



Entry to Baccalaureate Nursing Practice and Advanced Nursing Practice Divisions
Student Technical Standards Policy For Admission And Matriculation

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Approval Authority: Faculty of Rutgers School of Nursing	
Policy Owner: Senior Associate Dean for Administration and Student Affairs	
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*This policy combines and supersedes two older policies on student essential functions.

1. Policy Statement

This policy identifies the set of technical standards that specify the nonacademic attributes, abilities, and skills candidates must demonstrate for admission, retention, progression, and graduation in the School of Nursing. This policy also defines the procedures to be followed in the event that a student does not meet those defined standards.

2. Reasons for Policy

Admission to the School of Nursing is conditional on the candidate's ability to achieve and meet these technical standards in conjunction with the academic standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, and depends on a process that examines and values the pertinent skills, attitudes, and attributes of each candidate on a case-by-case basis. The School of Nursing adheres to the highest ethical and professional standards of the nursing profession. In doing so, the School of Nursing reserves the right to deny admission to candidates or to dismiss candidates who, upon completion of the interactive process, cannot meet these technical and/or academic standards or who would be deemed to pose a threat to patients and others in the educational and clinical environment.

3. Who Should Review This Policy

All applicants to the School of Nursing and School of Nursing students participating in educational programs.

4. Resources and Related Documents:

- Office of Disabilities, [New Brunswick](#) and [Rutgers Health](#)
- [School of Nursing Disabilities Services](#)
- [Temporary Conditions Website](#)
- RBHS Office of Disability Services (ODS): 973-972-5396 or odsrbhs@rbhs.rutgers.edu
- ODS website: <https://oasa.rbhs.rutgers.edu/office-of-disability-services>

5. Definitions

- **Candidate:** refers to applicants to the Rutgers School of Nursing as well as current nursing students (graduate or undergraduate).
- **Temporary Conditions.** Temporary conditions or injuries do not last long (typically 6 months or less), are not chronic, and have little or no outstanding or lasting effects. Although temporary conditions generally do not qualify as a disability under federal or state laws, the University does recognize that temporary conditions and injuries can be problematic and may adversely affect a student's ability to fully participate in class.

6. The Policy

Under all circumstances, a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. The use of an intermediary in the clinical setting is ordinarily not permitted and may not be used as a substitute for a candidate's judgment or intellectual acumen. The use of an intermediary would be considered only when it does not alter an essential element or function of these technical and/or academic standards.

Technical Standards

A candidate for any School of Nursing degree must possess abilities and skills, which include those that are observational, communicational, dexterity/motor, intellectual-conceptual (integrative and quantitative), behavioral, and social. The School of Nursing adheres to the following technical standards which are required of all candidates for the undergraduate or graduate degrees in nursing for admission, progression, and graduation, with or without reasonable accommodation. The attainment of knowledge mandates that the candidate participates in course activities, laboratories, and experiential rotations as defined by the School of Nursing policies. All courses in the curriculum must be successfully completed. In order to acquire the knowledge and skills to function in a variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care, students for the undergraduate and graduate degrees in nursing must have abilities and skills in the following five areas:

Observation

Candidates must have the ability to observe and evaluate in classroom settings, small group teaching exercises, one-on-one evaluations, patient care settings, nursing practice, and clinic sites.

Candidates must be able to:

- Acquire information from demonstrations and experiences in nursing courses such as lecture, group, and physical demonstrations
- Acquire information from written documents and computer systems (e.g., literature searches and data retrieval)
- Identify information presented in images from paper, slides, videos and transparencies
- Recognize and assess patient changes in mood, activity, cognition, verbal and non-verbal communication

Candidates must also be able to:

- Use and interpret information from assessment techniques/maneuvers such as those involved in assessing respiratory and cardiac function, blood pressure, blood sugar, neurological status, etc.
- Use and interpret information related to physiologic phenomena generated from diagnostic tools

(i.e., sphygmomanometer, otoscope, ophthalmoscope) during a comprehensive examination of a client or patient

Communication

A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently; observe patients to elicit information; describe or detect changes in mood, activity, and posture; perceive nonverbal communications; and establish a therapeutic relationship. A candidate must be able to respectfully communicate effectively, efficiently, and sensitively (using English and/or a functional equivalent) in clinical and classroom settings with patients, their families, faculty, peers, and all other members of the health care team in both immediate and recorded modes. Communication includes speech, reading, and writing or the functional equivalent.

Dexterity/Motor

Candidates must be able to perform nursing skills requiring the use of gross and fine motor skills. Candidates must have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other basic diagnostic procedures or assessment techniques. Candidates must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide nursing care and emergency response to patients, such as IV insertion, venous blood draw, urinary catheter insertion, airway management, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and application of pressure to control bleeding. Candidates must also be able to assist and/or participate in various lifting activities. All actions included in this section require the coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and use of the senses of touch and vision or the functional equivalent. In addition, the candidate must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities

Candidates are required to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, synthesize and retain complex information. In addition, candidates must be able to recall and apply information from course materials, lectures, current literature, and journals, as well as clinical nursing practice sites. Necessary abilities include critical thinking and reasoning, problem-solving, measurement, and mathematical calculation to provide optimal nursing care.

Behavioral-Social

Candidates must act ethically with integrity and demonstrate compassion and concern for others. Candidates are expected to exhibit professionalism, personal accountability, motivation, and interpersonal skills, including accepting and applying feedback and respecting boundaries, and caring for all individuals in a respectful and effective manner regardless of sex, gender identity, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other protected status. Candidates must have appropriate hygiene and a professional appearance. Candidates must possess the emotional health required to fully utilize their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, work as effective members of a healthcare team, and function successfully under emotionally, intellectually, and physically demanding workloads within the classroom and clinical settings. This requires the ability to take responsibility for one's actions and emotional stability in stressful situations, with long hours and personal fatigue, dissatisfied patients, and tired colleagues. Candidates must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical environment.

Candidates are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards in their behavior and are expected to meet the ethical standards set forth by the nursing profession. Candidates must be able to develop skills necessary to recognize when they may need the support or assistance of other health care professionals and seek help when needed. Candidates must be able to develop professional relationships with patients, patients' families and/or caregivers, and other health care providers to provide effective nursing care while maintaining patient confidentiality. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admissions and educational process.

Reasonable Accommodations

The University provides reasonable accommodations to students on a nondiscriminatory basis consistent with legal requirements as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments ACT (ADAAA) of 2008, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to an instructional activity, facility, program or service that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to participate in all Rutgers University student activities. To be eligible for accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The ADA, the ADAAA and Section 504 all define disability as (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (b) a record of such impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such a condition.

These technical standards are not intended to deter any candidate for whom reasonable accommodation would allow the fulfillment of the complete curriculum. The School of Nursing will provide reasonable accommodations, according to university policies and procedures, to otherwise qualified applicants and matriculated candidates with disabilities unless: (a) such accommodations impose undue hardship to the institution; (b) direct threats of substantial harm to the health and safety of others due to the disability cannot be eliminated by any reasonable accommodations available; or (c) such accommodations fundamentally alter the educational program or academic standards.

If a student is in need of reasonable accommodations to meet the Technical Standards outlined in this policy, they should contact the appropriate Office of Disability Services at the campus where they are enrolled.

Change in Ability

If, while matriculated, a student's ability to meet the program's technical standards, with or without accommodations, comes into question, a thorough and comprehensive review will be conducted to determine the student's fitness to continue in the program. This review may include an independent evaluation and/or testing by a health care provider designated by the School**. In circumstances where a determination has been made that a student may not be able to meet the technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations, the student will be referred to an ad-hoc Technical Standards Advisory Committee. It is the responsibility of the ad-hoc Technical Standards Advisory Committee to determine whether the student can or cannot meet the described standards utilizing reasonable accommodations. The recommendations of this Committee shall guide the student's program in determining whether a student should be referred to the Academic Review Board for dismissal. Students who are no longer able to meet the technical standards of their program even with reasonable

accommodations will be dismissed.

***Students may request an evaluation and/or testing by their own provider at their own expense.

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Student attestation

By submitting this document, I hereby certify that I am able to meet, with or without accommodations, the technical standards, which are required for admission, matriculation, and completion of the School of Nursing program. If I require any accommodation to perform these functions, I agree to request accommodation, if needed, by promptly following the established policies and procedures set forth by the university.

If my circumstances change related to these technical standards, I will promptly notify the Office of Administration and Student Services at the Rutgers School of Nursing and/or the Office of Disability Services.

Please print name: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____