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. (Hours earned in a nursing education program will not be credited toward the 1,000 practice hour threshold).

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 in the program as part of the DNP scholarly project series.

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; School of Nursing faculty members are allowed to serve as mentors during the first semester of the program as students determine their area of focus for their project an identify a mentor with subject matter expertise.

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 if 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 be 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 towards program hours. Students will utilize the Medatrax evaluation system each semester to evaluate their mentors. Students must also be evaluated by their mentor and have hours verified by their mentor to earn credit for each term.

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

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>
</tr>
<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

Mentors:

a. Ideally, mentors should be doctorally prepared and/or have evidence of expertise in the area of project focus. 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.

b. Mentors are critical to the student learning experience and must be treated with the utmost care and respect. Students exhibiting conduct that to the contrary will face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

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://www.indstate.edu/health/nursing-name-pin-order-form-distance-education-students

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.
References

