



Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston Graduate Preceptor Handbook

Introduction

A clinical rotation, immersion, practicum, or preceptorship is a supervised practice experience that enables graduate students to apply knowledge and skills in a practice setting. Each graduate student enters a clinical rotation, immersion, or preceptorship with a varying level of knowledge, practice skills, and competence, depending on their experience, education, and current point in the academic timeline. Learning opportunities that enhance the graduate student's individual learning needs are determined with input from the graduate student, the preceptor, and the Cizik School of Nursing (CSON) faculty. The purpose of this Graduate Preceptor Handbook is to provide the CSON preceptor with information to optimize graduate student learning.

Cizik School of Nursing Mission

Improve the health and well-being of our diverse community by preparing tomorrow's leaders to drive innovation and excellence in nursing education, practice, and scientific discovery.

Cizik School of Nursing Values

- Integrity
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Respect
- Excellence

Cizik School of Nursing Vision

"To lead the advancement of health and high-quality health care for all."

Graduate Program Outcomes

MSN/Post-Graduate Certificate Program Outcomes:

Graduates of the Master of Science in Nursing program (and/or completers of the Post-Graduate Certificate program) should be able to:

1. **Knowledge and Scholarship.** Use evidence-based practice in the delivery of nursing care through integration of theories, models, and nursing scholarship to improve health and transform health care.
2. **Health Care Delivery.** Integrate person-centered nursing care in advanced nursing roles to meet health care needs for individuals, families, populations, and communities in diverse settings with coordination of resources across the healthcare delivery continuum.
3. **Quality, Safety, and Technology.** Integrate quality and safety science and healthcare technology to manage and improve the delivery of safe, high-quality, and efficient healthcare services.

4. **Interprofessional Practice.** Utilize team communication and multidisciplinary collaboration skills to promote, improve, or maintain optimum health for patients, families, communities, and populations.
5. **Professionalism and Leadership.** Utilize professional and leadership values and skills to support ongoing personal and professional development.

DNP Program Outcomes

Upon completion of the DNP Program, graduates will be able to:

1. **Knowledge and Scholarship.** Uses evidence-based practice in the delivery of nursing care through translation of theories, models, and nursing scholarship to improve health and transform health care.
2. **Health Care Delivery.** Translate person-centered nursing care at the highest level of nursing practice to meet healthcare needs for individuals, families, populations, and communities in diverse settings with coordination of resources across the healthcare delivery continuum.
3. **Quality, Safety, and Technology.** Translate quality and safety science and healthcare technology to manage and improve the delivery of safe, high-quality, and efficient healthcare services.
4. **Interprofessional Practice.** Demonstrate team communication and multidisciplinary collaboration skills to promote, improve, or maintain optimum health for patients, families, communications, populations, and health systems.
5. **Professionalism and Leadership.** Demonstrate professional and leadership values and skills to support ongoing personal and professional development.

Cizik SON Graduate Faculty Responsibilities

1. Prior to the initiation of the clinical rotation, immersion, practicum, or preceptorship, the graduate faculty or their designee will review and approve the practice sites and preceptors in EXXAT.
2. If appropriate, review and approve the Student-Preceptor Learning Agreement for Clinical Experience and project (if appropriate) at the beginning of the semester of enrollment.
3. The preceptor has responsibility for evaluating the student's performance in the clinical rotation, immersion, practicum, or preceptorship, and providing direct assessment of clinical skills, professional behaviors, and day-to-day practice. The faculty member will evaluate the student, focusing on integration of clinical learning, achievement of course objectives, and overall progression. These evaluations contribute to the student's final outcome; however, the faculty member maintains ultimate responsibility for assigning the course grade. Students will provide the required evaluation and documentation forms throughout and/or upon completion of the clinical experience prior to the end of the semester of enrollment.
4. The CSON faculty will be available for consultation as requested by the student, preceptor, and/or practice site.
5. The CSON faculty will retain final authority for determining when the graduate student has successfully met requirements for satisfactory completion of the clinical experience and course requirements.
6. Graduate program faculty periodically evaluate clinical sites and preceptors. The CSON will verify preceptor qualifications before placing a student with a preceptor.
7. Graduate program faculty will conduct periodic on-site graduate student practice evaluations and consultations at a time as determined by the faculty, graduate student, and/or preceptor.

Practice Site Responsibilities

Practice Site Selection Criteria

The designated practice setting shall provide experiences that are appropriate to the graduate student's educational needs and learning agreement.

Practice Site Responsibilities

1. Orientation to the electronic health record (EHR) system/or other technologies as appropriate.
2. Orientation to policies, procedures, and/or other needed information and organizational resources specific to the setting, role, and/or project.

Preceptor Qualifications

1. Holds an active, unencumbered license if applicable to their discipline and one of the following (a, b, c, or d), depending on the area of focus:
 - a. Clinician
 - i. Clinicians are licensed health care providers directly engaged in patient care, for example APRN, physician, psychologist, therapist and who meet the following requirements:
 - (1) Must hold an active, unencumbered professional license in their discipline.
 - (2) Possess graduate-level preparation (master's degree or higher) in their clinical specialty.
 - (3) Have a minimum of one year of experience in the identified clinical specialty and role
 - b. Education
 - i. Graduate degree in nursing.
 - ii. Currently working in patient or staff education in a health care facility or in an academic setting.
 - iii. A minimum of one year of practice experience in a clinical specialty and role.
 - c. Leadership
 - i. Functioning in a leadership role within the scope of the Texas Nurse Practice Act;
 - ii. Graduate degree, preferably in nursing.
 - iii. Appropriately credentialed (i.e., national certification preferred)
 - iv. A minimum of one year of practice experience in a clinical specialty and role.
 - d. Informatics
 - i. Graduate degree in nursing informatics/health informatics/a related informatics department, quality improvement, data analytics, patient safety
 - ii. Minimum of one year of experience in nursing informatics/health informatics/or related HIT field, quality improvement, and data analytics
 - iii. Decision-making authority at the practicum site
2. Appropriately credentialed (i.e., national certification as appropriate)
3. Functions as a supervisor and teacher, and evaluates the student's performance in the clinical setting. (Texas Board of Nursing, 2024)
4. Functioning within the scope of the legal parameters for appropriate professional practice acts.
5. Demonstrates a willingness to participate actively in the education and evaluation process of the graduate student.

Preceptor Responsibilities

Preceptor responsibilities include orientation or onboarding, supervision, teaching, and evaluation of the graduate student's performance in the practice setting. The preceptor is responsible for:

1. Orientation/on-boarding
 - a. Communicate general guidelines for preceptor/graduate student interactions and for the review and feedback on graduate student performance.
 - b. Review policies, procedures, and protocols specific to the setting, role, and project as appropriate.
 - c. Review expectations for documentation as applicable.
 - d. Discuss the overall plan for graduate student progression.
 - e. Review graduate students' previous practice, learning experiences, and course objectives.
 - f. Encourage graduate students to identify strengths and areas for continued professional growth.
 - g. Perform an initial assessment of the graduate student's current level of knowledge, expertise, and ability to complete the practice/project according to the preceptor's expectations.
 - h. Collaborate with graduate students to identify desired learning opportunities.
 - i. Establish a mutually agreed-upon practice schedule with the graduate student.
 - j. If appropriate, negotiate a project with the graduate student. The project must meet the needs of the preceptor's organization/department, allow the graduate student to stretch their current knowledge and skills, and be completed during the semester.
 - k. Electronically complete the Student-Preceptor Learning Agreement for Clinical Experience with the graduate student. The Student-Preceptor Learning Agreement includes a brief description of the agreed-upon project, specific deliverables, and deadlines.
2. Supervision and teaching
 - a. Provide timely and necessary input to the graduate student regarding their ability to meet course objectives throughout the clinical rotation, immersion, or preceptorship experience.
 - b. Assess the graduate student's competence in fulfilling role responsibilities and, if applicable, project completion.
 - c. Ensure the graduate student's performance is consistent with practice site standards, policies, and procedures.
 - d. Direct the progression of graduate student assignments based on preceptor and graduate student evaluation of knowledge and skill competencies.
 - e. Directly mentor the graduate student in the performance of role responsibilities and remain available to the graduate student for consultation and ongoing evaluation throughout the preceptorship.
 - f. Provide timely and constructive feedback to the graduate student.
 - g. Facilitate graduate student activities in various organizational departments.
 - h. Schedule regular meetings with the graduate student to discuss specific learning objectives, experiences, and progress toward these objectives.
3. Evaluation of graduate student performance
 - a. Assess graduate student progress through a formal, online evaluation at the completion of the clinical rotation, immersion, or preceptorship experience. The preceptor evaluation is a component of their grade.
 - b. Inform the supervising faculty of any concerns related to:
 - i. Unsafe practice by the student.
 - ii. Student difficulties in meeting the requirements of the clinical rotation, immersion, or preceptorship.
 - iii. Professionalism, reliability, or conduct within the clinical setting.

Cizik SON Graduate Student Responsibilities

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

Graduate students will perform activities based on the objectives of their specific clinical rotation, immersion, or preceptorship. These activities include, but are not limited to:

1. Entering placement requests in EXXAT and completing all onboarding requirements for the identified organization.
2. Discussing specific clinical objectives and negotiating a mutually agreeable schedule with the preceptor prior to the start of the clinical rotation, immersion, practicum, or preceptorship.
3. Demonstrating professional behaviors at all times.
4. Maintaining a log of experiences attended throughout the duration of the clinical rotation, immersion, or preceptorship experience.
5. Demonstrating progressive independence and competency in the chosen role and specialty area.
6. Actively seek input into the evaluation process, participate in self-evaluation of strengths, and identify areas for professional growth with faculty members and preceptors.
7. Completing clinical preceptor and site evaluations and providing feedback to the preceptor.
8. Maintaining personal records of all evaluation forms.
9. Notifying the graduate preceptor and the faculty before missing any clinical day or, in the case of illness, before the start of the clinical day.

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact the course coordinator (faculty).

References

Texas Board of Nursing. (2023). Nursing practice act, nursing peer review, and nurse licensure compact: Texas occupations code.

https://www.bon.texas.gov/pdfs/law_rules_pdfs/nursing_practice_act_pdfs/NPA2023.pdf

Texas Board of Nursing (2024). Rules and regulations relating to nurse education, licensure, and practice.

https://www.bon.texas.gov/pdfs/law_rules_pdfs/rules_regulations_pdfs/December%202024%20Rules%20and%20Regulations.pdf