GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAMS

CLINICAL | PRACTICUM HANDBOOK
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Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information policies about practicum, clinical, and service-learning courses. This handbook is an adjunct to the CMU Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual and the Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook. Questions not covered by this Handbook should be directed to course faculty. Practicum, clinical, and service-learning experiences should provide students with opportunities to integrate new knowledge acquired in didactic courses into their emerging advanced nursing practice.

Definitions

- **Advanced nursing practice**: Any nursing intervention that influences health care outcomes for individuals or populations (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2015).
- **Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)**: The title given to a nurse who meets education and certification requirements and obtains a license to practice as an APRN in one of the four roles: certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA), certified nurse-midwife (CNM), clinical nurse specialist (CNS), and certified nurse practitioner (CNP) (APRN Consensus Workgroup & National Council of State Boards of Nursing APRN Advisory Committee, 2008).
- **Direct Care**: Nursing care provided to individuals or families for the purpose of achieving specific health goals or achieve selected health outcomes; provided in a variety of settings (e.g. acute and critical care, long-term care, home health, community-based settings, educational settings) (AACN, 2011).
- **Indirect Care**: Nursing decisions, actions, and/or interventions provided through or on behalf of individuals, families, or groups. These decisions, actions, and/or interventions create conditions allowing nursing care or self-care to occur (e.g. administration, public health, policy development) (AACN, 2011).
- **Interprofessional education**: Involves shared learning experiences among health profession students across disciplines (World Health Organization, 2010).
- **Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE)**: A standardized examination of structured patient scenarios during which students can demonstrate clinical competencies including health history taking, physical examination, diagnoses, planning treatment, and case presentations (Shumway & Harden, 2003).
- **Service-learning**: An educational experience embedded in a course where students are expected to participate in organized service activities that meet community needs and reflect on the service activity in order to gain understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and a sense of civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995). Service-learning in CMU’s Graduate Nursing Program follows the Goals-Needs-Objectives-Methods-Evaluation (GNOME) model (Roberts, 1996).
- **Simulation**: A method of experiential learning during which a set of conditions is artificially created to mimic real life or real-world events for the purpose of evaluating students’ clinical competencies (Al-Elq, 2010).
### MSN-NE Track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Type of Experiences</th>
<th>Settings</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURS 577</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 545L</td>
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</table>

**Total Hours: 250**

*Note. Settings=clinical (inpatient, long term care, outpatient, community/public health, urgent care, others as approved by course faculty), laboratory, organizational, academic, simulation, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), service-learning (SL).*

### MSN-FNP Track*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Type of Experiences</th>
<th>Settings</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURS 577</td>
<td>Direct Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 586</td>
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<td>NURS 588</td>
<td>Direct Care</td>
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<td>50</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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**Total Hours: 700**

*Note. Settings=clinical (inpatient, long term care, outpatient, community/public health, urgent care, others as approved by course faculty), laboratory, organizational, simulation, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), service learning (SL).*

*Students who have been out of clinical courses for 1 calendar year must participate in and pass an OSCE held the semester prior to when the student plans to re-enter clinical courses.  
** A minimum of 560 hours must be performed in direct care.*
## DNP-FNP Track*

<table>
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<th>Settings</th>
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<td>Clinical, Simulation, OSCE</td>
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<td>NURS 588</td>
<td>Direct Care</td>
<td>Clinical, Laboratory</td>
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<td>NURS 615</td>
<td>Direct Care</td>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 610</td>
<td>Direct Care, SL</td>
<td>Clinical, Simulation, OSCE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS 620</td>
<td>Direct Care, SL</td>
<td>Clinical, Simulation, OSCE</td>
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<td>NURS 630</td>
<td>Direct Care, SL</td>
<td>Clinical, Simulation, OSCE</td>
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<td>NURS 640</td>
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<td>Clinical, Simulation, OSCE</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURS 650</td>
<td>Direct &amp; Indirect Care, Interprofessional education</td>
<td>Clinical, Community, &amp;/or Organizational</td>
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<td>NURS 652</td>
<td>Direct &amp; Indirect Care, Interprofessional education</td>
<td>Clinical, Community, &amp;/or Organizational</td>
<td>150</td>
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Total Hours: 1000**

*Note. Settings=clinical (inpatient, long term care, outpatient, community/public health, urgent care, others as approved by course faculty), laboratory, organizational, simulation, OSCEs, SL.

*Students who have been out of clinical courses for 1 calendar year must participate in and pass an OSCE held the semester prior to when the student plans to re-enter clinical courses.

**A minimum of 800 hours must be performed in direct care.

### Roles & Responsibilities

#### Graduate Nursing Students

- Verify that a current agreement is in place between CMU and the desired clinical organization (clinical site). An agreement is not established between CMU and individual preceptors unless the individual preceptor is also the business owner. Contact the clinical placement coordinator for the most current list of contracted sites or to establish an agreement with a new clinical site. Students should note that it may take several months or more for an agreement with a new clinical site to be processed by the university. New agreements should only be initiated when sufficient time allows for agreements to be established prior to the beginning of the clinical course.

- Maintain ethical and professional nursing conduct throughout the practicum/clinical/service-learning rotation. This includes arriving on time and communicating with preceptors and course faculty when schedules or experiences require modification.
• Comply with all the institutional/agency, CMU, and Graduate Nursing Program policies. Students in violation of institutional/agency, university, or program policies are subject to disciplinary actions.
• Never perform any task that is outside one’s scope of practice. Performing tasks outside one’s scope of practice or tasks performed without preceptors’ consent are subject to disciplinary actions up to program dismissal. Should the student be involved in any level of violation at the clinical site, students must contact faculty immediately. Failure to contact faculty immediately may jeopardize the student’s enrollment in the program.
• Maintain CPR certification, malpractice insurance, vaccinations, and unencumbered registered nursing license prior to and throughout the duration of the practicum/clinical experience. Failure to maintain any of these will result in expulsion from the practicum/clinical rotation and failure of the course for which the practicum/clinical was being performed.
• Wear a CMU name badge clearly specifying the student role during all practicum/clinical rotations.
• Comply with the personal appearance requirements of the institution/agency where the clinical/practicum hours are accrued. Students must adhere to the requirements set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). No sandals, open-toe shoes, jeans or shorts are permitted. No midriff or low-cut clothing is allowed in any practicum site. Lab coats are usually required in clinical settings, although agency/institutional requirements may vary.
• Avoid bringing valuables into practicum/clinical sites. CMU and practicum/clinical sites are not responsible for lost or stolen items.
• Complete onboarding, if any, for the clinical/practicum placement prior to the beginning of the clinical/practicum course. Examples of onboarding include, but are not limited to, fingerprinting, institutional training (e.g. confidentiality, OSHA), and application for parking privileges.
• Possess and bring to clinical/practicum all necessary supplies to perform roles and responsibilities. Supplies may include, but are not limited to:
  o Clinical supplies (e.g. stethoscope with both a bell and diaphragm, wristwatch with a second hand, otoscope/ophthalmoscope).
  o Working computer with current software and internet access. If students have difficulty with their computer, it is their responsibility to resolve it or seek another computer for use during the course.
  o Transportation to and from their clinical site.
• Complete the Practicum/Clinical/Service-Learning Time Log (Appendix A), have preceptor verify hours performed by initialing each row, and submit to the course D2L shell at least monthly (approximately weeks 4, 8, 12, 16).
• Document all patient cases and clinical hours in Typhon. Adhere to the minimum number of hours specified within each clinical/practicum/service-learning course.
• For non-degree seeking students and students not yet admitted to the Graduate Nursing Program, malpractice insurance and a criminal background check are required prior to
enrolling in any clinical / practicum courses. Refer to the Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook, available at [https://www.coloradomesa.edu/health-sciences/graduate/master-science-nursing.html](https://www.coloradomesa.edu/health-sciences/graduate/master-science-nursing.html) for more information.

**Preceptors**

- **If precepting MSN-FNP and DNP-FNP students:**
  - Be licensed as nurse practitioners (NP), medical doctors (MD), doctors of osteopathy (DO), or physicians’ assistants (PA-C) in the state where the practicum/clinical hours are planned.
  - Hold an educational degree at the level of Master’s or higher (e.g. MS, MSN, DNP, MD, DO, PHD).
  - Work in and have expertise in the substantive area covered in the clinical course (e.g. pediatrics, adult health, geriatrics, rural health, family practice, nursing leadership).
  - Work in settings providing, or collaborating with, primary care across the lifespan.

- **If precepting MSN-NE students:**
  - Maintain an active, unencumbered RN license in the state where the clinical/practicum are completed.
  - Hold an educational degree at the level of Master’s or higher degree from an accredited college or school of nursing. Preceptors holding degrees in disciplines other than nursing must be pre-approved by the course instructor prior to the first day of the course.
  - Have a minimum of two years of experience in the nursing education (clinical or academic) and/or advanced nursing practice.
  - May not be an immediate supervisor or manager of the student. This may be waived by the course instructor on a case-by-case basis. However, clinical hours must be separate and distinct from hours performed as part of the students’ employment.

- **All preceptors, regardless of the student’s educational track, should be prepared to:**
  - Submit curriculum vitae (if available) or the *Preceptor Data/Demographic Form* (Appendix B), and the signed *Preceptor Agreement Form* (Appendix C) prior to the start of the student’s clinical/practicum/service-learning experience.
  - Ensure that the student can complete designated number of clinical/practicum hours under the preceptor’s supervision.
  - Sign a *Practicum/Clinical/Service Time Log* (Appendix A) verifying the student has completed the clinical hours documented (at least monthly) by the student for practicum/clinical/service-learning experiences. Preceptors will need to respond to faculty’s email verifying that the student completed the documented clinical hours.
  - There are situations where students accrue hours at more than one site. If this is the case, preceptors are only responsible for overseeing the student for hours performed under their direction.
o Orient student to clinical setting, organizational policies and key personnel.
o Assist student in planning assignments based on course objectives and student’s articulated learning needs. Students should not be “shadowing.” Instead, they should be actively engaged in the clinical/practicum experience. Active engagement is based on the student’s progression throughout the graduate program.
o Provide supervision of and feedback to the student on a one-to-one basis until the student and preceptor deem direct supervision is no longer necessary.
o Review all student documentation in clinical and/or academic records. Preceptors should co-sign their names to any student documentation.
o Serve as a role model and/or mentor to the student.
o Maintain an open line of communication with student’s clinical faculty, particularly if any concerns arise.
o Note that students are responsible for working with CMU’s clinical placement coordinator to ensure that a current clinical affiliation agreement between CMU and the clinical site is in place.
o Submit an evaluation of the student and upon completion of the student’s clinical rotation. Course preceptors will be provided the evaluation form by the course faculty.
o The preceptor is expected to contact the faculty via email or phone if a concern arises regarding student’s attendance, competence, HIPPA violation, safety or professional demeanor.

**Practicum / Clinical / Service-Learning Sites**

- Be a currently affiliated site with CMU prior to the student’s start of the clinical rotation. Questions about the organizational affiliation process should be directed to the clinical placement coordinator.
- Provide educational and/or clinical opportunities for graduate nursing students that are congruent with course outcomes and the purpose of the practicum.
- Provide a safe place for the student to achieve the student’s learning objectives.
- Maintain all clinical and educational licenses and certifications required by local, state, and national bodies.

**Course Faculty**

- Oversee all clinical/practicum/service-learning experiences performed by graduate student. This includes assessing the appropriateness of student experiences, preceptor qualifications, and adequacy of clinical sites (AACN, 2016).
- Discuss the program and/or course requirements and objectives as needed with the preceptor and student.
- Communicate with the preceptor regarding student’s progress. Course faculty will review the student’s clinical hour logs form at least monthly. Faculty will email the
clinical hour log form to the preceptor for verification that the log accurately reflects the hours reported by the student in Typhon.

- Schedule on-site and remote visits (e.g. conference calls, Zoom meetings) with students and/or preceptors at least twice during the semester.
- Approve students’ record of clinical hour completion in Typhon.
- Email preceptors with forms aligned with course outcomes for the clinical evaluation of student.

**Student Violations & Disciplinary Actions**

Students are subject to disciplinary action if any university, program, or institutional violations occur during the practicum/clinical rotation. Violations may include, but are not limited to, lapses in ethical conduct, unsafe practicum or clinical performance, inability to meet compliance standards for practicum/clinical placement, loss or restriction of the student’s nursing license, or unprofessional behavior as defined by either the practicum/clinical site staff or the graduate nursing faculty. Disciplinary actions, and disciplinary appeals processes, are outlined in the CMU Graduate Program Policies and Procedures and the Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook.

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to,

- Expulsion from the clinical site.
- Course failure.
- Graduate Nursing Program dismissal.

**Preceptor & Clinical/Practicum/Service-Learning Site Selection & Preparation**

1. Students will discuss potential placement options that are local to the student with the instructor at least three months prior to the clinical/practicum course.
2. Students will verify that a clinical affiliation agreement is in place between the clinical/practicum agency and CMU. Students should contact the Clinical Placement Coordinator at the Department of Health Sciences at scruse@coloradomesa.edu to find out the most current listed of affiliated agencies/institutions.
3. Students will reach out to a potential preceptor to inquire about interest in being a preceptor.
4. Once a preceptor is chosen, students will verify the preceptor has the qualifications as stated above in this Handbook.
5. The student will provide the preceptor with a copy of this Handbook, the course syllabus (once it is available), and the following forms which the preceptor will complete and return to the course instructor no later than the first week of the semester.
   a. CV (if available) or the Preceptor Data/Demographic Form (Appendix B).
   b. Preceptor Agreement Form (Appendix C).
6. The course instructor will notify the student via email when the student is approved to begin clinical/practicum hour accrual. No clinical/practicum hours can be performed prior to approval by the course instructor.

7. No clinical/practicum/service-learning hours can be accrued prior to the first day of the course and all hours must be completed by the last day of the course.

8. Students should schedule their hours in conjunction with their preceptors and course instructors. Once the schedule of hours is established, a copy of that schedule should be submitted to the course instructor. The course instructor will use this schedule to make announced and/or unannounced visits to the student’s clinical/practicum/service-learning site. All preceptors and course faculty should be notified by the student of any changes to this schedule.

**Clinical/Practicum/Service-Learning Hour Tracking**

**Schedule and Verification of Hours**

1. At the beginning of each clinical/practicum course, students should document the days and hours they plan to spend at each site. This schedule should be uploaded into the D2L course shell. Course faculty may choose, at their own discretion, to make unannounced site visits to the clinical site to assess the student’s progress.

2. Track all hours performed at the clinical site using the *Practicum/Clinical/Service-Learning Time Log* to track hours.

3. The *Practicum/Clinical/Service-Learning Time Log* will be initialed by the student and the preceptor upon completion of planned practicum/clinical day. Submit the *Time Log* to the course shell at least monthly. Course faculty will send the Time Log to the preceptor electronically to verify accuracy of documentation. Only hours verified by preceptors will be counted towards the student’s total hour accrual.

4. Hours accrued during a course that exceed the minimum number of hours required cannot be counted towards future courses. Instead, they are included in the total hours performed by the student upon the completion of the student’s graduate program.

**Use of Typhon**

Students must document all practicum/clinical/service-learning experiences in Typhon ([https://www.typhongroup.com/](https://www.typhongroup.com/)). Students are expected to follow these steps prior to their first practicum/clinical/service-learning course.

1. The semester prior to the first clinical/practicum/service-learning course, students should contact the clinical placement coordinator in order to establish a Typhon account. Typhon charges a fee for student accounts. Students are responsible for sending their payments directly to Typhon.

2. Students will receive an email from the clinical placement coordinator with the CMU account number (3055), the student’s log in name and a link for the student to create a password.
3. Once the Typhon account is active, students are responsible for uploading the following information into Typhon:
   a. Personal contact information (phone number, email).
   b. License number.
   c. Vaccination status.
   d. Malpractice insurance as a graduate nursing student (NP student insurance required upon enrollment in 600 level courses).
   e. Verification of confidentiality (HIPAA) training.
   f. Verification of CPR certification.
   g. Verification of cultural competency training.
   h. Any additional documentation required by either the practicum/clinical/service-learning site or the course instructor.

4. Students may access instructional videos through Typhon on how to use the software and how to aggregate clinical/practicum/service-learning data to identify gaps in clinical/practicum/service-learning experiences.

5. Students will verify that the clinical/practicum/service-learning site and preceptors are among those already listed in the documentation system. If sites or preceptors are not listed, the student will email the Clinical Placement Coordinator to ask that the site/preceptor be added.

6. Students will record ALL clinical/practicum/service-learning experiences using Typhon. Hours not posted in Typhon will not count towards the student’s clinical/practicum/service-learning hour accrual needed for course completion or graduation from the Graduate Nursing Program.

7. Students should complete all sections of the Typhon spreadsheet.
   a. This spreadsheet will serve as evidence of the student’s clinical/practicum/service-learning experiences. At the completion of each rotation, students should review their aggregated spreadsheet to identify gaps in clinical/practicum/service-learning experiences and to prioritize those areas in their next rotation.
   b. This spreadsheet also serves as evidence of all clinical/practicum/service-learning experiences students have performed over the duration of their graduate studies. Student may need to justify their clinical/practicum/service-learning experiences when applying for advanced practice nursing licensure, when interviewing for employment, or when registering for national certification exams.
Clinical/Practicum/Service-Learning Site Evaluation

Evaluation methods will be determined by each course and will be described in the syllabus or on D2L as determined by the course instructor. Evaluation methods may include but are not limited to written exams, standardized tests, written papers, individual assignments per course syllabus, log of practicum/clinical hours (Typhon), on-campus assessments and clinical appraisals, and surveys of preceptor feedback of the student. Passing grades in a practicum/clinical course will be discussed within each syllabus and in the Graduate Nursing Program Student Handbook.

In addition, students will complete an evaluation survey regarding preceptors and practicum/clinical site. Prior to the end of the semester, students and preceptors will receive an email with a link to the survey. Students and preceptors are expected to complete the surveys to gain perspectives on how course objectives were met through the practicum site, preceptor, and student performance. Students are expected to follow the requirements for each individual practicum/clinical course as required and described in the individual course syllabus.

Service Learning Projects: GNOME

Goals-Needs-Objectives-Methods-Evaluation (GNOME) is an organizing model used by the Graduate Nursing Program to direct service-learning activities. The GNOME will consist of a project that is based on the needs of a community partner (e.g. clinical or academic organization) and the interests of the student. Individual course expectations of the GNOME service-learning expectations will be discussed in the individual courses. All GNOME projects must be approved by course faculty before the student is allowed to begin. The student, in conjunction with course faculty and community partner, will:

- Goals: Identify a national goal (e.g. Healthy People 2030) that is congruent with the needs of the community partner and the course learning objectives.
- Needs: Perform a needs assessment of the community partner.
- Objectives: Develop objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART).
- Methods: Create and implement methods to meet the stated objectives.
- Evaluation: Evaluate the project to determine if the objectives, needs, and goals were met. Part of the evaluation will also include students’ reflection about the project and the extent to which the project met their course or program learning objectives.
References


Appendix A
Graduate Nursing Program
Practicum/Clinical/Service-Learning Time Log*

Students should use this form to document the time they plan to spend at each clinical site. Once the hours are completed, the student and preceptor should initial the row to verify that the hours were completed. At least monthly, students must upload this form, signed by their preceptors, into their D2L course shell. Faculty will send electronic copies of signed forms to preceptors for verification of accuracy of documented days and hours performed under the preceptors’ supervision. Preceptors may use this form as verification for national certification.

Student Name: _______________________________ Student Initials: ________

Preceptor Name: _______________________________ Preceptor Initials: ________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Clinical or Academic Organization (Site)</th>
<th># of hours</th>
<th>Preceptor initials</th>
<th>Student initials</th>
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Total hours completed

*Use additional sheets if necessary.
Preceptor Data/Demographic Form

Preceptor Full Name and Credentials ________________________________

Returning Preceptor? Yes ___ No ___ First Time Preceptor? Yes ___ No ___

Healthcare/Academic Institution

Healthcare/Academic Institution Address _______________________________________

Phone Number ____________________ Email Address ____________________________

Practice Setting (e.g. Clinical, Academic, Organizational, Simulation, Laboratory)
__________________________________________________________________________

Please indicate if your setting serves any of the following (check all that apply)
☐ Federally-Qualified Health Center
☐ Health Provider Shortage Area
☐ Rural or Frontier Setting
☐ Primary Care Medical Home
☐ University/College
☐ Other: ________________________________

Position ________________________ Years/Months in Current Position __________

Total Years/Months in Practice (in any setting) ________________________________

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<th>Certifications</th>
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Licensure

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Clinical/Academic Expertise or Other Relevant Experience*
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

*Use a separate sheet of paper and attach it to this form for additional information that you would like to include.
Appendix C
Preceptor Agreement Form

Student Name __________________________ Date __________________________

Course Number & Title ______________________________________________________

I, ______________________ (Preceptor’s Name), agree to be a preceptor for the graduate
nursing student identified above, beginning ________________ (month/year) and ending
_____________ (month/year). The student has provided me with course objectives, evaluation
materials, faculty contact information and other pertinent items related to this experience. I
agree to oversee all practicum/clinical/service-learning activities of this student for the duration
of this agreement. I understand that the student is required to complete a total of
______________ hours during this practicum/clinical/service-learning experience. I agree to
facilitate learning activities that are associated with the educator/clinician (circle one or both)
role and agree to contact the faculty member with any questions or concerns I have about the
student or the student’s preparation for this experience. I understand there are no monetary or
nonmonetary benefits from Colorado Mesa University associated with my role as a preceptor
for this student. By signing this form, I attest to the above and that the student is not related to
me, is not my employee or subordinate, and is not my immediate supervisor.

_______________________________________________  ______________________
(Type or Print Preceptor Name and Title  Date

_______________________________  ________________________________
Preceptor’s Signature  Student’s Signature