

## **PERIOPERATIVE IMMERSION**

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**Background Information:** Many educational institutions have decreased or omitted completely perioperative experiences for undergraduate nursing students. As a result, new nurses rarely consider the perioperative environment for their practice which contributes to clinical staff shortages in the preoperative, operative, and postoperative environments. As the workforce in this environment is aging, it is imperative that consideration of the perioperative environment as a nursing career be available to graduating nursing students. Providing an immersion experience in the perioperative environment for nursing students potentially provides opportunities for graduate nurses.

**Objectives of Project:** The purpose of this project is to evaluate the senior nursing student's readiness to practice after experiencing a perioperative clinical immersion internship. The objectives are twofold: provide students with opportunities to be immersed in the perioperative environment and support the seasoned nurses as preceptors in mentoring students.

**Process of Implementation:** Students may select the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) or Operating Room (OR) for their last nursing course (Internship). This course requires 192 clinical hours to be completed by the student with the preceptor which involves working closely together following the preceptor's work schedule. Prior to and upon completion of the internship, students complete a pre and post survey to evaluate critical thinking, competency, and socialization within the profession.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** The student meets the outcomes of the course as well as attains the competency, skills, critical thinking experience, and knowledge necessary for the novice nurse in the perioperative environment.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** With the impending nursing shortage, a need exists for the perioperative management to consider the new nurse as a possible employee. In addition, educational institutions should be cognizant of the need to support and increase student's exposure to the perioperative environment. A collaborative relationship between the perioperative management and nursing faculty could provide nursing students with an awareness of the environment for future practice.