



PURDUE UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing

Strengthening Clinical Partnerships

Amanda Ward DNP, RN CNE

Purpose

- Reframe clinical placement growth from chasing slots to investing in the people who make them possible.
- This presentation shares one school's journey in building the next steps with partners and not for them.

Program Evaluations

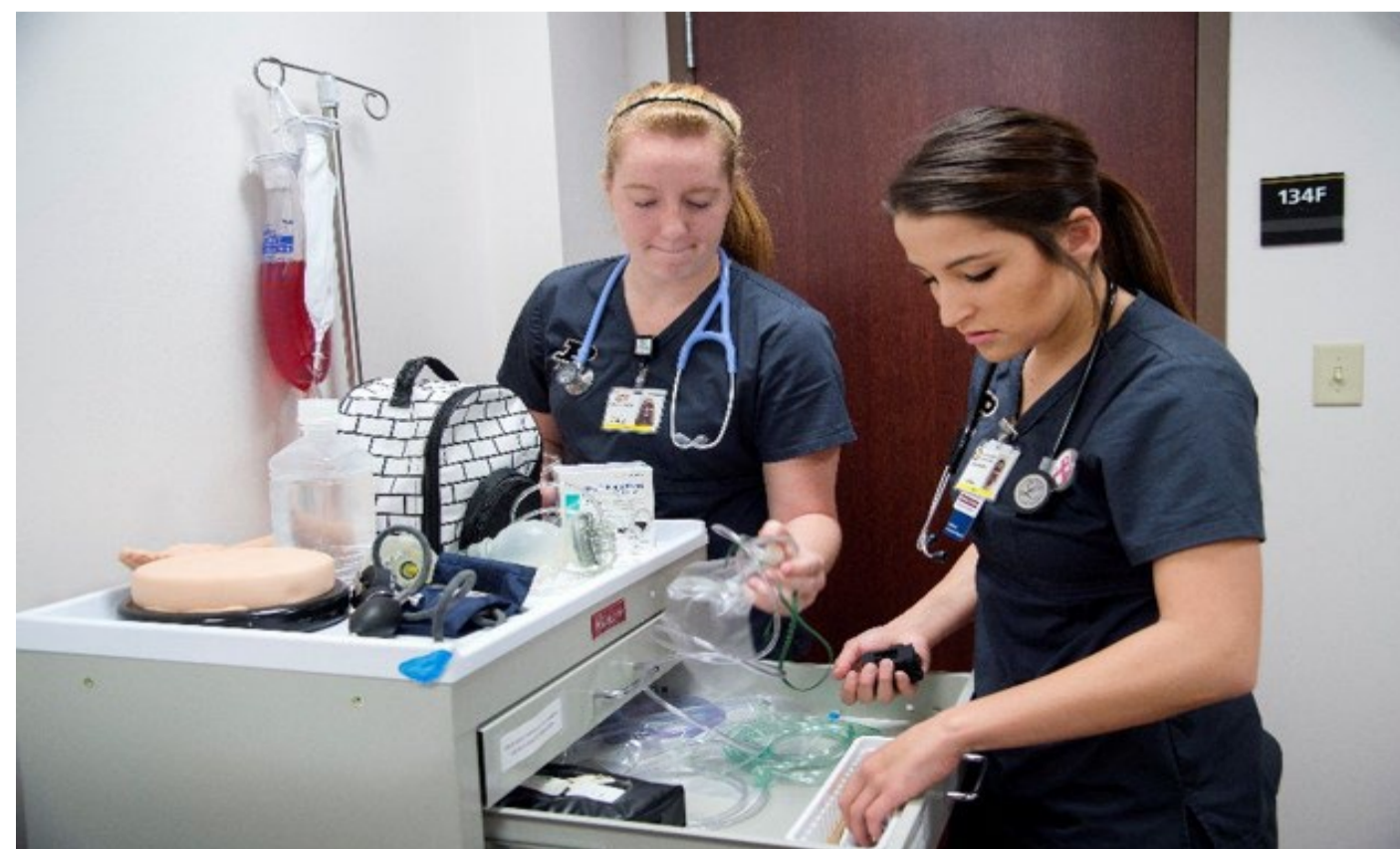
- Partner satisfaction trend over time.
- Preceptor CE attendance.
- Student-reported placement quality.
- Preceptor-reported student and faculty preparedness at start of rotation.
- Faculty-reported alignment between course content and clinical experience.
- Placement slots secured vs. enrollment forecast.
- Alumni reporting partner sites as employers of choice.

Recommendations

- Visit every partner. Site visits surface things no survey can and reset the relationship experience.
- Share student feedback. Closing the loop on what students experience shifts the partnership more than anything.
- Invest in preceptors and faculty in some way to treat them as professionals and not free labor.
- Document expectations. Faculty and student expectations turn placement quality from unwritten assumptions into shared standards.

Implementation Process

Forecast	Engage	Build	Sustain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a multi-year enrollment and placement forecast • Assessed capacity and utilization across existing practice partners • Identified regional opportunities for sustainable partnership growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 Clinical site visits completed with current practice partners. • Student feedback shared with practice partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardize faculty orientation expectations. • Establish shared student expectations across clinical sites. • Provide free CE for practice partners on supporting the new student nurse to practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate partnership outcomes and placement quality regularly. • Maintain ongoing communication and support with practice partners.



Background

Nursing programs are growing, but clinical placement capacity is not keeping pace.

Too often, academic–practice relationships become recurring scrambles for placement slots instead of sustained, strategic partnerships.

We started with our 19 existing practice partners and asked: *How do we strengthen and deepen the partnerships we already have before trying to expand further?*

Review of the Literature

Sustained academic-practice partnerships expand placement capacity.

Bidirectional feedback changes both placement quality and student readiness.

Forecast-driven planning reduces placement scramble cycles.

Visible faculty investment increases partner engagement and retention.

References:





Strengthening Clinical Partnerships

Amanda Ward, DNP, RN CNE

Biography

Amanda Ward, DNP, RN, CNE, is a Clinical Associate Professor at the Purdue University School of Nursing, where she serves as the Assistant Head of Undergraduate Academic Affairs. In this role, she provides leadership across curriculum oversight, faculty workload management, clinical placement coordination, and student success infrastructure for a growing BSN program preparing the next generation of nurses to enter Indiana's healthcare workforce. She oversees more than 46 clinical faculty and lecturers and is responsible for the academic operations supporting an enrollment trajectory expanding from approximately 630 to 844 students over three years.

With over 20 years of bedside experience in emergency nursing, Dr. Ward brings a wealth of clinical expertise and a deep commitment to nursing education. Her extensive background in emergency nursing uniquely informs her teaching, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world practice. As a Certified Nurse Educator, she is dedicated to preparing the next generation of nurses with the clinical reasoning, resilience, and leadership skills needed to thrive in high-acuity care environments.

Dr. Ward's leadership trajectory at Purdue reflects a steady commitment to advancing undergraduate nursing education. She joined the School of Nursing in 2017, stepped into a course coordinator role in 2019, was appointed Director of the Undergraduate Program in 2021, and assumed her current Assistant Head position in January 2024. Across these roles, she has led large-scale curriculum redesign efforts, developed governance and accountability frameworks for course quality, and built infrastructure for student success, including academic coaching, NCLEX readiness planning, and progression tracking systems designed to support students throughout the BSN program.

Her scholarship is grounded in the practice environment she knows best. Dr. Ward's current IRB-approved research focuses on emergency department safety, and her broader scholarly portfolio integrates student success programming, curriculum redesign, and the thoughtful integration of artificial intelligence into nursing education. She approaches each of these areas with an emphasis on systems-level thinking, evidence-based practice, and sustainable academic-practice partnerships.

Dr. Ward is passionate about leadership development in nursing and has honed her own leadership skills through participation in the AACN Access, Connection, and Engagement Leadership Institute. This experience continues to shape her approach to mentoring students and faculty, and to advancing undergraduate nursing education.

Contact Information



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