Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
College of Nursing and Health Sciences

FNP Preceptor Guide

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Thank you for serving as a preceptor! Your role is essential to the preparation of safe and competent entry-level Family Nurse Practitioners. This handout outlines expectations, responsibilities, and support resources for preceptors with the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Program at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, aligned with program and clinical education standards.

Purpose of the Preceptorship

The purpose of the FNP preceptorship is to provide supervised clinical experiences that allow students to integrate didactic knowledge, evidence-based practice, and clinical reasoning in primary care settings across the lifespan.

Clinical experiences are structured to ensure students achieve expected program outcomes and entry-level competencies.

Preceptor Qualifications

Preceptors are selected and approved by the nursing program and must meet the following criteria:

- Active, unencumbered professional license (NP, MD, or DO)
- National board certification in family practice or related specialty
- Minimum of two years of independent clinical practice
- Practice setting appropriate for FNP role preparation
- Commitment to teaching, supervision, and evaluation

Role and Responsibilities of the Preceptor

As a preceptor, you agree to:

- Complete necessary documents formally agreeing to preceptorship
- Supervise the FNP student in accordance with state law and site policy
- Facilitate progressive clinical learning experiences
- Serve as a role model for professional, ethical, and evidence-based practice
- Provide timely, constructive feedback and end of semester evaluations

Scope of Student Practice

FNP students:

- Practice only under preceptor supervision
- May not practice independently
- May not sign prescriptions, orders, or legal documents
- Must present all assessments, diagnoses, and plans to the preceptor prior to implementation

Student autonomy should increase gradually based on demonstrated competence, consistent with program expectations for clinical oversight and supervision.

Supervision and Clinical Teaching Model

Clinical supervision typically progresses as follows:

- **Early Clinical Experience** - Observation and shadowing - Focused and complete histories - Physical examinations with guidance - Verbal case presentations
- **Mid-Clinical Experience** - Independent histories and exams - Development of differential diagnoses - Proposed diagnostic and treatment plans - Documentation with review
- **Late Clinical Experience** - Management of common primary care conditions - Efficient clinical reasoning - Patient education and counseling - Recognition of red flags and referral needs

The following list details the clinical courses students currently take and identifies where in the learning model students should be:

NURS 5624 – Health Assessment and Differential Diagnosis (Early Clinical Experience)

- 90 clinical hours

NURS 5644 – Acute & Chronic I (Mid-Clinical Experience)

- 135 clinical hours

NURS 5645 – Acute & Chronic II (Mid-Clinical Experience)

- 135 clinical hours

NURS 5746 – Integrated Clinical (Late Clinical Experience)

- 270 clinical hours

Faculty and Program Support

The nursing program will provide:

- Clear clinical objectives and course outcomes
- Clinical faculty oversight and availability
- Evaluation tools and guidance
- Support for addressing student performance concerns

Expectations of Student

- Meet with preceptor to clarify course objectives and focus of clinical activities
- Assist preceptor to complete required documents associated with preceptor role
- Verify preceptor's credentials that indicate preceptor is eligible for teaching role
- Generate a clinical schedule with the preceptor consistent with the preceptor's availability
- Before clinical time begins, negotiate a procedure for contacting the preceptor in case of absence
- Notify preceptors at the beginning of the clinical day if they will be absent for a scheduled clinical day, due to illness or emergency
- Behave in a professional manner in keeping with the standards set forth by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Attendance and Dress

Students are expected to always follow preceptor guidance in terms of daily dress code with the expectation of remaining professional in appearance. Students are required to wear a name badge always identifying them as a student of TAMU-CC and are instructed to introduce themselves in the same manner. If a student will be absent on any given clinical day, the student will notify the preceptor and clinical instructor immediately. Any concerns regarding student attendance should be reported to the clinical faculty or program coordinator.

Documentation and EHR Use

- Students may document in the electronic health record per site policy
- All student documentation must be reviewed and authenticated by the preceptor
- Students must not use copy-and-paste without validation
- Documentation should reflect student involvement and preceptor oversight

Professional, Ethical, and Legal Considerations

- Students are covered under the university's professional liability insurance
    - a copy of the policy can be provided by the student
- Students must comply with HIPAA and confidentiality requirements
- Patients must be informed of student participation in care
- Preceptors should intervene immediately if patient safety is at risk

Evaluation and Feedback

Preceptors play a critical role in student evaluation by:

- Providing ongoing formative feedback

- Completing evaluations as required

- Assessing clinical competence, professionalism, and communication

- Notifying faculty promptly of concerns related to safety or ethics

- Notifying faculty when a student is at risk of failing or when minimally acceptable performance is demonstrated consistently by student

At the end of every semester, preceptors will be asked to complete an evaluation of the student. If you do not receive a request to submit an evaluation, please notify the clinical instructor or clinical coordinator. The faculty member has the overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the learning experience, however rely on the preceptors for additional insight.

Appreciation and Recognition

The program values your contribution to nursing education. Preceptors may be eligible for:

- Continuing education credit (as applicable per your certifying body)
    - A certificate is generated with the verification of hours at the end of semester
- Letters of appreciation or verification of service
- Awards given by the university for outstanding service

Your commitment to teaching supports quality nursing education and safe patient care. Thank you for partnering with us in preparing the next generation of Family Nurse Practitioners.

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Preceptors are encouraged to contact the FNP Clinical Coordinator with questions or concerns at any time.