



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER.

COLLEGE OF NURSING



RN FIRST ASSISTANT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

STUDENT/PRECEPTOR/FACULTY MANUAL

FOR

2020-2021

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Goals of the RNFA Certificate Program

Welcome to the Registered Nurse First Assistant Certificate Program. This is the first RNFA program offered in the State of Tennessee. The College of Nursing admitted its first RNFA students in August of 2017. The program meets the criteria established by the Association of periOperating Room Nurses (AORN) for RNFA programs and is listed as an approved program by the Competency and Credentialing Institute; the certifying body for Registered Nurse First Assistants.

The RNFA Scope of Practice

Perioperative nursing is a specialized area of practice. Registered nurses practicing as first assistants in surgery are functioning in an expanded perioperative nursing role. The RNFA may be either a registered Nurse who is a Certified Nurse in the Operating Room (CNOR) or an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, both of which are completing an approved RNFA program. First assisting behaviors are further refinements of perioperative nursing practice and these behaviors include certain delegated medical functions that can be assumed by the RN who is qualified to practice as an RNFA. Registered nurse first assistant behaviors may vary depending on patient populations, practice environments, service provided, accessibility of human and fiscal resources, institutional policy, and state nursing regulations.

Registered nurse first assistant behaviors in the perioperative arena include, but are not limited to:

- preoperative patient management in collaboration with other health care providers, such as: performing focused preoperative nursing assessments and communicating and collaborating with other health care providers regarding the patient plan of care; and
- intraoperative performance of surgical first assistant techniques such as: using instruments and medical devices, providing surgical site exposure, handling and/or cutting tissue, providing hemostasis, suturing, and
- Wound management
- postoperative patient management in collaboration with other health care providers in the immediate postoperative period and beyond, such as: participating in postoperative rounds and assisting with patient discharge planning and identifying appropriate community resources as needed

The APRN practicing in the perioperative environment as a first assistant at surgery

- Functions in an expanded perioperative APRN role;
- Functions autonomously as part of the surgical health care team to achieve optimal patient outcomes in the preoperative and postoperative management of surgical patients and their complex responses to the surgical process;
- Functions in the perioperative arena with responsibilities based on role specific competency, patient populations, practice environments, accessibility of human and fiscal resources, and health care organization policy; accessibility of human and fiscal resources, and health care organization policy;
- functions intraoperatively as a first assistant at surgery only and not concurrently as a scrub person or circulator; and

- functions intraoperatively in a coordinated manner with the surgeon while using instruments and medical devices, providing surgical site exposure, handling and/or cutting tissue, providing hemostasis, suturing, and wound management

Graduates are eligible to take national certification examinations for Certified Registered Nurse First Assistant or CRNFA. Graduates are expected to contribute to the delivery of quality health care through their implementation of evidence-based practice.

Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this Manual is to acquaint students, preceptors and faculty to some of the elements that are a part of the clinical education of RNFA students. The processes of selecting, approving, administering, and evaluating the wide variety of clinical learning experiences are. Hopefully, this document will provide guidance.

Education is a dynamic undertaking and there are a number of changes that take place over the school year. Please work with the faculty for any questions you have not answered by this manual.

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Expectations for RNFA Students

The general expectations for students in the College of Nursing are contained in the UTHSC Catalog and *CenterScope* located at <http://catalog.uthsc.edu/>. This document focuses on specific issues for the clinical aspects of the RNFA Certificate Program.

RNFA students work with a number of faculty, staff and preceptors as a part of their clinical education. Several official documents must be executed prior to beginning any clinic assignment. You will need to know which documents must be completed, by whom and when.

Your faculty, with the assistance of the Clinical Coordinator, will identify and assign your clinical site and preceptor. All clinical sites and preceptors are required to be approved and proper documents executed between them and the university prior to you beginning to see patients at the site.

Student Responsibilities for Clinical Experiences

- Review course outcomes
 - Your faculty will discuss with the preceptor what is expected for the course. You are responsible for knowing what you are to be learning and how your learning progresses in the course.
- Meet with Preceptor, if indicated.
 - Some preceptors prefer to interview you prior to agreeing to work with you while others do not. If you have an interview, you should use it to your advantage.
- Provide the preceptor with an understanding of your level, ability, and personality.
- Enable the preceptor to assess if you will be a “good fit” for the clinical site and the population it serves. You can put your best foot forward by being prepared with a CV.

Scheduling of Clinical Experiences

- Clinical practicum experiences are scheduled at the convenience and availability of the preceptor.
 - Please do not expect preceptors to conform to a schedule that meets your employment needs.
 - You and the preceptor need to agree on the days and times you will be in the clinical agency prior to beginning.
 - Unless otherwise stated in the syllabus, you are expected to begin the clinical experience when the course starts and complete when the course ends.
- Schedule the start and end dates along with the days of the week for the entire time you will be in site and place this in Medatrax.
- Schedule the course evaluation with the preceptor.

Professional Dress and Behavior

- You are a representative of UTHSC College of Nursing so please present yourself professionally.
- Please be respectful of preceptors, faculty, staff, patients and their families.
- You should be professionally dressed and wear your UTHSC Student ID.
- A short lab coat with the UTHSC patch on left upper arm is appropriate unless the preceptor says otherwise.
- You should follow the dress and OSHA standards for clinical attire of your clinical site.
- You should express your appreciation to your preceptors for their assistance.

Preparation for Clinical Experiences

- Please be prepared including credentials, dress, location, and timing, before the first clinical day at the clinical agency.
- Discuss questions about computer access, the procedure for preceptor cosigning documents, eating and parking arrangements, and communication with other disciplines.
- Please clarify the preferred method to notify the preceptor in the event of a late arrival or absence.
- Learn something about the preceptor to acknowledge the preceptor's background and broaden your educational experience.

Attendance

- Attendance at the negotiated times and days with the preceptor is required.
- Documentation in Medatrax is another requirement. Faculty will monitor this to help you assure you are meeting the required minimum expectations.
- Be proactive with your faculty if you find you are running into problems in meeting your minimum expectations. Rarely can you expect to receive an incomplete for a clinical course.
- Immediately notify the preceptor and faculty if you are not able to attend a scheduled day.
- You will need to present a plan to make up the missed experiences and have this approved by the faculty and preceptor.
- Unapproved absences for assigned clinical experiences are a violation of professional behavior and may result in disciplinary action.

Use of Medatrax to Track Experiences

The Medatrax system is used to provide on-line tools specifically designed to assist in recording and maintaining student and clinical data. Each student has a specific account.

- Students track clinical time and log patient encounters.
- Students upload and maintain current RN licensure and CPR certification.
- Students may also upload required clinical forms or complete other clinical assignments.
- Faculty review Medatrax to assure students are on track.
- Approved preceptors and clinical sites are maintained in Medatrax.

Expectations of Preceptor and Volunteer Faculty

- Mentor and serve as a role model for student.
- Guide the student to meet the course outcomes.
- Identify appropriate clinical encounters for student.
- Direct the use of accepted clinical guidelines and standards of care.
- Tailor guidelines/standards to unique clinical situations.
- Assist student in refinement of interpersonal skills with patients and colleagues.
- Alert student and faculty of problem areas early for improvement.
- Evaluate achievement of the learning outcomes.
- Provide the student with feedback.
- Demonstrate high ethical standards.
- Demonstrate respect for the student's faculty, curriculum, and program.
- Demonstrate the ability to manage multiple variables while carrying out patient and colleague interactions.

Important Aspects of the Student and Preceptor Relationship

- Immediately report to the faculty any student behaviors threatening the safety of the patient or risk to the clinical site.
- Monitor and report student performance including at risk of not meeting standards.
- Supervise student in the clinical setting.
- Communicate with the appropriate staff about the scheduling of patients, and specific procedures to enhance learning with a minimal disruption of the office routine.
- Provide student evaluations using the appropriate Clinical Performance Evaluation forms.
- Understand the legal liability of the preceptor role.

Preceptors Can Expect Students To:

- Meet with preceptor to clarify course objectives and focus of clinical activities.
- Assist preceptor completing required documents associated with preceptor role.
- Create an acceptable schedule with the preceptor.
- Contact the preceptor in case of any absence, prior to the absence.
- Negotiate with the preceptor for making up time missed if possible.
- Dress appropriately for the site and behave in a professional manner at all times.

Preceptors Can Expect Faculty To:

- Provide course description, clinical outcomes, and the amount of time required.
- Provide information about the RNFA program.
- Provide methods to contact faculty member.
- Act on any problems affecting student progression in clinical coursework
- Guide preceptor in the student evaluation process.
- Provide feedback to preceptors on their performance.

Preceptors Who Wish to Be Appointment Volunteer Faculty

The University of Tennessee recognizes the valuable contributions of people who give freely of their time and talents for the benefit of the University without compensation. The Tennessee legislature in the enactment of the Tennessee Claims Commission Act of 1984 recognized the need to protect volunteers from legal actions while performing their service on behalf of the University. Volunteers who are registered with the University enjoy civil immunity from liability under the Act. Volunteers are not covered for Worker's Compensation. We encourage preceptors to consider becoming Volunteer Faculty in the College of Nursing.

The following information is required to be recommended and approved as Volunteer Faculty:

- Curriculum vitae or resume
- Copy of current license
- 2 letters of recommendation from individuals who can speak about your professional qualifications
- Permit a background check

Preceptors who wish to be recommended as volunteer faculty should notify a faculty member who will facilitate this process. Volunteer faculty also are eligible for:

- Discounted Membership to the UTHSC Fitness Center
- Access to the UTHSC Library, including online journals (e.g., Up-to-Date)
- Free evening and weekend UTHSC campus parking; and
- Discounted fees at the UTHSC Dental Clinic

Expectations of Faculty

Prior to the beginning of a clinical assignment:

- Verify appropriateness of clinical site and contractual agreements.
- Orient new preceptors to the preceptor role and College of Nursing educational expectations.
- Review preceptor responsibilities with continuing preceptors related to course and level of student.
- Prepare student for clinical experience including faculty specific communication requirements.
- Validate student qualifications for clinical practice.
- Understand the legal liability of the preceptor role.

Throughout Course:

- Have a first-hand knowledge of the clinical site through either an in-person or a virtual site visit.
- Work with the student and preceptor to assure the learning outcomes are being met.
- Monitor use of clinical guidelines and standards of care.
- Support student in refinement of effective communication.
- Alert student to focus on problem areas early to provide an opportunity to refine skills by when practicum is completed.
- Communicate with preceptor regularly to monitor student's progress in course.
- Evaluate students through direct observation and preceptor feedback using proper forms.

Legal Agreement Requirements

There are a number of documents that are required to be executed by the University of Tennessee prior to the beginning of any student clinical experience. Some of these are rather complex and can take from weeks to months to complete.

Site Approval

Each clinical site must have a current and valid contract between the clinical organization and the University of Tennessee. This agreement specifies the responsibilities of each organization and provides legal protections for both. All currently approved sites are listed in Medatrax, but some may be difficult to find as the name of the organization may have changed since the initial approval. The Clinical Coordinator can assist in identifying approved sites.

Preceptor/Volunteer Faculty

All preceptors are required to be appointed by the College of Nursing as a preceptor or volunteer faculty prior to accepting any students. This appointment provides recognition of the responsibilities of the preceptor and provides legal protections as well. All approved preceptors are listed in Medatrax.

CPR, BLS and ACLS Certification

Students are responsible for maintaining current certification in CPR, BLS and ACLS. The certification may expire during the time the student is in the program, but students must recertify to remain current. The dates of coverage for certification are listed in Medatrax under each student's site.

Criminal Background Check

All students undergo a required criminal background check prior to beginning the program and annually. Any changes are required to be reported immediately by students as a condition of remaining in the program.

Drug Screening

DNP students undergo a required urine drug screen prior to beginning the program and annually. In addition, drug screens may be required for cause, random screenings, or clinical agency requirements.

Immunizations

The university requires that students complete a list of immunization as well as TB skin tests prior to engaging in any patient care. These data are maintained by the University Health Service. Some clinical agencies may have additional requirements for immunization, but students will be informed, and these will be provided prior to the specific clinical experience.

Appendix

College of Nursing Forms for the RNFA Program

The college of Nursing uses a number of different forms as a part of the program. Copies of these forms used in the RNFA Certificate Program are shown. Many of these forms are to be uploaded into Medatrax so that they are associated with the student.

1. Student-Preceptor-Faculty Agreement
2. Confirmation of Student-Preceptor-Faculty Agreement
3. Preceptor and Faculty Evaluation of RNFA student
4. Student Evaluation of clinical Site and Preceptor
5. Faculty Evaluation of Clinical Site and Preceptor

Student-Preceptor-Faculty Agreement

Course _____ Semester/Year: _____

The preceptor agreement permits nursing students of the College of Nursing, University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) to participate in a student preceptorship in your facility,

_____. Conditions of this program are as follows:
(Clinical Site Name)

The Affiliation period will be _____ to _____. The student, _____, will be under the supervision of _____, acting as preceptor.

(Preceptor Name)

Professor _____, of the College of Nursing, serves as the liaison with your facility for the above course(s).

Preceptor Responsibilities:

1. Function as a role model in the clinical setting.
2. Facilitate learning activities for no more than two students per day.
3. Orient the student(s) to the clinical agency.
4. Collaborate with faculty to review the progress of the student toward meeting clinical learning objectives.
5. Provide feedback to the student regarding clinical performance.
6. Contact the faculty if assistance is needed or if any problem with student performance occurs.
7. Discuss with faculty/student arrangements for appropriate coverage for supervision of the student should the preceptor be absent.
8. Give feedback to the nursing program regarding clinical experience for student and suggestions for program development.

Nursing Program/Faculty Responsibilities

1. Ensure that preceptors meet qualifications.
2. Ensure that there are current written agreements which delineate the functions and responsibilities of the clinical preceptor and associated agency and nursing program
3. Ensure that clinical experiences using preceptors occur only after the student has received basic theory and clinical experiences necessary to safely provide care to clients (within course or curriculum).

4. Orient both the student and the preceptor to the clinical experience.
5. Provide the preceptor an orientation to the philosophy, curriculum, course, and clinical objectives of the nursing education program. Discuss student expectations, skills' performance, student guidelines for performance of procedures, and methods of evaluation.
6. Assume overall responsibility for teaching and evaluation of the student.
7. Assure student compliance with standards on immunization, screening, HIPAA compliance, OSHA standards, CPR, criminal background check as needed and current liability insurance coverage.
8. Work cooperatively with the preceptor and the agency to determine student learning needs and appropriate assignments.
9. Make appropriate student assignments with the preceptor.
10. Communicate assignments and other essential information to the preceptors.
11. Meet regularly with the clinical preceptor and the student in order to monitor and evaluate the learning experience.
12. Monitor student's progress through rounds, student clinical seminars, student-faculty-preceptor conferences and review of student clinical assignments.
13. Be readily available, e.g., telephone, pager or e-mail for consultation when students are in the clinical area.
14. Receive feedback from the preceptor regarding student performance.
15. Provide recognition to the preceptor for participation as a preceptor.

Agency Responsibilities:

1. Retain ultimate responsibility for the care of clients.
2. Retain responsibility for preceptor's salary, benefits, and liability.

Student Responsibilities:

1. Verify clinician/administrator eligibility to function as preceptor.
2. Maintain open communications with the preceptor and faculty.
3. Maintain accountability for own learning activities.
4. Prepare for each clinical experience as needed.
5. Be accountable for own nursing actions while in the clinical setting.
6. Arrange for preceptor's supervision when performing procedures.
7. Contact faculty by telephone, pager or e-mail if faculty assistance is necessary.
8. Respect the confidential nature of all information obtained during clinical experience.
9. Wear appropriate professional attire and university name tags when in the clinical site.

Signatures on following page confirm that the above conditions reflect correctly your understanding of an agreement to this affiliation.



RNFA Certificate Program
RNFA542G Advanced Perioperative II - Evaluation of Student

Student: _____ Preceptor _____

Date of Evaluation _____

- I. Directions: Circle the rating that best represents the student’s performance at the completion of this clinical course.

	Rare	Usually	Always
1 Arrives prepared and informed about procedures	1	2	3	4	5
2 Assists with appropriate positioning, prep and drape	1	2	3	4	5
3 Provides appropriate exposure of the surgical site	1	2	3	4	5
4 Communicates effectively with the surgeon and anticipates needs	1	2	3	4	5
5 Demonstrates knowledge of anatomy and physiology	1	2	3	4	5
6 Demonstrates appropriate knowledge and use of instrumentation	1	2	3	4	5
7 Demonstrates ability to tie knots effectively	1	2	3	4	5
8 Demonstrates one handed knot tying	1	2	3	4	5
9 Demonstrates two handed knot tying	1	2	3	4	5
10 Demonstrates ability to instrument tie.	1	2	3	4	5
11 Recognizes and demonstrates appropriate techniques for providing hemostasis.	1	2	3	4	5
12 Demonstrates appropriate tissue handling	1	2	3	4	5
13 Demonstrates proper technique/instrument to cut tissue	1	2	3	4	5
14 Demonstrates appropriate deep wound closure	1	2	3	4	5
15 Demonstrates appropriate suture techniques	1	2	3	4	5
14 Displays/ Verbalizes understanding of emergent situations and the appropriate response required.	1	2	3	4	5
15 Functions within the institution’s guidelines governing RNFA’s.	1	2	3	4	5
16 Participates as an effective perioperative team member	1	2	3	4	5
17 Present with professional Appearance and demeanor	1	2	3	4	5

RNFA542G Advanced Perioperative II Eval Page 2

Comments:

II. General Comments:

A. Identify three areas where the student needs to continue to develop their skills?

B. Identify three strengths in the students in the student's ability as a RNFA assist?

Date this evaluation was discussed with student _____

Preceptor Signature _____

I have read this report.

Student signature _____

Faculty signature _____

NAA 8/18

Student Evaluation of Clinical Site and Preceptor

Preceptor's Name: _____ Clinical Site: _____

Student's Name: _____ Date of Evaluation: _____

1 – almost always 2 – usually 3- sometimes 4 – rarely 5 – almost never

INVOLVEMENT/RECEPTIVITY/COMPETENCE	1	2	3	4	5
1. Respects student as an important individual in the healthcare team.					
2. Assists students when problem arises					
3. Allows adequate time to accomplish a task					
4. Involves student in formulating plan and decision making					
5. Remains calm, poised in clinical situation					
6. Relates didactic knowledge to clinical practice					
TEACHING PRACTICES	1	2	3	4	5
7. Demonstrates flexibility to improve learning					
8. Assists student in identifying problems					
9. Demonstrates new procedures					
10. Leads student through decision making rather than giving own impressions.					
11. Encourages questions and discussions regarding alternative management.					
12. Allows appropriate documentation.					
13. Considers student's limits according to level of experience.					
14. Encourages student to assume increasing responsibility during clinical rotation.					
15. Student evaluations are objective and shared with students in a positive, confidential manner					
CLINICAL SITE	1	2	3	4	5
1. Do clinical experiences correlate with course outcomes?					
2. Do students have adequate (census, acuity) learning experiences?					
3. Do students have adequate role models/preceptors?					
4. Are staff receptive to students?					

OTHER COMMENTS:

 (Signature of Student)



**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER**

COLLEGE of NURSING

Faculty Evaluation of Clinical Site and Preceptor

Preceptor's Name: _____ Clinical Site: _____

Faculty's Name: _____ Date of Evaluation: _____

1 – almost always 2 – usually 3- sometimes 4 – rarely 5 – almost never

INVOLVEMENT/RECEPTIVITY/COMPETENCE	1	2	3	4	5
1. Respects student as an important individual in the healthcare team.					
2. Assists students when problem arises					
3. Allows adequate time to accomplish a task					
4. Involves student in formulating plan and decision making					
5. Remains calm, poised in clinical situation					
6. Relates didactic knowledge to clinical practice					
TEACHING PRACTICES	1	2	3	4	5
7. Demonstrates flexibility to improve learning					
8. Assists student in identifying problems					
9. Demonstrates new procedures					
10. Leads student through decision making rather than giving own impressions.					
11. Encourages questions and discussions regarding alternative management.					
12. Allows appropriate documentation.					
13. Considers student's limits according to level of experience.					
14. Encourages student to assume increasing responsibility during clinical rotation.					
15. Student evaluations are objective and shared with students in a positive, confidential manner					
CLINICAL SITE	1	2	3	4	5
1. Do clinical experiences correlate with course outcomes?					
2. Do students have adequate (census, acuity) learning experiences?					
3. Do students have adequate role models/preceptors?					
4. Are staff receptive to students?					

COMMENTS: _____

Recommend for continued use? YES NO _____
(Signature of Faculty)