

# The Meaning of Clinical Competency: Perceptions of Pre-Licensure Baccalaureate Nurse Faculty and Acute Care Nurse Managers

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## Background

- Clinical competency in nursing is a significant concept as determined by the IOM *Future of Nursing*
- No widely accepted understanding of the meaning of clinical competency is found currently in the nursing literature.
- Educating nursing students to achieve an entry level of clinical competency is an essential foundation of the nursing profession.
- Ambiguity in the understanding and measurement of clinical competency may lead to “failure to fail” in the evaluation of the nursing student.

## Purpose

- Describe Clinical Competency
- Gain an understanding of the meaning of Clinical Competency from the perspective of pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing faculty and acute care nurse managers

## Research Questions

- How do pre-licensure baccalaureate nurse faculty describe clinical competency?
- How do acute care nurse managers describe clinical competency?
- What is the meaning of clinical competency for pre-licensure baccalaureate nurse faculty and acute care nurse managers?
- What are the expectations of clinical competency from the perspective of acute care nurse managers?

## Significance of the Study

- **Nursing Science and Research**
  - A consensus of the meaning of clinical competency
  - Support of a nursing theory
  - An initial step towards the objective evaluation of clinical competency
- **Nursing Education**
  - A shared meaning of clinical competency bridging theory to practice
  - Support the interests of nursing faculty in preparation of students for the challenges of nursing practice
- **Nursing Practice**
  - A clear meaning of clinical competency could assist in the transition of the new graduate in practice and provide support in their transition

## Sample & Setting

- 6-10 Pre-licensure Baccalaureate Nursing Faculty
- 6-10 Acute Care Nurse Managers
- Semi-structured individual interviews
- Convenient Setting for Participants
  - Acute Care setting
  - University setting

## Study Design

- Interpretive Description- a qualitative approach that allows for an understanding of a phenomenon from a clinician’s perspective (Thorne, 2008).
- The clinical description of a phenomenon is “interpretive” by nature in nursing.
- There is a recognition of the knowledge and “clinical expertise” of the researcher that contributes to the study.

## Data Collection and Analysis

- Recruitment through professional contacts and the snowballing method.
- Digitally recorded semi-structured interviews with acute care nurse managers and pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing faculty.
- Inductive analysis using constant comparative analysis technique of each data set.

## Interview Questions

- Tell me about your role and contact with student/graduate nurses in the clinical setting.
- Describe the practice of a student/ graduate nurse that you have seen in practice that exemplifies clinical competency.
- Describe the meaning of the concept clinical competency in nursing practice.
- What expectations do you have of the student/ graduate nurses to be considered clinically competent?