

ACE Recommendations for Terms and Roles in the Clinical Setting

The following are recommendations from ACE for issues related to clinical rotations and include recommendations for clinical faculty, nursing students, Schools of Nursing and Clinical Agencies.

Students are philosophically and legally not employees of clinical agencies. The School of Nursing is responsible for students and agencies are responsible for employees. As it relates to students, these responsibilities are outlined in the affiliation agreements.

I. Recommended Definitions for the Following Terms:

- A. Patient Care Nurse: The RN to whom the patient is assigned and who is ultimately responsible for the patient to which the student is assigned.
- B. Clinical Scholar Agreement: A contractual agreement where the academic institution pays the facility for clinical instructor services provided by employees of the facility.
- C. Clinical Experience: Faculty planned, guided and supervised learning activities in a clinical setting occurring after a student has received the theory and course work necessary to provide safe care.
 1. Clinical Rotation: A clinical experience for more than one student at a facility for a defined period of time and conducted under the supervision of the clinical faculty (instructor or scholar).
 2. Precepted Experience: A clinical experience in which an individual student is assigned to a licensed nurse at or above the level of licensure the student is seeking, employed by a clinical setting, who assumes joint teaching responsibility with the faculty member when a Clinical Faculty is not present at the setting. The Preceptor and student assume an ongoing 1:1 relationship.
- D. Clinical Faculty:
 1. Clinical Instructor: May be either a Clinical Faculty or ANIP (see definition from Colorado Board of Nursing) who is **hired by the Academic Institution** for the purpose of facilitating clinical education. These individuals are “**academic-based**”.
 2. Clinical Scholar: The term used to represent a Clinical Faculty or ANIP (see definition from Colorado Board of Nursing) who is an **employee of the Clinical Agency** who is freed from usual clinical responsibilities in order to facilitate clinical education for a group of nursing students. These individuals are “**agency-based**”.
- E. Faculty/Course Coordinator: Faculty from the academic institution who is ultimate responsible for the nursing students during the clinical rotation and precepted experience.
- F. Preceptor: A licensed nurse at or above the level of licensure the student is seeking; a nurse employed by the clinical setting who assumes joint teaching responsibility with a faculty member when a Clinical Faculty is not present at the setting. The Preceptor and student assume an ongoing 1:1 relationship.
- G. Affiliation Agreement: A contract established between the nursing school

ACE Recommendations for Terms and Roles in the Clinical Setting

and clinical site used to set forth policies and procedures to place students in a supervised clinical experience. An affiliation agreement must be in place for all clinical rotations and/or practicum experiences.

II. Recommendations for Clinical Faculty Role

- A. Know the institution in which you are instructing students.
 1. Arrange and attend any and all orientations required by the healthcare institution, including but not limited to electronic medical record systems, automated dispensing systems, unit-specific information and facility policies and procedures.
 2. Abide by the policies and procedures of the healthcare institution and ensure that students do the same.
 3. Coordinate and ensure orientation of the students to the institution and units on which they will be providing care.
- B. Know the Law
 1. Comply with all the applicable federal, state and local statutes and regulations in connection with the performance of clinical activities.
 2. Maintain the confidentiality of all patient medical information including information obtained in the performance of clinical responsibilities according to HIPAA.
 3. Maintain the confidentiality of all student academic information in accordance with FERPA regulations.
 4. The student is NOT working under your license or the license of the staff nurse. The student is covered by malpractice/liability insurance provided by the school of nursing. You are responsible for your own nursing practice and are provided malpractice/liability insurance by the school and/or privately. The staff nurse and Clinical Scholars are responsible for their own nursing practice.
- C. Know you are responsible for supervising your students' clinical experience.
 1. Supervise the Student: Clinical faculty assumes supervisory responsibility for the student. The staff nurse is responsible for the patient.
 2. Monitor Clinical Practice: Allow students to perform only those procedures that fall within the student's scope of practice using the following guidelines:
 - Within standard nursing practice
 - Learned in an academic program
 - Permitted by the institution
 - Leveled appropriately according to student's point in the educational program
 - Deemed appropriate in the clinical judgement of the clinical faculty in collaboration with the patient's nurse

ACE Recommendations for Terms and Roles in the Clinical Setting

3. **Communicate:** In most cases, students should be assigned to patients, not individual nurses. Post the student/patient assignments daily and verbally communicate at the beginning of each shift to the patient's nurse specifically what each student can do related to each patient's care. Communicate openly with staff and students regarding patient assignments, student/staff responsibilities and the students' scope of practice. Provide feedback regarding student performance. Use the appropriate chain of command within the hospital and the school to resolve problems in a timely manner.
 4. **Be Available and Engaged:** Clinical Faculty must be present and/or available on the clinical units where their students are providing care throughout the clinical rotation.
- D. **Know you are responsible for educating your students on how to perform and communicate in the clinical environment to maintain safe patient care at all times.**
1. Provide opportunities for students to integrate theoretical content with its application in the clinical setting using a variety of clinical instruction methods.
 2. Instruct students that they must assume responsibility for seeing direct and indirect supervision as necessary from the Clinical Instructor, Preceptor or designated, qualified alternative.
 3. Instruct students that they must communicate clearly to the Clinical Faculty, Preceptor or staff nurse any skills or procedures expected of them which they do not feel adequately prepared to assume independent responsibility.
 4. Conduct clinical conferences with the students as needed to meet the learning objectives of the course and provide written and/or verbal documentation of the students' achievement of clinical course objectives and professional behavior as needed.
 5. Follow the institution's policy regarding your review of students' documentation of patient care.
- E. **Know you are responsible for evaluating student clinical performance and progress toward meeting course competencies/outcome criteria:**
1. Provide constructive feedback, oral and/or written, to students on regular and consistent basis.
 2. Complete the appropriate performance evaluation tools provided by the nursing school program within the timeframe of the clinical course/rotation indicated by the school of nursing.
 3. Identify and appropriately communicate to the school of nursing information regarding the student who is performing below standards of care indicated in the performance evaluation outcomes tool. Early identification and communication is critical.
 4. Return all the required written documents and graded assignments to the school of nursing within the designated timeframe of the clinical course/rotation.

ACE Recommendations for Terms and Roles in the Clinical Setting

- F. Know you are responsible for enhancing the student's clinical learning by fostering a relationship based on mutual respect, advocating for the student and role modeling professional behavior.

III. Recommendations for the Student Role

- A. Attend all required facility orientation.
- B. Consistently demonstrate professional behavior.
- C. Report to nursing unit 15 minutes before the shift begins.
- D. Be prepared to provide safe patient care.
- E. Maintain the School of Nursing skills checklist.
- F. Perform only those procedures that fall within the student's scope of practice:
 - 1. Within standard nursing practice
 - 2. Learned in academic program
 - 3. Permitted by the agency
 - 4. Deemed appropriate in the clinical judgement of the faculty in collaboration with the patient's nurse
- G. Maintain patient confidentiality standards according to HIPAA.
- H. Complete assigned documentation on each patient.
- I. Have instructor from academic institution review documentation each day.
- J. Notify instructor and assigned patient care nurses before leaving for breaks and before leaving for the day.
- K. Maintain a continual dialogue with the patient care nurse who is ultimately responsible for the patient.
- L. Participate in the evaluation process.

IV. Recommendations for the Academic Institutions

- A. Maintain a current contract/agreement with the clinical facility.
- B. Provide facility with list of students/faculty names with contact numbers no less than 14 days before each rotation.
- C. Provide facility with documentation that verifies student and faculty compliance with OSHA safety, BLS certification, HIPAA training, professional liability insurance, current PPD, immunizations and other information as required by the facility.
- D. Provide facility with documentation that verifies current RN license for instructors and advanced practice students.
- E. Provide resumes of clinical instructors for review by the facility for appropriateness to the assigned unit and experience level.
- F. Clinical Faculty time and expertise is valuable. Fair and equitable reimbursement should be provided to clinical faculty for agency orientation, direct supervision of students and any additional time required to ensure the delivery of safe clinical practice and the satisfactory achievement of clinical course objectives.

V. Recommendations for the Clinical Agency

ACE Recommendations for Terms and Roles in the Clinical Setting

- A. Provide Clinical Scholar resume/CV to school of nursing for each rotation.
- B. Provide orientation to clinical faculty and/or students that commensurate with the roles and responsibilities they will be fulfilling within the facility.

VI. Recommended Evaluations

- A. Clinical staff to evaluate student rotation.
- B. Students to evaluate staff, facility and instructor.
- C. Clinical Faculty to evaluate students and facility.
- D. Clinical agencies and schools are encouraged to exchange evaluation data.