client-centered, and culturally appropriate concepts in the planning, delivery, management, and evaluation of evidence-based clinical prevention and population care and services to individuals, families, and aggregates/identified populations.
- 9. Master's-Level Nursing Practice:** Integrates the advanced level of understanding of nursing and relevant sciences with nursing practice to create nursing practice interventions

**Additional Program Learning Goals for Specializations:**

- 10. Forensic Nursing:** Apply advanced-level theoretical, research-based, scientific, and clinical forensic nursing knowledge through nursing care planning and practice in corrections, legal consulting, sexual assault nurse examination, community violence prevention, and work with law enforcement.
- 10. Nursing Education:** Apply advanced-level theoretical, research-based, scientific, and clinical nursing education knowledge through nursing care planning and practice in teaching strategies and curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation.
- 10. Administration and Management:** Apply advanced-level theoretical, research-based, scientific, and clinical nursing administration and management knowledge through nursing care planning and practice through informatics, health care planning, finance, and economics.
- 10. Public Health:** Apply advanced-level theoretical, research-based, scientific, and clinical public health nursing knowledge through nursing care planning and practice in home health, hospice, school nursing, or case management.

10. **Informatics:** Apply advanced-level theoretical, research-based, scientific, and clinical nursing informatics knowledge through nursing care planning and practice in advancing health promotion, utilization of data and advanced information management systems, internet and technology.

## **Program Admission Options**

There are two entry options for students wishing to pursue the MSN degree. The first entry option is for applicants who already have a BSN. These students would enter the traditional MSN program. The second entry option is for applicants who have an associate degree or diploma in nursing. These students would enter the RN-to-MSN Program.

## **Master of Science in Nursing Program**

Aspen University offers specialized online Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) programs for registered nurses who wish to pursue a master's degree. The 5 specializations are designed for adult learners who want to earn their degree without an on-campus class requirement. These specializations are Forensic Nursing, Informatics, Nursing Administration and Management, Nursing Education, and Public Health.

### ***MSN Program Admission Requirements***

Please refer to the Academic Catalog for detailed information on admission standards and procedures. The Academic Catalog can be found at:  
<http://aspen.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Academic-Year-2020-2021/Academic-Catalog>.

You can also check admissions requirements for the MSN program at:  
<https://www.aspen.edu/nursing/msn/>

### ***MSN Degree Completion Requirements***

Graduate-level degree candidates must successfully complete all required courses with an overall GPA of 3.0 and must also pass any required examinations. **There is a proctored comprehensive examination at the end of the MSN program, in addition to an oral Presentation of the Capstone Project.**

### ***MSN Course Descriptions***

The MSN course descriptions and credit hours are located at:  
<https://www.aspen.edu/nursing/msn/>

\*Practicum courses are performed in a healthcare work environment under the supervision of a Registered Nurse preceptor. The preceptor is a Master's or Doctoral-prepared Registered Nurse with an association to the practicum site. **Practicum courses are charged an additional Practicum Fee of \$250 per course.**

## **RN-to-MSN Bridge Program**

Aspen University offers an online RN-to-MSN degree program for registered nurses who have an associate degree or diploma in nursing and wish to pursue a graduate degree. Students do not receive a BSN degree, but instead progress toward graduating with the MSN degree in a specialty area. Built upon a liberal arts foundation, this “bridge” program begins with 21-credits of undergraduate nursing courses that are designed to prepare students for the rigor of a master's level nursing program. After the completion of core masters nursing courses, students select a focus in one specialty track, completing 36 credits of graduate-level course work. All courses in the RN-to-MSN degree program are completed online, and practicum experiences are mentored by a local preceptor, which eliminates travel.

### ***RN-to-MSN Program Admission Requirements***

Please refer to the Academic Catalog for detailed information on admission standards and procedures. The Academic Catalog can be found at:

<http://aspen.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Academic-Year-2020-2021/Academic-Catalog>.

Check the admissions requirements for the RN to MSN program at:

<https://www.aspen.edu/nursing/rn-msn>

### ***Liberal Arts Foundation***

The Aspen University MSN curriculum builds on a foundation comparable to baccalaureate-level nursing knowledge. A solid base in liberal education provides the distinguishing cornerstone for the study and practice of professional nursing. Liberal education enables the nurse to integrate knowledge, skills, and values from the arts and sciences to provide humanistic, safe quality care; to act as advocates for individuals, families, groups, communities, and/or populations; and to promote social justice (*Baccalaureate Essentials*, AACN, 2008, p. 12).

Students in the RN-to-MSN program are required to have completed a broad spectrum of liberal arts education course work, which includes both the sciences and the arts. Nursing courses are not considered as part of this requirement.

### ***RN-to-MSN Program Degree Completion Requirements***

The “bridge” component of the RN-to-MSN program is comprised of 7 courses, spanning content normally acquired in upper-division bachelor-degree nursing programs. Following successful completion of the seven bridge courses, students then transition into the MSN courses. Grading policies for the seven “bridge” courses are consistent with other undergraduate courses.

\*\*A proctored examination is required at the completion of the 400-level courses. At the completion of the 500-level courses, a second proctored exam is required.

## ***RN-MSN Course Descriptions***

The RN-MSN course descriptions and credit hours are located at:

<https://www.aspen.edu/nursing/msn/>

\*Practicum courses are performed in a healthcare work environment under the supervision of a Registered Nurse preceptor. The preceptor is a Master's or Doctoral-prepared Registered Nurse with an association to the practicum site. **Practicum courses are charged an additional Practicum Fee of \$250 per course.**

## **Nursing Practicum and Capstone**

The purpose of the practicum's individualized learning experience is to enable you to develop an original comprehensive nursing capstone project on a topic of professional or personal interest. The practicum is project-based and during the practicum you will focus on an issue, create a viable solution through research, design and development quality improvement initiative that is substantial original applied project of your own authorship.

## **Enrollment**

You may enroll in the Capstone Project after you have completed all courses within the MSN curriculum and Practicum courses. Upon enrolling in the Capstone course, you will be assigned a Capstone Instructor who will remain with you throughout the remainder of your program. Your Capstone Instructor will be a select member of the Aspen faculty whose area of expertise has been chosen to most closely align with your Capstone Project interests. The Capstone Project course is comprised of:

## **Project Proposal**

Your project design should focus on a quality improvement of a process, policy or procedural. You will create a proposal or presentation focused on a specific issue and with a focus on a specific target audience. Examples:

- Design or develop a curriculum
- Implement and evaluate an educational activity
- Create a systemic review of the literature to support evidence-based change
- Design and implement a change project (e. g. proposal for a change in process)
- Write a grant
- Develop a policy and work with leaders to implement it.
- Analyze systematically the healthcare system in another geographic region
- Develop or revise an existing business or marketing plan within a nursing or healthcare organization
- Advocate for legislative change for an issue important to nursing
- Write a publishable journal article
- Create a professional conference poster
- Design an informatics solution to a nursing problem

When you have chosen a topic, and received approval from your Capstone Instructor, you can proceed to complete the capstone proposal template. The template is designed to guide

you through specific steps that will become the blueprint to follow for the rest of your project. The template includes project title, description, rationale, personal and professional expectations, project goals, analysis of the literature, procedure, and evaluation. Refine your proposal based upon input from your Capstone Instructor. This step can be accomplished through classroom communication until the Capstone Instructor is satisfied that all requirements for the proposal have been met. The final proposal can be submitted through the classroom drop box for formal approval and acknowledgement that it is complete in all aspects.

### **The Capstone**

The final Capstone Project/Master's Thesis manuscript will be graded by the Capstone Instructor; however, he or she may select to forward your project to either the Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences or Director of Graduate Nursing Programs for a second opinion and evaluation. The capstone project will include 5 Chapters, utilize a minimum of 35 sources, and overall length will be 30 written pages excluding the title, abstract, references and appendices pages.

### **Weekly Updates**

Although sections of your capstone sections are submitted via the classroom drop box to your Capstone Instructor as you complete them and you must to participate in the classroom and share your reflections and progress with classmates through required activity reports are certain junctures as required in the classroom assignments.

The Oral Presentation of the Capstone Project will be conducted during the Capstone Course. The Oral Presentation marks the culmination of many months of formal study and intensive research on the part of the student. This Oral Presentation affords the student an opportunity to demonstrate the depth and breadth of his/her knowledge in a field of specialization, ability to conduct research and to present the findings before his or her Capstone Instructor and sometimes invited guests. The Oral Presentation, the audience will have the opportunity to question the work, critically.

The Oral Presentation should last about 30 minutes, and will be facilitated via synchronous telecommunication such as video conferencing media. Other faculty and administrative members of Aspen University might also be present. It is recommended that individuals within your community who have an interest in the topic or who may be impacted by the findings be invited to attend. For the first twenty minutes, you will present your Capstone Project, summarizing the aspects of the project that were reported in the formal paper. Visual aids must be included, and may be either a PowerPoint®, Prezi® or poster board. For the final ten minutes, the Capstone Instructor and any Aspen faculty present will have an opportunity to question you about various aspects of the project. At this time the portfolio may also be discussed, and preparation for the comprehensive exam considered. If time allows, other audience members may also ask questions/seek clarification.

If the oral presentation is unsatisfactory, the student will be given one opportunity to improve performance but the Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences or her designee will join the Capstone Instructor. If a second "unsatisfactory" presentation is delivered, you will

receive a failing grade for this course, which falls under the policies and procedures of Aspen University.

## **Final Capstone Project**

Your Final Capstone Project/Master's Thesis submission must be professionally prepared and free of typographical, spelling and grammatical errors. The formatting protocol of the American Psychological Association (APA) is the approved format for Aspen University. The specific length of the formal document may vary somewhat depending upon the topic selected, the use of tables, matrices, graphs, or other visual supplements.

The following sections should be included:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Table of Contents
- Chapter 1 - Introduction (Background, Significance, Justification, Purpose)
- Chapter 2 - Literature Review
- Chapter 3 - Method (as appropriate for your project---may include project design, procedures, evaluation methods, etc.)
- Chapter 4 - Discussion of findings and Recommendations
- Chapter 5 - Conclusion
- References
- Appendices, as appropriate

The Final Capstone Project/Master's Thesis submission for dissemination should be prepared using the Microsoft Office suite (Word®, Excel®, and PowerPoint® as appropriate), appropriately paginated using a twelve-point standard style font such as Times New Roman, Century Schoolbook, etc. Although the foregoing project format requirements may suffice for most capstone projects, there may be some appropriate variations approved by your Capstone Instructor.

Throughout the Capstone course, you will need to submit iterations of the chapter sections as you complete them to your Capstone Instructor for feedback. Do not wait until the end of the course to submit one completed paper and expect it to meet the rigorous expectations of this course.

## **Academic Policies**

MSN students are guided by the policies outlined in the Academic Catalog. Students are encouraged to review academic policies in the Academic Catalog at: <http://aspen.smartcatalogiq.com/>. In certain situations, policies governing MSN students may differ and are specified here.

## **Credit Transfer**

Aspen University accepts academic credits earned from accredited/approved academic institutions when the course content is deemed to be the equivalent to our own. The RN-to-MSN program allows transfer of up to 18 credits. The MSN program allows transfer of

up to 12 credits (excluding Practicum courses). A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for admission and award of any possible transfer credits. Please refer to the Aspen University Catalog for additional details about the Credit Transfer policy.

### **Portfolio Credit**

Prior Experiential Learning (Portfolio Credit) is any learning experience that was not part of a college or university course and does not carry academic degree credit.

Policies and procedures related to portfolio credit are detailed in the student handbook: "**Prior Learning Assessment: Portfolio Guidelines**". Contact your Academic Advisor to request a copy of the guideline document. Portfolio credits are NOT allowed for 500-level nursing courses in the MSN program. They are only available for the undergraduate coursework associated with the RN-to-MSN program.

### **Grading Policy: Practicum Courses**

The practicum courses N550, N552, and N586 have unique grading policies that deviate from the general Aspen University policies. These courses have a practicum component with a preceptor within the student's home community. The additional details on specific requirements for these practicum courses as well as practicum evaluation criteria and tools are discussed under the practicum section.

Evaluation of the student's practicum performance is the responsibility of the faculty with input from the preceptor. These practicum evaluations are comprised of a preceptor evaluation, a self-evaluation, and review by the faculty of practicum experiences with appropriate documentation and satisfaction of the minimum required practicum hours. The practicum performance is graded as "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory." In the practicum setting, students are expected to function with independence and increasing complexity as they progress through the course.

Unsatisfactory practicum performance encompasses an array of behaviors and attitudes. Examples include unprofessional attire, failure to submit required practicum documents, "no-show" at the practicum setting, cross-cultural issues, and functioning at a level inconsistent with expectations. In the event that a preceptor detects performance moving in an unsatisfactory direction, a conference with the student will be prompted, the result of which will be development of a plan of action to correct the deficiency. This plan of action will be the responsibility of the student working in coordination with their preceptor and the Practicum Coordinator.

Students must pass practicum(s) in order to pass the course. Students who do not satisfactorily pass practicum will not be permitted to progress to the next course in the program sequence. Likewise, students must complete the Practicum course(s) prior to entering Capstone.

**Note:** Students receiving a grade of "U" are required to re-enroll in the course, paying all applicable tuition and other fees effective on the date of reenrollment.

## **Proctored Examinations**

Students who are admitted into the RN to MSN Bridge program are required to take a proctored comprehensive examination at the completion of the 400-level courses. The purpose of this **Bridge Proctored Exam** is to evaluate a student's ability to synthesize, analyze, and apply core concepts/theories studied in the undergraduate-level nursing courses. Satisfactory performance on this Bridge Proctored Exam will demonstrate readiness to transition into graduate-level nursing courses. The Bridge Proctored Exam is offered as multiple-choice exam. The multiple-choice format will require students to complete 60 multiple choice questions within a two-hour time period. The Bridge Proctored Exam is graded on a S/U (Successful/Unsuccessful) basis. A passing grade on the Bridge Proctored Exam is a 70%. Students who fail to successfully complete their Bridge Proctored Exam may have one additional attempt at the exam.

## **MSN Comprehensive Examination**

The MSN Comprehensive Examination is administered at the completion of the 500-level MSN core courses, from both the MSN and RN to MSN programs. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to evaluate a student's ability to synthesize, analyze, and apply core concepts/theories studied in the graduate nursing program (both core and specialty courses). The format is an open-book, broad essay exam, which allows maximum freedom and creativity. The MSN Comprehensive Examination is a student's opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the program's required courses and the scholarly writing process. The Comprehensive Exam is taken after all necessary coursework, practicum(s) and capstone are completed. Students must pass this examination to successfully complete the program.

If a student does not successfully complete the Comprehensive Exam, s/he is required to retake the exam after receiving coaching from the Program Director. If the student again does not successfully complete the exam on the second attempt, the student is dismissed from the program.

All students will answer ONE questions during their Comprehensive Exam. The question will assess the student's understanding of how the Capstone incorporated all the AACN's *Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing*. Please bring at least 3 text books from the MSN program coursework to support the Comprehensive Exam response. The student will not be able to access the internet in the proctor testing environment because of security issues. Students will also be expected to have an introduction, a body with level headings separating the topics, a conclusion and the use of APA style is mandatory. Expect to write 1,000-1,200 words while answering the question.

To pass, the student must achieve 80% to pass the Comprehensive Examination and the following rubric is used for the evaluation of the student's submission. As such, students need to ensure they have a properly formatted APA document, equipped with a title page, headings to organize and labeled required content, an introduction with a purpose or thesis statement, a clearly labeled conclusion, a reference page with properly formatted references in APA style, APA in-text citations, and any applicable appendices.

Criteria	Does Not Meet 0%	Approaches 70%	Meets 80%	Exceeds 100%	
<p>Content Weight: 30%</p> <p><a href="#">Add Feedback</a></p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Topic is inappropriate to assignment, inaccurate understanding of concepts, unclear and difficult to understand; does not address many assignment requirements. Information has weak or no connection to the assignment topic.</p>	<p>21 points</p> <p>Topic is mostly covered and appropriate to assignment, but does not adequately demonstrate accurate understanding of concepts; mostly clear and understandable; lacks some of the requirements of the assignment description and/or provides little detail; Information relates to the main topic, but few details and/or examples are given.</p>	<p>24 points</p> <p>Topic is covered completely and appropriate to assignment; overview of key concept dimensions is evident; clear and understandable; addresses all of the requirements of the assignment description, with adequate attention to detail.</p>	<p>30 points</p> <p>In-depth coverage of topic; outstanding clarity and explanation of concepts demonstrated in information presented; approaches assignment with depth and breadth, without redundancy, using clear and focused details.</p>	/ 30
<p>Organization Weight: 25%</p> <p><a href="#">Add Feedback</a></p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Organization is confusing and interferes with reader's ability to follow ideas. Weak or no introduction of topic or purpose is unclear, weak, or missing. Conclusion lacks a summary of topic, or is missing or irrelevant.</p>	<p>17.5 points</p> <p>Ideas are sometimes disorganized or irrelevant; Flow is sometimes choppy; somewhat clear organization. Basic introduction that states topic but is presented in an uninteresting way. Conclusion contains basic summary of topic without final concluding ideas, may inappropriately introduces new information.</p>	<p>20 points</p> <p>Structures ideas in a coherent, organized order that has good flow and an obvious framework. Proficient introduction that is interesting and states topic. Conclusion contains good summary of topic with credible concluding ideas and introduces no new information.</p>	<p>25 points</p> <p>Exceptionally clear, logical, mature, and thorough organization permitting smooth flow of ideas; Introduction that grabs interest of reader and states topic in clear, unambiguous terms. Excellent concluding summary with succinct and precise ideas that impact reader.</p>	/ 25
<p>Logic/Argument Weight: 15%</p> <p><a href="#">Add Feedback</a></p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Demonstrates little logical reasoning for the claims and thoughts within assignment; Many claims are weak or illogical.</p>	<p>10.5 points</p> <p>Lacks some logical reasoning for the claims and thoughts within the assignment; Some claims are weak.</p>	<p>12 points</p> <p>Uses solid logical reasoning for the claims and thoughts within the assignment.</p>	<p>15 points</p> <p>Provides exemplary logical reasoning for the claims and thoughts within the assignment.</p>	/ 15

<p>Support Weight: 20%</p> <p><a href="#">Add Feedback</a></p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Lacks support; Uses poor sources for references; Citations lack credibility, relevance, or academic quality or are not current; Does not meet the minimum number of required citations in assignment description. APA format and style are not evident.</p>	<p>14 points</p> <p>Provides weak support or not enough support; Citations are not consistently credible, current, relevant or academic; Meets the minimum number of required citations in assignment description</p> <p>Missing APA elements; in-text citations, where necessary, are used but formatted inaccurately and not referenced.</p>	<p>16 points</p> <p>Provides sufficient support with credible, current, relevant academic citations; Meets the minimum number of required citations in assignment description. ; In-text citations and a reference page are present with few format errors. Mechanics of writing are reflective of APA style.</p>	<p>20 points</p> <p>Provides very strong support from credible, current, relevant, academic citations; Meets or exceeds the minimum number of required citations in assignment description. Accurate citations and references are presented. No APA errors are evident.</p>	<p>/ 20</p>
<p>Quality of Written Communication Weight: 10%</p> <p><a href="#">Add Feedback</a></p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Style and voice inappropriate or do not address given audience, purpose, etc. Word choice is excessively redundant, clichéd, and unspecific. Inconsistent grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing. Surface errors are pervasive enough that they impede communication of meaning.</p>	<p>7 points</p> <p>Style and voice are somewhat appropriate to given audience and purpose. Word choice is often unspecific, generic, redundant, and clichéd. Repetitive mechanical errors distract the reader. Inconsistencies in language, sentence structure, and/or word choice are present.</p>	<p>8 points</p> <p>Style and voice are appropriate to the given audience and purpose. Word choice is specific and purposeful, and somewhat varied throughout. Minimal mechanical or typographical errors are present, but are not overly distracting to the reader. Correct sentence structure and audience-appropriate language are used.</p>	<p>10 points</p> <p>Style and voice are not only appropriate to the given audience and purpose, but also show originality and creativity. Word choice is specific, purposeful, dynamic and varied. Free of mechanical and typographical errors. A variety of sentence structures and effective figures of speech are used. Writer is clearly in command of standard, written, academic English.</p>	<p>/ 10</p>

## **Governance**

Students have input into the workings of Aspen University and the MSN program through a variety of mechanisms.

Input is sought at the completion of each course, through course evaluations. At the end of the RN to MSN or MSN programs, graduates are provided an opportunity to share about their overall program experience through an end-of-program survey taken during the Capstone course. A final way the student has course and program level input is their participation in biannual data dialogues with faculty and program leadership. You are encouraged to participate in these opportunities.

Formal committees at Aspen University and within the MSN program provide another avenue for student input. The two MSN committees that have student representation include the Curriculum Committee and the Program Advisory Board. Descriptions of these two committees follow:

### **Program Advisory Board**

Purpose: The Nursing Program Advisory Board acts in an advisory and consultative capacity to promote, assist, and perpetuate the goals and objectives of Aspen University MSN program. This committee meets twice per year.

#### Functions:

- Identify emerging health care needs that may require programmatic and institutional response

- Provide an opportunity for the exchange of viewpoints between business/professional persons, alumni, and academicians as they relate to nursing education.
- Provide a direct liaison between faculty and the community for the purpose of promoting the activities and mission of the Aspen University MSN program and the nursing profession.
- Advise and inform the Dean of Nursing on local, state, and national perceptions regarding nursing education and the nursing profession, suggest possible avenues for marketing the program.

Membership: Dean of Nursing, and various members of the community of interest: current student, alumni, nurses, leaders in health care.

### **Curriculum Committee**

Purpose: The Curriculum Committee is responsible for the curriculum, specifically to develop, implement, and evaluate the MSN curricula. This committee is a subcommittee of the MSN Faculty Committee. This committee meets twice a year or as needed.

#### Functions:

- Monitor and formulate policies governing the curriculum of the MSN program.
- Lead the evaluation of the curriculum according to the MSN program evaluation plan
- Recommend mechanisms for implementing the MSN program to the parent committee
- Recommend curricular revisions for the MSN program to the parent committee
- Recommend new MSN program options based on input from the community of interest

Membership: Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences, at least 2 faculty members as dictated by curricular needs, 1 student from each MSN specialty tract.

### **RN-MSN and MSN Program Administration/Faculty**

The Dean, Assistant Dean, Director and any Coordinator for the RN-MSN and MSN program hold an equivalent degree from a recognized and accredited college or university and enough academic experience to warrant such a position.

#### **Leadership:**

##### **Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences**

Dr. Nina Beaman, Ed.D., MSN, CNE, RN-BC (PMH), RNC-AWHC, CMA (AAMA)  
email: [nina.beaman@aspen.edu](mailto:nina.beaman@aspen.edu)

##### **Assistant Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences**

Dr. Marcos Gayol, EdD, MSN, MPH, RN, BSc, CNE, CPH  
email: [marcos.gayol@aspen.edu](mailto:marcos.gayol@aspen.edu)

## **Program Director**

Dr. Randall Mangrum, DNP, MSN, RN  
email: [randall.mangrum@aspen.edu](mailto:randall.mangrum@aspen.edu)

## **Practicum Coordinator**

Dr. Jeannie Randall, DNP, RN  
email: [npcoordinator@aspen.edu](mailto:npcoordinator@aspen.edu)

## **Faculty**

Every Professors/Faculty who teaches Aspen University MSN-level students holds a DNP, PhD, EdD or other doctoral-level degree from an appropriately accredited college or university.

## **MSN Practicum Information for Faculty, Preceptors, and Students**

### **Preceptor's Message**

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for serving as a preceptor for a student enrolled in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program at Aspen University. The practicum experiences the student will obtain in your organization are of critical importance to a successful learning experience in the program. Students need the "real life" experience that only a seasoned nurse can offer. This practicum experience provides opportunities where the student can acquire knowledge, advance skills, and observe the modeling of professional behaviors. Without your willingness to participate, it would be impossible to replicate the experiences the student needs to be successful.

The practicum setting is where synthesis of concepts and application of principles of nursing administration and leadership occur. You are the key to successful learning experiences in the practicum setting. The graduate nursing student will work closely with you, learning from your advice and example. Through your guidance and supervision, the student will progressively develop the competencies and skills necessary to become a Masters-prepared nurse.

The Preceptor and Aspen University faculty members collaborate in providing practicum instruction and evaluation. This section of the MSN Handbook outlines the responsibilities of the student, the preceptor, the faculty, and the school. Students are engaged in MSN core coursework or specialty courses prior to their practicum. The course descriptions contained within this handbook provides you with a list of topics covered to assist you in determining which types of practicum experiences are most appropriate at various stages in the program. The student will also develop and share with you individualized practicum objectives for this course to assist you in identifying the most appropriate learning experiences. Lastly, copies of all forms and evaluation tools are also provided as part of this handbook.

Please note, no practicum hours can begin until approval for both the site and preceptor has been given from the MSN Practicum Coordinator, all required documentation is submitted and approved and the student is actively enrolled in the Practicum course.

Your participation in this practicum experience is invaluable to the student and their success in the MSN program. The faculty values your services as a preceptor and welcomes your recommendations for making the preceptor role more effective and satisfying.

Again, many thanks to you!

Warm Regards,

*Office of the Nursing Practicum*

## **MSN Practicum Policies**

### **Practicum Setting Selection**

The criteria for practicum site selection are as follows. The site should be able to provide: (1) a preceptor who is affiliated with the practicum site; (2) space and adequate resources for the student to complete the practicum experience according to the curricular requirements of the MSN track in which the student is enrolled; (3) completion of the documentation prior to the start of the practicum; and (4) support for the affiliated preceptor and student throughout the practicum experience. The student will submit all documentation relating to site/facility selection and preceptor for approval by the Nursing Practicum Coordinator, utilizing ProjectConcert for all submissions.

The Nursing Practicum Coordinator is dedicated to student success and is available to discuss appropriate sites for your Practicum experience. Here are some suggestions for the various specialty tracks of the MSN:

**Administration:** All healthcare facilities with MSN working in Administration positions, State professional organizations, hospitals and clinics, union headquarters, Magnet facilities, educational institutions, etc.

**Education:** Nursing programs, online, state (public) schools, public universities, Allied Health programs, staff education in facilities, companies that create continuing education for nurses, public health departments, etc.

**Forensics:** Fire departments, EMSs, Law Enforcement, Search and Rescue, Hospital emergency departments, correctional facilities, law offices, agencies that address risk management, Environmental protection agencies and departments, medical examiner's office, Certified Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and trainers, and the court system, etc.

**Public Health:** Local health department, medical reserve corps, American Heart, MADD, home health agency, school nurse office, state health department, and population-specific outreach programs, etc.

Informatics: Acute, sub-acute, ambulatory, outpatient, and community health, home health, and other health care service provider's informatics department, Health Information Management service providers, etc.

### **Specific Policies for Students in Practicum Facilities**

- Students must adhere to requirements stipulated in the practicum contact or Memorandum of Understanding from the practicum site.
- Professional apparel that meets agency guidelines is expected. Conservative and professional dress clothing and a lab coat are the norm. No jeans or shorts or running shoes or bare midriff or low cut clothing are allowed in an agency or agency library.
- The student will work within the policies of the agency and maintain a constructive relationship with the agency.
- The student is required to supply health information to Practicum sites/facilities as requested.
- If requested by the practicum site/facility, the student should wear a name badge which identifies her or his status as an Aspen University graduate nursing student. To obtain a name badge, please send an email to: [nursingadvising@aspen.edu](mailto:nursingadvising@aspen.edu) for more information.

### **General Guidelines Regarding Practicum, Practicum Site and Preceptor**

- Participation in approved practicum experiences at the required number of hours for each specific course; student must be prepared, active, informed, accountable, and professional.
- Demonstration of effective and appropriate communication skills.
- Demonstration of effective and appropriate documentation on client's records, dictation, and practicum logs, including correct spelling.
- Completion of practicum hours logs documenting variety of experiences using the required system.
- Attendance at required practicum conferences with preceptor and instructor.
- Completion of personal/professional objectives along with self-evaluation of progress.

### **Attendance at Practicum Experiences**

Students are to negotiate acceptable hours with the preceptor prior to starting practicum. The student is expected to accommodate the preceptor's availability and schedule. Students are expected to treat the agreed upon practicum hours as they would a place of employment. If the student is to be absent for a scheduled practicum day due to illness or emergency, the preceptor should be notified prior to the beginning of the practicum day. The student should negotiate the procedure for contacting the preceptor in case of absence prior to starting practicum. Make-up hours are then to be negotiated. Students also must

contact the faculty member promptly.

Students will document practicum hours in ProjectConcert. The student will run an audit report of hours logged and present this to the preceptor for signature during the course. If the student is not attending practicum as scheduled, the faculty member needs to be notified promptly.

## **Criteria for Grading Practicum Progress**

### **Faculty Role**

Aspen University's Practicum Coordinator and Course Faculty assume the ultimate responsibility for the evaluation of the student. Faculty employ several methods, including communication with preceptor, regular review of student's practicum logs documenting the student's practicum experiences, supportive evidence from the practicum preceptor, and evaluation of assignments as outlined in the study guide of the course.

### **Preceptor Role**

While the faculty members (Practicum Coordinator and Course Faculty) assume ultimate responsibility for the formal written evaluation, the preceptor's input will provide supportive evidence for the ratings. The preceptor's primary role is teaching. In the teaching process, the preceptor will observe the student in practice. The preceptor is in a position to collect data that gives evidence of student competence. Also, the preceptor has the opportunity to support professional practice standards and the credibility. The preceptor's observations of the student's performance should be compared with practice standards, validated with faculty, and shared with the student. The student's response to your day to day feedback also becomes a part of your evaluation data.

Preceptors need to remember that they do not fail students or stall a student's progress. Instead, the student's performance either meets or fails to meet criteria.

### **Faculty Responsibilities**

#### ***Practicum Coordinator:***

- Facilitate and coordinate student/preceptor/site agreements
- Evaluate practicum sites and preceptors for appropriateness of learning experiences,
- Review all documents related to the preceptorship, including the Preceptor Agreement (and curriculum vitae), and Practicum Site Agreement (Memorandum of Agreement),
- Provide the student's Practicum Approval Letter once the required documents are complete, correct and uploaded to ProjectConcert.

### ***Course Instructor:***

- Responsible for evaluating and providing feedback on course content, practicum course evaluation and on student assignments, as outlined in the practicum course.
- Communicate with Preceptor to ensure appropriate feedback is provided and that learning objectives are being met at each practicum location.

### **Specific Details Pertaining to Faculty and Practicum Coordinator Responsibilities**

Preceptor & Site approval, verification and contracts are handled by the Practicum Coordinator.

All preceptors and practicum sites must be approved by the Practicum Coordinator. The student will need a Practicum Approval Letter to enroll in the Practicum course(s) as well as to provide verification to the instructor that the student has completed and submitted all the required documents to begin the practicum course.

The preceptor must be a Registered Nurse with a Master or Doctoral degree and have an affiliation with the practicum site, but may not be the student direct work supervisor. Additionally, the preceptor must have a minimum of two years of nursing experience in an educational, practice, leadership/managerial role. The preceptor's credentials to practice in the state of the practicum practice site and a CV must accompany the students' request for preceptorship. Contracts with the preceptor and the practicum agency must be in place prior to the student being on site for practicum.

Virtual/Remote practicum are a rare option, and are based on prioritized needs. Preceptors available are limited. The student must explain why his/her situation constitutes a virtual practicum and what the student has done to attempt to find an onsite experience. The student must establish an extraordinary exception requiring waiver of the onsite practicum. The student must submit for a virtual practicum plan by submitting a request to the Practicum Coordinator. Please submit the request in a word document to the [npcordinator@aspen.edu](mailto:npcordinator@aspen.edu) email address. The request will be submitted to a three-person committee who will review the request and inform the student of the result of the committee review. This must be completed PRIOR to the start of the practicum experience.

The student may not be paid by the agency while they are completing their practicum hours, specifically if the student chooses to complete the practicum at their place of employment; the practicum hours must be completed outside of paid working hours.

### ***Communication***

**Practicum and Preceptor Experience:** The student must submit the three required documents to ProjectConcert. The preceptor and student must be available for at least three tele-conference with practicum instructor.

**Preceptor Communication:** The student must share the course requirements; level of

prospective student; time and method of regular communication; expectations of the Preceptor; method(s) of student performance evaluation. This information can be through written or verbal communication. The student will provide the following documents as required: completed Student Profile, resume, copy of an active, unencumbered RN license and liability insurance (if required), and individualized practicum objectives.

### ***Evaluation of student***

The course syllabus and practicum evaluation forms include the requirements and evaluation criteria for successful student performance. Evaluations by the faculty members, with input from the preceptor are important components of the student performance. Open communication between the Practicum Coordinator, Course Faculty, preceptor and student is essential. Faculty employ several methods including interactions with preceptor, regular review of student's practicum logs documenting the student's practicum experiences and supportive evidence from the practicum preceptor are utilized.

### ***Evaluation of practicum site and preceptor***

The Practicum Coordinator will complete a regular review of each preceptor using information from student evaluations. These documents will be used for continued approval or removal of future placement at sites and as well as selections of preceptors.

### **Preceptor Responsibilities**

- Sign the **Preceptor Agreement Form** (the "Intent of Relationship" form establishing your willingness to serve as a preceptor for the specified student). This will be submitted by the student after it is signed by the administrative or business manager.
- Complete the **Preceptor Profile** and attach a *curriculum vitae/resume*. Submit this to the student, who will then forward it to Aspen University. Alternatively, the preceptor may submit it directly to Aspen University. Contact information is provided on each form.
- Assist in facilitation of legal and contractual documents to be submitted by the student prior to beginning the practicum experience.
- Provide a setting in which the student may participate in appropriate situations in a healthcare organization.
- Function as a role model and provide suggestions, ideas, guidance, advice, direction, and leadership and supervision for the student.
- Sign the student's practicum hours audit report during the practicum course.
- Participate in teleconference with the student, preceptor and instructor (jointly) to discuss the student's progress and learning needs.
- Provide input regarding practicum evaluation of the student and will complete the **Student Performance Evaluation** form at the end of the course.

- Notify the course instructor immediately when satisfactory performance of the student is in question.

### **Specific Details Pertaining to Preceptor Responsibilities:**

The preceptor's primary role is teaching and mentoring. Preceptors assist the student to integrate and apply knowledge from their foundational courses incorporating the information to assess issues, utilize available resources, plan solutions & solve problems in various situations. Preceptors also guide and stimulate decision-making through questioning the student regarding their observations and reasoning. This process assists the student to reflect and describe their assessment and recommend strategies to achieve their stated objectives for the practicum course.

Additionally, preceptors assist the student to become more accurate and complete in their communication with the healthcare team. The preceptor should model interpersonal relationship skills with colleagues in the given healthcare environment.

Preceptors can model behaviors to navigate the academic setting or health care organizational system such as experiences with managed care and interagency referrals. Furthermore, the preceptor models the role of an expert nurse and an interdisciplinary team member.

### ***Communication with Faculty***

While preceptors are encouraged to contact our faculty at any time, preceptors should initiate contact as soon as possible for situations involving a student's unsafe practice, unethical conduct, or any changes in the preceptor's availability to precept. Please know the activities to accomplish your individualized objectives and the hours associated with those activities are negotiated during a three-way practicum teleconference between you, your preceptor and the capstone instructor. A three-way teleconference with the student, preceptor, and course instructor will take place during Module One, Four, and Eight and usually takes 15-20 minutes, to discuss course objectives, practicum activities and answer any question the involved parties may have.

### ***Communication with student***

Preceptors are encouraged to provide regular feedback to the student including brief discussions of the student's performance, as well as midterm and final evaluations. Preceptors are encouraged to relate concerns to the student at the time of occurrence in order for the student to rectify any concerns as soon as possible. Direct contact with the preceptor is always appropriate; however, other activities such as literature search (for knowledge acquisition and understanding), interviews, community assessment, contrast/comparison exploration, PowerPoint or educational information development, or policy development may also qualify as practice hours.

### ***Evaluation of student***

While the faculty assumes ultimate responsibility for the formal written evaluation, the preceptor's input will provide supportive evidence for the ratings. Preceptors are in a position to collect data that gives evidence of student competence. Also, preceptors have an opportunity to support professional practice standards and the credibility. Observations of the student's performance should be compared with practice standards, validated with faculty, and shared with the student. The student's response to your day-to-day feedback also becomes a part of the preceptor's evaluation data.

Preceptors need to remember that they do not fail students or stall a student's progress. Instead, the student's performance either meets or fails to meet criteria.

## **Student Responsibilities**

- Suggest a preceptor to the Practicum Coordinator based on geographic need, preceptor qualification, reputation, and availability.
- Provide the preceptor with the **Practicum Handbook** (which contains course objectives and appropriate evaluations tools).
- Complete and submit the **Preceptor Agreement Form** (the "Intent of Relationship" form establishing your preceptor's willingness to serve as a preceptor, along with the signature of administrative representative or business manager) to the Practicum Coordinator for signature approval.
- Assist in collection of legal and contractual documents (**Preceptor Profile** and **curriculum vitae/resume**, and the **Practicum Site Agreement**). Submit all contractual documents to the Practicum Coordinator for signature approval prior to beginning the practicum experience. Submit a completed **student profile** and **curriculum vitae/resume**, proof of current nursing license, and **individualized learning objectives** to the preceptor on or before the first practicum day.
- Establish a mutually agreeable schedule for practicum time with the preceptor. He/she will come to the practicum experience prepared to perform in accordance with assigned learning activities in accordance with course.
- Fulfill all agency requirements specified in the site contract prior to starting practicum. This may include liability insurance (1 million/3 million), criminal background checks, and drug screens. Students may be required to complete instruction in universal precautions, infection control practices, and take a blood borne pathogen course.
- Follow policies and procedures established in the preceptorship site and keep the preceptor informed about learning activities.
- Participate in teleconferences with the preceptor and Practicum Coordinator or Course Faculty to discuss progress, problems, and learning needs.
- Maintain accurate records of practicum time and experiences in ProjectConcert. The audit report should be printed and sent for the the preceptor's signature weekly while the student is in the practicum site. The document will be submitted to the appropriate drop box within the classroom for faculty review (retain a copy for your records) and enter the hours in Project Concert.

## **Specific Details Pertaining to Student Responsibilities:**

It is important for students to recognize their role as a graduate nursing student and his/her responsibilities to the practicum site and preceptor. The student can optimize their practicum learning experience by following these guidelines.

### ***Selection of Preceptor***

Students suggest a preceptor to the Practicum Coordinator based on geographic need, preceptor qualification, reputation, and availability. All preceptors and practicum sites must be approved by the Practicum Coordinator and all documents must have been submitted and approved through ProjectConcert before a Practicum Approval Letter is issued.

Again, the preceptor must be a Registered Nurse with a Master or Doctoral degree and have an affiliation with the practicum site. Additionally, the preceptor must have a minimum of two years of nursing experience in an educational, practice, leadership/managerial role. The preceptor's credentials to practice in the state of the practicum practice site and a CV must accompany the students' request for preceptorship. Contracts with the preceptor and the practicum agency must be in place prior to the student being on site for practicum.

### ***Interview with Preceptor***

The student should set up an appointment to meet with the preceptor prior to beginning practicum hours. The student should go to the meeting prepared with the Student Profile, a resume or CV, written individualized practicum objectives, copies of RN licensure, and liability insurance (if needed).

### ***Negotiation of Practicum Hours***

Students are to negotiate acceptable hours with the preceptor and practicum instructor prior to starting practicum hours. The student is expected to accommodate the preceptor's availability and schedule. The student's personal and work schedules are expected to accommodate participation in the required number of practicum hours specified by the practicum course. Direct contact with the preceptor is always appropriate; however this is not a shadowing experience - but rather an active participation experience and other activities such as literature search (for knowledge acquisition, understanding and integration), interviews, appropriate meetings/conferences/classes/webinars, community assessment, contrast/comparison exploration, PowerPoint or educational material information development, or policy and process development may also qualify as practice hours. Work closely with your instructor and preceptor to determine the best types of activities for your situation. A practicum calendar should be completed by the student and submitted to the course instructor and the preceptor. Changes to the practicum schedule are provided in writing to the preceptor

and the Practicum Coordinator.

### ***Preparation for Practicum***

The student is expected to prepare for the practicum as recommended by the faculty and preceptor. This preparation includes developing individual learning objectives, conferring with faculty and preceptor on areas of weakness that need to be refined, and seeking independent learning experiences that will provide the student with a higher level of self-confidence. The student is expected to prepare for the practicum by reading current reference and course materials for the challenges most often encountered by the preceptor. Subsequent practicum day's preparation should include reading appropriate reference material to expand knowledge regarding situations encountered by the student during the practicum hours.

### ***Evaluation of Practicum Site and Preceptor***

The student's evaluation of their experience and the expertise of the preceptor is required at the end of each practicum experience. The Site Evaluation and Preceptor Evaluation must be completed electronically in ProjectConcert. The evaluations will become available to students in the following courses: N550, N552, and N586. The evaluations will appear in Week 7 of the course and will remain open for three weeks.

		Evaluatee	Form	Detail	Due Date	Due Status	Form Status	Close Date
1	<input type="button" value="Select"/>	Evaluatee, Course ()	MSN Preceptor Evaluation	N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Tea Faculty (06/09/2020 03/26/2025)	3/12/2025	DUE	INCOMPLETE	4/9/2025
2	<input type="button" value="Select"/>	Evaluatee, Course ()	MSN Site Evaluation	N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Tea Faculty (06/09/2020 03/26/2025)	3/12/2025	DUE	INCOMPLETE	4/9/2025

### ***Confidentiality of Information***

The student will maintain confidentiality while communicating data, plans, and results in a manner that preserves the dignity and privacy of the client and provides a legal record of care. For purposes of accreditation, students will assemble certain information in relation to their participation in the care of patients, but subsequent use of the information will be in redacted form meeting HIPAA Limited Data Set requirements.

When recording data to document student experiences, the student will remove any patient identifying data identified as "Limited Data Sets." Limited Data Sets are Protected Health Information (PHI) with the following 18 identifiers regarding the patient, the

patient's employer, the patient's relatives and the members of the patient's household removed from it: 1)Names; 2)All geographic subdivisions smaller than a state; 3) All elements of dates (except year) for dates directly related to an individual; 4)Telephone numbers; 5)Fax numbers; 6) Electronic mail addresses; 7) Social Security numbers; 8) Medical record numbers; 9) Health plan beneficiary numbers; 10) Account numbers; 11) Certificate/license numbers; 12) Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers, including license plate numbers; 13) Device identifiers and serial numbers; 14) Web Universal Resource Locators; 15) Internet Protocol (IP) address numbers; 16) Biometric identifiers, including voice and finger prints; 17) Full face photographic images and any comparable images; and 18) Any other unique identifying number, characteristic or code.

## School Responsibilities

### Verification of student pre-requisites

Aspen University is responsible for verifying that students meet pre-practicum requirements prior to entering the practicum setting. This includes verifying that the student has completed pre-requisite course work, holds RN licensure in the state or province they will be conducting the practicum experience.

Aspen University will also facilitate that the student has fulfilled all agency requirements prior to starting practicum. This may include liability insurance (1 million/3 million), criminal background checks, and drug screens. Students may be required to complete instruction in universal precautions, infection control practices, and take a blood borne pathogen course.

Methods to orient the student to their responsibilities include but are not limited to verbal and written communication. Orientation materials can include this document.

All preceptor/practicum documents will be submitted prior to the beginning of the practicum. The documents must be approved by the NP Coordinator. The documents can be found in this Handbook or under Program Documents in Project Concert.

ASPEN UNIVERSITY  
 Logged in as: TEST STUDENT MSN Student MSN, Test  
 Program Documents

Program: MSNAM  
 Collapse All Expand All \*Click the small triangle to the left of a document type to expand that group of documents

Document Type

Document Type	Date	Title	Comment
Document Type: AU MSN Practicum Handbook (1)			
1 AU MSN Practicum Handbook	05/06/2019	AU_MSNApracticum_Handbook2019	<a href="#">View</a> <a href="#">Download</a>
Document Type: MSN Handbook (1)			
Document Type: Practicum Site Agreement (1)			
Document Type: Preceptor Intent of Relationship (1)			
Document Type: Preceptor Profile (1)			

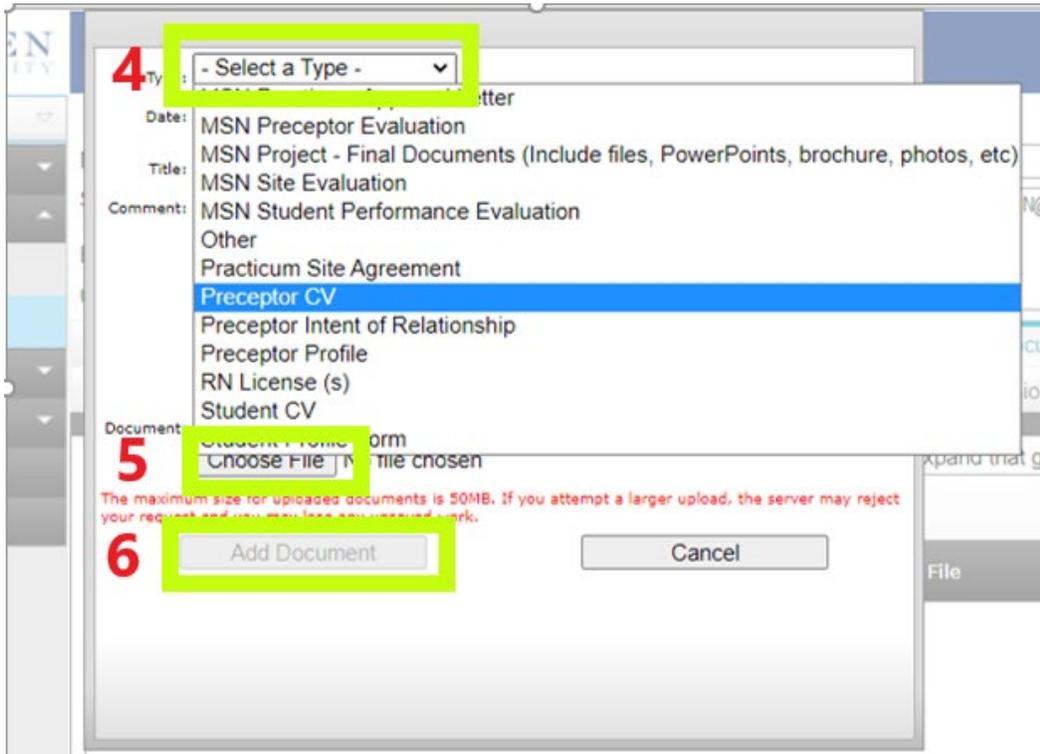
The student may not begin the practicum course without approval from the NP Coordinator. All documents must be submitted in ProjectConcert under the Document Tab.

## Instructions Uploading Documents to ProjectConcert

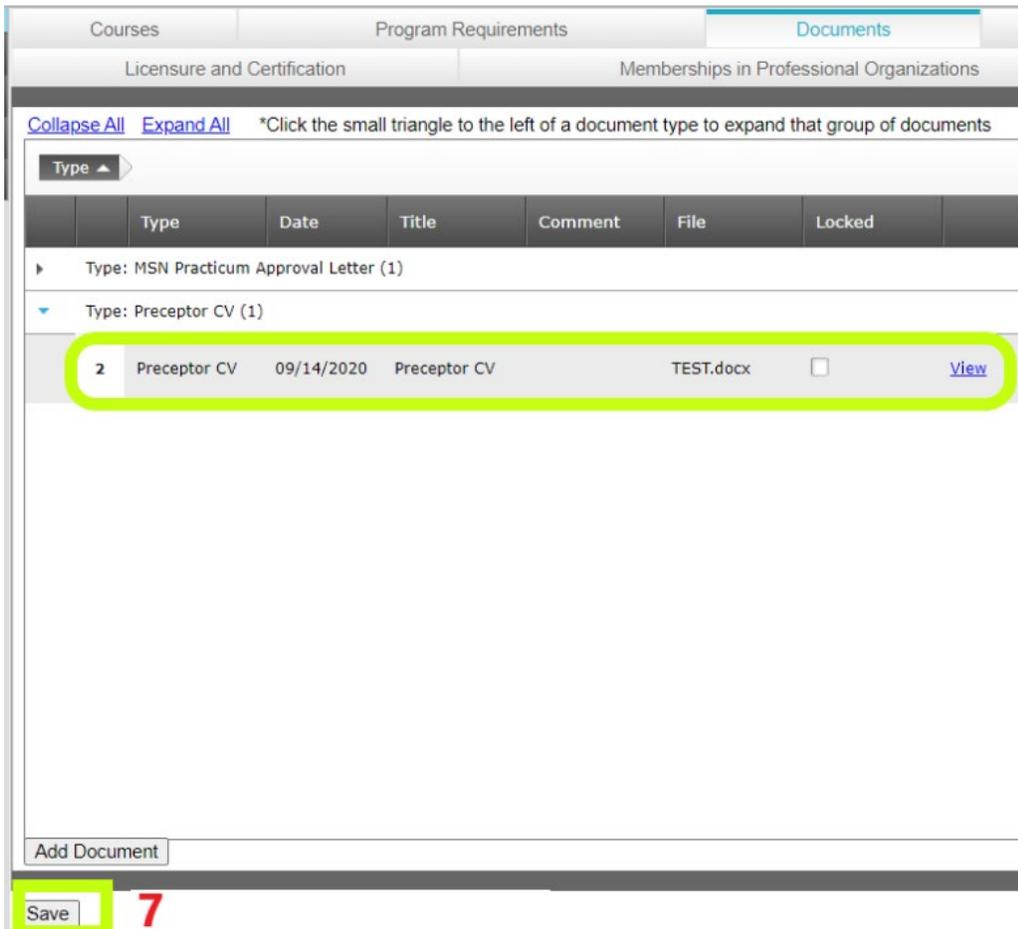
Steps 1 – 3: Click on Information Edit. Click on Documents. Then click Add Document.

The screenshot displays the ProjectConcert user interface. On the left is a navigation menu with items: Evaluations, Experience, Information, Utilize (with a red '1' next to it), Information Edit (highlighted with a green box), Portfolio, Reports, Change password, and Logout. The main content area shows a user profile for 'Test' with fields for Name (First, Middle, Last, Previous Last), Student ID (XXXXXXXX), Advisor (Fernandez, Liz), Email(s) (TestStudentMSN@pc.edu), Birthdate, and Age. Below the profile is a tabbed interface with 'Documents' highlighted (with a red '2' next to it). The 'Documents' section includes a table with columns: Type, Date, Title, Comment, File, and Locked. A dropdown menu for 'Type' is open, showing 'Type: MSN Practicum Approval Letter (1)'. At the bottom left, the 'Add Document' button is highlighted with a green box and a red '3' next to it.

Steps 4 – 6: A pop-up will open. Select the Type of file you are uploading. Click Choose File which will allow you to select the file you are uploading from your computer. Click Add Document.



Step 7 – You will see the file you just uploaded. Click Save.



A unique practicum site affiliation agreement may be submitted to: npcoordinator@aspen.edu for review and signature. However, all agreements will be submitted to the Nursing Practicum Center or ProjectConcert for final approval.

## **Practicum Forms & Evaluation Tools**

The following documents are located below this section:

Practicum Site Agreement\*

Preceptor Agreement\*

Student Profile\*

Student Performance Evaluation

Practicum Hours Tracking Log

Site Evaluation

Preceptor Evaluation

\*Required documentation to receive a Practicum Approval Letter.

A Practicum Approval Letter is required prior to enter into a Practicum Course.

\*\*\*All forms need completed and signed where applicable and the uploaded to Project Concert.



## **Practicum Site Agreement**

This PRACTICUM AGREEMENT is entered into between the ASPEN UNIVERSITY INC. with its principal place of business located 1660 S. Albion St. Suite #525 Denver, CO 80222 (hereinafter referred to as "SCHOOL") and \_\_\_\_\_ (hereinafter referred to as "AGENCY"). This agreement shall replace or supersede all other agreements between the parties.

WHEREAS, the mission of the Aspen University School of Nursing and Health Sciences is to enhance the health and quality of life for individuals, families, and communities at local, state, and national levels through excellence in teaching, scholarship and practice.

WHEREAS, the Master in Science in Nursing (MSN) program prepares nurses to assume leadership roles in management, education, and practice within a diverse society and across a spectrum of healthcare settings.

WHEREAS, the AGENCY is willing to share its facilities with the SCHOOL by making its resources available for the instruction of students.

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the foregoing objectives and in further consideration of the covenants and promises hereinafter set forth, the parties hereto mutually agree as follows:

1. Upon inception, the graduate student shall execute a form acknowledging all applicable policies required by SCHOOL and AGENCY.
2. The graduate student participating in the practicum experience at the AGENCY will be enrolled in the graduate nursing program and currently enrolled in a graduate nursing course with an appropriately credentialed faculty member.
3. The graduate student will hold a current, unencumbered nursing license. This license is on file with the SCHOOL and available upon request to the AGENCY.
4. A general orientation to the AGENCY will be provided by the Preceptor or AGENCY designee and must be attended by the graduate student prior to beginning the practicum experience.
5. When on AGENCY premises, the graduate student will be under the direct supervision of a specified Preceptor agreed upon by the SCHOOL and AGENCY.
6. The graduate student and Preceptor will negotiate the specific areas of the practicum experience in alignment with the requirements of the graduate course in which the student is enrolled.
7. The SCHOOL shall instruct the graduate student that he/she shall follow all administrative policies, standards and practices of AGENCY while participating in the practicum experience to the extent that AGENCY's rules and regulations do not contradict the SCHOOL'S rules and regulations.
8. Where the AGENCY provides direct patient care, the SCHOOL and the graduate student shall comply with the AGENCY'S applicable policy regarding the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and shall not disclose any records concerning a patient or participant to any third party without the prior written consent of the AGENCY.

9. Upon mutual agreement, the AGENCY reserves the right, upon consultation with the SCHOOL, to require the dismissal or removal from the AGENCY any graduate student (i) whose personal characteristics prevent desirable relationships with AGENCY, (ii) whose health status is a detriment to the graduate student's successful completion of the practicum experience or to the welfare of patient or participants or (iii) whose performance, after appropriate instruction and counseling, continues to fall below the level required to maintain practice standards.
10. The SCHOOL agrees that the faculty member may serve as consultant and on committees of the AGENCY when requested by the AGENCY.
11. There will be no exchange of monies between the AGENCY, the SCHOOL, the Preceptor, or the graduate student.
12. The graduate student will be responsible for personal transportation, meals, laundry and health care needs in the performance of this agreement.
13. To the extent permitted by applicable law, each party does hereby covenant and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the other party, its appointed boards and commissions, officials, officers, employees, students, and subagents, individually and collectively, from all fines, claims, demands, suits or actions of any kind and nature by reason of its acts or omissions occurring in the performance of this Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement or in its performance shall be construed to result in any person being the officer, agent, employee or servant of either party when such person, absent of this Agreement and the performance thereof, would not in law have had such status. Nothing in the execution of this Agreement or in its performance shall be construed to establish a joint venture by the parties hereto.
14. Both parties, in connection with any service or other activity under this Agreement, agree not to unlawfully discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, political affiliations or belief. The SCHOOL and the AGENCY will comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1991, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
15. In addition to those laws specifically mentioned in this Agreement, AGENCY shall comply with all applicable policies of SCHOOL applicable to it and comply with all applicable laws and rules.
16. The SCHOOL and AGENCY will maintain in effect during the entire term of this Agreement, at their sole respective cost and expense, at least \$1,000,000 of commercial general liability insurance on a standard comprehensive occurrence form. The SCHOOL and AGENCY will make certificates of insurance available to each other upon request. The SCHOOL and AGENCY will maintain in effect during the entire term of this Agreement, at their sole respective cost and expense, Medical Errors & Omission coverage.
17. This agreement is for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ unless terminated by either party upon giving 30 days advance written notice to the other party.

**Aspen University**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Agency**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Student: Submit this completed form directly to ProjectConcert. Directions can be found on page 29 of the MSN Handbook under "Instructions Uploading Documents to Project Concert"**



## Preceptor Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have identified the following preceptor and he/she agrees to serve as my site preceptor for this/these course(s) N\_\_\_\_\_. I verify that I have provided this preceptor with a copy of the Aspen University MSN Handbooks on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (today's date).

Student's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Preceptor's Information:

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

Agency Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Telephone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Preceptor's Education: Degree (Highest Level Attained):

\_\_\_\_ MSN      \_\_\_\_ Ph.D.      \_\_\_\_ Ed.D.      \_\_\_\_ DNP  
\_\_\_\_ Other Master or Doctoral Degree - Specialization \_\_\_\_\_

RN License # (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Preceptor's Acknowledgement and Acceptance:

I agree to function as the practicum site preceptor. I have reviewed the MSN Handbook and accept the role and function as a preceptor. The information provided herein is true to the best of my knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (*No Typed Signatures*)      Printed Name      Date

### Preceptor's Experience (Please attach and submit a 5-year resume or CV)

### Practicum Site Information (Should be the Same as the Practicum Site Agreement):

Name of Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### ASPEN UNIVERSITY APPROVAL:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Student: Submit this completed form directly to ProjectConcert. Directions can be found on page 29 of the MSN Handbook under "Instructions Uploading Documents to Project Concert"**



## Student Profile

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Other Telephone (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

**Potential Topics of MSN Practicum Project: (provide a short discussion of the intended topic):**

### Emergency Contact Person

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student: Submit this completed form directly to ProjectConcert. Directions can be found on page 29 of the MSN Handbook under "Instructions Uploading Documents to Project Concert"**



## Student Performance Evaluation

### Student Information

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Observed \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Course: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Preceptor: \_\_\_\_\_

### Ratings

(1) = Poor      (2) = Fair      (3) = Satisfactory      (4) = Good      (5) = Excellent

**Implements a variety of teaching strategies appropriate to learner needs, desired outcomes, content, and context**

Comments:

<input type="checkbox"/>				
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**Grounds teaching strategies in educational theory and evidence-based teaching practices**

Comments:

<input type="checkbox"/>				
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**Uses information technologies skillfully to support the teaching-learning process**

Comments:

<input type="checkbox"/>				
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**Creates opportunities for learners to develop critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills**

Comments:

<input type="checkbox"/>				
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**Shows an enthusiasm for teaching, learning, and nursing that inspires learners**

Comments:

<input type="checkbox"/>				
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**Develops collegial working relationships with students, faculty, and Practicum agency personnel**

Comments:

<input type="checkbox"/>				
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**Maintains the professional practice knowledge base**

Comments:

<input type="checkbox"/>				
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### Evaluation

Additional Comments:

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

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preceptor: Submit this completed form directly to the student Faculty Mentor.  
 Note: this is currently being automated in ProjectConcert.**



## Site Evaluation – Completed Electronically in ProjectConcert

### Student directions:

1. In Week 7 of courses N550, N552, and N586, the Site Evaluation will appear under Evaluations. There are two ways to navigate to it. First, there will be a notification in your dashboard alerting you the evaluations are ready for you to complete. Click on the “Evaluations” link and it will take you directly to the evaluations.

The screenshot shows the ProjectConcert dashboard. At the top, it says "Logged in as: TEST STUDENT MSN Student MSN, Test". Below this, there are two boxes: "Experiences: 2 rejected experiences" and "Evaluations: 2 incomplete scheduled evaluations". The "Evaluations" box is highlighted with a green border. On the left, there is a navigation menu with "Evaluations", "Experience", and "Information".

2. The second way to access, is to click on Evaluations on the left menu. Both options take you the evaluations and you click on “Select” to complete.

The screenshot shows the ProjectConcert dashboard with the "Evaluations" menu item highlighted in the left sidebar. The main content area displays "Outstanding Evaluations" with a table of two entries. Each entry has a "Select" button highlighted with a green border.

		Evaluatee	Form	Detail	Due Date	Due Status	Form Status	Close Date
1	Select	Evaluatee, Course ()	MSN Preceptor Evaluation	N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Tes Faculty (06/09/2020 03/26/2025)	3/12/2025	DUE	INCOMPLETE	4/9/2025
2	Select	Evaluatee, Course ()	MSN Site Evaluation	N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Tes Faculty (06/09/2020 03/26/2025)	3/12/2025	DUE	INCOMPLETE	4/9/2025

3. When you click “Select,” the evaluation will open. Type in the Clinical Site name. There will be 13 multiple choice questions. When you finish, click on “Submit.”

**MSN Site Evaluation**  
N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Test Faculty (06/09/2020-03/26/2025)  
Evaluatee, Course ()

Save Save & Return **Submit** **3**

**Site Evaluation**

**Clinical Site Location Name:**

**1**

**DOES THIS SITE HAVE:**

**1. Adequate space?**

Always **2**

Sometimes

Never

Not Applicable

**The following questions will asked:**

1. Adequate space? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
2. Adequate numbers of clinically competent staff? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
3. Autonomy and accountability for nursing practice? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
4. Nursing control of nursing practice and the practice environment? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
5. Adequate compensation commensurate with responsibilities, education, and performance? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
6. Opportunities to follow-up with nursing problems of interest? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
7. Access to education, research, and appropriate technologies? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
8. Promotion of evidence-based practice? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
9. Nursing and educational support staff that are accepting of student's role? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
10. Does the philosophy of the organization as directed in a healthy work environment and improved patient outcomes? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
11. Does the organization use procedure and protocol manuals, educational materials, and have personnel to adequately support a student? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
12. Are community resources, other agencies, and professional disciplines involved with client welfare? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable
13. Would this site be recommended for future student placement? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable



## Preceptor Evaluation – Completed Electronically in ProjectConcert

### Student directions:

1. In Week 7 of courses N550, N552, and N586, the Preceptor Evaluation will appear under Evaluations. There are two ways to navigate to it. First, there will be a notification in your dashboard alerting you the evaluations are ready for you to complete. Click on the “Evaluations” link and it will take you directly to the evaluations.

Dashboard header: Logged in as: TEST STUDENT MSN Student MSN, Test

Left menu: Evaluations, Experience, Information

Notification boxes:
 

- Experiences: 2 rejected experiences
- Evaluations: 2 incomplete scheduled evaluations

2. The second way to access, is to click on Evaluations on the left menu. Both options take you the evaluations and you click on “Select” to complete.

Evaluations		Outstanding Evaluations						
		Evaluatee	Form	Detail	Due Date	Due Status	Form Status	Close Date
1	Select	Evaluatee, Course ()	MSN Preceptor Evaluation	N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Tes Faculty (06/09/2020-03/26/2025)	3/12/2025	DUE	INCOMPLETE	4/9/2025
2	Select	Evaluatee, Course ()	MSN Site Evaluation	N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Tes Faculty (06/09/2020-03/26/2025)	3/12/2025	DUE	INCOMPLETE	4/9/2025

3. Type in your Clinical Site and Preceptor name. There will be 21 multiple choice questions. When you finish, click on “Submit.”

**MSN Preceptor Evaluation**  
N550 - 2020 Spring/N550/Test Faculty (06/09/2020-03/26/2025)  
Evaluatee, Course ()

Save | Save & Return | **Submit** 4

Preceptor Evaluation

Clinical Site Location Name:

1

Preceptor Name:

2

Advocate

Did your preceptor:

Assist you with setting goals and providing constructive feedback?

Always

Sometimes

Never

Not Applicable

3

## **The following questions will asked:**

### **Advocate**

Did your Preceptor:

Assist you with setting goals and providing constructive feedback? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Maintains confidentiality of students/patients/staff? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Maintain confidentiality of your work performance? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Demonstrate understanding of and promote the Nurse Leader role? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

### **Role Model**

Did your Preceptor:

Function as a patient/student/family/nurse advocate? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Interact well with superiors, subordinates, and ancillary personnel? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Consider your individual learning needs? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Communicate nursing education knowledge well? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Utilize other members of the health care and educational team? (i.e.: dietician, social worker, academic advisement, information technology, human resources)? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

### **Teacher**

Did your Preceptor:

Help you identify your learning needs? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Suggest or provide additional learning experiences? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Collaborate with you in making decisions about the practicum environment? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Provide immediate and adequate feedback? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Promote a climate that supports validation of problem-solving? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Lead you through decision analysis? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Encourage questions? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Provide opportunities for you to grow in the MSN role? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

### **Consultant**

Did your Preceptor:

Encourage you to be independent as you gained experience? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Help you recognize and utilize resource persons other than himself/herself? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable

Remain accessible for consultation as you gained competence? Always - Sometimes - Never - Not Applicable