Helen and Arthur E. Johnson
Beth-El College of
Nursing and Health Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **COLORADO SPRINGS**

Nurse Practitioner Practicum Handbook

for

Family and Adult/Gerontology Students

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IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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STATEMENT OF FACULTY REVIEW

Changes are made in the handbook at the discretion of the faculty. Students are expected to comply with the Handbook that is current each semester.

ARTICLE I: NP CLINICAL PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

SECTION A: Overview of Clinical Practicum Experience

To engage students in varied, quality clinical experiences in primary care settings.

All students need to follow the required number of hours, depending on when they started the program.

Students Starting the Program BEFORE FALL 2026:	**Students Starting the Program FALL 2026 OR LATER:**
Clinical practicum experiences are embedded in primary care courses **(90 hours each)** and a final practicum of **360 hours**, designed to provide a synthesis experience for the student. Students must complete a total of **630 practicum hours** in primary care in addition to **45** clinical hours in Health Assessment to meet the requirements for graduation. **1 credit hour= 45 clinical hours**	Clinical practicum experiences are embedded in primary care courses (110 hours each) and a final practicum of **440 hours,** designed to provide a synthesis experience for the student. Students must complete a total of **770 practicum hours** in primary care in addition to **45** clinical hours in Health Assessment to meet the requirements for graduation. **1 credit = 55 clinical hours.**

Section B: Requirements for Clinical Practicum Experience

Background Check and Drug Testing

1. All students participating in a laboratory, clinical, practicum or residency course will be required to submit data for a certified background check and drug screen, at their expense.
2. Each student has access to his or her own confidential results, which they must upload into Medatrax.
3. Should there be a positive background check finding or a positive drug screen finding, the Nursing Department Chair will determine if the student is eligible to participate in the Program. Eligibility is based on the nature of the findings as well as clinical site requirements.
4. All background checks and drug screens will be done through Castle Branch-DISA Healthcare. You may use the link below and the NV15 code for the background check and NV15dt for the drug screen.

https://www.castlebranch.com/online_submission/package_code.php

Additional Requirements

Students in clinical and community settings throughout the duration of the program are responsible for complying with all of the immunization requirements set forth by individual clinical sites (including additional immunizations not required by UCCS such as COVID-19), and supplying (if requested) to the affiliated health care facility any records for physical examinations, immunization status, and other medical tests and any other forms of required documentation (related to, for instance, Occupational Health and Safety Administration, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, and The Joint Commission requirements).

Students who do not comply with immunization requirements described in this policy may not be allowed to progress in the program and/or be assigned a clinical placement until requirements are met.

The following documents must also be uploaded by the student into Medatrax by the published due date each semester. In the event that the following documents are not submitted or up to date, the student will not be allowed to start clinical hours or will be removed from the practicum until all documents are uploaded into Medatrax.

1. **RN license**
2. **CPR certification-**BLS level provider course through the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross for Health Care Workers. The card must be current when beginning clinical hours. If the card expires during the semester, the student is responsible for renewing CPR in order to continue with clinical hours. Any online CPR course must include a hands-on skills assessment. An RQI training card issued by the American Heart Association may be used as

verification. Students cannot submit an ACLS card as a substitute for CPR since some ACLS courses no longer review CPR as part of the course.

3. **Proof of personal health Insurance**
4. **Immunization Records Required**
    - **a.** Dates for two MMR immunizations or documentation of positive titers of ALL three diseases.
    - **b.** Dates of three-shot series of Hepatitis B series or titer demonstrating immunity.
    - **c.** Date of last Tetanus, which must be within the past 10 years.
    - **d.** Proof of one pertussis vaccination as an adult
    - **e.** Dates of two Varicella immunizations or titer demonstrating immunity
    - **f.** Date and result of annual TB Test. If a student has had a positive PPD a copy of the last chest x-ray report is needed. If a student is unable to take PPD, a copy of QuantiFERON® can be substituted for the PPD. Annual TB testing is required.
    - **g.** Current annual flu vaccine

Exemptions

1. Students who wish to file a medical exemption to immunization requirements will need to meet with Office of Disability Services.
2. Students who wish to file a religious exemption to immunization requirements will need to contact the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students can approve religious accommodation in the form of an immunization exemption for UCCS only. Students will need to follow any exemption procedure for individual clinical sites. The Department of Nursing cannot guarantee clinical placement without following immunization requirements and this may impact the student's ability to find clinical placement.
3. Students should reach out to Denise Ostovich, Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator for more details.

Section C: Expectations for the Clinical Practicum

The following sections list the general expectations for the clinical practicum experience. If you have questions about the clinical practicum that are not answered in this handbook, please contact the Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator: Denise Ostovich at mostovic@uccs.edu or (719) 255-4473.

1. Students may not do more than **330 hours** with the same preceptor or site unless the site is a major health system, to allow for varied experiences.
2. Students should **expect one on-site or phone visit** during each clinical course, regardless of the number of sites that a student is using. Additional site visits are at the discretion of the practicum or option coordinator.
3. Students who have a **site visitor as their preceptor** may or may not have a site visit during that semester.

4. **Preceptors:** can be NPs, MDs, DOs, or PAs who are licensed in the state where the student is completing clinical hours. Military healthcare providers must be licensed in a state regardless of where they are assigned. Preceptors should have two years of experience, and all NPs must be nationally certified with full prescriptive authority.
5. It is recommended that each student spend a minimum of **200 hours with a nurse practitioner** during their clinical practicum experience to help the NP student appreciate the nuances of the NP role.
6. **Incompletes:** Students who are unable to complete all of the clinical practicum hours that they registered for or fail to log clinical hours and/or patients in a given semester may request an incomplete grade for their clinical course.
7. Students must also be passing their didactic class to be given an incomplete and are expected to complete the remainder of the clinical hours and documentation during the following semester.
8. Students with two incompletes may not progress to the next clinical course and will be required to register for a 1-credit independent study to complete the clinical hours unless there is a non-clinical course on their degree plan that they still need to complete.
9. Students requesting an incomplete grade must notify the lead faculty of the course and Denise Ostovich, Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator, explaining why they could not complete their clinical hours.
10. Students may not enter NURS 6980 Synthesis Practicum with an incomplete in any of the primary care courses NURS 6915, 6925, 6950, 6900, 6960 or 6982.
11. Students must “clear” their incompletes within one calendar year or the incomplete will become a failing grade.
12. Students conducting telehealth visits may only count 45 hours during the entire program. They must first complete the telehealth tutorial in their class.

DROPPING OR WITHDRAWL FROM A COURSE:

The **Census Date** is the last day to drop without penalty and receive a full refund of tuition and most course fees. Courses dropped before their census date will not receive a grade and do not appear on a student's transcript.

Courses that are **withdrawn from *after* their census date** are non-refundable and are assigned with an official notation of ‘W’ (withdrawn). The **Last Day to Withdraw** is the last day students can withdraw from a course in their myUCCS portal. Students can withdraw from a course until 11:59pm (MST) on this date. After this deadline, students must obtain specific approvals to withdraw from a course.

Any request after the last day to withdraw is not guaranteed and is reserved for students who have extenuating circumstances and is up to each individual professor and their policies (refer to course syllabus). *If* approved, courses are assigned an official notation of 'W' and no refunds are given.

Please visit the Office of the Registrar web page for additional information on course/session deadlines, withdrawal policies (graduate handbook), and tuition policies. https://registrar.uccs.edu/

Students who have a grade of B- or less for two classes during their graduate work will be dismissed from the program.

LOA/Remediation: It is the expectation that once clinical coursework begins, the graduate nursing student will proceed continuously through clinical rotations. If an extenuating circumstance occurs that necessitates a leave of absence (LOA) of greater than two (2) semesters, the graduate nursing student will be required to satisfactorily complete a comprehensive Head to Toe Assessment if the student has not already taken any clinical courses. This remediation must be completed before any clinical site placement is approved.

Clinical Practicum Expectations

The expectation is that students **will progress** from requiring close supervision and needing consistent guidance in the first practicum experience to seeing a schedule of clients independently with their preceptor's support by the end of their last clinical class.

Clinical Skills and Medical Knowledge

- Obtains accurate, relevant patient history and performs correct, focused and/or comprehensive physical examination
- Selects appropriate diagnostic tests, interprets labs/imaging
- Develops appropriate differential diagnoses
- Demonstrates sound clinical judgement

Patient Management

- Develops appropriate treatment plans and adjusts plans based on patients' needs
- Uses evidence-based guidelines
- Prescribes medications safely and appropriately, recommending non-drug therapies
- Recognizes when to seek help or refer

Communication & Patient Interaction

- Communicates clearly using plain language, open-ended questions, and listens effectively
- Explains diagnoses and plans understandably and encourages the patient in shared decision making
- Shows empathy and professionalism

Teamwork & Workflow

- Works effectively with the healthcare team
- Communicates patient case clearly to preceptor/team, accepting feedback and applying it
- Manages time and patient flow appropriately

Professionalism

- Arrives prepared and on time
- Maintains patient confidentiality and demonstrates respect for patients and the team
- Practices within the level of training
- Shows awareness of cultural/social factors in care

Section D: Attendance at Clinical Practicum

- Identify the procedure for contacting the preceptor in case of absence.
- If a student must be absent due to illness or emergency, the preceptor should be notified prior to the beginning of that clinical day and negotiate with the preceptor regarding make-up times.
- Students are expected to schedule clinical time with the preceptor consistent with the preceptor's availability/schedule.

Section E: Professional Behavior & Dress at Clinical Practicum

Students are expected to dress appropriately and always behave in a professional manner. School insignia and /or student identification badges must be worn.

- **Dress Code:** Students should verify with the office manager at the site if there is a specific dress code and may wear attire that is consistent with the clinical site. Most office dress is business casual with or without lab coats. If lab coats are needed, students are required to supply their own lab coats. Scrub clothes are not appropriate attire during clinical hours, unless required by the clinical site.
- **Professional Communication:** Because of the professional expectations of students in clinical sites, it is expected that students will respond promptly to communication from faculty, administrative staff, site visitors, and/or a preceptor.
- **Badges:** Instructions for obtaining student badges will be sent to students prior to NURS 6730, the Advanced Health Assessment course. Post Master's students who do not take NURS 6730 will receive instructions before their first clinical rotation. While in clinical and signing charts and forms, students should sign their first and last name, followed by RN, then designation as FNP/AGNP/PMHNP student. If you are a postmaster student, your designation would be the highest license held by the board of nursing (APRN).
- **Issues with Clinical Site:** Students who have an issue with a preceptor or clinical site need to follow protocol to address the issue. The first person to speak with is the professor in your class. If that is not possible, the Graduate Clinical

Practicum Coordinator is the next person who can discuss the problem. If a resolution cannot be made, the Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator will discuss the situation with the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Department Chair of Nursing as needed.

Students **MAY NOT** directly confront or communicate with a preceptor in a caustic manner.

Section F: Student Injury and Exposure Reporting

Students are covered by the University insurance program, Workers' Compensation, for any injury and/or exposure while completing a clinical practicum rotation.

All incidents should be reported as soon as possible to Dr. Sherry McCormick, Option Coordinator.

1. For an emergency, call 911 or go to the closest urgent care facility or emergency room.
2. For all non-emergencies or follow-up medical care, you must seek treatment with a Designated Medical Provider: https://www.cu.edu/risk/dmp.
3. Complete an Injury Report Form to file a claim: https://www.cu.edu/risk/file-claim.
    a. You must file a claim within 10 days of the incident.
4. For additional information or questions, please contact University Risk Management at 303-860-5682 or email URM@cu.edu.
5. Incident procedures can be found on URM's website: https://www.cu.edu/risk/incident-procedure.

ARTICLE II: CLINICAL COURSES

Students should follow the exact degree plan that was created for them upon admission. If, for any reason, a change is needed, they must reach out to Debbie Schultze, the Academic Services Senior Professional.

No more than three (3) Degree Plans can be requested over a student's tenure unless a written explanation, submitted for review to the Graduate Program Coordinator and Option Coordinator, and Academic Services Senior Professional Graduate Nursing – Debbie Schultze, citing the extenuating circumstances that support the request.

Section A: Overview for NP Clinical Practicum Courses with a Practicum Component:

All students need to follow the required number of hours, depending on when they started the program.

Students Starting the Program BEFORE FALL 2026:	**Students Starting the Program FALL 2026 OR LATER:**

Clinical Practicum Hours for FNP Students	**Clinical Practicum Hours for FNP Students**
• NURS 6730 Advanced Health Assessment (not included in 630), 45 hours • NURS 6900 Primary Care of Pediatrics and Their Families, 90 hours • NURS 6915 Primary Care of Adults with Acute Health Conditions, 90 hours • NURS 6925 Primary Care of Adults with Chronic Health Conditions, 90 hours • NURS 6982 Pre-Synthesis, 45-90 hours • NURS 6980 Synthesis Practicum, 360 hours	• NURS 6730 Advanced Health Assessment (not included in 770), 45 hours • NURS 6900 Primary Care of Pediatrics and Their Families, 110 hours • NURS 6915 Primary Care of Adults with Acute Health Conditions, 110 hours • NURS 6925 Primary Care of Adults with Chronic Health Conditions, 110 hours • NURS 6982 Pre-Synthesis, 55-110 hours • NURS 6980 Synthesis Practicum, 440 hours
Clinical Practicum Hours for Adult/Gerontology Students	**Clinical Practicum Hours for Adult/Gerontology Students**
• NURS 6730 Advanced Health Assessment (not included in 630 hrs/), 45 hours • NURS 6915 Primary Care of Adults with Acute Health Conditions, 90 hours • NURS 6925 Primary Care of Adults with Chronic Health Conditions, 90 hours • NURS 6950 Primary Care of Geriatric Patients, 90 hours • NURS 6982 Pre-Synthesis, 45-90 hours • NURS 6980 Synthesis Practicum, 360 hours	• NURS 6730 Advanced Health Assessment (not included in 770 hrs/), 45 hours • NURS 6915 Primary Care of Adults with Acute Health Conditions, 110 hours • NURS 6925 Primary Care of Adults with Chronic Health Conditions, 110 hours • NURS 6950 Primary Care of Geriatric Patients, 110 hours • NURS 6982 Pre-Synthesis, 55-110 hours • NURS 6980 Synthesis Practicum, 440 hours

This Program prepares students to work as Primary Care Advanced Practice Nurses; therefore, clinical hours are to be done in primary care settings.

- Family Practice, Pediatric and Internal Medicine settings will provide opportunities for the majority of clinical experiences.

- Students may not do clinical hours in a hospital setting or round on patients in a hospital setting as these hours will not count toward the required hours.
- Students may contact Denise Ostovich, Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator, at 719-255-4473 or by email at mostovic@uccs.edu with questions about clinical sites.

Before planning clinical experiences outside of Colorado, it is imperative that the student check with the College's Department of Nursing regarding any changes in state regulations that can affect their clinical placement decisions.

Students need to be aware **that relocating from the state of residence at the time of acceptance** into the graduate nursing program may prohibit a student from completing their course of study or obtaining an NP license in a new state because of state restrictions. These restrictions apply to both a didactic course and a clinical course requiring clinical practice hours.

1. **Course Overviews**
    a. **NURS 6730-** practicum hours in a primary care setting, emphasizing health history and assessment skill development **(No ED, Urgent Care, SNF, Specialty Clinics).**
    b. **NURS 6900- practicum hours** in a primary care setting, focusing on developmental assessment, acute and chronic disease recognition, and management and health maintenance of the pediatric patient **(ex., pediatric clinic, family clinic that sees children, or urgent care if a 2nd rotation or greater)**
    c. **NURS 6915** - practicum hours in a primary care setting, concentration on acute, episodic problems and health maintenance of the adult client **(ex. family or internal medicine clinic)**
    d. **NURS 6925** - practicum hours in a primary care setting, concentration on chronic disease states, treatment, and management of the adult population **(ex. family or internal medicine clinic/urgent care if a 2nd rotation or greater)**
    e. **NURS 6950** - practicum hours in a geriatric setting, applying gero-pharmacology content to clinical decision-making for pharmacologic treatments, integrating facets of comprehensive geriatric assessment into routine office visits and utilizing current clinical guidelines for health promotion with older adults and management of common acute and chronic health conditions utilizing current guidelines for management. Also addressing elder maltreatment and implementing processes in support of advanced care directives **(ex. family or internal medicine clinic/skilled nursing)**
    f. **NURS 6982** - practicum hours in a primary care setting, concentration on acute/chronic, problems and health maintenance of the pediatric or adult

clients **(ex. family or internal medicine clinic/urgent care) NO SPECIALTY**

g. **NURS 6980** - practicum hours in a primary care setting, concentrating on refining skills, developing clinical decision-making, gaining experience working with patientin the NP role within the student's particular option. This course also has a didactic component **(ex. family or internal medicine/urgent care/specialty)**

2. **Options of settings outside Primary Care**
    a. Students are required to complete a minimum of **30 hours** addressing **women's health** care issues (gynecological and breast problems) and no more than 45 hours. These hours MAY be completed in a primary care setting or women's health clinic during any clinical rotation/practicum except NURS 6900, pediatrics.
    b. It is also recommended that students have **30 hours** of experience working with patients with **mental health** issues. These hours many times are completed during your primary care rotation. However, if you would like to do them in a mental health clinic they can only be done in synthesis and will be counted towards specialty.
    c. Students in their second, third, or Synthesis Practicum rotations MAY complete up to **110 hours in Urgent Care**. This does not include the Emergency Room or Fast-Track in a hospital ER. Students may do **110** additional hours during the Synthesis Practicum course in an Urgent Care setting for a total of **220 hours.**
    d. FNP students are encouraged to do **55 hours** in **Assisted Living/Long-Term Care** during the Synthesis Practicum class. Students in the FNP option may also do **55 hours in hospice/palliative car**during the Synthesis Practicum class. These hours do not count as "specialty" hours for either of these clinical sites.
    e. Students in the Adult/Gerontology track MAY complete up to **110 hours** in an **assisted living/skilled nursing facility** either in NURS 6950 or the Synthesis Practicum class, NURS 6980. In addition, students may complete **55 hours of hospice/palliative care** (outpatient only) during the NURS 6950 course.
    f. Synthesis Practicum students MAY complete up to **110 hours** total in approved **specialty clinics.** Students can do two **55-hour** rotations or **110 hours** in one specialty area. The approved specialty clinics include: Dermatology, Orthopedics, Interventional Pain Management, Palliative Care (outpatient only), Allergy/Immunology, and Cardiology. Other specialty clinics may be approved on a case-by-case basis. Specialty hours may not be done in NURS 6982, pre-synthesis. Adult/Gero students may do **55 hours** of hospice/palliative care (out-patient only) if not done in NURS 6950. Adult/Gero students may also do **55 hours** in

adult pulmonology during the Synthesis class instead of the other listed specialties.

g. Students **may not** do clinical hours in an inpatient setting.

3. **Additional hours that can be counted**
    a. **Students may "bank"** up to a maximum of **55 clinical hours** in the entire program.
    b. Hours may only be banked at the current site where you are completing your clinical hours for that semester. Additional sites will not be processed in order to bank hours.
    c. These hours may be done in primary care, internal medicine, pediatrics and women's health. Hours should be **logged during the semester in which they are completed.**
    d. Hours can be banked in any clinical class after NURS 6730 but **can only be counted in the last semester of synthesis** NURS 6980.
    e. You must reach out to Denise Ostovich, Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator, at 719-255-4473 or by email at mostovic@uccs.edu to get approval.

Student may "count" a maximum of **20 additional hours** that may be used in their last semester of synthesis NURS 6980.

1. These hours are in addition to banked hours
2. They may include hours completed in simulations and/or skills lab held on the UCCS campus. For students unable to attend this lab, they can reach out to the Option Coordinator, Dr. McCormick @ smccorm3@uccs.edu for other alternatives.
3. Hours will be **logged in Medatrax in the final semester of synthesis** NURS 6980.

Section B: Requirements for Primary Care Courses

Each primary care course will require the student to complete clinical practicum hours. Faculty will require the student to reflect on clinical objectives that the student will attempt to meet during the semester with clinical practicum experiences. These are different from the objectives for the course.

- Contact a preceptor and arrange to work with the preceptor in their clinical setting. Hours will vary depending on the course the student is taking.
- Complete the Clinical Site Sheet for each clinical site. A copy of this form is sent to every clinical student at the start of the semester.
- Ensure that all requirements for the Clinical Practicum Experience (Refer to Article I-Section B) are up to date.

ARTICLE III: PREPARING FOR PRACTICUM

Section A: Guidelines for Setting-Up a Practicum Rotation

- This section will briefly outline strategies to help students in finding and setting up clinical practicum rotations.
- Students are expected to participate in finding preceptors.
- Preceptors need a minimum of 2 years of experience, and nurse practitioners must have obtained full prescriptive authority
- Students should start looking for a preceptor well in advance of the beginning of a clinical course.

Finding a preceptor may occur in several ways:

- Talk to a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant that you know about the possibility of being a preceptor, at least 3 to 6 months before you plan to start your practicum course.
- Consult other students who have completed clinical rotations in the program and in programs in your area.
- Contact and participate in the advanced practice group in your area.
- Contact Schools/Colleges of Nursing Faculty in your state/Faith-based clinics/Community Health Clinics/Department of Corrections.
- Lists of sites with clinical education agreements in place cannot be given to students. The Clinical Practicum Coordinator can be contacted for assistance.
- Denver Health may restrict students, even employees, and only allow students from select Universities to use their clinics.
- Students seeking preceptors within many of the area Health Care systems may contact a preceptor**. Some sites require you to use My Clinical Exchange (mCE).** When Shannon Clark, Academic Services Professional for Graduate Nursing, processes your site sheet, she will determine if mCE is required and will submit a request for the rotation in mCE. Shannon will send you an email letting you know your site sheet has been processed and will notify you in the email that you need to register for a mCE account. The email will provide information about how to register for and pay for a My Clinical Exchange account.

Restrictions

- Students may not use family (by blood or marriage) or close friends as preceptors**.**
- Students may not do clinical hours where they or a family member works.
- Students **may be allowed** to complete clinical hours at their place of employment if it is at a different location or floor/unit with the approval of the Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator.
- Students may not do more than **330 hours** with the same preceptor or the same site to offer a variety of experiences.

State Residency and Admitted students

You have been admitted to the UCCS program as a resident of the state in which you

resided at the time of your application. If you plan to move to a different state while in the program, or do any practicum hours or online coursework in a different state, it is your responsibility to check the list of approved states for the UCCS program to be sure you can continue in the Program in a different state. **Residency is defined as physical location.**

Temporarily Going Out of Home State to Complete Hours

If you plan to do clinical hours in a different state from your permanent residence, you must contact the Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator, Denise Ostovich for approval. Students may only do hours in states listed on the College website. If the state is a compact state, you must hold a multi-state license. If the state is not a compact state, you must hold an active RN nursing license in that state where you plan to do clinical hours.
Permission to begin hours

- **Student MAY NOT begin clinical hours at a site until the contract with the agency is signed AND the preceptor letter is signed and returned. THESE ARE LEGAL DOCUMENTS**
- Any clinical hours done without these two documents completed and returned to the Graduate Nursing office will **NOT** be counted in your required number of clinical hours.
- Shannon Clark, the Academic Services Professional for Graduate Nursing, manages these documents and will notify students by email that the student is **"good to go"**.
- It is imperative that students read and follow instructions in emails from Shannon Clark regarding clinical hours.

Section B: Clinical Education Agreement/Clinical Site Sheet

- A fully executed Affiliation Agreement (legal contract) and a signed preceptor agreement letter for every health care agency are required for each student rotation.
- Affiliation Agreements and preceptor letters are legal documents produced and tracked by the Nursing Department. These documents are generated by the Graduate Nursing Department after a completed clinical site sheet is received by Shannon Clark, Academic Services Professional for Graduate Nursing.
- At times, there may be legal issues that need to be resolved before an Affiliation Agreement can be signed by UCCS and the health care agency. This may slow down the process of completing the Affiliation Agreement.
- **It takes 6 to 8 weeks or longer for the legal review process** to establish a new Affiliation Agreement if legal issues are involved. Occasionally, the legal issues cannot be resolved, and the site cannot be used by the student.

No more than three (3) new Affiliation Agreements are allowed to be submitted for clinical rotation sites per semester with the exception of NURS6980, Synthesis. In the event of extenuating circumstances, for example, a preceptor is unable to fulfill clinical hours, the graduate nursing student may submit a written explanation for review to the Option Coordinator, Academic Services Professional Graduate Nursing – Shannon Clark, and Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator – Denise Ostovich.

1. **You should review the Site Sheet Information Module in the Graduate Practicum Resource Course found in Canvas prior to submitting your first site sheet.**

2. It is important to get the complete and correct information requested to Shannon Clark, Academic Services Professional for Graduate Nursing, sclark6@uccs.edu, earlier than the semester before your practicum experience starts, whenever possible. **Once you have contacted a potential preceptor and she/he has agreed to be your preceptor:**
    a. **Complete the Clinical Site Sheet** that was sent at the beginning of the semester. These forms sometimes change so it is imperative to use the one that was sent at the beginning of the semester.
    b. The Clinical site Sheet is **completed by the student** and does not need to be signed by the preceptor or office manager of the site.
    c. A Clinical Site Sheet is required for **each** site and **each** preceptor and includes the exact number of hours to be done at the site. Ranges of hours will not be approved. This **must be done** every semester for **each clinical site even if the same site is being used again**. If multiple preceptors are used at the same site, the number of hours with each preceptor needs to be included.
    d. Forms need to be completed with correct information in every area. They must be <u>typed and attached as a Word document</u>.
    e. Forms with incorrect or incomplete information will be returned to the student for the correction of errors thus delaying the process of getting the clinical experience set up.
    f. Completed Clinical Site Sheets should be submitted to Shannon Clark at sclark6@uccs.edu.
    g. Any questions regarding clinical agreements should be directed to Shannon Clark.
    h. Questions regarding the suitability of sites should be directed to the Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator.
3. **Important information regarding Affiliation Agreements:**
    a. The Clinical Site Sheet is used to create an Affiliation Agreement if needed and must be fully executed before the Practicum Education can start.
    b. The student may **<u>not</u>** begin any clinical hours until the Affiliation Agreement and the signed preceptor letter are returned to Shannon Clark.

c. The student will be notified by Shannon Clark by email when the Affiliation Agreement process has been initiated and again when it is completed.
d. Students are notified by Shannon Clark by email when clinical hours can be started.
e. Students **cannot** do clinical hours prior to the start of the semester nor during time between semesters due to professional liability and Workers' Compensation requirements.
f. Students may only do clinical hours when registered for a course during fall, spring or summer semesters.
g. Students are responsible for verifying their start status with their site before beginning any clinical hours.
h. **Any clinical hours done without the proper signed preceptor letter, site clearance, and compliance items posted will not count as part of the required hours for the course.** Also, any clinical hours greater than 16 hours done with a preceptor other than the preceptor listed on the processed clinical site sheet will not count for the required hours if no clinical site sheet for that preceptor has been submitted. Students may **NOT** do any clinical hours **while** paperwork is being processed.

Section D. Documentation of Clinical Experiences

a. Students are expected to keep a log of clinical activity. The intent of the log is to have a record of the types of patients, ages of patients, and certain codes specific to that day's visit.
b. Medatrax is the electronic tracking system that is used by the College for a clinical log. Information about signing up for Medatrax is provided to students prior to starting health assessment NURS 6730 or their first clinical class.
c. Student must log **all** patients using the patient icon in Medatrax. Failure to correctly enter the Medatrax system will necessitate an incomplete grade in a course until the information is entered.
d. Based on which clinical course the student is in, the following **minimum** number of patient encounters is expected as a **guideline:**
    1. First clinical course **75 patients** for the semester
    2. Second clinical course **90 patients** for the semester
    3. Third clinical course **125 patient** for the semester
    4. Synthesis practicum the **equivalent of 2 patients/hour**
e. Students will log their clinical hours within Medatrax, documenting diagnosis codes (ICD-10), CPT procedure codes, and E/M billing codes.
f. Samples of the necessary documentation are shown in the Medatrax power point sent to students prior to their first clinical course and in the Canvas course Graduate Practicum Resources.
g. Demographic information will be requested by the system.

h. Reports can be prepared by Medatrax summarizing the information added in the data drop-down. This report can be used to verify hours when applying to certification boards.
i. In addition to the clinical log, Medatrax is used to complete all evaluations by the student, preceptors, and site visitors.

ARTICLE IV: CLINICAL PRACTICUM EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated by several different individuals during their clinical practicum rotations.

- Preceptors will be evaluating the students' performance and progress.
- Site visitors who are University Faculty will also help to assess how the student is progressing in their knowledge, experience, critical thinking, and clinical management.
- The grade for the clinical practicum is based on these evaluations and on other assignments related to the role of the APRN by the Faculty. (See Appendix A).
- Students **not performing at the expected level** of competence, based on which clinical rotation or not meeting the clinical expectations of the course, will fail the course, and it will need to be repeated. Repeating the course also includes repeating the clinical hours. If this failure is the second failure for the student, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Section A: Medatrax

- All evaluations will be completed through the Medatrax system.
- Students are responsible for forwarding preceptor evaluations in Medatrax each semester. Students may contact the Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator, Denise Ostovich at mostovic@uccs.edu (719) 255-4473 for questions regarding this or any Medatrax-related issues.

Section B: Preceptor Evaluations

- Preceptors who have been with a student for more than 24 clinical hours will be asked to fill out an evaluation form evaluating the student at the end of the rotation. This evaluation will be factored into the student's final grade.
- Preceptors may be contacted by the Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator at any time to discuss a student's performance.
- Telephone calls or email contact will be made with preceptors who are working with students in practicum experiences.
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all clinical/practicum paperwork, including the preceptor/site evaluation by the student, student self-evaluation, and clinical logs, patient logs using the patient icon in Medatrax is completed by

the dates listed in the syllabus for each clinical course. Students are sent updates towards the end of each semester, documenting which evaluations are missing.
- Students may contact Denise Ostovich, Graduate Clinical Practicum Coordinator at mostovic@uccs.edu at any time to discuss the evaluation process.

Section C: Site Visitor Evaluation

- Site visitors complete an evaluation on the student when a site visit (either on-site or by phone) is made. This evaluation is factored into the student's final grade.
- Students should expect one site visit each semester either in person or by phone.
- Students who have a Site Visitor or faculty member as their preceptor may or may not have a separate site visit.
- Phone calls or email contact will be made by the site visitor depending on the assignments.
- Additional site visits are at the discretion of the Option or Clinical Practicum Coordinator.

Section D. Students not completing required clinical hours

- Sometimes circumstances beyond the student's control prevent a student from completing clinical hours. In this circumstance, the student must notify the Lead Faculty and Denise Ostovich, explaining the circumstances that interfered with the completion of clinical hours, and request to take an incomplete.
- It is the student's responsibility to notify the Lead Faculty for the incomplete class and Denise Ostovich when the hours have been completed. Once Denise Ostovich has verified through Medatrax the hours have been met, she will notify the Lead Faculty for the incomplete to be changed to the earned grade in the class.
- After the hours have been completed and the grade has been changed, the transcript will show the earned letter grade and will also note that the course was originally graded as "I" (incomplete). This will remain on the original transcript and cannot be removed by the College.

Section E. Students not meeting the minimum requirements

- Occasionally, it is apparent that although a student is passing the didactic portion of their clinical class, the performance in the clinical area does not meet the requirements for the level of student performance or their clinical judgment is impaired as documented by the preceptor and/or site visitor evaluation.
- Since the clinical hours are imbedded in the clinical course the student would then fail the clinical course and need to repeat the clinical course and the clinical

hours. In turn, if a student is passing their clinical course, but failing the didactic portion, they must repeat the clinical course and clinical hours also.

ARTICLE V: GRADUATION NON DEGREE STUDENTS

Section A. Post Masters Students

- Only students that are obtaining a degree will be included in graduation ceremonies per University Policy. Post Masters certificate students will receive a certificate printed on diploma-quality paper after the completion of the program.

APPENDIX A

Preceptor Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Student

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Preceptor Name/Discipline (MD/DO/PA/NP): _____

Clinical Site: _____

Rating Scale

1 = Needs significant improvement: below expected level (Performance is inconsistent, unsafe, incomplete, or requires continuous prompting)
2 = Developing: needs guidance often (Performs tasks with guidance; beginning to integrate knowledge, skills, and judgment)
3 = Competent: occasional guidance (Performs safely and effectively with minimal prompting; demonstrates consistent progress)
4 = Advanced: functions at or near independent level (Performs independently, synthesizes information, anticipates needs, and demonstrates high-level competency for their level
N/O = Not Observed

1. CLINICAL SKILLS & MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

Competency	1	2	3	4	N/O
Obtains accurate, relevant patient history	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Performs focused/comprehensive physical exam correctly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Selects appropriate diagnostic tests	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interprets labs/imaging appropriately	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develops appropriate differential diagnoses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates sound clinical judgment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

_____

2. PATIENT MANAGEMENT

Competency	1	2	3	4	N/O
Develops appropriate treatment plans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uses evidence-based guidelines	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prescribes medications safely	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Recommends appropriate non-drug therapies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adjusts treatment plan based on response/results	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recognizes when to seek help or refer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

_____

3. COMMUNICATION & PATIENT INTERACTION

Competency	1	2	3	4	N/O
Communicates clearly using plain language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uses open-ended questions and listens effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Explains diagnoses and treatment plans understandably	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Engages patients in shared decision-making	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shows empathy and professionalism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

_____

4. TEAMWORK & WORKFLOW

Competency	1	2	3	4	N/O
Works effectively with healthcare team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Communicates patient cases clearly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accepts feedback and applies it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Manages time and patient flow appropriately	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

_____

5. PROFESSIONALISM

Competency	1	2	3	4	N/O
Arrives prepared and on time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maintains patient confidentiality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Practices within level of training	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates respect for patients and team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shows awareness of cultural/social factors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

_____

6. OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Overall Rating: ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐N/O

Strengths:

_____

Areas for Improvement:

_____

Preceptor Signature: _____