



ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN NURSING

CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE HANDBOOK

STUDENT ATTESTATION

Students must verify that they have read this Excelsior College Associate Degree in Nursing Clinical Practice Experience Handbook in its entirety and are aware of the information contained within it. An attestation is available in Evaluate and required for approval to take the clinical practicum courses.

CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

The faculty believe the clinical practice experiences offer opportunities for associate degree nursing students to provide direct, hands-on nursing care for patients across the life span. The clinical practice experience enables students to interact with the interprofessional team as well as with the patient's family and friends, while applying the nursing process to make nursing judgments. Principles of management and delegation to implement plans of care, evidence-based findings, and information technology are applied to improve the quality of care for patients. The required clinical practice experiences are live practicums in **NUR 250 Clinical Nursing Practicum: Care of Patients Across the Lifespan** and **NUR 290 Nursing Capstone: Advanced Clinical Practicum** that take place in an acute-care setting across a three-day clinical experience. Students must travel to clinical sites during the course terms for NUR 250 and NUR 290. Clinical practice experiences are conducted by clinical faculty with expertise in clinical nursing education.

Background

The organizing framework of the School of Nursing embodies four essential core concepts: patient-centered care, nursing judgment, professional identity, and spirit of inquiry. These are integral to the meta-paradigm of nursing and are the underlying curricular concepts that promote safe quality care, collaboration, cultural consideration, and evidence-based practice in pre-licensure clinical practice experiences in the School of Nursing.

The hybrid NUR 250 and NUR 290 courses each allocate 0.5 credit hours to the clinical experience. The clinical experience immerses students in an acute-care setting for one 3-day clinical experience to complete 30 hours of clinical practice in each clinical course. Clinical faculty provide useful and timely feedback to students throughout the clinical practice experience. Students must comply with all clinical site requirements; course registration cannot be guaranteed if requirements are not met. Students are responsible for any costs associated with travel to the designated clinical site. Students must successfully pass the clinical experiences to be eligible to pass NUR 250 and NUR 290.

Clinical Practicum Objectives (Competencies)

NUR 250

1. Provides patient-centered care. (Patient-Centered Care)
2. Demonstrates qualities of teamwork and collaboration. (Teamwork and Collaboration)
3. Uses evidence-based findings for optimal patient care outcome. (Evidence-Based Practice)

4. Uses quality improvement initiatives to improve safety of patient care. (Quality Improvement)
5. Uses information technology to communicate effectively and mitigate error. (Information Technology)
6. Uses nursing judgment to plan, implement, and evaluate patient care in the acute-care setting. (Nursing Judgment)
7. Demonstrates professional behaviors consistent with Registered Nursing when interacting with patients, families, and team members with regard to patient's health care needs. (Professional Behaviors)

NUR 290

1. Incorporate unique needs of individuals and families to assist them toward self-determination of their health care needs. (Patient-Centered Care)
2. Apply principles of teamwork and collaboration when caring for groups of patients. (Teamwork and Collaboration)
3. Evaluate effectiveness of applied evidence-based findings on patient care outcomes. (Evaluation of Care)
4. Identify appropriate quality improvement initiatives for assigned patients. (Quality Initiatives)
5. Compare and contrast types of information technology used to mitigate error during patient care. (Integration of Technology)
6. Analyze effectiveness of nursing judgment when caring for multiple patients. (Analysis of Nursing Judgment)
7. Assume accountability for nursing practice. (Professional Practice)

Clinical Expectations for Students

- Arrive to clinical site prepared and on time, ready to start the clinical day.
- Exhibit professional appearance.
- Adhere to clinical attire requirements.
- Adhere to professional behaviors.
- Comply with clinical site policies and procedures.
- Maintain safety and patient privacy throughout the clinical practicum.

Clinical Practicums

Clinical provides the opportunity for students to practice in real-life environments to apply nursing knowledge, skills, and attitudes while bridging the gap from theory to practice. Other benefits of clinical include interacting and collaborating with the interdisciplinary team, applying clinical judgment, and addressing changing clinical conditions as they arise. Participation in the nursing program requires a high level of personal commitment to achieving the program learning outcomes. While much of the work in the clinical courses is completed asynchronously, some work needs to be conducted in live, synchronous sessions. In the clinical courses, there are 1–2 synchronous one-hour virtual pre-clinical briefing sessions that count toward the mandatory clinical hours for the course. These sessions are scheduled by the clinical instructor to take place with the clinical student cohort and are offered only at the designated time. The session dates/times are posted in the classroom on the first day of each term and will take place during weeks 3, 4, 5, or 6 of the term. A quiet area, free of interruptions with adequate lighting and noise control, is required for the virtual sessions. Students should have a backup plan in place in the event of a

power outage or loss of internet. An example of a backup plan includes having a mobile hotspot available via smartphone and participating in an environment where the internet is known to be reliable.

In-person clinical hours occur at designated times during the student's scheduled three-day clinical experience. Students in the clinical courses are strongly encouraged to provide advance notice and work with their employers, families, and friends to ensure they can attend and fully participate in all the mandatory clinical hours. Students may not be working or providing childcare/ adult care during any of clinical hours, including the virtual briefing sessions.

After finishing Phase 1 of the nursing program, students will receive access to eValue, the software used at Excelsior College to manage data related to the clinical practice experiences. Students will be notified of their access via messaging from the School of Nursing. To prepare for the clinical practicum courses, students must then log into the eValue AD Program via their MyExcelsior page.

At least one term before taking NUR 250 and NUR 290, students must complete preferencing prior to electronically submitting to eValue the necessary documentation that supports their readiness to participate in the clinical practicums. Incomplete documentation will result in approval delays to take NUR 250 and/or NUR 290. Please note that all documents must be completed truthfully to the best of the student's knowledge. Failure to do so or falsifying information is in violation of the academic integrity policy and could result in negative consequences, including dismissal from the nursing program.

Clinical Practice Requirements

- All students are required to submit credentialing information to the eValue system before receiving academic advisor approval to register for the clinical practicum courses. This information includes, but is not limited to, a national background check, current CPR certification, vaccinations (influenza, and COVID-19 initial series and booster(s)), health records (including current physical examination, current tuberculosis screening, MMR vaccination, varicella vaccination, hepatitis B vaccination), and drug screening. Individual hospitals may have additional credentialing requirements. Information about site-specific requirements can be found on the eValue Home Page. Students unable or unwilling to provide appropriate documentation may not be able to meet the learning outcomes for the course. If you have additional questions about the requirements, contact clinicalexperience@excelsior.edu.

Clinical Facility Information

Clinical sites are located in acute-care hospitals across the United States. Students will care for patients across the life span on medical/surgical units and/or pediatric units in the hospital setting.

Clinical Sites

Clinical sites are listed in eValue for the terms in which there is clinical site availability.

Availability of clinical site locations is subject to change.

Travel Information

Students are scheduled for clinical experiences and are required to travel to the clinical site during the assigned three-day clinical experience. Students are responsible for their own transportation and all expenses related to travel to and from the clinical site. Students attend one clinical weekend—day one (2 hours), day two (12-hour day), and day three (12-hour day). In addition, students will participate in a two-hour synchronous huddle prior to the clinical experience and a two-hour asynchronous debrief after the experience. Clinical experiences occur during the eight-week terms for NUR 250 and NUR 290.

Pre-Clinical Conference

When enrolled in NUR 250 and NUR 290, students are required to virtually participate with the clinical instructor and student cohort group during asynchronous pre-clinical conferences and for a one-hour synchronous pre-clinical conference at the instructor's established date and time. Dates and times of the synchronous pre-clinical conference are shared by the clinical instructor on the first day of the course. Attendance at the pre-clinical conferences is mandatory and ensures adequate preparation of students to enter the clinical site.

The Clinical Experience

Clinical performance will be evaluated by the clinical instructor throughout the three-day clinical experience, and formative mid-point feedback will be provided at the conclusion of Day 2 with opportunities to improve prior to the conclusion of the clinical experience. The clinical experience grade will be submitted in the classroom by the end of the week following the student's clinical experience. Clinical performance is evaluated based on criteria in the Clinical Evaluation Rubric.

If an extenuating circumstance prevents attendance at clinical, the student must contact the clinical instructor and provide documentation to support the extenuating circumstance. Students with extenuating circumstances who miss clinical will only have one opportunity to make up clinical at a designated time/date. Examples of extenuating circumstances include but are not limited to illness, death in the family, and natural disaster. Additional credentialing information for the clinical site may be required to attend the clinical makeup. Failure to make up a missed clinical will result in an unsatisfactory score for the student's clinical practicum, and thus result in failing the course.

Post-Clinical Conference

A post-clinical conference occurs in the week following the student's clinical experience. The post-clinical conference occurs asynchronously with the clinical instructor and student cohort group. Students are required to submit their post-clinical assignment(s) in the designated classroom area the week following clinical for a timely evaluation by the clinical instructor. Participation in the post-clinical conference is mandatory and ensures appropriate debriefing of the clinical experience.

Professional Responsibilities

Professional Behaviors

Students must demonstrate accountable, responsible, professional behaviors that embody the role of the Registered Nurse throughout the entire clinical practice experience. Professional behaviors include:

- Comply with the Excelsior College Academic Integrity Policy.
- Adhere to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Practice within a manner consistent with American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nursing.
- Practice within the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN): A Nurse's Guide to Professional Behaviors.
- Use professional language (both verbal and non-verbal) during all communications.
- Act within the legal scope of nursing practice.
- Demonstrate civil conduct to patients, faculty, hospital staff, and fellow students at all times.
- No patient information may be downloaded, photographed, and/or removed from any clinical site.
- No taking or posting photographs or divulging information related to the clinical experience on any social media site or otherwise.

Students may perform all skills and experiences according to hospital policies and procedures necessary for patient care, with the exception of:

1. Initiate or regulate the following intravenous treatments
 - a. Vasoactive medications
 - b. Lipids
 - c. Hyperalimentation
 - d. Chemotherapy
 - e. Narcotics
 - f. Any blood products
2. Conduct cardiac outputs
3. Perform venipuncture
4. Administer IV push medication
5. Administer epidural medication
6. Administer experimental, trial, or off-label medication
7. Change a Central Line Dressing
8. Collect blood from a central line
9. Perform tracheal suctioning
10. Access controlled medication or witness the access of controlled medications
11. Carry narcotics keys
12. Access dialysis devices and/or implantable ports
13. Manipulate peritoneal dialysis
14. Tape, extubate, or manipulate an endotracheal tube
15. Manipulate respiratory ventilator equipment
16. Manipulate auto-infusion devices
17. Manipulate dialysis devices
18. Take verbal or telephone provider orders
19. Perform procedural or conscious sedation
20. Transcribe provider orders

Professional Appearance

Students must exhibit a professional appearance during the clinical experience. While at the clinical site, students must:

- Have no visible body piercing other than one pair in ears.
- Limit jewelry to a watch, wedding band, and one pair of stud earrings or neutral-colored ear lobe inserts; ear gauges must be plugged closed with plugs matching skin tone.
- Visible tattoos may require coverage dependent upon clinical facility requirements.
- Ensure hair is well groomed, and if shoulder length or longer, is pulled back; hair color is of natural tones.
- False eyelashes are prohibited.
- Make-up should be limited and of natural tones.
- Ensure nails are well groomed, less than ¼ inch length, and if polished, the color is clear, light beige, coral or pale pink; nail polish must be intact (not chipped or peeling), no artificial nails, and detailing or accessories.
- Practice personal hygiene and be free of offensive odor; offensive odor includes body odor, perfume, cologne, and smoke.
- Refrain from chewing any substance (example: gum).

Clinical Attire

At the clinical site, students are required to wear clean, pressed attire. The professional uniform for Excelsior College includes:

- White dress (underclothing must be white) or dark purple dress at or below the knees; **OR**
- Two-piece uniform
 - **Top:** White shirt or scrub top with sleeves above elbows; t-shirts are not allowed, and underclothing must be white.
 - **Bottom:** Dark purple bottom—either pants or skirt—that falls at or below the knee, with white or beige socks or stockings.
- White rubber-soled shoes or sneakers, must be clean and free of perforations, with closed toes and enclosed heel. Shoes with small brand insignias are permitted.
- White lab coat is permitted but not required; the sleeves must be ¾ length or shorter and have no insignias such as name, title, or hospital name.
- Student identification badges—personalized identification badges must contain the student name and designation as an Excelsior College nursing student. Information about site-specific requirements can be found on the eValue Home Page.

Required Equipment

Students must bring their own stethoscope, penlight, and bandage scissors to the clinical practicum site. These items are available for purchase via the bookstore if students do not have access to ones for personal use. Additionally, students must bring pens, a pocket calculator without wi-fi or cellular capability, a watch with a second hand, a NANDA-I handbook, and a current drug handbook. Secure locations for personal items cannot be guaranteed at the clinical sites. Personal items and items of value should not be brought into the hospital.

Self-Care Items

Students may bring food and drink to consume during the lunch break.

Clinical Policies and Procedures

- Students must receive a satisfactory (complete) clinical grade in order to pass a nursing course with a clinical component, regardless of the academic grade earned.
- Students cannot be in a clinical setting without approval of the nursing faculty.
- Students are expected to attend and fully participate in the entire scheduled clinical practicum experience. Any student arriving late for clinical and/or leaving early will be required to make up the missed clinical hours during a clinical makeup at the designated date/time and may be required to submit additional credentialing information for the clinical site. Students who miss any portion of the clinical practicum experience must request a course extension to complete the required clinical hours. See the [Excelsior College Courses and Exams Extension](#) policy for further information.
- Clinical absences must be reported prior to the start of the scheduled clinical experience. Students must send a message to the clinical instructor via messaging in the Canvas course. Additionally, students must send an email from their personal email to clinicalexperience@excelsior.edu to notify them of the day(s) they are absent in the Canvas course. Failure to notify the clinical instructor will result in an unsatisfactory score for clinical.
- If a student reports to the clinical setting with an illness and/or demonstrates behavior that indicates the student is under the influence of alcohol/drugs, he/she will be sent home immediately and will earn an unsatisfactory for clinical.
- To ensure patient safety, students are responsible for coming to clinical well rested.

Student Conduct in Clinical

- Patient care should not be interrupted by personal electronic devices.
- Smartphone and smartwatch use are not permitted in patient care areas.
- Students should arrive in a prompt manner ready to receive their assignment and to receive the report from the primary RN.
- Students are not to leave the patient unit without the clinical instructor's acknowledgment.
- Clinical time is limited; therefore, students should be actively participating in the patient's care. Students should not loiter at the nursing station or computer station unless gathering information from the electronic health record.
- All patient procedural care including, but not limited to, dressing changes, intravenous flushes, and medication administration must be in the direct supervision of the clinical instructor. Students should never independently give medications or perform procedures.
- Maintain HIPAA standards and patient privacy.
- No clinical documents with patient identifiers (date of birth, medical record number, and name) should be removed from the facility.
- Students must alert the clinical instructor immediately when there is a safety issue, and/or significant change in the patient's clinical condition and/or if there is a situation requiring a change in patient assignment or special intervention.

Clinical Evaluation

On the first day of the course, students must familiarize themselves with the Clinical Evaluation Rubric. Student performance will be evaluated by the clinical instructor, using the criteria within the course's Clinical Evaluation Rubric. During the clinical experience, the clinical instructor will provide mid-clinical feedback to the student. Grading and feedback will be documented in the Canvas classroom.

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