



**St. Thomas University
College of Nursing
Graduate Program**

2026-2027

Preceptor Role for MSN-NP Programs

Disclaimer Statement: These guidelines have been prepared to inform you of the selected policies, procedures, and activities within St. Thomas University's Accelerated MSN option.

As registered nurses, graduate students must adhere to all rules and regulations in the Nurse Practice Act in your state.

SAINT THOMAS UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF NURSING

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Dear Preceptor,

Thank you for partnering with the St. Thomas University College of Nursing in the education of our graduate nursing students. We sincerely appreciate your willingness to share your time, clinical expertise, and professional experience as you mentor the next generation of advanced practice nurses.

As a preceptor, you play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between academic preparation and clinical practice. Your guidance, mentorship, and commitment to excellence provide students with invaluable opportunities to apply evidence-based knowledge, develop clinical judgment, strengthen critical thinking skills, and gain confidence in delivering high-quality, patient-centered care.

We recognize that serving as a preceptor requires a significant investment of time and dedication, and we are truly grateful for your invaluable contribution to our students' professional growth and success. Your commitment to clinical education has a lasting impact on the future of the nursing profession and the quality of healthcare delivered to the communities we serve.

We value your partnership and welcome your questions, feedback, and suggestions as we continually strive to enhance our clinical education programs. Nursing education is a collaborative endeavor, and your expertise is essential to ensuring a meaningful and rewarding clinical learning experience for our students.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students at the St. Thomas University College of Nursing, thank you for your dedication, mentorship, and commitment to excellence in advanced nursing education.

**Sincerely,
College of Nursing
St. Thomas University**

St. Thomas University College of Nursing

All preceptors must possess the qualifications and experience necessary to effectively supervise graduate nursing students during their clinical education. Preceptors for the MSN Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP), Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP), and Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (AGNP) programs must meet the educational and professional qualifications established by the College of Nursing and the applicable national certifying and regulatory agencies, including the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).

Preceptors must:

- Hold a current and unrestricted license as a Physician (MD or DO) or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (FNP, PMHNP, or AGNP), consistent with the clinical specialty in which they supervise students.
- Be authorized by the appropriate state licensing board to practice within their designated population focus and specialty area (e.g., family, adult-gerontology, psychiatric-mental health, women's health, or pediatrics).
- Have a minimum of two (2) years of clinical experience in the specialty area relevant to the student's assigned clinical course.

The preceptor plays a vital role in bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world clinical practice. Before the clinical rotation begins, preceptors will receive the student's course syllabus and are expected to review the course objectives and clinical learning outcomes. While these objectives should guide the clinical experience, students should also be provided with a broad range of appropriate learning opportunities that enhance their professional development. The College of Nursing encourages exposure to diverse patient populations, clinical conditions, and evidence-based practice experiences whenever possible.

At the beginning of the clinical rotation, the preceptor is responsible for orienting the student to the clinical site's policies, procedures, documentation requirements, workflow, and safety protocols. Initially, students should observe the preceptor's approach to patient assessment, diagnosis, and management. As the student's competency develops, the preceptor should progressively provide opportunities for independent clinical practice under appropriate supervision. Students are expected to perform patient assessments, formulate differential diagnoses, develop treatment plans, and present their clinical reasoning before receiving feedback and guidance from the preceptor.

Throughout the clinical experience, the preceptor is responsible for providing ongoing supervision, mentoring, constructive feedback, and professional guidance. At the conclusion of the required evaluation periods, the preceptor will complete the appropriate student evaluation forms provided by St. Thomas University and review the evaluation with the student, offering constructive feedback that promotes continued professional growth and clinical competence.

The preceptor agrees to notify the Clinical Faculty immediately if the clinical site location changes during a student's clinical rotation. This notification is essential to ensure that the student is completing clinical experiences at a site that has been approved by the Clinical Coordinator and continues to be in compliance with all St. Thomas University College of Nursing (STU CON) clinical placement requirements.

Preceptor Handbook

Clinical faculty serve as the primary liaison between the College of Nursing, the student, and the preceptor. Faculty are available to discuss program requirements, course objectives, and student expectations with both the preceptor and the student. In addition, faculty are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the clinical placement provides appropriate learning opportunities aligned with the course objectives and program outcomes.
- Maintaining regular communication with preceptors regarding student progress and performance.
- Conducting clinical evaluations through on-site visits and/or virtual meetings at midterm and final evaluations, or more frequently when necessary based on the needs of the student, preceptor, or faculty.
- Providing guidance and support to both students and preceptors throughout the clinical experience.

Faculty also ensure that students and preceptors adhere to the **Nurse Practitioner Primary Care Competencies** appropriate to each specialty area, including Family, Adult-Gerontology, Psychiatric-Mental Health, Pediatrics, and Women's Health. Throughout the clinical rotation, preceptors receive ongoing orientation, mentoring, and support from clinical faculty through Microsoft Teams, email, and other approved communication methods.

St. Thomas University provides all required evaluation forms, clinical documentation, and instructional materials necessary to support the preceptor's role. In addition, all policies, procedures, and regulations governing clinical education are outlined in the Clinical Handbook.

We sincerely appreciate your willingness to share your expertise, knowledge, and professional experience with our students. Your mentorship is essential to preparing the next generation of advanced practice nurses. If you have any questions or need additional assistance, please contact the student's Clinical Faculty, the Program Clinical Coordinator, or the Program Director.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for maintaining professional standards and fulfilling all clinical requirements throughout their clinical rotation. Student responsibilities include the following:

1. **Review the course syllabus** prior to the start of the clinical rotation and provide a copy to the assigned preceptor to ensure a clear understanding of the course objectives, clinical expectations, and required competencies.
2. **Complete all clinical compliance requirements**, including submission of the Clinical Eligibility Form, proof of current nursing licensure, immunization records, and any additional documentation required by the clinical site or the College of Nursing.
3. **Verify that all clinical placement requirements have been completed** before beginning the clinical rotation, including confirmation that the preceptor has signed the required Preceptor Agreement and received the Preceptor Orientation materials.
4. **Comply with all policies and procedures** outlined in the St. Thomas University College of Nursing Graduate Student Handbook and Clinical Handbook, including those related to Nurse Practitioner competencies, professional conduct, ethical practice, confidentiality, and patient safety.
5. **Accurately document all clinical encounters** in the appropriate health record using the SOAP note format or other documentation required by the clinical site. All clinical logs and required documentation must be reviewed, signed, and dated by the preceptor. When applicable, the preceptor's official stamp should also be included.

6. **Demonstrate professionalism at all times** by arriving at the clinical site punctually, adhering to the site's policies and procedures, wearing professional attire appropriate for the clinical setting, displaying the St. Thomas University College of Nursing patch on the lab coat (when applicable), and visibly wearing the official STU student identification badge throughout the clinical experience.

Faculty Responsibilities

Clinical faculty serve as the primary liaison between the College of Nursing, the student, and the preceptor to ensure a high-quality clinical learning experience. Faculty responsibilities include the following:

- **Provide guidance and support** by discussing program requirements, course objectives, and clinical expectations with both the preceptor and the student.
- **Evaluate the clinical learning environment** to ensure that the clinical site, patient population, and assigned experiences are appropriate and sufficient to meet the student's learning objectives and course outcomes as outlined in the course syllabus.
- **Maintain ongoing communication** with the preceptor regarding the student's clinical performance, progress, and achievement of clinical competencies.
- **Conduct clinical evaluations** through on-site visits and/or virtual meetings at the midterm and final evaluation periods, or more frequently when deemed necessary by the faculty, student, or preceptor.
- **Perform additional site visits**, when appropriate, to provide support, address concerns, monitor the quality of the clinical experience, and ensure that program expectations are being met.
- **Ensure compliance with national competency standards** by verifying that students and preceptors adhere to the applicable **Nurse Practitioner Primary Care Competencies** and specialty-specific competencies for Family, Adult-Gerontology, Psychiatric-Mental Health, Pediatrics, and Women's Health Nurse Practitioner programs.

The Nurse Practitioner

The Nurse Practitioner (NP) is a registered nurse (RN) with advanced education and additional clinical experience who delivers health care in a variety of settings. Nurse Practitioners must be recognized as advanced practice nurses by their State Board of Nursing and hold a current specialty-specific certification issued by their professional organizations.

The Nurse Practitioner (NP) focuses on health promotions, disease prevention and treatment. Using a step-by-step (holistic) approach, the NP:

1. Assesses the person(s) by obtaining patient history and complete health assessments. Using this data, appropriate risk factors for disease and health problems (medical and nursing diagnoses) are identified.
2. A patient-specific plan of care is then determined and implemented. This care includes nursing interventions (e.g. education, counseling, or symptom relief) as well as medical interventions (e.g. ordering laboratory tests, prescribing medications, or referrals).
3. The treatment interventions and resulting care outcomes are evaluated.

Nurse Practitioners work in all types of settings such as private practice, clinics, health departments, occupational health clinics in business, nursing homes and many others. NPs work independently in some states. Numerous research studies have demonstrated that Nurse Practitioners provide high-quality care.

Guidelines for Effective Preceptorship

A preceptorship is a collaborative educational partnership between an experienced healthcare provider and a graduate nursing student. The preceptor plays a critical role in bridging the gap between academic preparation and clinical practice by fostering the student's professional growth, clinical competence, and confidence in delivering high-quality, evidence-based patient care.

To promote a successful clinical learning experience, preceptors are encouraged to:

1. **Review the course syllabus and clinical objectives** before the clinical rotation begins. Familiarize yourself with the student's expected learning outcomes and competencies. While these objectives should guide the clinical experience, students should also be exposed to a broad range of appropriate clinical experiences that enhance their knowledge, critical thinking, and clinical decision-making.
2. **Provide a comprehensive orientation** to the clinical site, including office policies, workflow, documentation requirements, patient safety procedures, electronic health record (EHR) use, and any site-specific protocols.
3. **Model best clinical practices** by initially allowing the student to observe your approach to patient assessment, clinical reasoning, diagnosis, treatment planning, documentation, and patient communication.
4. **Provide progressive, supervised clinical experiences** that allow the student to assume increasing responsibility as clinical competence develops, while ensuring patient safety and appropriate supervision at all times.
5. **Encourage independent clinical reasoning** by allowing the student to assess patients, develop differential diagnoses, formulate management plans, and present their recommendations before providing guidance, feedback, and clinical instruction.
6. **Provide ongoing mentoring and constructive feedback** throughout the clinical rotation. Complete the required student evaluations using the forms provided by St. Thomas University, review the evaluations with the student, and offer specific, constructive feedback that supports continuous learning, professional development, and achievement of clinical competencies.

Your mentorship is essential to the professional development of future advanced practice nurses. The time, expertise, and guidance you provide have a lasting impact on students' clinical competence, confidence, and readiness for independent practice.

Precepting Guidelines

See Preceptor requirements listed above, plus the following:

1. No more than three (3) NP Student per Preceptor Ratio is allowed, including students from universities other than St. Thomas University.
2. A preceptor must have authorization by the appropriate state licensing entity to practice in his/her *population-focused and/or specialty area*.

3. Preceptors are oriented to program requirements and expectations for oversight and evaluation of NP students.
4. Preceptor CV's, credentials and a current copy of the preceptor's licenses must be on file in the student's folder in the documentation holding software.
5. Preceptors must read the orientation handbook prior to beginning a clinical rotation with a STU NP student.
6. The Preceptor must sign the acknowledgment of receiving the Preceptor Book, recognition of the Preceptor responsibilities and expectations, and acknowledgment of student expectations. (See Appendix A: Preceptor Acknowledgment Form). *The student is expected to upload the Preceptor Acknowledgment form into Canvas with the Clinical Policy Acknowledgment.*
7. The clinical log database will be utilized for student evaluation, evidence of types of clients and diagnoses, clinical hours, site evaluation, and clinical hours. The preceptor's evaluation and program evaluation will be conducted by Clinical faculty.
8. Students will be evaluated by STU faculty at midterm and at the end of each semester, while in clinical courses at clinical sites by preceptors and clinical faculty. All students will be evaluated at midterm and at the end of each semester.

Rules and Regulations

Our nurse practitioner students have been oriented, prior to commencing clinical practice, on the following rules and regulations:

Confidentiality and Privacy of Client Information

Confidentiality is the protection of a client's privacy through careful use of oral and written communications. The client's right to privacy is safeguarded by judicious protection of confidential information. An individual can withhold any personal information desired. Nursing students must be especially careful regarding the invasion of the client's privacy. Students should use only the initials of the client when completing history forms, care plans, and any other documents that are part of their educational experience. The graduate student is particularly concerned with the process of informed consent in the implementation of research during completion of the research project. Some students choose to conduct their research project at the clinical setting.

Academic Honesty

In their academic and independent research activities, students are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and integrity. Exhibiting plagiarism (presenting another's work as one's own) is totally unacceptable. A student is expected to maintain the ethical and professional standards of nursing discipline as defined in the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics.

Providing nursing care in an unsafe or harmful manner

- Carrying out a procedure without competence or without the guidance of a qualified person.
- Willfully or intentionally causing patient/client harm, with or without permanent damage.
- Exhibiting careless or negligent behavior in connection with the care of a client.
- Finding oneself unable to assume the assigned and necessary care of a client and failing to find alternative measures for the delivery of that care.

Falsifying patient's records or fabricating patient experience.

- a) Failing to report omission or error in treatments or medications.
- b) Fabricating patient experience or clinical hours.

Disrespecting the privacy of a client: violating the confidentiality of the nurse/client relationship.

- a) Disclosing the full name or position of a client in a manner that violates the individual's privacy.
- b) Discussing confidential information in inappropriate areas, such as elevators, or with inappropriate persons, such as media representatives.
- c) Discussing confidential information about a patient with third parties who do not have a clear and legitimate need to know.
- d) Any violation of the Federal HIPAA requirements for confidentiality and/or security of patient-specific health care information.

Drugs and alcohol: Using, possessing, selling, or distributing illicit drugs; illegally using, selling, possessing or distributing any drugs or alcohol; or using prescribed and/or illicit substance or alcohol in such a manner as to impair one's judgment or performance as a nursing student.

General Dress Code Policies

Our nurse practitioner students have been oriented prior to commencing clinical on the following dress code.

- Jewelry: Rings-engagement and wedding bands only. (Rings can cause injury to clients, also harbor organisms.) Small earrings, whether posts or loop earrings. Only one earring per ear is allowed. No other body piercing jewelry may be worn in the clinical area.
- Fragrances (perfume, cologne, aftershave): Use only sparingly. Strong odors can be objectionable to clients who are ill. The odor of a smoker is also apparent and offensive to some clients and others.
- Hair: Long hair must be pulled back from one's face and should not be allowed to fall forward in a work area. Use discretion in hair accessories to maintain a professional appearance, safety, and hygiene.
- Fingernails: Short! Clear or very light color polish is permitted.
- Gum Chewing: No gum chewing is allowed in the clinical area.
- Females: White lab coats with the school insignia, closed toe shoes. Black scrub uniforms.
- Males: White lab coats with the STU insignia, black scrub uniform and closed toe shoes.

Cellular Phones and Pagers

It is recognized by the faculty and staff that the changing pace of life in our society requires the use of electronic communication in many styles and methods. It is also recognized that the time spent in the classroom or clinical setting is very important and must be the primary focus of both the faculty and students involved. It is, therefore, necessary to prohibit the use of personal cellular phones, pagers and any other disruptive equipment in the classroom and clinical settings. When cellular phones or pagers are part of communication within that clinical setting, an exception may be made. Should a student be in a

situation where an emergency communication is pending, it should be brought to the attention of the faculty member or appropriate staff member. Cellular phones or pagers can be left with the appropriate person for a message to be delivered to the student if the need arises.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may be imposed upon a student following the violation of any of the rules and regulations.

The NP Program faculty and administrative staff expect every student to observe the basic rules of good behavior in all academic settings including clinical rotations.

Acts of Reprimand or Probation

- Non-compliance with the NP program and policies.
- Defamatory statements about the clinic, fellow students, preceptors, patients or faculty.
- Unexcused absence or lateness: Habitual or frequent lateness or absence from duty, classes, conferences, or extracurricular activities.
- Untidiness: Both personal untidiness with respect to personal grooming and hygiene, or untidiness in work areas, care of equipment, keeping of records, etc.
- Smoking in an unauthorized area or at an unauthorized time.

Insubordination: Students are expected to comply with directions given by a faculty/preceptor, without argument or dissent. Any questions concerning the directions may be presented to the Faculty and Program Director. Faculty and Preceptors must not tolerate irresponsible behavior such as:

- Unsatisfactory performance of assignments.
- Contributing or causing unsafe conditions.
- Practical joking and laughing or playing on duty.
- Unauthorized absence from assigned work.
- Extending lunches or break-time without permission.
- Failure to sign-in and out when required.
- The use of profane or abusive language.
- Any conduct detrimental to patient safety, fellow students, employees or clinical settings.
- Divulging any confidential information.
- Refusal to carry out assignments.
- Soliciting tips, loans, or gifts from patients or another person.
- Failure to report an injury, accident, incident or unsafe conditions occurring or existing on clinical premises.

Acts that are cause for dismissal:

- Failure to fulfill responsibilities to an extent that might or does cause injury to a patient, visitors, other students or hospital personnel.
- Deliberate violation of a posted health, safety, and fire prevention or security rule.
- Falsification of records (i.e. health forms, patient document(s), or application forms).
- Habitual non-compliance with departmental policies.

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- Unauthorized clinical performance without the knowledge of faculty or program director that have been logged as official when not in an official capacity
- Deliberate false, fraudulent, or malicious statements or action involving relations with a patient, fellow students, the clinical settings, employees, or the public or other disloyal conduct.
- Theft: Removal of or unauthorized possession of property belonging to employee, students, visitors. This includes the intent to remove or the actual removal of university and property from clinical settings grounds.
- Illegal use of or possession of drugs or the dispensing of drugs without a prescription.

Impaired Student Nurse - Preceptor Reporting Requirement

Students are expected to report to all clinical/experiential learning activities free from impairment due to alcohol, controlled substances, illicit drugs, or any other substance that may interfere with their ability to safely perform clinical responsibilities.

Preceptors who have reasonable suspicion that a student may be impaired or under the influence of alcohol or drugs while participating in clinical/experiential learning activities must immediately notify the faculty of record and should not attempt to independently investigate or manage the situation. Concerns may be based on observed behaviors, signs, symptoms, or other circumstances suggesting possible impairment.

The faculty of record will determine the appropriate course of action in accordance with the St. Thomas University College of Nursing Impaired Student Nurse/Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) policies. The preceptor should document and communicate objective observations to the faculty of record and maintain confidentiality regarding the matter.

Preceptors should never allow a student suspected of impairment to continue providing patient care without first notifying the faculty of record.

Civility Expectations - General Principles for All Members

All students, faculty, and staff are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity, kindness, and respect
- Communicate with professionalism across all platforms (verbal, written, electronic)
- Address conflicts constructively, respectfully, and directly
- Promote a culture of inclusion and mentorship
- Be accountable for their own actions and words
- Refrain from retaliation in any form

This document has been developed to provide guidance to students, preceptors, and clinical faculty in complying with the St. Thomas University College of Nursing (STU CON) policies, procedures, and clinical requirements for the successful completion of clinical education and required clinical

Appendix A

Graduate Nursing Preceptor Acknowledgement Form

St. Thomas University College of Nursing Graduate Nursing Program

(Please retain a copy for your record.)

Thank you for serving as a preceptor for our Graduate Nursing Program. Your expertise and commitment are essential to providing students with meaningful clinical learning experiences. This acknowledgement confirms receipt of preceptor materials and understanding of the responsibilities and expectations associated with the preceptor role.

Preceptor Information

Preceptor Name: _____

Credentials: _____

Practice Setting: _____

Employer: _____

Student Name: _____

Faculty Member: _____

Preceptor Handbook

By initialing below, I acknowledge that I have:

_____ Received the Graduate Nursing Preceptor Handbook (Preceptor Book).

_____ Reviewed the handbook and understand the information, policies, and procedures contained within it.

_____ Know how to contact the course faculty if questions or concerns arise during the clinical experience.

Preceptor Responsibilities and Expectations

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I understand and agree to:

- ☐ Provide a safe, professional, and supportive clinical learning environment.
- ☐ Orient the student to the clinical site, applicable policies, workflow, and patient care expectations.
- ☐ Facilitate clinical learning experiences that support the student's approved course and clinical objectives.
- ☐ Supervise the student's clinical activities consistent with organizational policies and applicable state and federal regulations.
- ☐ Provide regular feedback regarding the student's clinical performance, professionalism, communication, and clinical reasoning.
- ☐ Notify the course faculty promptly of any concerns related to student performance, professionalism, patient safety, attendance, or conduct.
- ☐ Complete required student evaluations and documentation within established program timelines.

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- ☐ Promote patient confidentiality and compliance with HIPAA and all applicable privacy regulations.
- ☐ Model ethical, evidence-based, culturally sensitive, and professional nursing practice.
- ☐ Collaborate with course faculty regarding student progress and learning needs.

Student Expectations

I understand that graduate nursing students are expected to:

- ☐ Arrive prepared, punctual, and professionally dressed according to program and agency policies.
- ☐ Maintain current required compliance documentation before participating in clinical experiences.
- ☐ Demonstrate professional behavior, accountability, integrity, and respect toward patients, families, staff, and the healthcare team.
- ☐ Maintain patient confidentiality and comply with HIPAA and institutional policies.
- ☐ Communicate promptly regarding absences, tardiness, or schedule changes.
- ☐ Accept constructive feedback and incorporate recommendations into clinical practice.
- ☐ Practice only within the scope permitted by the clinical course, institutional policy, and supervision of the preceptor.
- ☐ Complete assigned clinical documentation, logs, and course requirements by established deadlines.
- ☐ Demonstrate initiative in learning while recognizing personal limitations and seeking guidance when appropriate.
- ☐ Adhere to all STU CON, clinical agency, and professional standards during their entire clinical experience with me.

Acknowledgement Statement

I acknowledge that I have received the Graduate Nursing Preceptor Handbook and have reviewed the information regarding the Graduate Nursing Program. I understand the responsibilities and expectations of the preceptor role, as well as the expectations established for graduate nursing students. I agree to fulfill the responsibilities of a graduate nursing preceptor to the best of my ability and to collaborate with the assigned faculty member throughout the clinical experience.

Print	Signature	Date
Preceptor Name:		
Student Name:		
Clinical Coordinator:		

Program Contact Information

Program Director: _____
Faculty Contact: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____