

## **Technical Standards for Admission, Progression and Graduation**

**Mission of the School of Nursing.** The University of Maryland School of Nursing seeks to shape the profession of nursing by developing nursing leaders in education, research, and practice. The School accomplishes this through its outstanding baccalaureate, graduate, and continuing education programs; cutting edge science and research; and innovative clinical enterprise.

**Personal Attributes and Capabilities Essential for Admission, Progression and Graduation of students of the University of Maryland School of Nursing.** The curricula leading to Baccalaureate, Master's and Doctoral degrees in Nursing from the University of Maryland School of Nursing require students to engage in diverse and complex experiences directed at the acquisition and practice of essential nursing skills and functions. Unique combinations of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, physical and social abilities are required to perform these functions satisfactorily in a timely manner that is consistent with patient safety and effective clinical outcomes. In addition to being essential to the successful completion of the requirements of nursing degrees, these skills and functions are necessary to ensure the health and safety of patients, fellow students, faculty and other health care providers.

Applicants and students should assume that any plan of study will be completed with patient interaction or work in a clinical environment. Applicants should always inquire of the School in advance of enrollment about the nature of patient and clinical work required. The Technical Standards for interacting with patients and working in a clinical environment are not applicable provided such work is not required as part of the student's program of study and presuming the student does not enroll in courses or participate in other activities which involve interaction with patients or work in a clinical environment. Under certain circumstances, a student may be able to complete a post-Baccalaureate program without patient interaction or work in a clinical environment, depending on the offerings available while the student is enrolled, the focus of the student's plan of study, and review and approval by the School.

Admission to the School of Nursing is open to all qualified individuals and in accordance with the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. §701 *et seq.*) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*).

The following technical standards describe the non-academic qualifications required in addition to academic qualifications that the School considers essential for entrance to, continuation in and graduation from its Baccalaureate nursing degree program, as well as from certain Master's and Doctoral degree programs. Candidates for nursing degrees must be able to meet these minimum standards with or without reasonable accommodation for successful completion of degree requirements. The use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable if a student's judgment and skill are mediated by reliance upon someone else's power of selection, observation, or clinical ability.

### **Standards**

#### **A. Visual, Auditory and Tactile Abilities**

- Sufficient abilities to allow the student to gather data from written reference materials, oral presentations, demonstrations and observations of a patient and the patient's environment.
- Sufficient ability to perform health assessments and interventions; collect diagnostic specimens; and obtain information from digital, analog and waveform representations of

physiologic phenomena to determine a patient's condition.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Visual acuity sufficient to draw up the correct quantity of medication in a syringe or detect changes in skin color or condition.
- Auditory ability sufficient to hear and interpret information a patient is communicating verbally, to detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope, to detect audible alarms generated by mechanical systems used to monitor patient physiological status, to communicate via a telephone and to hear cries for help from patients and staff.
- Tactile abilities sufficient to detect unsafe temperature levels in heat-producing devices used in patient care or detect anatomical abnormalities, such as edema or small nodules.

## **B. Communication Abilities**

- Ability to communicate with accuracy, clarity and efficiency with patients, their families and other members of the health care team (including spoken and non-verbal communications, such as interpretation of facial expressions, affect and body language).
- Required communication abilities, including speech, hearing, reading, writing, language skills and computer literacy, in real time with a primarily English-speaking population.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Abilities sufficient to give verbal directions to or follow verbal directions from other members of the health care team and to participate in health care team discussions of patient care.
- Ability sufficient to elicit and record information about health history, current health state or responses to treatment from patients or family members.
- Ability sufficient to convey information to patients and others as necessary to teach, direct and counsel individuals.

## **C. Motor Abilities**

- Sufficient motor function to execute movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all health care settings.
- Required motor functions include gross and fine motor skills, physical endurance, physical strength and mobility to carry out nursing procedures, perform basic laboratory tests and provide routine and emergency care and treatment to patients within a safe time frame and over an extended period of time (i.e., a 6 – 12 hour clinical practicum per day).

Examples of relevant activities:

- Fine motor skills sufficient to obtain assessment information by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers.
- Physical endurance sufficient to complete assigned periods of clinical practice.
- Mobility sufficient to carry out patient care procedures, such as tracheostomy care or performing emergency airway suctioning, maneuvering in small areas such as patient rooms and nursing work stations.
- Strength sufficient to carry out patient care procedures, such as assisting in the

turning, lifting, transferring and ambulation of patients. This includes, but is not limited to, the ability to carry and lift loads from the floor, lift loads from 12 inches from the floor to shoulder height and overhead, as well as occasionally lifting 50 pounds, frequently lifting 25 pounds, and constantly lifting 10 pounds.

#### **D. Behavioral, Interpersonal and Emotional Abilities**

- Ability to relate to colleagues, staff, faculty and patients with honesty, integrity, maturity, empathy, professionalism, and non-discrimination.
- Capacity for the development of a mature, sensitive and effective therapeutic relationship with patients.
- Ability to work effectively and constructively in stressful and changing clinical and academic environments, both independently and under supervision, and as part of a team or group, with the ability to modify behavior in response to feedback and constructive criticism.
- Capacity to demonstrate ethical behavior, including adherence to the professional nursing and student honor codes.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Emotional skills sufficient to remain calm in an emergency situation.
- Interpersonal skills sufficient to communicate effectively with patients and families of diverse religious, cultural or social backgrounds.
- Behavioral skills sufficient to demonstrate the exercise of good judgment and prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.

#### **E. Cognitive, Conceptual and Quantitative Abilities**

- Ability to read and understand written documents in English and solve problems involving measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis.
- Ability to gather data, develop a plan of action, establish priorities among competing demands, and monitor treatment plans and modalities.
- Ability to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Cognitive skills sufficient to calculate appropriate medication dosage given specific patient parameters.
- Conceptual ability sufficient to analyze and synthesize data and develop an appropriate plan of care.
- Quantitative ability sufficient to collect data, prioritize needs and anticipate reactions.
- Ability to comprehend spatial relationships adequately to properly administer various types of injections or assess wounds of varying depths.

#### **Other Requirements**

A student must comply with University immunization requirements, as outlined at:

<http://cf.umaryland.edu/hrpolicies/section5/t50100Asa.html>

The admission of a student who is chronically infected with Hepatitis B virus will be

considered on a case-by-case basis after consultation with a panel of experts in Infectious Diseases. This panel will consider the Hepatitis B e antigen status, the health of the student, and decide what, if any, restrictions and monitoring are necessary for the student during their training in nursing.

### **Applicants with Disabilities**

The School of Nursing will provide reasonable accommodation in the admissions process for applicants with disabilities. An applicant is not disqualified from consideration due to a disability. Although the School of Nursing may not inquire whether an applicant has a disability prior to making an admissions decision, an applicant may disclose during the admission process a disability for which he or she wishes accommodation during the admissions process or upon admission. If this disclosure occurs, the School of Nursing may request that the applicant provide documentation of the disability. The admissions committee will consider the applicant based on the published criteria for admission of all applicants. An applicant who discloses a disability and requests accommodation in the admission process will be required to submit, in writing, the request for accommodation and pertinent supporting documentation. This pertinent information will include a history of accommodations granted previously in other educational programs and references who can discuss the experience of the student in other educational settings. Requests for accommodation should be initiated with the University's Office of Disability Support Services.

The School of Nursing may require additional medical or other verification of disabilities and proof of information presented concerning accommodations. Such proof may include demonstration of assisted physical abilities. The School may require independent medical examinations or testing to verify claimed disabilities, determine the extent and effects of disabilities, and assess the utility of accommodations. Technical and medical consultations from resources within the University and external to the University may be obtained. Costs of independent medical examinations, testing, technical and medical consultations required by the School of Nursing will be borne by the School.

The School of Nursing in conjunction with Office of Disability Support Services will make a determination as to the reasonableness of the accommodations that the applicant has requested or will determine alternative reasonable accommodations that the School may offer.

### **Enrolled Students with Disabilities**

A student who discloses a disability and requests accommodation will be required to submit, in writing, the request for accommodation and pertinent supporting documentation. The pertinent information will include documentation of the disability, by an appropriately credentialed professional. If available, documentation should also include history of accommodations granted previously in other educational programs and references who can discuss the experience of the student in other educational settings. Requests for accommodation should be initiated with the University's Office of Disability Support Services. Requests should be made prior to the start of each semester for courses in which accommodations may be needed.

The School of Nursing may require additional medical or other verification of disabilities and proof of information presented concerning accommodations. Such proof may include demonstration of assisted physical abilities. The School may require

independent medical examinations or testing to verify claimed disabilities, determine the extent and effects of disabilities, and assess the utility of accommodations. Technical and medical consultations from resources within the University and external to the University may be obtained. Costs of independent medical examinations, testing, technical and medical consultations required by the School of Nursing will be borne by the School.

The School of Nursing's faculty in conjunction with School's Disability Support Liaisons will make a determination as to whether the student can perform the essential functions of the educational program, taking into account the accommodations that the student has requested or alternative reasonable accommodation that the School of Nursing would offer. Costs of reasonable accommodation will be borne by the School of Nursing from its resources or other funds available to it.

The School of Nursing will provide reasonable accommodations, but is not required to make, nor will it make, modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of the educational program or provide auxiliary aids that present an undue burden to the School. The student must be able to perform all of the technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations to matriculate or continue in the program.

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