



# Conducting Robust Clinical Conferences: A Guide for Clinical Faculty

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## Purpose

To identify the value of clinical conferences and present recommendations to guide nursing faculty on implementing best practices to ensure consistency in delivery to achieve optimal student learning outcomes.

## Background

- Clinical conferences are an integral part of student nurse’s academic growth and development in clinical areas.
- Nurse faculty must conduct effective and consistent clinical conferences to enhance student learning.
- There is a paucity of literature supporting faculty on conducting quality clinical conferences.

## Methodology

- Literature review.
- Observation of clinical conferences.
- Informal semi-structured interviews conducted with six faculty members of a single pre-licensure program selected through convenience sampling.

## Results

- Findings obtained from faculty interviews and observations indicated inconsistencies among the nursing faculty conducting clinical conferences.
- Most notable were discrepancies in the content, direction of conferences, and the purpose of the conferences.
- Based on a comprehensive literature search, a guide recommending best practices when conducting clinical conferences was developed for faculty members to facilitate uniformity and foster optimal learning outcomes.
- Feedback from four of the six faculty members who utilized the guide supported its usefulness in providing structure and direction for conducting more purposeful clinical conferences.

### Clinical Conference Guide for Faculty

Clinical Conferences		
Goal	Faculty Role in Clinical Conferences	Information of Inclusion
To provide a guide to ensure consistency in conducting clinical conferences throughout an organization for all faculty members.		
<b>Clinical Conferences Explained</b>  Clinical conferences are small group discussions that occur before, during or after a clinical experience. Clinical conferences are an essential part of the clinical experience as students are able to develop critical thinking skills as well as clinical decision-making skills while acquiring knowledge and building confidence (Gubrud-Howe, 2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ask open ended questions</li><li>Correct student misconceptions</li><li>Assess student thinking</li><li>Identify student readiness to implement care</li><li>Facilitate transfer of learning</li><li>Provide constructive feedback</li><li>Present issues, problems and cases for discussion</li><li>Use active teaching strategies</li><li>Facilitate correlation of patient data in developing an appropriate plan of care</li><li>Encourage inclusion of patient’s education and health promotion</li><li>Notify students of their role as active participants</li><li>Model professionalism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Medical and nursing diagnosis<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reason for admission</li></ul></li><li>Relevant labs and diagnostics<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Normal vs abnormal</li></ul></li><li>Objective and subjective assessment findings</li></ul>
<b>Purposes of Clinical Conferences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Preconference<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Problem solving</li><li>Sharing information</li><li>Express concerns</li><li>Decision making</li><li>Priority setting</li><li>Clarification of expectations</li></ul></li><li>Mid Conference<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Useful in 12-hour clinical days</li><li>Evaluation of interventions</li><li>Plan for further interventions</li></ul></li><li>Post Conference<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Debriefing and reflection</li><li>Analyze clinical situations</li><li>Vent feelings and establish support systems</li><li>Provide evaluation of care provided</li><li>Link theory to practice</li></ul></li></ul>	<b>Promote Students Participation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use role play</li><li>Use case study to create discussion</li><li>Assign volunteers to speak on certain topics</li><li>Allow students time to think</li></ul> <b>Summary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Planning is required for successful conferences</li><li>Flexibility is required to guide learning</li><li>Utilize creative and innovative teaching strategies for diverse learning styles</li><li>Facilitate student learning and encourage student participation</li><li>Provide constructive feed-back in a timely manner to enhance immediate learning and performance improvement</li><li>Have student verbalize, prioritize, and discuss nursing diagnosis, patient centered goals and include planned interventions and evaluations</li><li>Encourage alternate strategies for unsuccessful or partial intervention</li><li>Align conferences with the clinical objectives</li><li>Evaluate for comprehension</li></ul>	
	<b>Strategies for Effective Clinical Conferences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Have a plan</li><li>Be flexible</li><li>Set positive tone for clinical experience</li><li>Be supportive and encouraging</li><li>Set expectations for the conference</li><li>Create an environment conducive to openness, trust, sharing, and discussion</li><li>Maintain group focus</li><li>Allow time for reflection</li><li>Promote student learning related to course objectives and outcomes</li></ul> <b>Student Role in Clinical Conferences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Arrive on time</li><li>Be prepared</li><li>Be open-minded</li><li>Assume responsibility for giving and receiving feedback</li><li>Maintain patient confidentiality</li><li>Demonstrate and maintain professionalism</li></ul>	

## Conclusion

- Faculty must be consistent in conducting the clinical conference to facilitate learning through planned exercises or reflection on experience.
- Inexperience and lack of cohesiveness in conducting clinical conferences should be addressed to ensure consistency in achieving student learning outcomes.
- The guide was developed for faculty members and presented in the form of a brochure to use when conducting clinical conferences.

### Recommendations

- A systematic review of the usefulness of the guide for faculty and its effectiveness in meeting student learning outcomes.

## References

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