

In the midst of a growing faculty shortage, many educational institutions are using adjunct faculty to teach undergraduate nursing students. The term, adjunct faculty, refers to part-time or non-tenure track faculty primarily responsible for clinical education of undergraduate students at clinical sites. While serving as an adjunct faculty member presents a wonderful opportunity to share your expertise, often adjunct faculty express frustration with the quality of guidance and supervision provided. With the right institutional support and commitment, serving in this capacity can be a rewarding career option. Below are five hallmarks of environments that best support adjunct nursing faculty.

### 1. Infrastructure that Supports Adjunct Faculty

Educational institutions that offer centralized adjunct faculty oversight are more likely to communicate a cohesive message in regard to school and university expectations.

### 2. Formal Orientation and Staff Support

Schools and universities should offer a streamlined orientation program for adjunct faculty that provides key information such as how to obtain and use resources, course content, teaching skills, lesson plan development, and conflict management. In addition to a formal orientation, an orientation manual with written guidelines should be provided to adjunct faculty.

### 3. Course Coordinators

Course coordinators should assume responsibility for faculty orientation as well as maintaining contact with adjunct faculty during the semester. They can serve as a “go to” person for adjunct faculty seeking information and ensure that appropriate resources ranging from textbooks to technology are available.

### 4. Networking & Information Sharing

Integrating adjunct faculty into full-time faculty events offers opportunities for networking and promotes a sense of inclusion. Adjuncts should be invited to participate in faculty meetings, lectures, and workshops.

### 5. Professional Development

In general, adjunct faculty members are interested in continuing their professional development and many are interested in furthering their formal education. Schools and universities that offer tuition-free or reduced-tuition courses reflect a strong commitment to developing faculty members. Finally, mentoring programs are a unique way to support new adjunct faculty. Mentors can provide support and direction in terms of teaching, role identity, and career development.

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