

MSN Programs Clinical Approvals and Required Signed Paperwork Policy

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I. POLICY STATEMENTS

The purpose of the PPS is to establish the policies and procedures which govern the clinical preceptor and site approval processes for the graduate nursing programs.

It is the policy of the School of Nursing that all graduate students participating in clinical practicum rotations or mentorships complete the appropriate department and course level approvals prior to starting their clinical practicum rotations or mentorships. Clinical approval processes must be thorough to ensure sites and preceptors are vetted, approved, and meet the requirements set forth by the SON, as well as meet accreditation requirements. This includes submission of pre-clinical paperwork of a site affiliation and preceptor agreement, with accompanying preceptor resume and licensure verification for departmental and course-level approvals. Course level approvals may only be completed by a licensed Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) for Nurse Practitioner (NP) programs and licensed Registered Nurse (RN) graduate faculty of record for Leadership and Administration (LAN) program.

At the end of the course, faculty must electronically send the preceptor agreements, clinical faculty evaluation form, and clinical hours records for all assigned clinical students to the MSN Programs Director and the appropriate specialty track coordinator prior to final grade submissions for the course.

II. PROCEDURES

There is a specific process for approvals for a student to be eligible to start their clinical rotations in the graduate programs. Ultimately, the final approval to start clinical with a preceptor comes from the student's faculty obtained by written approval within the online practicum course.

A. Faculty-Student Assignments:

1. Clinical adjunct faculty are responsible for accessing the course tracking spreadsheet located in the Microsoft Teams site titled “MSN Clinical Rotations and Tracking.”
2. Clinical adjunct faculty must document their assigned course section and student assignments on the spreadsheet for tracking and verification purposes.
3. The Clinical Education Placement Coordinator is responsible for documenting department-level clinical approvals on the same tracking spreadsheet.
4. Course faculty may review the spreadsheet to monitor the status of departmental approvals and student clinical readiness.
5. The tracking spreadsheet is maintained within the appropriate Term–Year folder under Files in the Microsoft Teams site and is updated on an ongoing basis as approvals are completed.

B. Immunization/CPR requirements:

1. *Student Responsibilities:*

- a. Students must ensure that all personal information, immunizations, RN licensure, and CPR are up to date within Clinical Student. This currently includes:
 - i. Annual TB test or screening
 - ii. Influenza vaccination administered between 9/1 and 10/25.
- b. Students may not attend clinical rotations in any site or agency without all items up to date throughout the program.
- c. Maintaining currency is the responsibility of the student and is always expected while enrolled in any class in the program, even when not enrolled in a clinical course.
- d. If a student’s immunizations, CPR certification, or other required compliance documentation expire during an academic term, the student must immediately cease all clinical activities and is not permitted to participate in clinical experiences until the deficiency is resolved.
- e. If required compliance documentation remains expired for more than fourteen (14) consecutive days, the student must meet with the MSN Programs Director to review academic progression and may be subject to dismissal from the program. Clinical hours completed during a period of noncompliance will not be applied toward course or program clinical hour requirements.

2. *Faculty Responsibilities:*

- a. Faculty will be notified by the Clinical Education Placement Coordinator (CEPC) of the student’s immunization status, including TB, CPR, and flu by the first day of class. If a question exists on a student’s status, the faculty will contact the CEPC or specialty program coordinator for clarification or updates.
- b. If a student is approaching the date for an item to be renewed, the CEPC will notify the student via email and copy the MSN Programs Director and the Track Coordinator (FNP/PMHNP/LAN), and current clinical faculty on the

email notification, reminding the student that they may not attend clinical until resolved.

- c. If a student's required compliance documentation expires without timely renewal, the Clinical Education Placement Coordinator (CEPC) will notify the student via email, with copies to the MSN Programs Director, Track Coordinator, and course faculty, that the student is prohibited from participating in any clinical activities until the compliance deficiency is resolved.

C. **Departmental Level Approvals:**

1. **Students must initiate the department level approval process.** For students to start the departmental level approval process for clinical sites and preceptors, the student must verify if there is a current affiliation contract with the site by reviewing the list published in the Graduate Clinical Placement Canvas Course.
 - a. If Texas State already has a site affiliation with the requested site, no further action is needed by the student.
 - b. If there is not an established affiliation contract, refer to PPS 02.02.12 *Graduate Nursing Affiliation Agreement Process* for the steps to request an affiliation.
 - c. Students must work with the CEPC to get the site affiliation for the facility completed. **Please Note:** This process can take 3-6 months for some sites. Start as early as possible, six months to a year in advanced is preferred.
2. For Preceptor approval, students must retrieve the preceptor approval forms found in the Graduate Clinical Placement Canvas Course site (see the Modules).
 - a. Students must obtain the required information from the preceptor along with the preceptor's signature/date on the form.
 - b. The student will then upload the form, along with a preceptor's resume or CV (required), and verify the preceptor's license using the appropriate link in the Graduate Clinical Placement Canvas course corresponding to the preceptor's licensure, uploading all of these to the Graduate Clinical Placement Canvas course in the appropriate assignment (see the Modules).
3. The CEPC starts the departmental level review process by reviewing the preceptor forms and resume for completeness and preliminary review of minimum requirements of preceptors, as well as initial licensure review to ensure the license is unencumbered. If there are concerns or licensing issues with the initial review, the CEPC or MSN Programs Director will notify the student to let them know.
4. Once the departmental level review is complete, the CEPC will award Departmental Approval in Canvas as Complete and has approval for the site and preceptor corresponding to the paperwork submitted.
5. The CEPC will then mark the student as approved in the Graduate Nursing Clinical Rotations and Tracking TEAMS site. Note—students cannot begin clinical until their clinical faculty actually approves them to begin through Course-Level Approvals.

D. Course Level (Faculty) Approvals:

1. **Students must initiate the course level approval process.** Once the student receives the departmental approval from the CEPC, the student must upload a copy of the preceptor agreement, the preceptor's resume, and the preceptors licensure verification report into the Practicum Canvas course (under assignments for preceptor forms) for faculty to review, along with a copy of the student's tentative schedule.
2. The faculty will review the following:
 - a. The site and preceptor for appropriateness and fit to meet course objectives for the specific practicum course (including population served for the course)
 - i. Site Review includes review of the MSN Clinical Rotations and Tracking Teams site to check for department level approval
 - ii. Faculty must verify that the preceptor's license is **unencumbered** with the appropriate board or licensing agency and validate:
 1. years of experience
 2. appropriate earned degree
2. After this course level review, faculty will notify the student by:
 - a. If *approved*, faculty will provide **written** approval and date in the practicum CANVAS course under the "preceptor approval" assignment area in the comments and post the grade.
 - b. Faculty shall document approval, and approved date to begin the rotation, in the "PRECEPTOR ASSIGNMENT" comment area for this assignment in the course.
 - i. **Written Approval Example:** *"Student is approved for clinical rotations at (Site) with (preceptor) starting (date). License validated and appropriate to meet course objectives."*
 - ii. Only when a student receives this **written approval in the course** from the faculty member may he or she start the clinical rotations for the course (must be on or after date of approval). **Course level approval by the faculty is REQUIRED in writing in the CANVAS practicum course (assignments area comments) before a student can start rotations.**
 - c. **Students may not start clinical without this written approval. Email and Text approvals are not allowed or accepted at any time.**
 - i. If a student attends clinical prior to getting faculty approval, those hours will not count toward the required hours. Students must reschedule and make up those hours.

III. OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A. Continuation with a Preceptor:

1. For students who will continue clinical in the same site in a new semester, a **new** preceptor agreement form must be signed and submitted for each term that the student is with the preceptor
 - d. Both departmental level approval and course level approval are required.
 - e. Resumes are good for 1 year and only need resubmitting annually unless there is a known change to the preceptor's resume

B. Preceptors at Multiple Clinics and Preceptor Substitutes:

1. If the preceptor sees patients in multiple clinics or facilities, every facility that the preceptor-student will see patients or manage care in **must have an affiliation contract** established with the SON and College of Health Professions.
 - a. **Please note:** this type of rotation (preceptor traveling to multiple sites/facilities) requires MSN Programs Director approval in addition to department and course level approvals.
 - b. Typically, only 1-2 sites will be approved for "contract" type of preceptors.
2. Students may not follow a preceptor's colleague (another provider in the same setting) without a preceptor agreement and approval for each colleague. Each provider in a facility that a student follows must have a preceptor approval. Following a preceptor's colleague without approval will result in those hours as uncounted.

C. Documentation of Dates and Clinical Hours:

1. Dates on the Clinical Hours Record and Final Clinical Schedule must match.
2. Dates on the preceptor approval form must correlate with the current term and course that the student is enrolled in. (A form is good for 1 term only).
3. Students may not schedule or attend clinical during university breaks or holidays, including spring break.
4. Students cannot work more than 10 hours in a day or 40 hours in a 7-day period. Students should log breaks and lunch times on their clinical hours record (think clock-in and clock-out on the clinical hours records).
5. For any clinical day over 6 hours, students must log at least one (1) thirty (30) minute lunch break. It is recommended that students should be taking a 1-hour lunch for shifts of 8 hours or more.

D. Clinical Practicum Syllabi:

1. All clinical practicum syllabi are required to refer to this policy.