

**NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF NURSING AND SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH**  
**ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS**  
**FOR DIDACTIC AND CLINICAL SETTINGS**

The education of a healthcare professional requires assimilation of knowledge, acquisition of skills and development of judgment through patient care experiences in preparation for semi-autonomous and collaborative practice, and making appropriate decisions required in such practice. Professional healthcare practice emphasizes collaboration among all healthcare professionals and the patient. In order to function adequately as a professional and progress as a student in any of the healthcare majors offered in the professional clinical programs at Northwestern State University College of Nursing and School of Allied Health (CONSAH), students must possess each of the following skill sets which are essential to meeting required **academic performance and technical standards in the classroom and clinical setting**.

Possession of the outlined skills (noted below) are required in order to meet CONSAH standards and demonstrate competence in disciplines as complex as nursing and allied health; thus, these skills are needed for successful admission and progression by students for all degrees within the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health at NSU. In addition to the standards of student conduct set forth in the **NSU Code of Student Conduct**, students must demonstrate competency in the skills which are foundational to meeting each of the **Essential Academic Performance and Technical Standards** within CONSAH.

### **MOTOR, STRENGTH, AND MOBILITY SKILLS**

Students must be able to:

- Manipulate equipment (locks, push buttons, knobs, and switches) using fine motor skills including grip, grasp, and bending and twisting of the wrist.
- Complete delicate procedures in a timely and accurate manner.
- Safely push a wheelchair, stretcher, or other transport equipment from a patient waiting area or patient room to other parts of the facility.
- Safely transfer a patient from a wheelchair or stretcher to the bed or exam table.
- Raise arms above head and in all directions to manipulate equipment.
- Stand and walk for extended periods of time (up to 12 hours).
- Lift twenty-five (25) pounds of weight and at minimum, ten (10) pounds above head.
- Perform all aspects of CPR, ACLS, PALS, and Basic Life Support (BLS) as required by specific clinical program.
- Employ diagnostic reasoning (select graduate students).
- Must be able to sustain positions for extended periods using upper body movements including reaching, twisting, and applying pressure.

### **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Students must be able to:

- Communicate effectively in English (via verbal and written means) with patients, family members, physicians, and all members of the health care team.
- Read and quickly comprehend written instructions to deliver appropriate patient care.
- Document written and electronic records and assignments in an accurate and timely manner.
- Willingly receive and provide feedback.
- Process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy, in a timely manner, to members of the healthcare team.

## **SENSORY (HEARING, VISION, TACTILE AND OLFACTORY) SKILLS**

Students must be able to:

- Hear sufficiently to interact with patients and medical staff when background noise is present.
- Detect audible sounds within the hospital, such as equipment alarms, fire alarms, telephones ringing, and overhead pages.
- Observe patients accurately, at a distance, close at hand, and in low levels of light.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to non-verbal communications when performing assessments and/or administering treatments/interventions.
- Distinguish between different shades of color and gray scales.
- Perceive signs of disease, infection, or discomfort manifested through physical examination and discriminating touch.
- Accurately read small print such as is found on medication labels and syringes.

## **INTELLECTUAL AND COGNITIVE SKILLS**

Students must be able to:

- Develop and refine problem-solving skills that are crucial to practice as a healthcare provider, including but not limited to the following: measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, synthesize objective and subjective data in the context of undergraduate or graduate professional study.
- Make sound decisions, even in urgent/emergent clinical situations that reflect consistent and thoughtful deliberation.
- Make a correct judgment in seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.
- Read and comprehend extensive written materials including instructions, test results, and histories.
- Apply information and engage in critical thinking in the classroom and clinical setting.
- Engage in self-directed learning.

## **BEHAVIORAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL SKILLS**

Students must be able to:

- Demonstrate emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment that may change rapidly without warning and in unpredictable ways.
- Understand that his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect his or her perceptions and relationships with others.
- Willingly examine and change his or her behavior when it interferes with productive individual or team relationships.
- Demonstrate the skills and maturity necessary for effective and harmonious relationships in diverse academic and practice environments.

## **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Students must be able to:

- Work collaboratively with peers, faculty, and other healthcare professionals.
- Minimize behavioral gestures that indicate dissatisfaction, disrespect or any negative attitude.
- Abide by professional standards of practice, and practice in an ethical manner.
- Engage in patient care delivery in all settings and deliver care to all patient populations as required.
- Demonstrate compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and flexibility in any given situation.
- Arrive timely to the clinical and classroom settings.
- Respond appropriately to constructive criticism while maintaining professional behavior.
- Practice independently (i.e., be able to perform all required skills, assignments independent of other student's help).

## **REGULAR AND ONGOING EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

Faculty will evaluate students on a regular and ongoing basis, addressing deficits and areas in need of improvement by means of a program-specific clinical evaluation tool, based on direct and indirect interaction and supervision of the student in the classroom and clinical settings and during clinically related activities. Students must notify faculty of any changes in their ability to meet the academic performance and technical standards. **Students who violate or fail to report changes in their ability to meet the *Essentials of Academic Performance and Technical Standards* will be placed on an academic deficiency learning contract and/or probation. Failure to consistently comply with the requirements of the learning contract may result in dismissal from the respective CONSAH program.** (Please refer to the academic deficiency form.) Keep in mind, clinical agencies may not allow or be able to provide the same accommodations as those that can be provided in a classroom.

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disabilities at 318-357-4460. Students with disabilities are expected to perform all the essential functions of the program with or without reasonable accommodation. The University will work with the student to provide, if possible, reasonable accommodations; however, it is important to note we are not required to provide requested accommodations that would fundamentally alter the essential qualifications, functions, technical standards, or other academic requirements of the program, or result in an undue financial or administrative burden.

***I have received a copy of this form and understand that it is my responsibility to meet the expectations and should I not be able to perform any of the above criteria I will notify my faculty immediately.***

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Student's Signature

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Date

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Print Student's Name

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CWID