UAH College of Nursing: Technical Standards for Students

The UAH College of Nursing (CON) is committed to excellence in student-centered nursing education in alignment with our mission, vision, and core values. Our ethical responsibility is to educate competent nurses and create a healthy learning and work environment where diversity and civility promote creativity, innovation, and social responsibility. The University provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities on a nondiscriminatory basis consistent with legal requirements 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. The CON encourages individuals with disabilities to explore potential accommodations through UAH Disability Support Services.

Students enrolled in the CON and individuals seeking admission must be able to complete the program curriculum with or without reasonable accommodations. The nursing curriculum is integral to fulfilling the full scope of nursing practice. The UAH College of Nursing provides the following sample description/examples of technical standards to inform incoming and enrolled students of the performance abilities and characteristics necessary to complete the nursing curriculum requirements. These examples are not all-inclusive and may be subject to the specific needs of individual students.

Acquire/Interpret/Use Information:

Gather, interpret, and apply information acquired through oral presentations, demonstrations, and observations (e.g., lectures, group activities, laboratory experiences, simulations and Objective Structured Clinical Exams).

Acquire information from written documents and computer systems (e.g., electronic health records, literature searches, and data retrieval from information systems).

Use and interpret data gathered through nursing assessment techniques.

Comprehensively assess changes in a client's condition (e.g., mood, activity level, cognition, physical needs, and verbal or non-verbal communication responses).

Recognize environmental risks to client safety (e.g., malfunctioning or disconnected equipment and fall hazards such as lowered bed rails).

Effectively use and interpret data obtained from diagnostic tools (i.e., stethoscope, sphygmomanometer, otoscope, ophthalmoscope) during a comprehensive nursing assessment.

Assess and evaluate client responses to the plan of care encompassing interventions, medications, treatments, and educational interventions.

Apply nursing knowledge and clinical judgment effectively.

Motor Function:

Possesses motor and sensory skills necessary to provide safe and comprehensive nursing care, including performing or assisting with procedures, treatments, medication administration, emergency response, utilization of technology, and life-supporting measures.

Communication:

Communicate verbally and nonverbally to gather and provide information.

Communicate effectively with clients and families, including those with diverse needs.

Document nursing assessments and nursing care on paper or in computer-based systems according to policies.

Intellectual Ability:

Measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data related to the health needs of clients.

Synthesize information, problem-solve, and use clinical judgment based on nursing concepts and assessment findings.

Demonstrate the ability to understand and think about complex, abstract concepts.

Behavioral and Professional Attributes:

Maintain mature and respectful relationships with clients, families, students, faculty, staff, preceptors, and other professionals under all circumstances.

Demonstrate the ability to function effectively under stress and adapt to changing and urgent environments.

Exhibit values such as concern for others, empathy, integrity, personal accountability, and motivation.

Follow the *Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice* (ANA, 2021) and *Code of Ethics for Nurses* (ANA, 2015).

Accommodation Process:

Decisions regarding reasonable accommodation are determined on a case-by-case basis, considering each student's disability-related needs, disability documentation, and program requirements. While the CON will make every effort to work with students with disabilities to accommodate their disability-related needs, the CON is not required to provide accommodations that fundamentally alter or waive essential program requirements.

After reviewing the technical standards, students who determine that they require accommodations to engage in the program fully should contact Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss their accommodation needs confidentially. Given the clinical nature of the nursing degree requirements, additional time may be needed to implement accommodations. Accommodations are never retroactive; therefore, timely requests are essential and encouraged.

Definitions:

Accommodation: 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 the academic program at the UAH College of Nursing. 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 individuals; (b) a record of such impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such a condition.

Competent: A person who demonstrates the necessary ability, knowledge, or skill to do something successfully at an expected level.

Competency: An expected level of nursing performance that integrates knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment.

Nursing Assessment: a process where a nurse gathers, sorts and analyzes a patient's health information using evidence-informed tools to learn more about a patient's overall health, symptoms and concerns.

Standards of Professional Nursing Practice: Standards are authoritative statements of actions and behaviors that all registered nurses, regardless of role, population, specialty, and setting, are expected to perform competently (ANA, 2021).

References

American Nurses Association [ANA], (2021). Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice (4th Ed.).

American Nurses Association (2015). Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements. Silver Springs, MD.

American Association of College of Nursing (2021). The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education
https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Publications/Essentials-2021.pdf