Identification of the problem – Overview: Senior nursing students have not been provided with a practicum experience in the perioperative environment which led to a limited interest of the perioperative environment for employment. As the nursing 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.

EP Question/Purpose: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of senior nursing student completing a perioperative clinical immersion experience during their last nursing course, Internship in Professional Nursing.

Methods/Evidence: Purposive sampling was utilized for seven senior baccalaureate students who selected the perioperative environment, which included the operating room or post anesthesia care unit, for their internship course completing 192 clinical hours.

Quantitative measurement utilized The Casey-Fink Readiness for Practice Survey © as a pre- and post- survey tool. The students completed the Casey-Fink Readiness for Practice Survey before and after the internship experience.

Qualitative measurement utilized a 12 question interview survey designed to capture student’s perception of the perioperative clinical immersion. The interview was completed with each student upon completion of the internship experience.

Significance of Findings/Outcomes: Statistical analysis of the quantitative section of the Casey Fink Readiness for Practice Survey was completed with SPSS V 21. The tool’s final 25 Likert scale questions with the option of strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree were evaluated using descriptive analysis. Utilizing a p-value of < 0.05, chi square reflected no statistical difference between the pre- and post-survey responses.

The 12 interview questions were analyzed qualitatively. The data analysis resulted in recurring key words of anticipation, preparation, maintaining sterile fields, increased confidence, being considered part of the team, and making decisions. The words were evaluated further as attributes of critical thinking, competency, and socialization within the profession.

Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research: While a limitation of this study was the sample size, the qualitative analysis resulted in the student’s perception of growth and readiness for practice. With the current and impending nursing shortage the perioperative area, operating room and postanesthesia care unit, are not immune. Allowing senior baccalaureate students to complete a clinical immersion in the perioperative environment provides potential future employees.