

Practicum FAQ

1. What is the practicum?

The practicum gives you the opportunity to get “hands on” experience where you get a chance to put your clinical knowledge and skills to work in health information technology or healthcare coding under supervision of a qualified professional. Think of it as on the job training. Instead of just having in class activities you will report to a medical office, hospital, or clinic. It is another step toward your path to graduation, and the experience you gain will help you prepare for certification. The practicum is an extension of your education.

2. How many hours do we have to fulfill?

You are required to fulfill 90 hours if you are enrolling in the Health Information Technology Practicum and 45 hours if you are enrolling in the Healthcare Coding Practicum. This can be accomplished by working one or two days a week during the quarter in which you are enrolled in the practicum.

3. What is the timeframe for the practicum?

The class and practicum, must begin at the beginning of the quarter in which you are enrolled and finish at the end of the quarter. There will be various assignments to be completed over the course of this time through D2L.

4. When should I start looking for a site?

It never hurts to start early. If you already know of some organizations that may be of interest to you, start talking to them about the possibility of hosting you as a practicum student

5. What paperwork do I need to complete?

Each student is expected to submit a Practicum Site Request Form and submit to the Allied Health Practicum Coordinator at least 1-2 quarters before you enroll in the practicum course. The Practicum site request forms must have your contact information, anticipated date of enrollment in the practicum course, and at least 3 sites along with their contact information where you are interested in completing your practicum.

6. What happens once I submit my Practicum Site Request Form?

The Allied Health Practicum Coordinator will contact the facilities about hosting a student and establish a contract with those facilities, and place students at those locations for their practicum. The Allied Health Coordinator will be in contact with the student as practicum placements for the student is being sought.

7. What if I have any concerns or special arrangements regarding my practicum?

You should speak with the Allied Health Practicum Coordinator as soon as possible regarding any concerns or special arrangements. Although the Coordinator will do her best to accommodate any special requests or accommodations we cannot guarantee that these accommodations will be available.

8. Will we get paid?

Student cannot accept any form of payment for their work at their practicum site. Although you do not receive monetary compensation for your practicum, it pays you in the sense that you are given the unique opportunity to learn from others in the healthcare field.

9. Can I do my practicum at my work place?

If you work at a healthcare setting you may ask your employer to host you as a practicum student, but you cannot fulfill your practicum hours during normal work hours.

10. Can a practicum site become a potential employer?

Your practicum site could potentially become an employer once your practicum is over. Don't be afraid to ask your supervisor if there are any opportunities once your practicum is over.

11. Can hours be done virtually?

If a student is having a difficult time finding a site and/or the site is unable to provide hours, with the approval of the Program Director and/or Allied Health Practicum Coordinator the student can participate in the virtual practicum.

12. Will I need to complete a background check?

If the facility request verification of a background check the student will be required to pay for and complete a background check before they are permitted to start their practicum at the facility.

13. Will I need a textbook for the course?

You will need a textbook(s) for the course. Please check the MBS website for specific titles and cost.