

NURSING PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS

To successfully progress through the nursing curriculum and function as a practicing nurse upon graduation, an individual must be able to perform certain essential physical and mental activities. The following technical standards reflect these activities.

Three levels of assessment will be applied regarding an individual's ability to meet the nursing program's technical standards: (1) the student's assessment of his/her own personal abilities; (2) a healthcare provider's assessment as a part of the required physical examination; and (3) the nursing faculty's ongoing assessment of a student's abilities prior to and throughout the nursing program.

Should a concern arise from any of the three levels of assessment regarding the student's ability to comply with technical standards, the nursing program may require a second professional assessment/opinion. The student will be required to assume any financial costs associated with additional assessments. At any point prior to admission or during the nursing program that a student fails to meet all of the technical standards, the program will review the situation and take appropriate action that may include ineligibility to participate in the clinical component of the program.

The college strives to provide reasonable accommodations when possible in order to allow the individual to perform safely in the clinical setting. Technical standards cannot be waived. Any accommodation that fundamentally alters the nursing curriculum is not considered reasonable, including the use of an intermediary or third party to perform the technical standards.

Technical Standards for admission to the Hesston College Nursing Program include the following.

Visual Acuity

1. Visual acuity sufficient to assess clients and their environments and to implement the nursing care plans that are developed from such assessments.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Detect changes in skin color or condition
- Collect data from recording equipment and measurement devices used in client care
- Detect a fire in a client area and initiate emergency action
- Draw up the correct quantity of medication into a syringe

Hearing Ability

2. Hearing ability sufficient to assess clients and their environments and to implement the nursing care plans that are developed from such assessments.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope
- Detect audible alarms (e.g., monitors, fire alarms, call bells)
- Communicate clearly in telephone conversations
- Communicate effectively with clients and with other members of the healthcare team

Olfactory Ability

3. Olfactory ability sufficient to assess clients and to implement the nursing care plans that are developed from such assessments.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Detect odors of bodily fluids or spoiled foods
- Detect smoke from burning materials

Tactile Ability

4. Tactile ability sufficient to assess clients and to implement the nursing care plans that are developed from such assessments.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Feel vibrations (e.g., palpate pulses)
- Detect temperature (e.g., skin, solutions)
- Feel differences in surface characteristics (e.g., skin turgor, rashes)
- Feel differences in size, shapes (e.g., palpate vein, identify body landmarks)
- Detect environmental temperature (e.g., check for drafts)

Fine Motor Skills

5. Fine motor skills sufficient to perform psychomotor skills integral to client care.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Safely dispose of needles in sharps containers
- Accurately place and maintain position of stethoscope for detecting sounds of bodily functions
- Manipulate small equipment and containers, such as syringes, vials, ampules, and medication packages to administer medications
- Accurately chart data on graphics and other flow sheets

Strength and Mobility

6. Strength and mobility sufficient to perform client care activities and emergency procedures.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Walk and climb (e.g., ladders, stools, stairs)
- Safely transfer clients in and out of bed
- Lift or move clients or objects, pull or push objects. This includes occasionally lifting 50 pounds and frequently lifting or carrying objects weighing 25 pounds.
- Twist, bend, stoop/squat
- Move quickly (e.g., response to an emergency)
- Turn and position clients as needed to prevent complications due to bed rest
- Hang intravenous bags at the appropriate level (shoulder or higher level)
- Accurately read the volumes in body fluid collection devices hung or placed below bed level
- Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation

Physical Endurance

7. Physical endurance sufficient to complete assigned periods of clinical practice (must be able to complete a full shift 12 hours in length on days, evenings, nights, or weekends; including consecutive 12 hour shifts in a row). Must perform with acceptable speed reflected by ability to carry out the usual client care assignment for a particular point in the program within the allotted clinical time.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Sustain repetitive movements (e.g., CPR)
- Maintain physical tolerance (e.g., work entire shift)
- Stand (e.g., at client side during surgical or therapeutic procedure)

Ability to Speak, Comprehend, Read, and Write English

8. Ability to speak, comprehend, read, and write in English at a level that meets the need for accurate, clear, and effective communication with individuals, families, and groups respecting social, cultural and spiritual diversity.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Give clear oral reports
- Read watches with second hands
- Read graphs
- Negotiate interpersonal conflict
- Read and understand English printed documents
- Write legibly in English in client charts
- Discriminate fine/subtle differences in medical word endings
- Obtain client information in a timely manner

Emotional Stability

9. Emotional stability to function effectively under stress, to adapt to changing situations, and to follow through on assigned client care responsibilities.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Deal with the unexpected (e.g., frequently changing client status)
- Handle strong emotions of clients and others in a safe and appropriate manner
- Monitor and handle own emotions in a safe and appropriate manner
- Be flexible with changing environments and schedules in both class and clinical settings
- Be able to work independently in close quarters with clients
- Establish therapeutic (physical and emotional) boundaries
- Provide client with emotional support
- Perform multiple responsibilities concurrently
- Demonstrate compassion, integrity, honesty, concern for others, interpersonal skill, interest and motivation

Cognitive Ability

10. Cognitive ability to collect, analyze, and integrate information and knowledge to make clinical judgments and management decisions that promote client outcomes.

Examples of relevant activities:

- Respond appropriately in emergency situations with sustained attention
- Process information accurately, thoroughly, and quickly to prioritize tasks
- Perform math computations for medication dosage calculations
- Demonstrate skills of recall using both long and short term memory, predicting possible outcomes, application of knowledge, and evaluation of predicted outcomes at appropriate level for point in program