



Statement Regarding Clinical Site Placements

Department of Physician Assistant Studies

The preceptor is an integral part of the teaching program. Preceptors will serve as role models for the student and, through guidance and teaching will help students' perfect skills in history taking, physical examination, effective communication, physical diagnosis, succinct recording and reporting, problem assessment, and plan development including a logical approach to further studies and therapy.

The clinical component of the program is vital to the successful preparation and appropriate practice of a physician assistant. Preceptor participation helps ensure that each student has a place to learn. By completing the majority of clinical experiences in the office of a practicing primary care physician or physician assistant, students are assured of exposure to the common primary care problems in a practice setting. It is under the aegis and supervision of the preceptor in a one-to-one teaching relationship that the student gains clinical competencies and accomplishes role integration. This is closely monitored and augmented by the faculty.

Students will complete the primary care clinical experiences with a preceptor who may also serve as clinical professor with the School of Medicine & Health Sciences. It is fully discussed at this time that a role of the preceptor is to assist students in finding additional clinical experiences in the areas not available within the primary care practice. The team of faculty advisor, preceptor and student will work together to identify clinical learning opportunities in areas such as inpatient medicine (hospitalist), emergency medicine, general surgery and other areas necessary to afford the student with a well-rounded clinical experience. Ideally, these experiences would include clinical settings within the referral system of the primary care clinical setting. This networking allows the student increased familiarity and an understanding of institutional policy and procedure in the healthcare system with the idea that the student may become employed within that system. The responsibility of the preceptor is also noted in the preceptor manual and is stated that the preceptor would "provide the student with supervised clinical practice experiences outside of the practice setting as needed to facilitate the fulfillment of the program objectives." The highest priority of the program is to allow students to meet program expectations, achieve instructional objectives and acquire the competencies needed for clinical PA practice.

It is the responsibility of the program to achieve program objectives required for graduation. Students should expect to travel outside of their home area for required clinical experiences.

Students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. It is the responsibility of the program to coordinate clinical sites and preceptors for program required rotations. This includes identifying, contacting, and evaluating sites and preceptors for suitability as a required or elective clerkship experience. Students may make suggestions to their faculty advisor or clinical team of sites and preceptors which may be considered for review, evaluation, and approval of educational suitability by the program. Prior to any student entering a clinical site, all related documentation including affiliation agreement, preceptor profile, discipline and dates secured must be finalized and approved by the program. Investigation of suggested sites will be at the discrepancy of the clinical team considering aspects of availability, timing, suitability and other factors necessary of successfully placing students in clinical settings.

Many health care entities employ personnel specifically for arranging educational experiences within their institution. The request from clinical placement personnel is to work directly with the program faculty rather than through each individual student. Keeping this in mind, students are required to respect the request of the health care institution and **must not directly approach the clinician or the clinical placement personnel** but must work through the program when discussing clinical site placement.