

Core Competencies Necessary for Students to Achieve Program Outcomes

It is the policy of the School of Nursing and the College of Health and Human Sciences to adhere to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Students admitted to the School of Nursing are expected to be able to complete curriculum requirements which include physical, cognitive, communication and behavioral core competencies that are essential to the functions of the entry level professional nurse. These core competencies are considered to be the minimum and essential necessary to protect the public.

An applicant for any of the degree programs in Nursing must be competent in the following areas: observation, communication, motor, and intellectual-conceptual. An applicant must meet the competencies in spite of any handicap with or without reasonable accommodation.

Examples of competencies for each of the areas follow. Note that these descriptions are intended to be examples rather than all-inclusive.

Observation:

The applicant must be able to observe a client accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation relies on the functional use of vision and touch, enhanced by the sense of smell.

Communication:

Communication includes speaking, writing, reading, and listening to obtain information, describe changes, and perceive non-verbal communication. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with clients and peers. The applicant must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with clients, families, peers and other members of the health care team.

Motor:

An applicant should have sufficient motor function to obtain information from clients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other assessment techniques. The applicant should be able to execute motor movements required to perform general care and emergency treatment of clients such as (but not limited to) cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medications, and manipulation of life support devices. These actions require coordination of both gross and fine motor muscular movements, equilibrium, functional use of touch and vision senses.

Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:

The applicant must be able to demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills required of nurses. Essential intellectual abilities include measurement, calculation, analysis, synthesis, and clinical reasoning.

Prospective majors who believe they may have difficulty meeting the core competencies in one or more areas are encouraged to contact the School of Nursing for more information. However, students applying for admission to the program are not required to disclose any disability prior to admission.

After students have been admitted to the program, each student will be sent a packet of information, which will also include a statement to be signed by the student that the student is capable of meeting the core competencies. (See student handbook agreement.) This statement will become part of the student's record.

If a student requires accommodation due to a stated disability, the disability must be documented through the Office of Student Support Services for academic disabilities or through the Office for Student Affairs for Section 504/ADA issues. Students need to be aware that the first clinical nursing course will require demonstration of physical mobility skills such as lifting, positioning, and the ability to see and hear, etc. The student is responsible for providing documentation of the disability to the professor and requesting accommodation(s).

Disability Services provides the student with a letter of suggested accommodations that the student gives to the professor. Examples of “reasonable accommodation” might include use of an amplified stethoscope (purchased by the student) or extra time to take a test for a student with dyslexia. If the professor, student, and the Disability Services cannot agree upon “reasonable accommodation”, the issue is then taken to the School Director and on to the Associate Dean, if necessary. In each of these steps, the student’s right to confidentiality must be protected.