



Pre-Licensure Nursing Education Functional Abilities for Professional Nursing Practice

Professional Aptitudes, Abilities, and Skills and Essential Requirements for Nursing

School of Nursing admissions are based on academic achievement and additional program specific non-academic criteria that can be referenced in the catalog. Essential Requirements have been established identifying the occupational specific technical skills and standards required of students in the program. Meeting these standards is necessary for students to become successful in both their clinical coursework and later in their profession. Decisions to apply for admission to the School of Nursing BSN program should be made after considering the program Essential Requirements.

It is the responsibility of this program to be concerned with the rights of patients and to only place students that are capable of providing safe, high quality health care in clinical sites. The following list represents reasonable expectations for the student enrolled in the BSN nursing program. It is the responsibility of program applicants to **carefully review** the essential requirements and **ask questions**, if not familiar with the standards and skills listed.

Certain chronic or recurrent illnesses and problems that interfere with patient care or safety may be incompatible with nursing skills or clinical practice. Conditions that may lead to a high likelihood of student absenteeism should be carefully considered. Deficiencies in knowledge, judgment, integrity, character, or professional attitude or demeanor which may jeopardize patient care may be grounds for course/clinical failure and possible dismissal from the program. All applicants to the program must have the ability to meet the standards and skills listed below, with or without reasonable accommodation, if accepted to the program in order to complete the educational requirements for the applicable degree.

If a student cannot demonstrate the following standards and skills without reasonable accommodation, it is the responsibility of the student to request an appropriate accommodation with The School of Nursing is committed to the principle of equal opportunity as defined in the catalog and will provide reasonable accommodation as long as it does not fundamentally alter the nature of the program offered, does not compromise patient safety or impose an undue hardship.

Essential Requirements

MOBILITY AND MOTOR ABILITY

The use of motor skills to execute gross and fine motor movements required to provide assessment, general care, and emergency treatment of clients. Examples of such skills include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Walk, bend, stand, kneel, sit, stoop or crawl to perform patient care activities and administer patient interventions or assist with equipment or to administer emergency care (CPR).
- Reach above head in standing, to adjust and position equipment.
- Lift, pull, guide; transfer a patient of up to 150 lbs. Lift, pull, guide; transfer a patient of up to 250 lbs. using a two-person technique.
- Guide: resist and assist adult patients (or classmates) during patient transfer, ambulation, interventions, and exercises, using your arms, legs, or trunk to provide the necessary stabilization for a patient when performing patient care.
- Walk for extended periods of time; climb stairs & inclines while safely guarding an unstable patient.

- Assume a wide base of support, to maintain and correct balance of an unstable patient on flat surfaces, inclines, and stairs.
- Demonstrate bilateral manual dexterity to perform clinical skills such as administering medications, initiating intravenous therapy, catheter insertion, dressing changes and assist with activities of patient care.
- Physical capacity to perform all essential skills and procedures to complete 12-hour workdays and a 40-hour work week during nursing clinical experiences.

SENSORY ABILITIES AND OBSERVATION

The use of assessment skills such as observing faculty demonstrations, obtaining a health history from the client, and directly observing a client's health condition. Students must be able to perform sensory skills (auditory, visual, and tactile) necessary to assess accurately the health status of clients. Examples of such skills include but are not limited to the ability to:

- See (with or without corrective lenses) patient skin, discriminate color changes, facial expressions and non-verbal communications, normal and abnormal patterns of movements; the environment for up to 20 feet; to read all electronic medical record and set parameters on patient care and monitoring equipment and detect small calibrations on measuring instruments.
- Hear soft voices, masked voices, patient call systems, alarms, timers, hear with a stethoscope to assess blood pressure, heart lung and abdominal sounds.
- Feel to discriminate small and large temperature differences; palpate pulses, discriminate sharp and dull, light touch and deep pressure sensation.
- Smell to detect odors related to patient assessment.

COMMUNICATION

Communication with patients, members of the health care team and families in settings where communication typically is oral or written and in settings when time span for communication is limited. Examples of such skills include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Speak and express clearly and understandably in the English language, information to peers, faculty, patients, their families, and other health care providers; demonstrate active listening skills.
- Read typed, handwritten, chart data, and computer-generated documents in the English language; at a level of competency that allows safe and timely execution of essential tasks or assignments.
- Understand; interpret medical terminology and information given regarding status, progress, and safety of a patient; to follow simple and complete instructions (oral or written) regarding patient care; and respond to non-verbal communication/behaviors of others.
- Follow directions accurately and efficiently, seeking clarification where necessary.
- Write to produce legible handwritten or computer word processed documents; use correct medical terminology, spelling grammar and punctuation; organize and express thoughts in written form in the English language; to prepare accurate, thorough, legally defensible patient documentation.
- Interpersonal skills to work collaboratively; interact professionally; to establish rapport with patients, colleagues, and classmates; to resolve conflicts with individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds; maintain confidentiality in all interactions.

INTELLECTUAL, CONCEPTUAL, INTEGRATIVE, AND QUANTITATIVE ABILITIES

Critical thinking, problem solving and teaching skills necessary to provide care for individuals, families, and groups. Examples of such skills include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Think critically to identify and solve problems; identify cause/effect relationships; to apply reading, lecture, and contraindications from textbooks, medical records, and professional literature.
- Prioritize events to provide with patient safety; appropriate patient interventions; multi-task; integrate information and make decisions about sequence and progression.
- Calculate to collect and/or interpret accurate patient data.

- Make clinical decisions to respond quickly and appropriately to changes in patient status; to analyze written, observed, or verbal data about patients and make decisions to contact health care provider for clarification of orders and modify the nursing care plan; act safely & ethically in the nursing laboratory and clinical settings.
- Demonstrate short-term and long-term memory to remember data accurately and quickly from the chart and information relayed in verbal exchanges with other members of the health care team; to access learned knowledge to include but not limited to diagnoses, indications, contraindications for interventions, safety precautions, subjective reports of patients, emergency procedures; safety procedures; to participate successfully in the learning and evaluation of knowledge within the curriculum.
- Think quickly and clearly to execute all duties unimpaired by any condition or substance that alters mental processing, speed or quality of thought processes or judgment.

BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The ability to provide care that is client centered and shown respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of everyone, free from bias and discrimination, and without consideration for personal attributes or the nature of health problems. Students must be emotionally stable. Examples of such skills include but are not limited to the ability to demonstrate:

- Flexibility to adjust to a constantly changing and very demanding full-time schedule.
- Compassion and respect and ability to show empathy for patients and their families; for people of all personality types, backgrounds, ethnic race or socioeconomic background and medical condition/diagnosis.
- Cooperation to work as a member of a team; develop positive and effective relationships with faculty, clinicians, peers, and patients.
- Recognition of limitation to request assistance when needed; accept correction and constructive suggestions; assume responsibility for personal development; utilize resources effectively.
- Tolerance for close physical contact with patients, peers, and classmates during the provision of interventions and in lab; for close proximity and physical contact with patients that require use of standard precautions during therapy due to open wounds, incontinence, or other potential exposures to bodily fluids or pathogens during treatment.
- Willingness to participate in lab activities that require palpation, measurement, and other forms of therapeutic touching of patients; to serve as both the patient model and clinician during patient simulations that allow classmates to practice and perfect nursing skills.
- Ability to attend class and clinic promptly and regularly; to stay focused and on task in lecture and laboratory instructional time; to submit work products promptly when due; to submit to all classroom and clinical rules/policies; to demonstrate respect for other health care providers and the profession of nursing; to comply with all legal and ethical standards of practice.
- Stress management coping skills for fast-paced clinical situation; to manage multiple academic deadlines; deal effectively with psychosocial issues of catastrophic illness, disability, and death; respond appropriately in a stressful environment and during impending deadlines; manage personal matters outside of class/clinical workday.
- The ability to plan in advance such things as, arranging transportation and living accommodations during and between semesters, along with being punctual to class, labs and clinicals.
- Self-care to maintain general good health and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical settings.
- Initiative, enthusiasm, and appropriate peer and patient interactions.

Student's Certification of Functional Abilities

I, _____, believe myself to be healthy and able to carry out the demands of the nursing profession. In consideration of the safety of myself and others, I will communicate any changes in my functional abilities, as indicated on this form, to my instructors prior to or during any nursing course. I realize that I may be required to drop selected components until my functional abilities meet these standards and/or until such time as my attendance can be resumed safely. I understand that I will need a statement of release from a physician before I may return to class and/or clinical areas. Deficiencies in functional abilities or any of the following may be grounds for failure and possible dismissal from the program: knowledge, judgment, integrity, character, or professional attitude or demeanor, which may jeopardize patient care.

Signed _____ Date _____