This course supports the assessments for the Nursing Clinical Practicum, in conjunction with Professional Nursing Role Transitions Course covers 5 competencies and represents 4 competency units.

**Introduction**

The Clinical Practicum is integrated with the didactic Nursing Role Transitions Course.

Before graduating, nursing students need to experience clinical as an independent member of the nursing team who manages a standard patient load. Working under the supervision of a preceptor, the student will have an opportunity to test critical thinking and organizational skills in caring for a group of patients. This is an exciting and challenging time for the student who is about to graduate.

Once you have completed the requirements to attend the practicum, and have received approval from the course instructor, you are ready to engage in the clinical practicum for this course. The Clinical Placement Scheduler will notify you of your clinical placement, and the course instructor will issue approval to begin the practicum, based on your completion of the requirements. Once in the practicum, you are expected to adhere to professional standards in clinical practice. Please refer to the Student Handbook and the Nursing Role Transitions Course for more information.

**Competencies**

This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 5 competencies:

- **Competency 726.10.1: Optimal Care Environment**  
  The graduate integrates delineated knowledge and skills to coordinate and advocate a respectful interdisciplinary environment that promotes optimal well-being.

- **Competency 726.10.2: Manager of the Healing Environment**  
  The graduate responds with appropriate flexibility and creativity to the type of unpredictable situations and events common in the healthcare environment.

- **Competency 726.10.3: The Nurse as Scientist**  
  The graduate correctly interprets and applies scientific evidence when planning and providing safe, quality and culturally sensitive care for patients and families.

- **Competency 726.10.4: The Nurse as Detective**  
  The graduate demonstrates clinical imagination and professional insight to detect subtle changes and deviations from expected health patterns when managing a beginning practitioner’s workload with minimal supervision.

- **Competency 726.10.5: Transition to Professional Practice**  
  The graduate synthesizes the requisite knowledge and skills necessary to function as a novice baccalaureate prepared nurse.

**Nursing Dispositions Statement**

Please review the [Statement of Nursing Dispositions](#).
Course Instructor Assistance
As you prepare to demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that course instructors stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts, mentors enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. Course instructors are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you.

Successful students report that working with a course instructor is the key to their success. Course instructors are able to share tips on approaches, tools, and skills that can help you apply the content you're studying. They also provide guidance in assessment preparation strategies and troubleshoot areas of deficiency. Even if things don't work out on your first try, course instructors act as a support system to guide you through the revision process. You should expect to work with course instructors for the duration of your coursework, and you are encouraged to contact them as soon as you begin. Course instructors are fully committed to your success!

Preparing for Success

The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

Learning Resources
The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course. For many resources, WGU has provided automatic access through the course. However, you may need to manually enroll in or independently acquire other resources. Read the full instructions provided to ensure that you have access to all of your resources in a timely manner.

Unbound Medicine’s Nursing Central

Unbound Medicine’s Nursing Central is a multi-dimensional application that puts essential nursing tools conveniently at your fingertips. The application includes current evidence-based resources that are used by healthcare professionals throughout the field. Use the resources to look up diseases, drugs, lab tests, procedures, or vocabulary in the lab or clinical setting for just-in-time learning to aid your patient care. Illustrations and videos are also available.

The application can also guide your studies and practice. Do you have topics that require a little more time and attention? Use Grasp to create your own flashcard deck or access decks shared by other learners.

You will also have access to the following content:

- *Davis’s Drug Guide*
- *Taber’s Medical Dictionary*
- *Davis’s Lab and Diagnostic Tests*
- *Diseases and Disorders*
- *MEDLINE journal database*
A variety of calculators, including ones for medication dosing and IV drip rates

A link to the web-based application is provided below. It is also available for download to a mobile device.

- **Unbound Medicine’s Nursing Central**

### Accessing and Using Pass-Port

You will need to access the portfolio software, Pass-Port, used in this course and many other courses. You will use this software to create a clinical journal and to receive feedback while attending clinical.

- **Accessing PASS-PORT**
- **Creating a Clinical Field Experience Form**
- **How to Use Your Clinical Experience Form**

### Nursing Standards

You will be able to access Nursing Professional Standards as they apply to your program through the WGU Library. Please access the documents at the following website:

- **Nursing Standards E-Reserves**

### Nursing Clinical Practicum

The topics and activities below will help you prepare for and complete your clinical practicum.

#### Weeks 1-4: Nursing Clinical Practicum Preparation

The following activities should be completed in the first few weeks of this course.

### Orientation

The Clinical Placement Scheduler will give you your preceptor’s name and contact information.

If you have not previously attended clinical at the assigned facility, you must complete the organization’s orientation requirements. Contact the National Clinical Faculty Coordinator (Jessica Harper, jessica.harper@wgu.edu) to obtain information about orientation requirements.

All American Databank information must be up-to-date at least two weeks before the practicum begins. This includes immunizations, TB tests and CPR. If any of these are outdated, you will not be allowed to begin your clinical practicum.

Refer to the [Course Progression Policy](#) for Prelicensure Nursing to ensure that you are qualified to progress to clinical.

### Before the Practicum Begins

### Instructions and Guidelines

Your clinical practicum will be quite demanding; over a course of five weeks you will participate...
in at least 180 hours of clinical time with your preceptor. The clinical practicum typically begins the 6th week of this course and is typically completed by the end of the 10th week. By the end of this practicum, you will be expected to safely care for your preceptor’s entire patient assignment with minimal assistance from the preceptor.

What you need to do:

Access Guidelines (You are responsible for knowing this content thoroughly)

- Read all 7 pages of the guidelines.
- Understand the role of the preceptor.
- Understand your role and responsibilities.
- Review the practicum timeline.
- Review the Key Behaviors.
  For course specific key behaviors contact your mentor.

Skills and Knowledge

- Review skills, especially skills that you have not performed in a while or do not yet feel comfortable performing.
- Review pathophysiology, pharmacology, diagnostic and laboratory test results, nursing interventions.

Logistics

- Pass-Port
- Create a clinical journal
- Request a recommendation from your Clinical Instructor. Confirm the date and shift you will begin your practicum.
- Be sure that you know how to get to the facility, where to park, how to reach your assigned unit.
- If you have never been placed at the clinical facility before, you must meet the orientation requirements of the organization. Please contact the National Clinical Faculty Coordinator (Jessica Harper, jessica.harper@wgu.edu) if you have not received orientation instructions/materials yet.
- Make certain to bring all necessary equipment and identification.

Download Unbound Medicine’s (Nursing Central /Nursing Pocket Guide) to your smart device to use as a resource during your clinical rotation.

Weeks 4-5: Nursing Clinical Practicum Assignment
The following activities should be completed in weeks 4 and 5 of this course.

When You Receive Your Practicum Assignment

Once you receive your preceptor’s name and contact information, you are responsible for contacting your preceptor to obtain his/her schedule and to set up your clinical time. You must
schedule 180 hours of clinical time over the course of five weeks. You cannot work more than 3 shifts in a row, and cannot be with your preceptor in a “Charge Nurse” role more than once. Your practicum typically takes place in weeks 6–10 of this course. Often preceptors do not have schedules for the full five weeks in advance; you may submit an initial schedule and then subsequent dates as they come available. However, clinical dates MUST be submitted prior to attending the practicum.

Submit a copy of your clinical schedule to:

- Your Clinical Instructor
- The Course Instructor
- Health Scheduling: healthscheduling@wgu.edu

**Weeks 6-10: Nursing Clinical Practicum**

The following activities should be completed during weeks 6 through 10 of this course.

**On the First Practicum Day**

Collect the Data Form - Orientation Affirmation from your preceptor and submit it to:

- Health Scheduling: healthscheduling@wgu.edu

Review the Role Transitions Pre-Practicum Self-Evaluation Form with your preceptor.

**Expectations During the Practicum**

Plan to meet with your preceptor and Clinical Instructor either in person or over the phone prior to the first day of clinical.

- Discuss your expectations for clinical and your preceptor’s and Clinical Instructor’s expectations for you.
- Discuss your strengths and weaknesses.
- Ask for any specific directions that can help you prepare for the first day.
- Gradually increase your patient assignment; by the end of this practicum, you should be able to safely care for your preceptor’s entire patient assignment with minimal assistance from the preceptor.

**Time Management**

In anticipating your practicum, you have likely thought about, maybe even worried about, a lot of things: your skills, giving report, charting, avoiding medication errors, recognizing subtle changes in your patients, and making a serious mistake. There is so much to think about that you probably haven’t even considered time management. When all is said and done though, managing your time will be key to your success because everything listed above takes time and needs the right amount of time (enough time to provide quality and safety but not so much time that it prevents you from meeting the overall needs of your patients).

Dee Adkins, MSN, has put together an excellent video on time management called Time Management in Nursing. She has also provided helpful attachments and a PowerPoint
presentation.

- Assessment Sheet
- Blank Organizing Sheet
- Clinical Planner
- Clinical Planner 2
- Sample Shift Schedule
- Sample Organizing Sheet
- Sample Report Sheet

**Weekly Journaling and Post-Conference**

As in your previous clinical courses, you will need to maintain a reflective journal in Passport. Instead of doing a daily entry, you will do a weekly entry due within 24 hours of completing your third shift of the week.

You will also do a weekly Post-Conference posting in the Learning Community. This is also due at the end of the week or after completing three shifts. In the final week, include a discussion of the areas you need to focus on the most as you begin you nursing career.

- Read [instructions regarding your Reflective Journal and your Post-Conference posting](#).
- Download and review the Key Behaviors document.
- Complete a weekly reflective journal entry in Passport (due within 24 hours at the completion of the 3rd shift for each week).
- Complete a weekly Post-Conference posting in the [PreLicensure Community](#) at the end of each week (or after 3 shifts) following attached instructions.

**Weeks 11-12: Post Nursing Clinical Practicum**

The following activities should be completed during weeks 11 and 12 of this course.

**After Completing the Practicum**

After all practicum hours are complete, the student submits the [Verification of Completed Practicum Hours](#) to healthscheduling@wgu.edu.