



Nursing students must meet all Washington State University College of Nursing Technical Standards independently, with or without reasonable accommodation, to support successful progress through and graduation from their respective curricula. These requirements pertain to all students regardless of setting (e.g., classroom/didactic, office, on-campus simulation, or off-campus clinical, email communication, etc.).

Program Technical Standards are used to assist students in determining whether accommodations or modifications are necessary and provide an objective measure upon which informed decisions can be based about whether students can participate in the nursing program.

Unique combinations of affective, psychomotor, physical, and social abilities are required to satisfactorily perform these functions. In addition to being essential to the successful completion of the requirements of the degree, these essential behavioral functions are necessary to ensure the health and safety of patients, fellow candidates, faculty, and other healthcare providers.

Students are encouraged to review these Technical Standards to become familiar with the skills, abilities, and behavioral characteristics required to complete the programs. Contact and other information for students who have questions about these Technical Standards or who may require reasonable accommodation is found at the end of this policy.

## **I. Communication Competencies**

Technical Standards include the ability to communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals.

**Rationale:** communication competencies include knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care in all healthcare settings. Examples of communication competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

1. communicate clearly in English, in a professional and sensitive manner, to patients or to a patient language interpreter (if the patient and/or family members/significant others do not speak English), and their family members/significant others, health team members, faculty, and peers of diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds in professional nursing practice settings as well as in the academic setting.
2. elicit accurate information from patients, family members/significant others, health team members, and/or faculty related to a patient's medical history and status necessary to evaluate a patient's condition adequately and effectively.
3. use and comprehend standard professional nursing and medical terminology when using and/or documenting a patient's print or electronic health record.
4. convey appropriate information to patients and the healthcare team and teach, direct and counsel a wide variety of individuals, including explaining treatment procedures and initiating health education.

## **II. Observation Competencies**

The Technical Standards include the ability to make observations in connection with other identified professional nursing student competencies.

**Rationale:** Nursing student observation competencies include the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care to patients in all healthcare settings. Examples of observation competencies include, without limitation, the ability to accurately:

1. use and interpret information obtained from digital, analog, and waveform diagnostic tools (e.g., sphygmomanometer, otoscope, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, EKG, IVs) and other diagnostic tools that monitor or obtain physiological phenomena.
2. observe a patient during a comprehensive or focused physical assessment to determine signs and symptoms of disease, pain, and infection.



3. observe and interpret normal and deviations from normal the following: e.g., a patient's heart and body sounds, body language, the color of wounds, drainage, urine, feces, expectoration, and sensitivity to heat, cold, pain, and pressure.

### III. Cognitive Competencies

The Technical Standards include the ability to demonstrate cognitive abilities in connection with the other identified professional nursing student competencies.

**Rationale:** Nursing student cognitive competencies include demonstrating the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care to patients in all healthcare settings. Examples of cognitive competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

1. demonstrate cognitive abilities related to course and program outcomes, which include intellectual, conceptual, integrative, quantitative, critical thinking, and comprehension skills that indicate that the student can carry out the nursing process in the care of patients.
2. measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize subjective and objective data to carry out the nursing process in relation to patient assessment, diagnosis, goals, plan of care/interventions, and evaluation.
3. mathematically calculate dimensional analysis and medication dosages.
4. retrieve and critically appraise patient-related research to determine the best available research evidence (quantity and quality) to use in a patient's nursing plan of care.
5. comprehend extensive information from written documents, visual and/or oral presentations, and patient computer information systems to carry out the nursing process.
6. analyze and prioritize all aspects of patient care in a prompt and timely fashion.
7. synthesize objective and subjective findings and diagnostic studies to formulate nursing diagnoses.
8. use synthesized data to initiate a nursing plan of care which appropriately integrates patient preferences to provide appropriate, quality, and safe patient care.
9. accurately follow course syllabi, assignment directions, patient protocols, and any action plan(s) developed by deans, faculty, administrators, or health care agency staff.

### IV. Motor Competencies

The Technical Standards include the ability to perform or assist with nursing interventions to provide comprehensive general nursing care and treatment in connection with other identified professional nursing student competencies.

**Rationale:** Nursing student motor competencies include the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care to patients in all health care settings. Example motor competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

1. obtain accurate information from patients using gross and fine motor skills appropriate to the technique (e.g., palpation, auscultation, and percussion) and common medical/nursing digital, analog, and waveform diagnostic tools and equipment (e.g., sphygmomanometer, otoscope, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, EKG, IVs) that monitor or obtain physiological phenomena or data.
2. perform and/or assist appropriately with expected nursing student procedures, treatments, and medication administration using sterile or clean techniques appropriate to the type of procedure, treatment or medication administration (e.g., drawing medications into syringes in precise measurements; giving a medication IV, IM, or



subcutaneously using the appropriate syringe or apparatus; performing tracheotomy care and suctioning; inserting urinary catheters; creating sterile fields; sterile and clean dressing changes), and administering basic life support (BLS) cardiopulmonary resuscitation or advanced cardiopulmonary life support (ACLS), depending upon the nursing student's program level.

3. move, transfer, and position patients or equipment safely under a variety of circumstances with or without a lift team or assistive devices during the delivery of general nursing care or in emergency situations.
4. have the endurance to complete all required tasks during the assigned period of clinical practice to carry out the nursing process in the context of patient care delivery.
5. navigate patients' rooms, workspaces, and treatment areas with appropriate precision and speed to carry out the nursing process during the delivery of general nursing care or in emergency situations.

## **V. Behavioral And Social Attributes Competencies**

The Technical Standards include the ability to demonstrate behavioral and social attributes in academic and in on- campus clinical and off-campus clinical settings in connection with other identified professional nursing student competencies included in the AACN's Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice, the National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.® Code of Ethics: Part II Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct and Interpretive Statements, and WSU's College of Nursing Student Academic Integrity Policy.

**Rationale:** Nursing student behavioral and social attributes competencies include the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care in all healthcare settings. Examples of behavioral and social attributes competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

1. conform to all requirements set forth by WSU/healthcare agency's affiliation agreements as well as any additional requirements of any clinical setting.
2. uphold professional nursing standards related to the student's scope of practice.
3. conform to WSU's College of Nursing attendance and clinical dress code/professional appearance requirements for on-campus, clinical simulation, and off-campus clinical learning sessions.
4. communicate in a mature, professional, culturally sensitive, therapeutic, accurate, and effective manner with patients, patients' family members/significant others, members of the healthcare team, faculty, staff, and peers.
5. maintain effective, appropriate, and sensitive relationships with patients, patients' family members/significant others, peers, faculty, staff, and other healthcare professionals.
6. work cooperatively and with honesty and integrity with peers, faculty, and members of the healthcare team.
7. adapt to changing environments and exhibit flexibility and composure in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of diverse patients.
8. use conflict resolution strategies effectively in university, on-campus clinical simulation, and off-campus clinical learning settings.
9. integrate constructive criticism received in university, on-campus clinical simulation, and off- campus clinical learning settings.
10. correctly judge when a nursing intervention requires additional assistance and seek help from the clinical instructor, preceptor, or appropriate agency health care team member.



11. meet requirements for criminal background evaluation to support clinical placement.

**Requesting Reasonable Accommodations** [[2021-2022 Graduate School Handbook / Policies and Procedures](#)]

Graduate students with identified disabilities should contact the Access Center before the semester that they plan to attend and initiate the accommodations process. Accommodations are unique for each individual and some require a significant amount of time to prepare for, so it is essential that students notify the Access Center as far in advance as possible. Students with a disability that is identified during the semester should contact the Access Center as soon as possible to arrange for an appointment and a review of their documentation by an Access advisor. All accommodations must be approved through the Access Center located on each campus. Contact information for the Access Center at each campus can be found at the following websites:

- Pullman: <http://accesscenter.wsu.edu/>
- Spokane: <https://spokane.wsu.edu/studentaffairs/access-resources/>
- Tri-Cities: <http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/disability/>
- Vancouver: <http://studentaffairs.vancouver.wsu.edu/access-center/>
- Students not on one of these campuses should contact the Access Center in Pullman for more information.

The School of Nursing works with the WSU Access Center to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have followed the accommodations request process. However, the school reserves the right to determine if a requested accommodation is in conflict with the Professional Standards and Behavior Code. Examples of inability to accommodate are when a fundamental alteration to the Professional Standards and Behavior Code would result, compromise client care, or compromise the safety of others in the healthcare setting.



Policy Title	DNP Technical Standards
Policy Inception Date	06/2022
Policy Applicable Party	College of Nursing Graduate Students
Date of Last Change	03/2023
Responsible Party, Level I (to create and review)	Center for Student Excellence
Responsible Party, Level II (to approve)	CON Faculty & DNP Program Director
Responsible Party, Level III (to implement)	Center for Student Excellence