

## Expectations for Clinical Placements

In each of your clinical assignments, you will be assuming the role of a professional, representing Appalachian State University and the Communication Disorders Program. As such, you will be taking on responsibility for your own behavior and the care of clients and patients.

Your initial placement is as an in-house clinician, involving work with any appropriate age group based on your previous coursework. These placements give you a foundation for moving into more complex situations, requiring more independence and self-assessment from the student clinician.

A valuable clinical experience for students is the off-campus practicum. The opportunity to participate in an off-campus placement prepares the student for the internship experience and is critical to the training program. Advanced graduate students may be assigned to off-campus placements, which may be in medical, educational, private practice, or rehabilitation facilities. Students assigned to off-campus placements may have one or two additional clients in the Clinic. All students should have at least one off-campus placement before they may participate in the internship.

The capstone experience for graduate students is the practicum experience in the internship placement. The opportunity to participate in the varied aspects at an external facility is critical to the training program. The clinical educator for internship and the program facility will work with you in determining how you can get specific clock hours. However, it is difficult for a facility to promise or guarantee a certain number or type of clinical hours.

Student clinicians may earn clock hours only for the portion of time they are actively participating in providing services to a client. The clinical educator for the clinical site will sign for the clock hours.

Students are expected to get diagnostic hours in the off-campus placement and for that reason are not given an additional diagnostic assignment in the Communication Disorders Clinic. Students assigned to in-house placements may have an additional diagnostic assignment. Please remember that an ASHA-certified professional must supervise at least 25 percent of your treatment hours as required by ASHA and at least 50 percent of each diagnostic session, as required by the North Carolina licensure law.

### **At the beginning of the semester:**

1. Your clinic assignment is emailed to you before the beginning of the semester. Other information also may be placed in your box in University Hall. You are expected to check your box at least two days before the beginning of the semester.
2. The start and ending dates are given in the "Clinic Schedule" information on the Clinic Calendar on the Clinic website.

Students going on internship are given a schedule prior to leaving for the placement. The internship schedule is different from the regular clinic schedule.

Students may be given additional clients at any time during a semester.

3. For off-campus placements, call your practicum clinical educator and confirm your starting date. For internship placements, you may call the clinical educator as soon as you receive the confirmation letter.
4. Ask the clinical educator if there is anything you need to do to prepare for the practicum, e.g., articles to read, tests to learn, etc.
5. Ask about possible requirements for the setting (e.g., giving presentation to staff, dress code, completing a project, immunizations needed, extra training needed including Infection Control and HIPAA, background checks, drug screens etc.) and agree to them before you begin the practicum.
6. Check on wearing a nametag. It is a requirement of the North Carolina licensure law. Many facilities will allow you to use your name badge from the Clinic.
7. All information concerning off-campus practicum is available at <http://www.cdclinic.appstate.edu/>. Check the information under Clinic Manual or Off-Campus Handbook.
8. Give your clinical educator a copy of your schedule.
9. Provide us with the name and ASHA number of the clinical educators at your site. This goes on the Clinical Educator Information and Clinical Population Data forms, included on the Clinic website in the Off-Campus Manual. We need these numbers during the first two weeks of your placement in order to confirm that your clinical educator is up-to-date with ASHA. This form is available at <http://www.cdclinic.appstate.edu/>. Check the information under Off-Campus Handbook, Appendices B and C.
10. Check to be sure your paperwork, including PPD, background check, observation hours, clock hours, infection control and HIPAA training, is current for the entire semester and that it is on file in the Clinic Office.

### **During the practicum**

1. Treat the placement as if it were a job.
2. Be on time and leave on time.
3. Turn off cell phones/do not take them with you to a practicum placement.
4. Do not bring your personal life into the clinical setting – clients do not want to hear your problems.
5. Students are required to attend all of their scheduled days in an off-campus placement. Failure to comply with the attendance rule may result in an unsatisfactory grade in clinic. The student must call the clinical educator at the off-campus site and the clinic coordinator prior to the scheduled arrival to arrange an absence.
6. Give advanced notices of any changes in your schedule. You may be able to take the normal university breaks, but be sure to inform your clinical educator concerning these breaks. Students in internship and spring practicum in the schools may not take university breaks.

7. Take full responsibility for tasks assigned to you.
8. Keep your clock hour logs updated and have them signed by your clinical educator.
9. Have your clinical educator complete a baseline (about 2 weeks after beginning therapy) and final evaluation of your clinical skills. Put them in your file at the Clinic Office.  
  
For internship placements or other placements out-of-town the student may mail a hard copy to the Clinic office.
10. Make sure that you are observed by your clinical educator at least 25% for all treatment time and 50% for each diagnostic session. Some placements will observe you more than the minimum amount.
11. Try not to ask your clinical educator the same questions over and over. If you have a hard time remembering procedural tasks or what certain medical terms mean, write them down.
12. Ask questions which show that you are thinking about your clients, their diagnosis, and/or treatment.
13. Periodically ask your clinical educator if there are ways in which you can improve your performance.
14. Be mindful of the facility's organizational structure and protocols.
15. Respect your clinical educator's space, including materials and files.
16. Students who have an excessive number of absences may have to make up the missed time. Excessive absences will be determined by the facility and by University Policy.
17. During practicum in the schools or any other placement, the student clinician can not substitute for the speech-language pathologist.
18. Call the Clinic Coordinator if you have any concerns about the site or your clinical educator.

#### **At the end of the semester**

1. Be sure to bring your final evaluation papers to the Communication Disorders Clinic at University Hall.
2. Complete the clinical educator evaluation and site evaluation forms online at <http://www.cdclinic.appstate.edu/resources.aspx>.
3. Put your semester clock hour sheets and the cumulative sheet in your file in the Clinic Office.
4. Schedule a meeting with the Clinic Coordinator to discuss your schedule for next semester. The schedule submitted is the one used to make clinical assignments.