



# Wilkes University

## Placement SOP (Standard Operating Procedures)

### PURPOSE:

This SOP outlines processes related to clinical placement, including clinical clearances, declinations, referrals, and mid-course activity.

### POLICIES AND PROCESSES:

Please note that Intake Surveys are synonymous with the Mandatory Clinical Preparation Form.

The placement team will always search and prioritize unpaid opportunities for placement preceptors and will search for placement sites within 125 mi radius of the address provided on the required Mandatory Clinical Preparation Form (formerly known as Intake Survey).

The Student Advisor will be able to address student inquiries regarding placement. They will share information, deadlines, expectations with students as needed throughout the program. To contact your Student Advisor, refer to their direct information in the Virtual Welcome Packet, emails they may have sent you, or you can contact [placement@onlinenursingdegrees.wilkes.edu](mailto:placement@onlinenursingdegrees.wilkes.edu). When reaching out, please email from your Wilkes account and provide your name, ID, and any relevant links/screenshots.

The Placement Specialist will source and identify sites for students but will not communicate with students directly. They will work with the site to acquire preceptor documents and affiliation agreements required before a site can be confirmed. When referrals are submitted prior to established deadlines, Placement Specialists will provide outreach to referrals and work to acquire paperwork.

The Placement Specialist will help collect the following documents from the preceptor: current resume/CV, board certification, license, RX prescriptive authority (not required for FNP). A signed affiliation agreement must be on file for the clinical site as well. Affiliation agreements must be signed by the site and Wilkes University. These items are submitted to the Graduate Clinical Coordinator for approval, and once approved, a student can be confirmed in InPlace. Please note that the receipt of these documents is largely dependent on the site/preceptor, which may delay a student from being confirmed in InPlace. Your Student Advisor will contact you if our team needs support in collecting documentation.

More than three weeks prior to start of term, requests for a 2<sup>nd</sup> preceptor/site can be reviewed but are not guaranteed. After a placement has been confirmed for full hours, the placement team reserves the ability to notify students we may be unable to secure a requested 2<sup>nd</sup> preceptor/site for the student for that clinical course. If a 2<sup>nd</sup> preceptor/site is being requested, students should specify the requested term and number of clinical hours.

Three weeks prior to the start of term, a 2<sup>nd</sup> preceptor will not be accommodated, unless the previously confirmed preceptor fails to meet program requirements, or the student provides a referral with all required paperwork. Required documents include: preceptor RN license (if applicable), preceptor APRN license, preceptor ANCC board certification, preceptor current resume, preceptor DEA license. *Please note an Affiliation Agreement between the site and Wilkes University must also be on file.* If a signed Affiliation Agreement is not on file, the referral may not be processed and confirmed on time.





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## Student Expectations

- Read and understand the Student Handbook and Admissions Application Acknowledgement (AAA) form
- Adhere to Wilkes University dress code
  - Professional business attire
  - White lab coat (except for PMHNP)
  - Wilkes ID badge
- Be flexible in your approach to scheduled hours with your preceptor – students are required to accommodate preceptors' schedules as outlined in your AAA
- Schedule necessary interviews and complete onboarding materials for your preceptor/site within 48 business hours of receiving notice of action required to confirm site.
  - The interview does not need to take place within 48 business hours. The expectation is the student will contact the site to schedule an interview within 48 business hours.
  - The student should follow-up with the Student Advisor to share when the interview has been scheduled, or to notify the Student Advisor if they have any questions.
- Expect a 48-business hour response time when communicating with Student Advisors. Multiple outreach attempts in this timeframe may delay communication.
- Students will be notified about registration from Student Advising, and registration information will be made available in the [Welcome Packet](#). Students must abide by registration requirements and be registered for upcoming courses, including clinical courses, by the established deadline. Students who are registered by Student Advising must ensure they have no holds on their account, preventing registration. Students who self-register must register for their clinical course before self-registration closes. Failure to be registered by this deadline may result in the student losing the placement team's services to source a site for them for that upcoming term.
- If an address change is a possibility and/or officially occurs -
  - Consult the [State Authorization website](#) to ensure you will be residing in an authorized state. Students must also be authorized to practice in their authorized state. Wilkes University will not be permitted to have students in courses while residing in an unauthorized state.
  - Notify your Student Advisor and Academic Advisor immediately. Students should complete any address change documentation required by the University (Registrar). Depending on where we are during the clinical term cycle, please know our placement team may be unable to secure placement for you in your new location, and a referral may be required in those instances.

## Clinical Clearances

- Clinical Clearances is defined as having submitted the Mandatory Clinical Preparation Form (formerly known as Intake Survey) and having all items in CastleBranch marked APPROVED (with the exception that fingerprints and/or child abuse results can be pending). These items must be submitted and approved by the term's established deadline as outlined in your placement welcome email.
  - Fingerprints and/or child abuse results must be submitted by the student, but you will be considered conditionally cleared if you are ONLY awaiting the results of these one or two items, pending all other items must be APPROVED.
- Clinical items in a "Pending Review", "Rejected" or "Overdue" status at the time of the deadline, with the exception of fingerprint and/or child abuse results pending, will result in the student account being considered NOT clinically clear





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- Students who have completed clinical clearances but have not submitted a Mandatory Clinical Preparation Form (formerly known as Intake Survey) for that term will NOT be eligible to be on the placement list in the upcoming term. The Mandatory Clinical Preparation Form (formerly known as Intake Survey) is needed for each term a student plans to complete clinicals, regardless of individual circumstances.
- Students not clinically cleared by the deadline will not be eligible for clinical placement for that upcoming term.
- Students MUST REMAIN clinically clear throughout their clinical placements by updating expiring clearances and renewing items as needed. Failure to do so would result in ceasing clinical hours until back in compliance, and/or having their clinical course DEFERRED.

## Declinations

- If a student is **confirmed** for a clinical site before the end of the clinical placement deadline (start of Week 2), and *student declines that site for any reason*, the student is responsible for providing a referral for that course.
- If a student is **confirmed** for a clinical site before the end of the clinical placement deadline (start of Week 2) and *student changes their schedule less than 3 weeks before the start of the term* (no longer requiring a clinical course), the student is responsible for providing a referral for that course.
- If a student is in an **offered** status because we are pending student action (preceptor outreach, onboarding site requirements, scheduling an interview, etc.) OR preceptor action (paperwork), and *student declines the site for any reason*, they are responsible for providing a referral for that course.
- If a student is in an **offered** status for a clinical site before the end of the clinical placement deadline (start of Week 2) and *student changes their schedule less than 3 weeks before the start of the term* (no longer requiring a clinical course), the student is responsible for providing a referral for that course.
- The above 4 situations will not apply to students if the site they are declining is a referral they provided. However, please know that by declining a referral, depending on how close we are to the start of a term, the placement team may be unable to source and secure an alternative site for you before the deadline, resulting in the student needing to defer their clinical course.

## Referrals

- Referrals should be submitted no later than 4 weeks before the start of the term.
- Referrals are nurse practitioners or physicians with whom you have made a past connection. Before submitting a referral, you should be sure this person has agreed to precept you for the requested term and can meet the requirements of the clinical course.
- Students must accept financial responsibility for any referral submitted in which the site/preceptor requires payment. Wilkes University and the placement team will not reimburse students for preceptor payment.
  - If a student has gone unplaced in previous term(s), and they submit a referral that requires payment, the placement team will explore if payment for preceptor is possible, but this is not a guarantee.
- Referrals submitted must follow Wilkes University State Authorizations policy. For more information about state authorizations, visit the [State Authorizations website](#). As explained on the website, students must be authorized to practice in the authorized state in which they reside.





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- When a student is required to provide a referral (ex. student declines site) to be eligible for their clinical course, that will apply to any term the student takes that clinical course. If a student is unsuccessful in sourcing their referral for that term, they'd remain responsible for sourcing a referral for that clinical course. Required referrals are course specific, not term specific.
  - Example: Student declines a placement for NSG 535 (outlined under Declinations section). To continue in NSG 535, student must submit a referral. If student does not submit a referral for 535 for that term, a referral would still be required for 535 in the following term.
- Referrals submitted must be completed with full, accurate information and follow referral guidelines outlined in the Wilkes virtual Welcome Packet and referral request form.
- The placement team will continuously accept referrals if we do not have a confirmed site for the student, but there is not a guarantee we can complete the referral/paperwork for the student if a referral is submitted within less than 3 weeks before the start of the term due to preceptors deprioritizing required paperwork.
  - If the student submits a referral along with all preceptor paperwork needed, this timeframe may be shortened.
- If a student is **confirmed** and they submit a referral *4 or more weeks* before the start the term, we will assist with confirming the referral, however the student will need to formally decline the site we secured and recognize the risk present if the referral does not work out.
  - Declining the site provided is a declination and the student would require a referral to proceed with that clinical course (in any term).
- If a student is **confirmed** and they submit a referral *less than 4 weeks* before the start of the term, we cannot guarantee we will not be able to secure that referral without the student providing all the required paperwork required. If students wanted to pursue their referral, they would need to formally decline the site we secured and proceed with providing the referral, all required paperwork, and recognize the risk present if the referral does not work out.
  - Declining the site provided is a declination and the student would require a referral to proceed with that clinical course (in any term).
  - An affiliation agreement would still be required to confirm a site. The student may be able to assist with this process, depending on the circumstances of the site.
- If a student is in an **offered** status and submits a referral *4 or more weeks* before the term starts, we will help confirm the referral. A formal declination will not be needed.
- If a student is an **offered** status and they submit a referral *less than 4 weeks* before the start the term, we cannot guarantee we will be able to secure that referral without the student obtaining all required paperwork. If the student wants to pursue the referral, we will ask for their assistance in acquiring the paperwork needed. A formal declination will not be needed.
  - An affiliation agreement would still be required to confirm a site. The student may be able to assist with this process, depending on the site's circumstances.
- If a student is not yet placed or placed for partial hours (no confirmed placement for full hours) and they submit a referral at any time, we will do our best to secure that referral placement for the student. The closer we are to the deadline, the increased risk in securing the placement in time, so based on the timeline, we may ask the student for their assistance in obtaining missing paperwork.
- Referrals will be reviewed by Wilkes University Administration and can be denied if they do not meet the requirements outlined by Wilkes University and/or the State of PA State Board regulations. In some instances, upon denial, no further explanation will be shared since the specific details may contain personal or confidential information. The decision is final and cannot be appealed.





### Mid-clinical activity

- If a student cannot attend/continue at a site for any personal reason, the student needs to contact the course faculty, Student Advisor, Academic Advisor, and their site/preceptor.
- If a student drops a clinical course mid-term due to preceptor action (preceptor can no longer help student), the placement team will look for another site for the student for that current term. Wilkes will allow the placement team 10 business days to secure another site.
  - If another site cannot be secured in this timeframe, the student will be removed from their clinical course and the course will be backdated and dropped so the student is not charged for the course. The student will be prioritized for next term's placement. Completed hours at this site will not roll over into the following term the student takes the clinical course without PSN administration approval.
  - If another site can be secured for the student, the student's hours completed at the first site will count towards the total hours needed for the clinical course, provided the hours meet program/course requirements and are approved by faculty.
  - If the student loses a preceptor mid-term due to preceptor action, and the student does not want to be replaced that term, they should have a conversation with their Student Advisor to discuss replacement options and impact that decision may have with declinations/referrals.
- If a student drops a clinical course mid-term due to student action (personal matters) this will be considered a declination in which the student will need to submit the declination form. The student will need a referral to continue with that clinical course, as outlined in the Referrals section.
- If a student believes they are not receiving the correct type of experience at their clinical site needed, they should immediately alert faculty and their Student Advisor, being specific to describe their experiences and issues present. The placement team will investigate further to determine what additional action may be needed.
  - If the preceptor can confirm they are meeting requirements, the student should plan to continue at that clinical site. Failure to continue at that clinical site would be considered a declination of the site.
  - If the preceptor is not meeting all established requirements, the placement team will have 10 business days to secure a different preceptor for the student.
    - If another site cannot be secured in this timeframe, the student will be removed from their clinical course and the course will be backdated and dropped so the student is not charged for the course. The student will be prioritized for next term's placement. Completed hours at this site will not roll over into the following term the student takes the clinical course without PSN administration approval.
    - If another site can be secured for the student, the student's hours completed at the first site will count towards the total hours needed for the clinical course, provided the hours meet program/course requirements and are approved by faculty.
- If a student has significant concerns about the clinical preceptor/site's ethics or their wellbeing at the site, they should immediately notify their course instructor, Student Advisor, and PSN Program Chair, being specific to describe their experiences and issues present. Wilkes PSN team will investigate further to determine what additional action may be needed.
  - If the preceptor/site is determined viable, the student can choose to continue at that clinical site that term. If the student decides to course withdraw, they are formally declining that site, and will require a referral for that clinical course in a future term.
  - If a preceptor/site is determined not viable, the placement team will have 10 business days to secure a different preceptor for the student.





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- If another site cannot be secured in this timeframe, the student will be removed from their clinical course and the course will be backdated and dropped so the student is not charged for the course. The student will be prioritized for next term's placement. Completed hours at this site will not roll over into the following term the student takes the clinical course without PERSON administration approval.
- If another site can be secured for the student, the student's hours completed at the first site will count towards the total hours needed for the clinical course, provided the hours meet program/course requirements and are approved by faculty.
- If a student fails a clinical course, the clinical placement team will consider this a declination. The student will need to submit a referral to continue with that clinical course as outlined in the Referrals section.

