

The following guide provides information and answer to questions frequently asked by Preceptors about the Senior Practicum experience.

**How to prepare for the Preceptor role:** The following suggestions will help you prepare to carry out the functions of a Preceptor:

1. Review the following:
  - Course syllabus
  - Course student learning outcomes
  - Senior Practicum Clinical Evaluation Tool
  - Preceptor Handbook
2. Your student will reach out to you via email or telephone prior the practicum beginning. This serves as an ice breaker and makes the first day easier for both of you!

**How to orient your student:** Preceptors should ensure students are well oriented to:

- The physical layout of the unit
- Policies and procedures
- Nursing roles and responsibilities
- Location of supplies and equipment
- Organization of the healthcare team
- Emergency procedures

**How to organize your student assignments:** Client assignments, responsibilities, and expectations for independent functioning should be gradually increased during the practicum. The following is a recommended progression:

**Day 1:**

- Orient the student to the facility, unit, policies and procedures
- Shadow you and help with basics

**Day 2:**

- Assign the student two (2) of your less complex clients (unless you are in an ICU, then one (1) client)**
- The student should perform all cares, documentation, and report

### **Day 3 - 10:**

- Gradually increase the complexity and number of clients assigned to the student

### **Day 11 and 12:**

- Student should be assigned a full client assignment for your unit

**What to expect of the student:** By the midterm evaluation (day 6) the student should be caring for an assignment that represents 50% of a typical assignment for your unit. By the end of the practicum the student should have a full client assignment expected for a New Graduate Nurse on your unit.

Students are expected to comply with all College and clinical facility policies and procedures.

**How to evaluate your student:** Your feedback about the student's clinical performance is essential to their growth and transition into practice. You will be provided education on effective and timely feedback during the required Preceptor Workshop.

Students will be evaluated on-going, at the end of the day, at midterm, and at the end of the practicum.

Daily post-shift debriefings are an effective way to discuss what went well and what the student should focus on for the next day.

Remember, the student is learning to be a generalist and will be functioning in the role of a Nurse for the first time. It will take years for them to get the experience, knowledge, and expertise you have.

**Student/Preceptor Relationship:** Preceptors mentor and supervise the student, and plan and coordinate their learning experience. Your most important roles include:

- Learning resource**
- Clinical teacher** – when new procedures are introduced or when previously learned procedures require supervision.
- Professional role model** – Your professional behavior such as how you dress, whether you introduce yourself to the client and family, your communication styles, whether you comply with policy and procedure, and how you deal with mistakes will have a profound influence on the student and their nursing practice.

**Faculty Advisor/Preceptor Relationship:** Each student is assigned to a Faculty Advisor who can assist you in planning the student experience, with evaluations, identifying problem areas in the student's performance, and in developing and implementing strategies to deal with them. Faculty Advisors should be contacted immediately for any of the following:

- You identify a pattern or single occurrence of unsafe behavior

- You have ongoing concerns regarding the student's psychomotor skills, knowledge base, organizational, decision-making, communication abilities, or their professional conduct
- The student becomes ill or injured during the practicum
- Anytime you have questions or concerns about the program, course, or the student's general preparedness
- If the student fails to arrive for an assigned shift without prior notice

### **Other Frequently Asked Questions:**

**How long is the practicum?** The student has six (6) weeks to complete the required hours.

**How many hours are required?** The student is required to complete 148 clinical practicum hours

**How many days per week should I plan to be with the student?** The student must do a minimum of two shifts per week, but can do three.

**Do Preceptors have an opportunity to evaluate the course?** Yes, you will receive an evaluation form to complete at the end of each Senior Practicum.

**Will I be evaluated by the student?** Yes, feedback is essential for professional growth and development.

**How are Preceptors chosen?** Preceptors are chosen for their clinical expertise, professional behavior, and willingness to work with the students. The College relies on Unit Managers to identify and recommend Nurses for this role.

**What happens if I have to float to another unit?** You should take your student with you. Floating to other units is an expectation of all Nurses so they should learn how to deal with this!

**What if I need to call in sick?** You, or someone on the unit, should contact the student to inform them to stay home. **The student should not be placed with another Nurse.**

**Your student's name is:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your student's Faculty Advisor is:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_