



Master of Science in Nursing Program

Nurse Educator
PRECEPTOR / FACULTY / STUDENT
ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

Angelo State University

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Dear Preceptor:

Thank you for agreeing to precept a student in the Angelo State University Master's degree program. Your expert guidance in providing students the opportunity to apply their practicum skills and knowledge as well as their teaching/learning skills is critical to preparing them for the nurse educator role. As a busy professional with numerous demands and responsibilities, your commitment to this process demonstrates personal dedication to the continuing quality development of the nursing profession. The student will gain confidence and validation as you provide teaching, coaching, and role modeling opportunities. It is difficult to imagine successfully preparing these individuals without the collaboration of our colleagues in the community!

Please review the mission statement, philosophy, program goals and objectives of the MSN program at Angelo State University enclosed in this packet. The student should also supply you with a copy of the course syllabus communicating course and practicum objectives as well as a faculty approved individualized student learning plan. Evaluation of the student will be in line with the NLN Nurse Educator Competencies. For each precepted experience, the student is required to formulate two or three personal objectives that relate to course outcomes and/or nurse educator competencies. You and the student should review and refine these objectives which are specific to the student's goals for the experience and the opportunities available in your practice. Review the objectives occasionally for those accomplished and not yet attained. Copies of the Student Practicum Evaluation forms to be filled out by you for each semester are also provided. Please complete the following forms (included in this packet) before the student begins the experience:

- Preceptor Biographical Data Sheet indicating professional preparation and licensure is required for all preceptors. (Many preceptors submit current, curriculum vitae to satisfy this requirement).
- Preceptor Agreement acknowledging your willingness to serve as a preceptor for the specified student.

The Angelo State University graduate nursing faculty values your service as a preceptor and welcomes your recommendations for making the preceptor role more effective and satisfying. Please feel free to contact me or the course instructor if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your service on behalf of continuing excellence in the practicum education of professional nurses.

Sincerely,



Molly Walker PhD, RN, CNS, CNE
Professor
Nurse Educator Program Coordinator & Advisor
Angelo State University
College of Health and Human Services
Department of Nursing & Rehabilitation Sciences

Introduction

A nursing educator preceptorship is a directly supervised practicum that allows students to apply knowledge gained in the didactic portion of a program. Nursing Educator students have the opportunity to work with preceptors in academic, clinical, and community-based settings. Practicum experiences provide Angelo State University Nursing students with the opportunity to observe and actively participate in the delivery of nursing education. Preceptors actively practicing in academic and practicum settings are uniquely qualified to facilitate the development of students in this advanced practice role.

Because each student enters the practicum experience with a varied amount of past experience and technical competence, providing practicum learning opportunities that support the student's individual learning needs may be challenging. Therefore, the purpose of the Preceptor Orientation Packet is to provide preceptors with helpful information and effective teaching strategies to optimize learning for students.

Definitions and Responsibilities

The Nurse Educator track at Angelo State University prepares nurses for graduate level practice in one of two ways: Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree or a Post-Masters Certificate for nurses who already have an MSN. All graduate students at ASU have core graduate nursing courses as a part of their curriculum. The nurse educator track requires additional coursework in preparation for the nurse educator role. This track provides the student with knowledge related to curricular development, instructional design, pedagogy, course development, learning outcome measures and effective teaching/facilitating strategies.

On-line classroom study is combined with community-based practicum experiences that are supervised by qualified preceptors. The MSN program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and is approved as an Advanced Practice Nursing program by the Board of Nurse Examiners for the State of Texas.

The advanced practice nurse educator may utilize practicum expertise and practice in academic, inpatient, outpatient and community based settings.

Preceptor Selection Criteria

A qualified preceptor must directly supervise the practicum experience. Angelo State University adheres to the following guidelines related to preceptor qualifications:

1. The preceptor must hold a current, active license in the state where the student will engage in the practicum experience.
2. The preceptor must have a Master of Science Degree in Nursing from a ACEN or CCNE accredited program.
3. The student will not be precepted by an immediate supervisor at his/her current place of employment.

In addition to the preceptor qualifications, the student should also consider the following when selecting a preceptor:

1. Amount of teaching experience
2. Availability to work with an adequately supervise the student
3. Ability to facilitate student learning and evaluate student progress
4. Adaptability in order to assist the student to achieve his/her learning goals and objectives
5. Agreeable to allowing the student to attend meetings/workshops/other activities with him/her and willingness to let the student actively participate in the teaching process.
6. Appreciation of the nurse educator role

Responsibilities of the Student

The student is responsible for being self-directed in identifying initial and ongoing learning needs, for seeking learning opportunities to meet identified needs, and for being accountable for their performance in the nurse educator role. The student should:

- Provide the preceptor with the Nurse Educator Preceptor/Student Handbook and complete all preceptor agreements prior to the initiation of the practicum experience.
- Discuss specific practicum objectives and negotiate a practicum schedule with the preceptor prior to the actual practicum experience.
- Provide the practicum site with the necessary licensure liability insurance, and educational information as required. Submit a completed student profile to the preceptor and to faculty on or before the first practicum day.
- Perform the nurse educator role under the supervision of the preceptor, recognizing the limitations of education preparation and complying with professional standards, academic and practicum site policies and protocols
- Demonstrate professional role behaviors.
- Demonstrate accountability for thoroughness and timeliness in completing assigned role responsibilities.
- Maintain a practicum log according to course requirements and submit it to the faculty at designated intervals. Practicum hours will be tracked to include the preceptor's signature each day the student is in the practicum site.
- Demonstrate progressive independence and competency in the nurse educator role in accordance with his/her academic progression. Arrive at the practicum experience prepared to perform in accordance with assigned learning activities in accordance with the course.
- Actively seek input in the evaluation process and participate in self-evaluation of strengths and identified area for professional growth with the preceptor and designated faculty.
- Contact faculty by telephone, pager, or email if faculty assistance is necessary.
- Respect the confidential nature of all information obtained during the practicum experience.
- Complete practicum preceptor evaluation at the end of the practicum experience.

Responsibilities of ASU Faculty

Faculty identify practicum learning objectives specific to the program, course, and learning needs of the students. They facilitate student achievement of these objectives through provision of didactic instruction, identification of appropriate practicum facilities and preceptors, observation and evaluation of students in the practicum setting, and establishment of close working relationships with preceptors.

The faculty should:

- Identify and evaluate practicum sites for appropriateness of learning experiences.
- Review the expectations for the students, the preceptor, and the faculty with the preceptor and pertinent personnel at the facility/agency.
- Assure establishment of affiliation or preceptor agreements prior to initiation of practicum experience.
- Review the policies of the agency to be followed by faculty and assigned students.
- Act as counselor, consultant, and teacher and is responsible for providing immediate consultation and/or support of the preceptor when needs or problems are reported.
- Serve as role model to demonstrate effective communication, leadership and practicum expertise.
- Seek preceptor input regarding student's practicum performance and other practicum related activities.
- Maintain communication with the preceptor/facility/agency and make site visits as needed.
- Encourage student to verbalize and demonstrate the use of theoretical frameworks and the application of relevant research and evidence-based guidelines related to nursing education.
- Document the student's progress using practicum objectives for the specific semester, and assign a pass/fail grade by the completion of the practicum experience.

Responsibilities of the Preceptor

The preceptor will guide the nurse educator student through the learning process, serve as a role model and mentor, and provide constructive feedback. In addition, the preceptor will also promote role socialization and adoption of nursing education standards of practice.

Orientation

The student should arrange to meet with the preceptor for orientation prior to the actual practicum experience. During initial orientation to the academic and/or practicum setting, the preceptor should:

- Communicate general guidelines to be used for preceptor / student interactions and for review and feedback of student performance.
- Review policies and protocols specific to the setting
- Review preceptor, agency and student expectations regarding documentation
- Discuss overall plan for student learning opportunities (i.e. lectures, practicum supervision, facilitating pre/post conferences, grading assignments, etc.).
- Review student's previous learning experiences and practicum objectives to be accomplished
- Encourage student to identify strengths and area for continued professional growth
Involve student in assessment/validation/decisions about learning strategies to be employed
- Negotiate a practicum schedule with the student. If the student will be absent on a scheduled practicum day, the student is responsible for notifying the preceptor prior to the designated time

Practicum Supervision and Teaching

- Assess student ability to communicate effectively when interacting with faculty, staff and students
- Ensure that student activities are consistent with standard set forth in academic and practicum site policies, procedures, and protocols
- Direct progression of student assignments
- Directly supervise the student in the performance of nurse educator role responsibilities. The student will require direct supervision until such a time the preceptor and the student deem it no longer necessary.
- The preceptor will sign the student's practicum hours tracking log each day the student is present in his/her academic and/or practicum site.
- Review the student's lectures and presentations and make constructive suggestions for improvement. Students will sign all notations with their first name, last name, title, and school.

- Take time with the student to discuss specific written learning objective and experiences. These discussions should review:
 - a. The student's teaching abilities
 - b. The student's ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with preceptors, faculty, and students
 - c. Professional issues related to nurse educator implementation
 - d. Plans for future learning experiences based on an assessment of the student's strengths and areas for continued professional growth

Evaluation of Student Performance

- Assess student progress through a formal, written evaluation at the completion of the practicum experience
- Assess daily progress through review of practicum log entries
- Inform the designated MSN faculty of concerns related to practicum practice by the student or if the student is identified as having difficulties in meeting the requirements of the preceptorship experience

The Preceptor Role in Preparing Nurse Educators

A practicum preceptor is an experienced nurse educator who plays a crucial role in the student's learning experience and learning outcome. The preceptor guides the student into the real world of nursing education and allows the student to learn new skills, gain confidence and validation. As a preceptor you will teach, coach and role model. It is hard to imagine how students could successfully prepare for roles in advanced practice without the guidance of preceptors. The faculty values your services as a preceptor and welcomes your recommendations for making the preceptor role more effective and satisfying.

Issues in Precepting

Some issues may arise when precepting and may recur in different forms with different students in different settings and/or situations. When you face such issues please feel free to consult with the faculty member for advice about some of the approaches that have proven effective in the past.

Time management may become a problem when adding precepting responsibilities to a busy academic day. Maximizing the time with realistic expectations requires planning with the student, realistic expectations, and continuing assessment of the experience and progress.

Students enrolled in the academic setting or attending the practicum site where the nurse educator may do his/her practicum may feel apprehensive initially about having someone other than their "regular instructor" giving assignments or providing direction. In order to allay these feelings, as preceptor, you should express and affirm your confidence in the student's competence.

Planning

The student will come to you with objectives to accomplish and will collaborate with you to formulate additional objectives. These objectives will serve as the foundation for your plan. Objectives specify at what level the student will perform at the conclusion of the learning experience. Broad, general objectives are sometimes referred to as goals.

Review the course objective with the student. Course objectives are usually broad in scope. Assure that you and the student share a mutual understanding of the expectations for accomplishing the objectives for the practicum. Objectives are constructed in such a way that student performance may be measured and judged against objectives. The box below (figure 1) contains some sample practicum objectives.

Figure 1 - Sample Practicum Objectives
1 Apply a variety of teaching strategies in the on campus and online environment.
2. Incorporate a variety of teaching strategies in the practicum setting
3. Collaborate with faculty members to improve student outcome

In addition to the practicum course objectives the student is required to formulate a few personal objectives which are subject to approval of the faculty member and preceptor. You and the student will refine these objectives which are specific to the student's goals for the experience and the opportunities available in your practice. Guide the student toward

objectives that are realistic given the timeframe of the experience, the opportunities available and the resources required. Consider the student's priorities and your own priorities for the student's learning. As the student accomplishes some goals, others may emerge. As the student learns more about the opportunities in your practice setting, new goals may take shape. The box (figure 2) contains some examples of objectives established by a preceptor and student together as additional objectives for the practicum. These objectives are additional to objectives established by the faculty and reflect interests of the student and opportunities available in the practice setting.

Figure 2 - Sample of Student's Personal Objectives
Develop a learning strategy.
Carry out a practicum post conference debriefing.
Attend a faculty work session.

Figure 3 - Sample Short-term (Daily) Objectives
Write a case study related to a specific topic.
Discuss patient care issues with students in the practicum setting.
Discuss a student learning issue during a faculty work session.

Periodically review objectives accomplished and not yet attained with the student.

Whenever possible, plan to give the student feedback at the conclusion of each day's experience. Precepting requires additional time: time to plan with the student, time to "think-out-loud" with the student, time to formulate and ask questions, time to observe student performance and coach, and time to empower the student to perform skills that you could do yourself more rapidly. We again, appreciate your willingness to take the extra time to do this.

Role Modeling

Students will learn from your role modeling whether or not you purposefully present yourself as a role model. Two of the most significant aspects of learning accomplished through role modeling are critical thinking and professional role behavior in interaction with patients, interdisciplinary colleagues and others. The approach that you model in your academic or practicum setting profoundly effects the student's approach.

Practicum Failure

Students deemed unsafe or incompetent will fail the practicum course. Behaviors constituting practicum failure can include the following:

- Demonstrates unsafe performance and makes questionable decisions
- Lacks insight and understanding of own behaviors and behaviors of others
- Needs continuous specific and detailed supervision
- Has difficulty adapting to new ideas and roles
- Fails to submit required written practicum exercises/assignments
- Falsifies practicum hours
- Violates student confidentiality agreement

ASU Nursing Program Mission, Vision and Philosophy

Mission

The nursing program supports the overall Mission of Angelo State University by offering graduate and undergraduate nursing programs that produce professionals committed to improving the health of individuals, groups and communities both locally and globally. As practitioners and educators, our graduates effectively lead and advocate for safe, high-quality health care that respects diversity and is responsive to a dynamic and technologically complex society.

Vision

We will be recognized as visionary leaders committed to delivering innovative nursing education that promotes optimal patient outcomes.

Philosophy

We believe nursing is a unique, caring, scientific and practice discipline built upon a solid foundation of knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences. Each level of nursing education expands upon prior knowledge and competency through the integration of research-based evidence. Our programs produce compassionate and skilled nurses prepared to meet the healthcare needs of a global society.

We believe the nurse delivers person-centered care as a member of the interprofessional team utilizing therapeutic partnerships and patient advocacy that emphasizes health promotion, health restoration and disease prevention.

We believe in student-centered, adult learning principles and provide a supportive, engaging educational environment facilitating personal and professional growth for leadership and lifelong learning.

We believe lifelong learning is nurtured in an environment of mutual respect and shared responsibility for the development of clinical reasoning, ethical conduct and personal accountability.

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ASU MSN Program Outcomes



Upon program completion, the graduate will be prepared to:

1. Integrate nursing and related sciences into the delivery of advanced nursing care to diverse populations.
2. Apply organizational and systems leadership skills.
3. Design and implement quality improvement initiatives.
4. Integrate best research evidence to improve health outcomes.
5. Utilize informatics, healthcare technology and information systems.
6. Advocate through system level policy development.
7. Employ effective communication in inter-professional teams.
8. Synthesize the impact of health determinants for provision of culturally relevant health promotion/disease prevention strategies.
9. Practice at the level of a Master's prepared nurse.