

Essential Functions for Admission and Continuance in the Nursing Program

To best prepare individuals seeking training in the career of Nursing, it is appropriate to consider a description of the demands placed on students while they attend requisite laboratories and clinical assignments located at facilities affiliated with Westchester Community College. These demands include specific action requirements.

Applicants should be reminded that some aspects of the Nursing program do not manifest themselves until later on in the program. Individuals should evaluate their abilities and ask questions of the program's officials about specific concerns that they may have regarding physical, emotional, or cognitive requirements to complete the program. Once they read the student "job description" listed below as well as the activity expectations of a candidate, they need to approach college officials about the resources available to allow the student to complete the program.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL NURSE: STUDENT JOB DESCRIPTION

Nursing students must demonstrate numerous competencies representing all three learning domains: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. Students learn, practice, and verify these competencies in a number of settings; including classroom, laboratory, and clinical.

To achieve the required competencies in the classroom setting, nursing students must perceive, assimilate, and integrate information from a variety of sources. These sources include oral instruction, printed material, visual media, and live demonstrations. Students must participate in classroom discussions, give oral reports, and pass written and computer-based examinations of various formats. Completion of these tasks requires cognitive skills such as: reading, writing, and problem solving. To be physically capable of the classroom work, students must, with assistance, be able to hear, see, speak, sit and touch.

Nursing laboratories provide students with the opportunity to view demonstrations, evaluate and practice with medical devices, and perform simulated clinical procedures. In addition to the cognitive skills required in the classroom, students must demonstrate psychomotor (hands-on) skills in manipulating patients and equipment, as well as general professional behaviors like team-building and interpersonal communications. To satisfy laboratory requirements, students must perform all procedures without critical error. This requires high levels of cognitive, perceptual, and psychomotor function. In addition to the physical capabilities for classroom work, the laboratories require students, with assistance, to assemble equipment, stand while using both hands to perform procedures, perform fine motor skills, and perform procedures requiring considerable strength. Examples of the latter procedures include turning and moving patients and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Clinical education in nursing care involves application of skills acquired in the classroom and laboratory settings to actual patients in the clinical setting. In addition to the cognitive skills required in those settings, students must demonstrate skills in client assessment, clinical reasoning, problem-solving, synthesizing care plans, and trouble-shooting equipment. Professional behaviors required for clinical training include constructive responses to situations involving emergencies, deaths, stress, frustrating situations, and complex interactions with other members of the health care team. Students must also demonstrate respect for others, to include empathy, responsibility, efficiency, integrity, and initiative.

In addition to the above-listed job description, a student should read the activity requirements identified as specific to a Nursing student.

ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

Gross Motor Skills

- move within confined spaces
- sit and maintain balance
- stand and maintain balance
- reach above shoulders (e.g., ECG monitors)
- reach below waist (e.g., plug electrical appliance into wall outlets)

Fine Motor Skills

- pick up objects with hands
- grasp small objects with hands
- write with pen or pencil
- key/type (e.g., use a computer)
- pinch/pick or otherwise work with fingers
- twist (e.g., turn objects/knobs using hands)
- squeeze with finger (e.g., eye dropper used for medication administration)

Physical Endurance

- stand (e.g., at client side during therapeutic procedure)
- sustain repetitive movements (e.g., CPR, Chest Physiotherapy)
- maintain physical tolerance

Physical Strength

- support 25 pounds of weight (e.g., ambulate client)
- lift 25 pound (e.g., monitoring equipment)
- move light objects weighing up to 10 pounds (e.g., IV poles)
- move heavy objects weighing from 11 to 50 pounds
- carry equipment/supplies
- use upper body strength (e.g., perform CPR, physically restrain a client)
- squeeze with hands (e.g., operate fire extinguisher)

Mobility

- twist
- bend
- stoop/squat
- move quickly (e.g., respond to an emergency a distance from current location)
- climb (e.g., stools/stairs)
- walk

Hearing

- hear normal speaking level sounds (e.g., person-to-person report)
- hear faint voices
- hear faint body sounds (e.g., blood pressure sounds, assess placement of tubes)

- hear in situations when not able to see lips (e.g., when masks are used)
- hear auditory alarms (e.g., monitors, fire alarms, call bells)

Visual

- see objects up to 20 inches away (e.g., information on a computer screen, skin conditions)
- see objects up to see objects up to 20 feet away (e.g., client in a room)
- see objects more than 20 feet away (e.g., location of equipment in storage)
- use depth perception
- use peripheral vision
- distinguish color (e.g., color codes on supplies, charts, bed)
- distinguish color intensity (e.g., flushed skin, skin paleness)

Tactile

- feel vibrations (e.g., tactile fremitus, client pulse)
- detect temperature (e.g., lower extremities)
- feel differences in sizes, shapes (e.g., palpate vein, identify body landmarks)
- detect environmental temperatures (e.g., check for drafts)

Smell

- detect odors from client (e.g., fetid secretions, keto-acidosis)
- detect smoke
- detect gases or noxious smells

Reading

- read and understand written documents (e.g., policies, protocols, charts, medication inserts)

Arithmetic Competence

- read and understand columns of writing (flow sheet, charts)
- read digital displays
- convert numbers to and/or from the metric system
- read graphs (e.g., vital sign sheets)
- tell time
- measure time (e.g., count spontaneous respirations)
- count rates (e.g., pulse)
- use measuring tools (e.g., spirometers)
- read measurement marks (e.g., scales, etc.)
- add, subtract, multiply and/or divide whole numbers
- compute fractions (e.g., medication dosages)
- use a calculator
- write numbers in records

Emotional Stability

- provide client with emotional support
- adapt to changing environment/stress
- deal with the unexpected (e.g., client condition worsens)
- focus attention on task
- monitor own emotion
- receive constructive feedback appropriately from instructors, managers, others on the team
- accept responsibility for issues that cause stress to others and self
- perform multiple responsibilities concurrently
- handle strong emotions (e.g., grief)

Analytical Thinking

- transfer knowledge from one situation to another
- process information - categorize results - create therapeutic plans
- evaluate outcomes of theory using protocols

- problem solve
- prioritize tasks
- use long-term memory
- use short term memory

Critical Thinking

- identify cause-effect relationships ■ plan/control activities for others
- synthesize knowledge and skills ■ sequence information

Interpersonal Skills

- negotiate interpersonal conflict
- respect differences in patient's beliefs (e.g., religion)
- establish rapport with clients
- establish rapport with co-workers

Communication Skills

- teach (e.g., client/family about health care)
- explain procedures
- give oral reports (e.g., report on client's condition to others)
- interact with others (e.g., health care workers)
- speak on the telephone
- direct activities of others
- convey information through writing (e.g., progress notes)
- tactfully suggest alterations in clientcare treatment
- demonstrate skills in the use of client care technologies and information systems, including clinical information systems.

Once an individual reads the job requirements and activity requirements, they need to evaluate their abilities to complete the program. If they feel they cannot meet the requirements of the activity description or job description and still want to enroll in the Nursing Program, they must contact the college via the Disabilities office at 606-6287. The individual must present documentation of a disability to their program officials, and the office will make reasonable attempts to accommodate the wishes of the student to enroll in the program and be successful in its completion. The Americans with Disabilities Act mandates reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities.

Traditionally extra time and other provisions to complete tasks (evaluations) have been made available to the student in class and laboratory. It needs to be understood by all students enrolled in the Nursing Program that while at clinical (the hospital component to our program) procedures done on patients need to be completed in limited time frames. Not only do client care tasks need to be completed in a timely fashion but also often with a specific sequence to be rendered. These psychomotor (hands-on) skills need to be mastered in laboratory prior to the students completing them on patients.

Client safety and comfort are paramount considerations to the college and the faculty. Individual teaching strategies will be considered for individuals once they are documented to have specific needs, and those needs are identified. Evaluations of all students will not vary from traditional criteria and will be equal for all students.

While the program is willing to revise teaching techniques, specific cognitive, psychomotor skills, and affective behaviors will be required for all students in order to finish the program.

Once an individual requesting accommodations to the program is identified by the disabilities office, and those disabilities are documented, the office will contact the student's instructor with suggestions for accommodations in the classroom and laboratory. For the clinical component of the program, the Program's Chairperson will contact clinical affiliates to insure reasonable accommodations for the student.

Unlike most other academic programs, the Nursing requirements are regulated by credentialing organizations and state licensure, which require students to be proficient in the psychomotor (hand manipulation), cognitive and affective (behavior) domains. Individuals with needs that differ from traditional students can and will be accommodated within reasonable bounds.

Essential Functions for Admission and Continuance in the Nursing Program

I have read the above and agree to my ability to handle these essential functions and agree that if problems arise I may need to withdraw from the program.

STUDENT SIGNATURE AND DATE

FACULTY WITNESS SIGNATURE AND DATE