



School of Nursing
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

PhD Clinical Research (N819) and Policy (N847) Practicums

Goals of the Practicum

The goals of the practicum are to provide a policy or clinical research field experience that corresponds to the student's chosen health problem, phenomenon, or population of interest, and that prepares the student to conduct research that is mindful of knowledge gained in the field. Students completing a field practicum will gain skills in making their research policy-relevant or using their research to shape policies that influence health. Specific course descriptions and objectives are available in the N819 and N847 syllabi (available from Carol Aspinwall).

N819 Clinical Field Practicum – Research in Health Care Settings

Students completing a clinical research field practicum will prepare to conduct clinical research in the setting by establishing relationships with clinical collaborators, learning about the research oversight committees in the setting (e.g., Protocol Review and Monitoring Committee, ICTR Scientific Review Committee), obtaining support of key stakeholders, identifying potential barriers to research in the setting, and / or gaining indepth "real world" understanding of the problem, phenomenon, or population of interest.

N847 Health Policy Practicum

Students completing a policy practicum will prepare to conduct policy-relevant research by working with a service agency that focuses on a health problem, phenomenon, or population of interest, exploring how current health policy affects the work of the agency, identifying how the agency uses and communicates research findings to influence policy, and obtaining critical feedback about proposed research questions and methods to assure they facilitate health policy-making.

Arranging Your Practicum

In consultation with the faculty advisor, identify and discuss:

- Your clinical or policy research interests
- An agency, organization or group appropriate to work with
- A list of resources that may be needed from clinical / agency staff or administrators
- Potential "deliverables" that the student could leave with leaders at the site when the practicum is over (e.g., an annotated bibliography, a draft of legislation)

Consult with the Academic Programs *Clinical Research Coordinator* (Becky Bertram, MSN, RN) to see if there is an established point of contact for student experiences at the proposed site / agency, and to determine if a contract with the site is necessary. Together with your faculty advisor, establish a strategy for contact and working with the agency, organization, or site. Register for the practicum course and meet with the N819 or N847 course professor to obtain approval of plans prior to the first week of the semester.

If your practicum is taking place in a clinical setting or organization that delivers health care:

The following information needs to be forwarded to Academic Affairs Clinical Resources Coordinator by July 1 for fall enrollment.

- Name of the organization including correct address
- Names of the key individuals with whom the student will be working
- Phone number of those individuals
- Email addresses of those individuals
- Name of individual that handles contracts at the organization
- Email address and phone number of that individual

IMPORTANT NOTE: Due to variability in clinical site requirements for students, planning should begin early (e.g., 6 months prior to the practicum). Some organizations have strict requirements for students having educational or research experiences in their setting. For example, even for shadowing, the VA facilities require the full intake procedure be completed on each student prior to being allowed on the unit or within the facility. This includes finger printing, completing a wide collection of forms, etc. and it takes between four and six weeks to complete and gain clearance. So, the earlier the Academic Programs Clinical Resources Coordinator knows where the student will be completing hours for the practicum, the less chance that the student will be delayed in starting the practicum.