Introduction

Preceptors are an integral part of nursing education. As defined by the Missouri State Board of Nursing (20 CSR 2200-2.085), a preceptor may be used as a role model, mentor, and assist nursing faculty in the supervision of students in professional nursing programs. We at the Sinclair School of Nursing appreciate your willingness to serve as a preceptor to one or more of our graduate students. This orientation guide will provide you with essential information that will be useful to you as you facilitate this relationship and support the educational goals of our graduate nursing students.

Sinclair School of Nursing Guiding Principles

In supporting our students through their clinical education the mission and core values of the Sinclair School of Nursing should be evident as you interact with students and faculty.

Our Mission is to prepare students at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels and to the ongoing professional development of practicing nurses to meet care needs of the citizens of Missouri and beyond.

Our core values include: Excellence, Collaboration, Scholarship, Leadership, Innovation, Integrity, Diversity, and Compassion.

Graduate Program Preceptor Regulations

Some states have specific regulations regarding advanced practice nursing program clinical experiences and clinical preceptors. In Missouri, the State Board of Nursing does not regulate advanced practice educational requirements. However, many other states do have specific regulations. It is each student’s responsibility to be familiar with their state’s Nurse Practice Act.

Missouri:  

Outside of Missouri—Search for your state here:  
https://www.ncsbn.org/npa.htm
Clinical Specialty Competencies

Specific standards of practice for clinical specialty areas also guide clinical advanced practice education including competencies and recommendations made by the:

National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF)

National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS)
http://www.nacns.org/docs/CNSCoreCompetenciesBroch.pdf

American Organization of Nurse Executives
http://www.aone.org/resources/nec.pdf

ANA Code of Ethics

All students must also abide by the ANA Code of Ethics during their clinical performance:

http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses

Preceptors serve as role models in demonstrating the ethical and moral responsibilities and actions of professional nurses in advanced roles. Students and preceptors should also be aware of specific Scope and Standards of Practice for their specific clinical specialty area:

http://www.nursingworld.org/scopeandstandardsofpractice

Clinical Preceptor Policy

The Sinclair School of Nursing clinical preceptor policy can be found in the Graduate Nursing Handbook http://nursing.missouri.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/2016_2017_Graduate_Nursing_Handbook_revisedClinical1.pdf. This policy describes preceptor qualifications and the student-preceptor-faculty relationship and is described below.

Preceptor Application & Agency Contract

Each preceptor must complete a preceptor application. Applications are reviewed by course faculty for approval. The instructions and copy of the Preceptor Application and Agency Contracts can be found http://nursing.missouri.edu/academic-programs/dnp/clinical-experience/.

Preceptors are employed in clinical agencies with signed, current clinical agreements made between the Curators of the University of Missouri contracting on behalf of the MU Sinclair
School of Nursing and clinical agency's board of directors or executive officer authorized to sign on behalf of the agency's governing body.

**Students cannot begin clinical work at an agency without faculty approval and a signed contract that has been approved by the University of Missouri and the sponsoring agency.**

For specific questions related to the preceptor application or agency contract, please contact:

**Sherry Cass**  
casss@missouri.edu  
573-882-2416

**Preceptor Qualifications Required by the Sinclair School of Nursing**

1. Graduate Program (MS and DNP)  
   a. Education  
      i. Master's degree or higher is preferred  
2. b. Licensure  
   i. Current unencumbered license in state of practice  
3. c. Expertise  
   i. Advanced practice authorization in state of practice  
   ii. At least one (1) year experience in the area of clinical specialty and role  
   iii. National board certification is preferred

* Acceptable preceptors for Leadership DNP students must be individuals with advanced degrees who are experts in the student’s leadership interest area. Potential clinical leadership preceptors may include: advanced practice nurses or other professionals with doctoral degrees; an advanced practice nurse with considerable leadership expertise; a nurse with a high level administrative position as the director, vice president, president, or CEO within a health care organization; a doctorally prepared nurse educator, or a nurse with an advanced business or policy degree. Preceptors with an advanced degree in areas such as public health or business administration may also be considered as leadership preceptors if this matches student’s leadership interests and academic goals.

**Student-Preceptor-Faculty Relationship Guidelines**

1. Student

   - Makes contact with potential clinical agency to explore preceptor-ship opportunities (faculty may assist).
   - Sends link to the preceptor application and agency contract form to preceptor to complete. Preceptor electronically submits form to faculty member.
- Verify agency has current contract with MU using contract list. If contract is needed, preceptor submits agency name and contact information of the person responsible for securing/updating an agency/clinical contract at the same time they complete the preceptor application.
- If appropriate or required for the course, submit an initial draft of goals and objectives to the responsible faculty member for approval. Revises goals and objectives as directed by faculty member prior to beginning clinical experience.
- Discuss course objectives and clarify goals for clinical experience with preceptor. Provides written copy of approved goals and objectives to preceptor prior to beginning clinical hours.
- Negotiates clinical schedule and activities, as appropriate.
- Discuss and provide preceptor with copy of the tool used to assess the student's clinical performance.
- Complies with policies of agency and MUSSON including pre-clinical compliance paperwork, training, professional attire and identification.
- Negotiates a change with faculty and preceptor when a project or activity is not fulfilling course requirements.
- Maintains regular contact with faculty member and informs faculty promptly when problems related to the clinical experience arise.
- Keeps all scheduled appointments with preceptor and faculty.
- Provides clinical log and/or journaling to faculty at regular intervals as indicated by course requirements.
- Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) students are required to complete a minimum of 33% of the total clinical hours required for advanced practice certification in their role and specialty area of study under the direct supervision of a master's (or higher) prepared nurse.
- All graduate students are required to be supervised by a minimum of 2 different preceptors during their program of study.
- In the event that no master's prepared nurses are practicing in the student's geographic location, students may be required to travel to another geographic location or come to the MU campus for clinical supervision.

2. Preceptor

- Agrees to serve as student’s preceptor; acts as role model, resource person, and mentor.
- Completes and electronically submits Preceptor Application and Agency Contract Form to course faculty prior to student starting clinical hours.
- Approves and agrees to jointly set goals and objectives for the student's clinical experience, as appropriate.
- Informs student and faculty of available learning activities and projects likely to fulfill the student's learning objectives.
- Encourages initiative, individuality, self-expression, self-assessment and increasing autonomy, as appropriate, by the student.
- Shares expertise necessary to function in this clinical site.
- Provides regular feedback to student regarding progress, strengths and limitations.
- Completes assessment of student's performance at mid-semester and at the end of the semester. Submits final written assessment form to faculty member within the specified course timeline.
• Confers routinely with faculty member directly regarding student's progress during the clinical experience. Immediately notifies the faculty member if the student's performance is unsatisfactory.

3. Faculty

• Assures all clinical requirements are complete prior to student beginning clinical hours.
• Provides course information to the preceptor, to include, course and/or clinical objectives, course timeline, and assessment criteria for student's clinical performance.
• Monitors student performance regularly and identifies progress, strengths, and limitations that may impact student's completion of the clinical requirements. Contacts student as needed during the semester to discuss the preceding.
• Contacts the preceptor regarding the student's performance at least twice during the semester and as needed.
• Utilizes a variety of data, including preceptor input to assign final clinical grade.

Clinical Schedules and Professional Behavior

• The student works with the approved preceptor to develop a specific clinical schedule based on the preceptor’s established work schedule.
• Students are responsible for notifying the preceptor if they are unable to attend a scheduled clinical day within a reasonable time frame and reschedule the missed clinical day as the preceptor’s schedule allows.
• Students should report to the designated clinical facility on time, in professional attire, and wearing their Sinclair School of Nursing name tag.
Important Resources for Preceptors

Checklist

The following items are essential to facilitate your preceptor relationship. It is the responsibility of the student to provide you with the following:

- Course Syllabi
- Faculty contact info
- Student contact info
- Learning objectives for the student’s clinical experience
- Online links to student evaluation forms

Contact Information

Students should provide you with the course faculty name, email address, and phone number. Feel free to contact the course faculty with any questions or concerns you have. Additionally the following may be of assistance if/when needing to contact the Sinclair School of Nursing:

Address:
Sinclair School of Nursing
S235 School of Nursing
Columbia, Mo. 65211
Phone: 573-882-0277
Fax: 573-884-4544
General inquiries: E-mail: nursing@missouri.edu

Faculty listing:
http://nursing.missouri.edu/meet-the-faculty/

MS Educator and MS Leader Program Director:
Dr. Robin Harris
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
harrisrc@missouri.edu

Doctor of Nursing Practice Program Director:
Dr. Miriam Butler
butlermd@missouri.edu

Clinical Contracts, Preceptor Application Questions, & Preceptor Online Surveys:
Sherry Cass, Executive Assistant
casss@missouri.edu or 573-882-2416