



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

PRECEPTOR HANDBOOK



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA

College of Health and Behavioral Sciences

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Thank you for agreeing to serve as a preceptor for students in the RN to BSN Program at Texas A&M University-Texarkana. This program would not be successful without your commitment to the education of nursing students. The students will benefit from your expertise and experience in your specialty area of nursing.

The faculty member responsible for each course will contact you to discuss the clinical experience and course objectives. At that time you will receive a Preceptor Handbook and faculty contact information.

The faculty look forward to working with you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING**

PRECEPTOR ORIENTATION

To achieve the aims of the BSN program, students require extended clinical experiences in surrounding communities in addition to theory components of the program. Students in the RN to BSN track select areas of clinical concentration or focus. Each practicum experience will vary according to the learning needs of students and the learning objectives set by the faculty.

Each faculty member will provide specific criteria for the experience students need with each agency. These criteria usually include the course objectives, the purposes and objectives of the preceptorship, time frames and criteria for supervision, assignments, feedback expected, and time frames and criteria for evaluation. Faculty will also provide office and home telephone numbers, on-going contract with students and preceptors, and evaluation consultations.

DESCRIPTION OF PRECEPTORSHIP

Preceptorship is a one-to-one relationship between an expert nurse and a nursing student in order that the student may learn the roles and responsibilities of clinical nursing in a particular area of practice. This learning occurs as nursing students practice alongside the expert nurse. Preceptors serve as role models for students. A role model allows students to see and experience what you, the expert, do on a daily basis while encouraging the student to ask questions. Preceptors challenge, guide, and direct.

Students benefit from an in-depth understanding of the role through exposure to everyday practice with its satisfactions and frustrations; increased ability to problem solve; and feelings of satisfaction resulting from professional nurturance. Preceptors benefit from the opportunity to share knowledge and facilitate the growth of an enthusiastic learner. Preceptors may find that the preceptor role brings status, recognition of expert practice, increased job satisfaction, increased learning, and advancement of their practice.

As a guide in this clinical practice setting, preceptors allow students to perform direct patient activities under their supervision. The preceptor and the student decide on the specific clinical experiences selected to meet learning objectives. This may involve caring for patients at different acuity levels, patients requiring specific monitoring interventions, or teaching of individuals within the agency. Preceptors should work closely with the student to provide interesting or challenging opportunities to learn.

Preceptors should consider that they are working with adult learners. The characteristics of an adult learner are:

- Adults prefer to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.
- Adults will invest considerable energy to something that they want to learn and perceived value in learning.
- Adult learners wish to be treated with respect and are capable of self-direction.
- Adults bring with them a volume of past experience, including experiences with learning. These experiences can be either/both positive or negative.
- Adults want to learn materials that have practical application.

A&M-TEXARKANA PRECEPTOR POLICY

The A&M-Texarkana Department of Nursing defines preceptors as qualified individuals who work one-to-one with RN to BSN students in clinical areas to promote attainment of student learning objectives. Preceptors are currently licensed registered nurses who preferably hold a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing and/or who have at least two years of experience. Preceptors are not A&M-Texarkana nursing program faculty and are not considered when determining faculty/student ratios.

Students are responsible for finding appropriate clinical preceptors. Preceptors are utilized in RN to BSN clinical nursing courses: Professional Nursing Practice with Individuals and Families, Community Health Nursing, and Leadership and Management in Nursing Practice. Preceptors serve as role models, mentors, and/or direct supervisors of students in the clinical area. Preceptors do not replace faculty but work closely with faculty in facilitating student success. Nursing program faculty maintains the responsibility for the final student evaluation.

PRECEPTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Preceptors shall be employees or have a legal contractual arrangement with the agency in which A&M-Texarkana has a current contract.

Preceptors shall be:

- Experienced in the area in which they supervise students.
- Preferably be baccalaureate prepared or have the requisite certification or experience to supervise the students.
- Available to the student and the faculty for the agreed upon time for student instruction.
- Known by the contracted agency as one who instructs A&M-Texarkana students and shall have the authority to prioritize their time in order to properly instruct students.
- Recommended by the contracted agency as professionals who are supported in their role as preceptors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

COURSE FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES

The **course faculty** will:

- Assure student compliance with standards on immunization, screening, CPR, current liability insurance coverage and current nursing licensure prior to clinical experience.

- Assume responsibility for the overall coordination of the student's clinical experience by making initial contact with the clinical agency and obtaining information about the nature of the agency and clinical placement.
- Obtain the names of preceptors and the nature of the clinical arrangement.
- Articulate the roles of the preceptor, faculty, and student in the preceptorship experience.
- Provide written materials, including but not limited to, the Preceptor Handbook and course syllabus and/or clinical objectives.
- Assist with the orientation of the preceptor and student as to the roles and functions of the experience and course requirements.
- Review and approve student objectives.
- Consult with clinical preceptor and student during the course.
- Receive student and preceptor communications by telephone, email, or in person for a report on student progress.
- Provide the final evaluation for the student.
- Receive preceptor feedback about student performance and suggestions for improving clinical experience.
- Receive student feedback about clinical experience.

The **Clinical Preceptor** will:

- Have clinical expertise in the defined area of nursing practice.
- Be willing to act as a role model and be interested in the student's learning.
- Be familiar with the roles of the preceptor, faculty, and student in the preceptorship experience.
- Orient student to the clinical practice setting including identification of facility policies and procedures.
- Serve as a role model as a practitioner, teacher, and mentor.
- Provide the student with ongoing constructive feedback that relates performance standards to student performance.

- Utilize others, including colleagues, nursing administrators, and faculty as resources for problem solving, support, and guidance.
- Provide suggestions that will assist and improve student performance to achieve course and clinical objectives.
- Communicate ongoing student progress to the student and faculty and contribute to the student's summative evaluation.
- Contact faculty if assistance is needed or if any problem with student performance occurs.
- Be available to student during designated clinical hours or provide for a designated preceptor in case of absence from the clinical area.
- Assist course faculty with the formal evaluation of the student's progress at the completion of the clinical experience.

AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In facilitating preceptorship experiences, the **agency** should:

- Assist faculty and students in the selection of appropriate preceptors for the preceptorship experience.
- Actively support the preceptor and student during the preceptorship with adequate time, facilities, and experiences as possible.
- Act as a liaison between preceptors and faculty.
- Participate in the evaluation of the preceptorship experience.
- Retain ultimate responsibility for the care of clients.
- Retain responsibility for the preceptor's salary, benefits, and liability.
- Assist in arranging preceptors' work schedules so they are available on student clinical days.
- Interpret the preceptor program and expectations of students to other agency personnel who are not directly involved with preceptorship.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In preceptorship, the **student** will:

- Comply with health and other professional requirements of the nursing program and clinical facility prior to the start of the clinical experience.

- Establish with preceptor the Clinical Contract and successfully complete the terms established within it.
- Identify appropriate candidates to serve as preceptors.
- Dress in a professional manner consistent with clinical facility guidelines and be clearly identified as being a student.
- Maintain open communication with the preceptor and faculty.
- Maintain accountability for own learning activities.
- Prepare for each clinical experience as needed.
- Be accountable for own nursing actions while in the clinical setting.
- Contact faculty by telephone or email if faculty assistance is necessary.
- Respect the confidential nature of all information obtained during clinical experience.
- Develop knowledge and skills in the defined area of nursing practice.
- Use problem solving and critical thinking to adapt scientific knowledge to the clinical practice area.
- Seek appropriate learning opportunities throughout the clinical experience.
- Complete critical self-evaluation.
- Adhere to agency policies and procedures.
- Develop collaborative professional relationships with clients, the preceptor, agency personnel, and other health care professionals.
- Complete clinical and course requirements.
- Participate in the evaluation of the course.

CLINICAL FORMS

To provide clear expectations for the preceptor and the student, the following forms are required:

- Clinical Contract
- Clinical Experience Documentation (of hours)
- Student Evaluation of Preceptor
- Student Clinical Performance Evaluation
- Preceptor Evaluation of Course

The Clinical Contract identifies the required number of clinical hours for the specific nursing courses.

The Clinical Experience Documentation (of hours) form is a recording form of the hours completed during the clinical experience. While the clinical hours may exceed the number identified in the contract, the total number of hours should not be less.

The Student Evaluation of Preceptor form is a means for students to evaluate the effectiveness of the preceptor and the clinical experience within the facility.

The Student Clinical Performance Evaluation form is used by the Preceptor to provide feedback about the student's performance during the clinical experience. The faculty of the course is responsible for the final evaluation of the student.

The Preceptor Evaluation of Course form is a means for preceptors to evaluate the course and faculty availability and support.

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**PRECEPTOR ORIENTATION CHECKLIST
RN-BSN CLINICAL NURSING COURSES**

BEFORE PRECEPTOR EXPERIENCE

- _____ Meet with preceptor at the agency or at A&M-Texarkana campus
- _____ Verify nursing compact license
- _____ Verification of baccalaureate degree
- _____ Verification of specialty certification
- _____ Specification of expertise
- _____ Term of agreement: Semester _____ Year _____
- _____ Provide written materials, including but not limited to, the Preceptor Handbook and course syllabus and/or clinical objectives
- _____ Review the roles of the preceptor, faculty, and student
- _____ Review forms in the handbook to be completed by preceptor and student
- _____ Discuss the preceptor's role in the evaluation of students
- _____ Review and approve student objectives

DURING PRECEPTOR EXPERIENCE

- _____ Student and preceptor communications by telephone, email, or in person to faculty to report on student progress

AFTER PRECEPTOR EXPERIENCE

- _____ Receive preceptor feedback about student performance and suggestions for improving clinical experience
- _____ Receive student feedback about clinical experience

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CLINICAL CONTRACT

Course: (Circle one) NURS 303, 305 or 406

Preceptor: _____ Date: _____

Student: _____

Faculty: _____ Date: _____

This contract specifies the number of clinical hours required for the student's experience.

For NURS _____ a minimum of _____ clinical contact hours is required. These hours are to be completed in a time framework agreeable to the preceptor and student. All clinical requirements need to be completed prior to the end of the course.

If the clinical hours cannot be completed, a conference between course faculty, preceptor, and student will occur in order to successfully resolve the issue.

Documentation of clinical hours is the responsibility of the student and is to be signed and dated by the preceptor.

Upon completion of the required clinical experience hours, the Clinical Experience Documentation is attached to this contract and filed with the Department of Nursing.

The specific learning objectives for this clinical experience are found in the course syllabus.

The student will provide personal learning experiences objectives on the first day of the clinical experience.

It is acknowledged that completion of required clinical hours does not assure a passing clinical and/or course grade.

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STUDENT EVALUATION OF PRECEPTOR

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Preceptor Name & Agency: _____

Please indicate with a check mark how you experienced or perceived your clinical preceptor.

| | Seldom | Sometimes | Frequently | N/A |
|---|--------|-----------|------------|-----|
| Is available to student | | | | |
| Is accessible to the student | | | | |
| Is responsive to the student | | | | |
| Demonstrates understanding of preceptor role. | | | | |
| Demonstrates understanding of leader/manager role. | | | | |
| Serves as an effective role model for leadership and management principles. | | | | |
| Demonstrates strong positive interpersonal skills with other members of the health team. | | | | |
| Demonstrates strong positive interpersonal skills with other members of the health team. | | | | |
| Demonstrates negotiation and conflict management skills | | | | |
| Facilitates student's identified goals and objectives. | | | | |
| Encourages student to assume responsibility and accountability throughout the semester. | | | | |
| Considers student's background and level of competence. | | | | |
| Provides feedback, when questions or situations arise, which is timely and appropriate. | | | | |
| Demonstrates critical thinking behaviors. | | | | |
| Assists student in decision making process | | | | |
| Allows student to suggest alternatives to the preceptor's ideas. | | | | |
| Suggests and provides additional learning experiences, when appropriate, to meet student's needs. | | | | |

Additional Comments: _____

Student Signature: _____

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING
RN-BSN DEGREE PROGRAM**

STUDENT CLINICAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Student Name: _____

Course: (Circle one) NURS 303, 305 or 406

Semester: (Circle one) Fall Spring Year: 20____

Clinical Setting: _____

BSN – LEVELS OF COMPETENCY

| | INDEPENDENT - 4 | SUPERVISED - 3 | ASSISTED - 2 | DEPENDENT – 1 |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| 1. Nursing Assessment | Assesses a complex individual, family or group to produce a complete database, incorporating lifestyle, biologic, health care system and environmental factors independently. | Assesses a complex individual, family or group to produce a complete database, incorporating lifestyle, biologic, health care system and environmental factors with instructor guidance. | Requires consistent direction to apply assessment frameworks to achieve a complete database; pertinent health history facts are missing. | Does not determine parameter of assessment. Cannot identify nor apply assessment frameworks. |
| 2. Application of Appropriate Interventions | Identifies and applies concepts, rationale, and role in goal directed discriminating decisions and plan of care independently. | Identifies and applies concepts, rationale, and role in goal directed discriminating decisions and plan of care with instructor guidance. | Identifies but cannot apply concepts, rationale, and role to plan of care. Cannot trace decisions and interventions to rationale. Plan of care inconsistent with goals. | Does not identify concepts and roles without prompting. Makes decisions regarding client care with difficulty as care is not clearly goal directed. |
| 3. Application of Research Findings | Consistently analyzes research findings and applies information to resolving clinical problems or opportunity | Identifies research findings but requires guidance to identify and apply research clinical care. | Consistently requires instructor guidance in identifying and applying appropriate research findings necessary to clinical care. | Does not identify specific clinical objectives that require research. Does not use research findings when selecting interventions. |
| 4. Synthesis and Application of Principles | Analyzes theoretical knowledge correctly. Compares and contrasts interrelationship of date without instructor guidance | Analyzes principles. Theoretical knowledge is correctly applied to the clinical area with instructor guidance. | Identifies principles. Need direction from instructor to translate application of knowledge. | Incorrectly identifies principles. Application of principles is inappropriate within evidence of research. |

| | INDEPENDENT - 4 | SUPERVISED - 3 | ASSISTED - 2 | DEPENDENT – 1 |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 5. Professional Roles and Responsibilities | Consistently accepts accountability and acknowledges responsibility in the professional nursing role in order to meet clinical objectives. | Requires one counseling session regarding accountability and acknowledgment of responsibilities for actions in the clinical setting. | Requires more than one counseling session regarding accountability and acknowledgment of responsibilities for actions in the clinical setting. | Does not demonstrate accountability and responsibility for personal actions in the clinical setting. |
| 6. Technology used for evidenced-based learning | Consistently utilizes and integrates information to nursing practice, presentations and written documents. | Utilizes and integrates information and technologies to practice, presentations, and written documents with instructor guidance. | Requires frequent direction and assistance to utilize and integrate information. | Does not integrate nor utilize information unless directed. |
| 7. Communication (Agency records; Clinical Activity Log) | Independently documents client care succinctly and accurately, timely. | Documents client care accurately, succinctly and timely with guidance. | Requires frequent direction to document succinctly and accurately. | Does not identify pertinent elements for documentation. |

Client=Individual, family, community

LEVELS OF COMPETENCY:

Independent No. Ix4 Maximum 28 points

Supervised Sx3 Maximum 21 points

Assisted Ax2 Maximum 14 points

Dependent Dx1 Maximum 7 points

Satisfactory **End of term: No less than 18 points from I, S, A only**

Unsatisfactory **Less than 18 points**

Satisfactory_____ **Unsatisfactory**_____

Faculty Signature **Date**

Student Signature **Date**

Preceptor Signature **Date**

Preceptor Name (Please Print)

References

Preceptor handbook, (1999). Boise State University College of Nursing: Boise, Idaho.

Preceptor orientation, (2000). Deaconess College of Nursing: St. Louis, Missouri.

Preceptor manual, (1999). University of Northern British Columbia: Prince George, BC, Canada.

Guidelines for precepted clinical experiences, (2007). Texas Board of Nursing: Austin, Texas.