Doctor of Nursing Practice
Clinical Guidelines
Under the guidance of the faculty advisor, the project advisory team (PAT) and designated mentor, the student will develop and implement a specific outline of clinical experience concerning an area of interest. The outline will identify specific opportunities for meaningful engagement with experts from nursing, as well as other disciplines. The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) scholarly project is a process to address a clinically relevant problem in nursing. This requires competence in knowledge development activities such as the translation of research into practice, the evaluation of practice, activities aimed at improving the reliability of healthcare practice and outcomes, and participation in collaborative research (DePalma & McGuire, 2005).

Clinical experiences are guided by the DNP competencies (AACN, 2006), student learning outcomes, and the individual course objectives. Emphasis should be placed on the application and synthesis of new learning while building upon previous knowledge. The clinical experiences can include a wide variety of sites where the DNP student achieves additional competencies for the practice doctorate.

The line between current employment and clinical scholarship hours and project must remain clear to the organization, the mentor, the DNP Project Advisory Team and the DNP student. The DNP student must be able to demonstrate the achievement of the DNP competencies and student learning outcomes, regardless of whether they are in their current place of employment or a different clinical setting. Mentor(s) will work to facilitate these achievements.

Students should follow the AACN Essentials for “Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice” for all scholarly projects and related clinical activities. In addition, alignment of the DNP Scholarly Project and clinical activities with domain(s) of Boyer’s Scholarship Model ensures the student’s ability to identify elements of scholarly development and progression (Boyer, 1990).

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Integrate scientific knowledge to influence health policy and decision-making through leadership, collaboration, and interprofessional action at the organizational, local, regional, national, and global levels.
2. Develop and evaluate care delivery approaches that meet current and future needs of patient populations based on scientific findings in nursing and other clinical sciences, as well as organizational, political, and economic sciences.
3. Use analytic methods to critically appraise existing literature and other evidence to determine and implement the best evidence for clinical practice.
4. Design, select, use, and evaluate programs that evaluate and monitor outcomes of care, care systems, and quality improvement including consumer use of health care information systems.
5. Advocate for social justice, equity, and ethical policies within all healthcare arenas.
6. Employ effective communication and collaborative skills in the development and implementation of practice models, peer review, practice guidelines, health policy, standards of care, and/or other scholarly products.

7. Synthesize concepts related to clinical prevention and population health in developing, implementing, and evaluating interventions to address health promotion/disease prevention efforts, in care of individuals, aggregates, or populations.

8. Demonstrate independent advanced practice clinical judgment, systems thinking, and accountability in designing, delivering, and evaluating evidence-based care to improve patient outcomes.

**Hours:**

a. Indiana State University requires 1000 post-baccalaureate hours of clinical experience for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree;

b. Supervised clinical hours, completed in a Master of Science program or Post-Master’s Certificate program, may be applied toward the 1000-hour requirement. A maximum of 500 post-baccalaureate clinical hours may be applied. Students must have completed the verification of post-baccalaureate hours form in order for these hours to be applied. Students who have not completed 500 post-baccalaureate hours will be required to complete additional clinical hours in the APN 890 variable credit course prior to starting the APN 891 course. This allows students to reach the final 1,000 practice hours to be awarded a DNP from ISU.

c. The number of hours to be applied from prior degree programs, certificate programs, and/or advanced certifications will be jointly determined by the departmental admissions committee (comprised of nursing faculty) and the Program Director.

d. Documentation of post-baccalaureate hours (see form) and advanced certification(s) should be sent to the APN Department as part of the final application packet. This document is linked from the application worksheet on the DNP website; and,

e. It is required that each student will do a minimum of 500 clinical hours

f. Table 1, provides some practical guidance on clinical.

**Activities:**

a. Early in the program, students will discuss their ideas/plans for clinical with their academic advisor, project chair, mentor, and/or course instructor;

b. Identified activities should be experiences that will contribute to the student’s career and are beyond/different from normal everyday compensated work activities;

c. Documented hours completed for the student’s project may be included as clinical hours, as long as they are new experiences for the student, are well documented, linked to one or more of the end-of-program student learning outcomes, mentored, and deemed appropriate by the advisor/course instructor;

d. The student, with the help of their advisor/project chair/ course instructor, will identify an appropriate mentor;
e. Mentors should be doctorally prepared, or master’s prepared, advanced practice nurses or experts in the student’s area of interest. Students and mentors will complete the mentor agreement and send this along with a CV to the advisor or program director. The project chair or program director will determine that the mentor has the necessary qualifications and, if so, will approve their mentor status;

f. The student will complete an outline of clinical experiences, in collaboration with the mentor and advisor, prior to logging any clinical hours. The outline is a dynamic document that will be altered to ensure that the student’s needs are met each semester. The outline will evolve over the course of the program based upon evaluations and feedback from the mentor and project chair;

g. Objectives, as well as the means of achieving the goals, will be developed with the mentor and approved by the project chair;

h. Accomplishment of goals and clinical hours will be documented in the Medatrax clinical documentation system and will approved by the lead course faculty or PAT chair at the completion of each semester. Only hours documented in the Medatrax system will be counted toward program hours.

j. All assignments for the DNP scholarly project course series must be met to progress in the program.

**Mentors:**

a. Ideally, mentors should be doctorally prepared and/or have evidence of expertise in the area. Mentors without a terminal degree will be considered if the student is able to provide documentation confirming that the mentor is an expert in the student’s area of interest. Exceptions to this should be discussed with the advisor and/or the program director.

**Table 1. Guidance for clinical hours.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Clinical Might Be</th>
<th>What Clinical Is NOT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testimony related to regional, state or national policy</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring in a new leadership role</td>
<td>Writing scholarly project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Face-to-face collaboration/data gathering r/t scholarly project</td>
<td>Paid activities that are not pre-approved by your instructor/advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of business plan</td>
<td>Data entry &amp; analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing theory into practice</td>
<td>Routine work hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action research/Progressive Problem Solving/SWOT analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality improvement project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff development activities/project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership/development of an interdisciplinary team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development in a new or expanded advanced practice role</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of strategies for translating clinical practice through education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site exploration/stakeholder engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteering in a new capacity or expanded role for a partner organization</td>
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Participation in Clinical: Student Guidelines

Affiliation Agreements

Some mentors/clinics/affiliations may require a contract with ISU (ISU does not require anything other than the agreement found in this packet). PLEASE do not confuse the mentor agreement with a contract or affiliation agreement. These are 2 very different things. The agreement is found in the mentor packet and is all that ISU requires. However, your mentor’s facility may require a contract/affiliation agreement with ISU and is considered a legal document. If your mentor’s facility states they require a contract, follow the process at http://www.indstate.edu/health/department/son/clinical-agencies. First, see if ISU already has a contract in place with the organization at: http://www2.indstate.edu/nhhs-contracts/agencylist.asp If they already have an affiliation agreement in place, you just need the mentor agreement. If they do not have a current contract in place, you need to initiate the contract/affiliation agreement (the link to “Initiate New Contract” is on the same page as the agency search listing).

Please let faculty know you are initiating a contract. Sometimes it is advantageous for faculty to review the mentor agreement prior to initiating the contract to ensure the site and preceptor are appropriate. Discuss this with faculty to avoid a possible waste of time for all parties involved. The contract process can take up to 3-4 MONTHS depending on the agency, so be sure that you plan accordingly if the site requires a contract. Also, once the contract is approved you must still send in the mentor agreement (the final 3 pages of the packet) to your instructor for approval. You cannot start in the clinical setting until this approval is received from your instructor (approval from Mark Schaffer for the contract is not accepted as mentor approval).

Health Requirements:

During enrollment in the Department of Advanced Practice Nursing, College of Health and Human Services at Indiana State University, students are expected to demonstrate appropriate health practices by regular health care and personal health behavior.

If you have a health condition or you are pregnant or have been hospitalized you must be of sound health to return to the healthcare setting.

HIPAA Statement

The ISU School of Nursing complies with all federal and state laws related to the confidentiality of patient medical information including the Privacy Regulations issued pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. Students are required to comply with such laws and the medical record confidentiality policies and procedures of any health care facility they are assigned.
**Name Tags**

All students must wear a name tag identifying themselves as an ISU student during any on-site clinical time. Name tags are ordered in advance of entering the clinical setting. Students should identify themselves as a graduate DNP student when speaking to the vendor.

[http://thetrophyshopterrehaute.com](http://thetrophyshopterrehaute.com)

**Clinical Hours**

Documentation of your clinical hours will take place in the Medatrax clinical documentation system. Falsification of clinical hours may result in dismissal from the DNP program and/or Indiana State University in congruence with the ISU Student Academic Integrity Code. The most important part of this log secondary only to tracking the hours is linking each experience to one or more of the eight program outcomes. *In the fall of 2016 students initiating the DNP Scholarly Project series (APN 891-APN 895) will be tracking clinical hours in the Medatrax clinical documentation platform. Individualized web-based training will be provided to students. Only hours logged in Medatrax count towards semester and program hour attainment.*
References


