

Clark College Nursing Program

Policies and Processes: Essential Functional Abilities Policy

What is the Purpose of this Policy?

Nursing is a physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding profession. Nursing education requires that the accumulation of scientific knowledge be accompanied by the simultaneous acquisition of skills and professional attitudes and behaviors. The goal of the College of Nursing Prelicensure Program is to prepare students to think critically and to practice nursing competently and compassionately in rapidly changing practice environments.

Specific essential abilities have been identified by the Nursing Department and are aligned with applicable laws. Essential Functional Abilities define the observational, communication, cognitive, affective, and physical capabilities considered essential to complete this nursing program.

Aligned Clark College Policies, Legal Requirements, and WAC:

ADA Policy

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

2008 Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment (ADAAA).

Related Documents, Forms, and Tools:

Disability Support Services (DSS): https://www.clark.edu/campus-life/student-support/disability_support/

Policy:

Applicants to the Clark College Nursing Program must meet the following essential functional abilities and as students, maintain and demonstrate these abilities for progression throughout the program with or without reasonable accommodation. Examples are not all-inclusive.

The curriculum for the Nursing Program requires students to engage in diverse, complex, and specific experiences essential to the acquisition and practice of essential nursing skills and functions. These functions are necessary to ensure the health and safety of clients, fellow students, professors, and other healthcare providers. Students are required to perform all the essential requirements below:

Motor Function

Provide physical care to clients. Engage in physical activity for up to twelve-hour shifts, lifting, and moving clients on day, evening, or night shifts. The student is able to perform gross and fine motor movements to provide nursing care. Students must be able to perform or assist with nursing care and interventions safely according to standards of care, and to maintain mental concentration and physical safety. Additionally, students must be able to function effectively under stress and be able to adapt to changing environments.

Examples:

- Perform CPR.
- Lifting a minimum of 40 pounds, with and without twisting torso.
- Fine motor skills: Able to grasp, pinch, twist, squeeze, and employ hand coordination.
- Work for up to twelve-hour shifts in a situation where most of the time is spent on physical activity.
- Don and wear a range of personal protective equipment.
- Able to bend, squat, reach, kneel, or maintain balance.
- Move within confined spaces
- Reach above shoulders and below waist

Communication Function

The student is expected to communicate effectively both verbally and non-verbally. This includes the use of speech, body language, reading, and writing to communicate with clients, families, peers, professors, and other healthcare members.

Examples:

- Communicate effectively with people.
- Read, speak, and comprehend English.
- Document information clearly and accurately.
- Clarify the meaning of verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Accurately elicit information from people.
- Clarify written and verbal information.
- Delegate tasks to others.
- Access and document in electronic medical record.
- Demonstrate responsive, empathetic listening to establish rapport.
- Demonstrate professional verbal and non-verbal communication.

Intellectual/Conceptual Function

Synthesize information from a variety of sources, use critical thinking, and apply it when making decisions regarding client care. The nursing student must be able to measure and calculate accurately, and analyze, synthesize, and retain complex information in order to problem solve.

Examples:

- Accurate computational abilities.
- Take accurate measurements
- Employ dynamic decision-making
- Organize and form appropriate conclusions
- Follow directions consistently and accurately
- Read and comprehend extensive written material
- Evaluate and apply information and engage in critical thinking
- Employ inductive and deductive reasoning
- Transfer knowledge from one situation to another
- Problem solving and prioritizing tasks
- Recognize when help is needed and obtain support from appropriate sources

Sensory & Observation Function

Use physical senses to gather information. Examples:

- Distinguish color, color intensity and body surface characteristics
- Feel vibration
- Feel temperature changes on the skin, i.e., warmth, and coldness
- Feel differences in sizes, shapes, surface characteristics
- Visualize objects at a close distance
- Visualize objects at a far distance
- Feel differences in size, shape, and surface characteristics
- Hear normal speaking level sounds
- Hear faint body sounds
- Hear in situations when not able to see lips
- Hear auditory alarms
- Detect faint and strong odors

Behavioral-Social

Nursing students must possess the emotional capacity and behaviors required to exercise good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom and clinical settings, and the development of mature, responsive, and effective relationships. Nursing

students must be able to relate and demonstrate to peers, staff, healthcare professionals, and patients with honesty, integrity, and non-discrimination. Nursing students must display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the educational and clinical environment.

Examples:

- Maintain effective and responsive relationships
- Possess the ability to regulate emotions under stress and the capacity to adapt to change.
- Interact with others in a non-judgmental and non-discriminatory manner.
- Adapt to changing environments and the unexpected.
- Establish and maintain interpersonal boundaries.
- Assume responsibility/accountability for own actions.

Nursing students must be able to meet essential abilities with or without reasonable accommodation. Nursing students are required to communicate any changes related to their essential functional abilities promptly. Self-disclosure of any illness, injury, or condition that could impair the ability to meet the essential functional abilities is required and matters to student safety and the safety of patients. Meeting the essential functional abilities aligns with clinical site policies and legal agreements between Clark College and clinical sites. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability.

Revision History:

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