

APP STATE Department of Nursing

SAFETY AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose: To validate all students' ability to meet the cognitive, affective and psychomotor requirements of the curriculum, with or without reasonable accommodations, while enrolled in any of the Appalachian State University Nursing programs. This policy and related procedures shall be implemented in a manner consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as subsequently amended. In addition, students must be compliant with the patient safety and quality standards of clinical and other regulatory agencies.

Policy: For admission and progression in any of the Appalachian State University Nursing programs, all students must:

- Meet the required eligibility requirements and the patient safety and quality standards of clinical and other regulatory agencies.
- Newly admitted students must:
 - Complete the health appraisal and have a physical examination performed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, DO).
 - Complete and obtain approval of the "Safety and Technical Standards" form (attached).
 - Provide documentation of required immunizations including completion of 2-step Mantoux (PPD) testing.
 - Provide documentation of current American Heart Association BLS certification in adult and infant/child at the health care provider level.
- In order to progress in the program, all current students must submit, at the beginning of each subsequent academic year, the *Safety and Technical Standards Evaluation* form (in the forms section of this document) for validation of meeting the safety and technical standards.
- All students must maintain currency of immunization status, PPD testing and BLS.
- Students who incur **subsequent illness or injury must be assessed at the time of said occurrence** to determine if they remain in compliance with this policy and its intent.

Confidentiality: The handling of all records and subject information will be strictly confidential and revealed only to those required to have access, e.g., ODR, Appalachian's Department of Nursing, clinical agencies, etc. Any breach of confidentiality will be considered serious and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Reasonable Accommodations Due to a Disability

- At any time within the program, students needing reasonable accommodations in order to meet any of the technical and performance standards of the curriculum must make a request to the Office of Disability Resources (ODR) to determine eligibility and discuss any ODR approved accommodations with each course faculty.

Temporary impairment verification by student of meeting required safety and technical standards

- If a student is injured, is ill, or the student's health status changes, this must be reported to the Chair of the Department of Nursing within 24 hours and/or prior to clinical experience.
- The Director of Compliance and Student Support will request that the student provide verification from a health care provider of the student's continued ability to perform clinical activities. In addition, the student must also be cleared by the assigned clinical facility and the Department of Nursing in accordance with the facility's patient safety and quality standards.
- A copy of the "Safety and Technical Standards" form signed and dated by the health care provider must be completed.
 - A healthcare provider note validating the student's ability or limitations in returning to class or clinical activities must accompany the Safety and Technical Standards form. Healthcare providers include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, DO's or specialized providers most relevant to the condition.
 - If the student needs accommodations due to a temporary impairment, requests should be made to ODR.
- The Department of Nursing will submit all associated documentation to the clinical facility for review and determination of the students' ability to participate in clinical.

Until a decision is made, the student will not be allowed to participate in clinical courses.

Failure to provide appropriate documentation as requested may result in the student not being allowed to participate in clinical courses and/ or dismissal from the program based on the inability.

Disputing the decision

The student may make a written appeal of a decision made by the Department of Nursing pursuant to this policy. Such an appeal shall be made to the Chair of the Department of Nursing within fifteen (15) working days from the student's receipt of notice of the decision. If the situation cannot be resolved at the Department level, the student may appeal to the Dean of the Beaver College of Health Sciences within 15 working days of the Department's denial of the first appeal. The appeal to the Dean must be submitted in writing and include documentation related to the situation. The Department will also have an opportunity to provide written documentation about the situation. The documentation will include specific details regarding why the Department has denied the appeal, and a record of the communication with the student. The decision of the Dean is binding (final).

Misrepresentations

Any identified misrepresentation, falsification, or material omission of information by the student may result in dismissal from the Nursing program.

Amendments or Termination of this Policy: The Department of Nursing reserves the right to modify, amend, or terminate this policy at any time.

SAFETY AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS

General abilities

To provide quality nursing care, the student is expected to possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, taste and smell. All data received by the senses must be integrated, analyzed and synthesized in a consistent and accurate manner. The student must be able to observe patients accurately at a distance and close at hand. In addition, the student is expected to possess the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, equilibrium and movement.

Observational Ability

The student is expected to be able to observe the patient/client holistically to accurately assess any health/illness alterations. Inherent in this observation process is the functional use of the senses and sufficient motor capability to carry out the necessary assessment activities.

Communication

The student is expected to be able to effectively communicate and receive communication, both verbally and non-verbally. This requires the ability to see, speak, hear, read, write, and effectively utilize the English language. A student must be able to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and receive nonverbal communications. A student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech, but reading and writing. The student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team.

Motor Ability

The student is expected to be able to perform gross and fine motor movements required to provide holistic nursing care. Examples of care that the student must be able to perform include turning, transferring, transporting, and exercising the patients/clients. The student is expected to have the psychomotor skills necessary to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medications, and emergency interventions. Examples of emergency interventions reasonably required of nurses are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of parenteral medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, and the suctioning of obstructed airways. A candidate must also be able to protect the patients in emergency situations such as a fire event. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch, hearing, and vision. The student is expected to be able to maintain consciousness and equilibrium, and have the physical strength and stamina to perform satisfactorily in clinical nursing experiences.

Intellectual – Conceptual Ability

The student is expected to have the ability to develop problem solving skills, and demonstrate the ability to establish care plans and set priorities. This includes the ability to calculate, analyze, and synthesize objective, as well subjective, data and make decisions that reflect consistent and thoughtful deliberation of the appropriate data. The student is expected to be able to listen, speak, read, write, reason, and perform mathematical functions at a level which allows the student to process and understand the materials presented (in both a written and a verbal format) throughout his or her course of study.

Behavioral/Social Attributes

The student is expected to have the emotional stability to fully utilize his/her intellectual abilities, exercise sound judgment, complete assessment and intervention activities, and develop sensitive interpersonal relationships with patients/clients, families, and others responsible for health care. The student is expected to have the flexibility to function effectively under stress; that is, the individual is expected to be able to learn to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Concern for others, integrity, accountability, interest and motivation are necessary personal qualities.

Ability to Manage Stressful Situations

The student must be able to adapt to and function effectively to stressful situations in both the classroom and clinical settings, including emergency situations. The student will encounter multiple stressors while in the nursing program. These stressors may be (but are not limited to) personal, patient care/ family, faculty/ peer, or program related.

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