

TECHNICAL STANDARDS/ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Students admitted to the Nursing program must meet the following technical standards (essential functions), with or without accommodation. Essential functions are the minimum fundamental and essential skills necessary to protect the student and community. Independent physical mobility and manual dexterity are crucial. In addition, all nurses must possess physical and cognitive capacity, emotional stability and communication skills to deliver safe, effective patient care.

Examples of the various essential functions as they related to industry standards are provided to inform prospective students of the skills, performance abilities and characteristics that are necessary to successfully complete the clinically based nursing curriculum.

These technical standards/essential functions are not a requirement of admission into the program as such. However, progression in the program may be denied if a student is unable to demonstrate the technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations. The following accommodations are not considered reasonable: (1) those that fundamentally alter the nature of the academic program, (2) could jeopardize the health and safety of others, or (3) cause an undue burden to the program.

Cognitive Standards

1. Recall, apply, analyze, synthesize, and integrate information from a variety of sources.
2. Measure, calculate reason, interpret, and evaluate data.
3. Solve problems and think critically to apply knowledge and skills and prioritize actions.
4. Communicate verbally and through reading and writing with individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.
5. Articulate thoughts orally and in writing and be computer literate.
6. Demonstrate skills and capability to work effectively with others in completion of a joint task.

Examples:

- Process information thoroughly and quickly to prioritize and implement nursing care
- Sequence or cluster data to determine client needs.
- Contribute to and implement a prepared nursing plan of care for clients in acute, long term and community settings.
- Discriminate fine/subtle differences in medical word endings.
- Report verbally and in writing client data to members of the healthcare team.
- Read and comprehend medical orders and client information found in the medical record (paper and electronic).
- Perform math computations for medication dosage calculations both with and without a calculator.

Physical Standards

Motor:

1. Coordinate fine and gross motor movements.
2. Coordinate hand/eye movements.
3. Maintain balance from any position.
4. Negotiate level surfaces, ramps and stairs.
5. Function with both hands free for performing psychomotor tasks.
6. Maneuver in small areas.
7. Attend to cognitive and psychomotor tasks for up to 7-12 hours.

Examples:

- Transfer patients/clients in and out of bed from stretchers and wheelchairs.
- Control a client's fall by slowly lowering him/her to the floor.
- Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Lift or move (turn, position) patients or objects, pull or push objects weighing up to 35 pounds and maintain a "medium activity level" as defined by the State of Oregon Department of Insurance Index of occupational characteristics.
- Reach to shoulder level or higher to lace or access equipment such as intravenous fluid bags or dispose of needles in sharps container.
- Bend or squat to access equipment below bed level.
- Carry equipment and supplies to the client bedside.
- Manipulate small equipment and containers, such as safety needle devices, syringes, vials, ampules, and medication packages, to administer medications.
- Complete assigned periods of clinical practice 7-12 hour shifts, days, evenings or nights).

Sensory Standards Internalize information from demonstrations and experiences, including but not limited to: information conveyed through lecture, small group activities, demonstrations, application experiences and online coursework.

1. Collect information through observation, listening, touching, and smelling.
2. Use and interpret information from diagnostic maneuvers.

Examples:

- Detect changes in skin color. (pale, ashen, grey, or bluish)
- Detect a fire in the patient care environment.
- Draw up a prescribed quantity of medication into a syringe.
- Observe clients in a room from a distance of 20 feet away.
- Detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope.
- Detect audible alarms generated by mechanical systems such as those that monitor bodily functions, fire alarms, call bells.
- Observe and collect data from recording equipment and measurement devices used in patient care.

- Communicate with patients, family members and members of the health care team in person and over the phone in a variety of settings, including isolation and the operating room where health team members are wearing masks and there is background noise.
- Detect foul odors of bodily fluids or spoiled foods.
- Smoke from burning materials.
- Detect changes in skin temperature.
- Detect unsafe temperature levels in heat-producing devices used in patient care.
- Detect anatomical abnormalities, such as subcutaneous crepitus, edema, or infiltrated intravenous fluids.
- Feel vibrations such as an arterial pulse.

Behavioral Standards

1. Demonstrate emotional stability by functioning effectively under stress and adapting to changing environments.
2. Maintain effective, mature, sensitive and professional relationships with others.
3. Examine and modify one's own behavior when it interferes with others or the learning environment.
4. Demonstrate attributes including compassion empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility and tolerance.

Examples:

- Exercise judgment
- Meet acceptable timeframes for patient care delivery (acceptable time frames are reflected by ability to carry out the usual patient care assignment for a particular point in the program within the allotted clinical time).
- Work effectively under stress and adapt to rapidly changing patient care environments.
- Accept accountability for actions that result in patient care errors.
- Deal effectively with interpersonal conflict; maintain effective and harmonious relationships with members of the healthcare team.