



**Westminster Campus Nursing Program  
Required Standards  
Cognitive-Motor-Behavioral-Sensory  
Health and Regulatory Requirements**

**Introduction**

Front Range Community College has adopted the following standards for admission, progression and graduation of all Nursing Program students in clinical courses involving direct client care. Candidates for these degrees must be able to meet these minimum standards with or without reasonable accommodations for successful completion of degree requirements.

**1. Standards Communication and Observation Skills**

Students are expected to sufficiently demonstrate the following verbal, non-verbal, written, computer assisted entry, and observational skills during professional interactions with others during their professional nursing practice. Communication includes not only speech, but also seeing, reading, writing, and computer literacy abilities in the classroom and clinical on and off-campus settings; the ability to communicate with a wide variety of people; and the ability to be easily understood.

The following are examples of communication and observation skills. The nursing student needs to be able to:

- Speak clearly and effectively in English
- Hear and observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and to perceive nonverbal communications
- Communicate in writing or computer entry, as well as orally using standard, professional nursing and medical terminology
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients' family members and other members of the healthcare team, as well as faculty and peers in a 1-1 or group situation
- Elicit, convey or exchange information at a level that allows for the implementation and evaluation of the nursing process
- Communicate in ways that are safe and not unduly alarming to patients, family members, and other members of the healthcare team



- Relay appropriate information to patients; teach, explain, direct and counsel a wide variety of individuals, as well as provide clear, direct communication in English during highly stressful, crisis situations.

## **2. Cognitive Abilities**

Nursing students on admission and throughout the program are expected to sufficiently demonstrate cognitive abilities which include intellectual, conceptual, integrative, quantitative, critical thinking and comprehension skills that allow her/him to carry out the nursing process in the care of patients. The following examples include, but are not limited to, nursing students demonstrating these related cognitive skills:

- Sufficient skills to read and understand written documents in English
- Sufficient skills in problem solving including measurements, calculations, reasoning, memory, analysis, and synthesis of subjective and objective data as well as critically appraise the best available research evidence
- Sufficient skills to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures
- Critical thinking ability sufficient for academic and clinical judgments demanded of nurses which require the intellectual abilities to critically appraise, to synthesize knowledge, integrate and prioritize all aspects of patient care in a prompt, timely fashion; synthesis of objective and subjective findings and diagnostic studies in order to formulate nursing diagnoses and initiate a plan of care integrating patient preferences
- Incorporate data from multiple patient sources (e.g. physical assessment, vital signs, lab values, interdisciplinary documentation) in a prompt manner in order to provide appropriate, safe patient care
- Recognize, make decisions quickly, and respond rapidly and safely to changes in a patient's status based on a variety of sources, such as physical assessment and pertinent laboratory findings, and ability to revise care to promote appropriate patient outcomes



### **3. Gross Motor Skills, Strength, Mobility, and Physical Endurance**

The student is expected to be able to perform gross and fine motor movements required to provide comprehensive nursing care. Examples of care that the student must be able to perform safely include, but are not limited to:

- Lifting as described below:
  - Turning and positioning patients as needed to prevent complications due to bed rest or minimal movement
  - Transferring patients in and out of bed
  - Transporting and exercising patients
  - Pulling and pushing patients and/or equipment
  - Administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- The student is expected to have the psychomotor skills necessary to perform or assist with procedure treatments, administration of medications, and emergency interventions. On a regular day whether in the classroom or clinical (on-campus simulation or off campus clinical), the student may be expected to sit, walk and stand. Examples include but are not limited to, the ability to:
  - Stand and/or sit for long periods of time (e.g., minimum of 3-4 hours)
  - Stand and maintain balance while transferring patients, reach below the waist and overhead while providing patient care procedures
  - Walk without a cane, walker, casts, walking boots, or crutches, as well as, arms free of casts or other assistive/restrictive devices in order to ambulate patient and provide bedside or general nursing care
  - Have two hands, real or prosthetic

### **4. Behavioral and Social Attributes/ Abilities**

Nursing students must exhibit the professional behavioral and social attributes embedded in National League for Nursing and American Nurses Association professional nursing competencies. They must possess the emotional and mental health required for full use of their intellectual, communication/ observational, motor and sensory abilities in order to exercise appropriate judgment and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients 'in a variety of settings and from different cultures.

The following are examples, which are not limited to, the behavioral and social attributes and abilities that nursing students need to demonstrate;

- Ability to relate to patients, family members, as well as work cooperatively with other members of the healthcare team and colleagues with honesty and integrity, and with non-discrimination in relation to the patient's race ethnic group, age, gender, religion or political preference, ability to pay, gender or sexual orientation
- Ability for the development of a mature, sensitive and effective therapeutic relationship with clients
- Ability 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
- Ethical behavior reflecting adherence to the professional nursing code of ethics, students nurse' code of ethics and student academic integrity policy
- Sufficient emotional and mental stability to:
  - Tolerate physically taxing workloads
  - Handle emotions that might affect practice performance
  - Function effectively when stressed
  - A level of consciousness and attentiveness that guarantees patient safety
- Ability to participate in the professional care of a patient, before and after procedures that he/she may be in disagreement with
- Ability to care for patients with communicable diseases using appropriate standard precautions and/or guidelines
- Ability to accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical settings
- Ability to examine and change his/her behavior when it interferes with productive individual or team relationships and/or the care of patients
- Ability to work in close quarters with patients, healthcare team members and nursing faculty

## 5. Sensory Skills

Nursing students must have hearing, visual and tactile skills sufficient to monitor, assess, and respond to patient health needs. Nursing students must possess these skills in connection with the other identified technical skills in order to observe and learn from demonstrations in the on-campus clinical simulation laboratory in the off-campus clinical patient care areas, and to make observations accurately at a distance and close at hand of the patient and the patient's environment. Observation necessitates the functional use of the senses of vision and other sensory modalities it is enhanced by the functional use of the specimens; and obtains information from digital, analog, and waveform representations of treatment/therapy.

Examples of the necessary sensory skills include, but are not limited to:

- Normal tactile feeling and use of touch to feel sensitivity to heat, cold, pain, pressure, etc.
- Use of auditory sense to detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope; to hear and interpret many people and correctly interpret what is heard; that is, physicians' or nurse practitioner orders whether verbal or over telephone, patient complaints, physical assessment (especially heart and other body sounds), fire and equipment alarms, etc.
- Auditory sense to communicate clearly in telephone conversations and respond effectively with patients and with other members of the healthcare team
- Acute visual skills necessary to detect signs and symptoms, body language of patients, color of wounds and drainage, and possible infections anywhere; interpret written words accurately, read characters and identify colors on the computer screen
- Observation skills to observe lectures, demonstrations, research and patient situations in the practice of healthcare professions; observation is necessary to perform competent health assessments and interventions and necessitates functional use of vision, hearing, tactile and somatic senses
- Capacity to make accurate visual observations and interpret them in the context of laboratory studies, medication administration, and patient care activities. (The New York University College of Nursing Technical Standards for Core Nursing Competency Performance, 2009, 2011)

Normative difficulties. The policy is not intended to address the common and expected difficulties experienced by a majority of nursing students particularly as they start a new clinical course. These normative difficulties might include, but are not limited to, mild emotional reaction and adjustment difficulties, mild or transient difficulty keeping up with academic work, and normative conflict with professors, fellow students, supervisors and administrators in clinical placements.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

It is the policy of Front Range Community College to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified students with disabilities so they can meet these required standards. Students who need reasonable accommodations must contact the Office of Special Services directly. There are services available to students with disabilities and special needs. It is the individual students' responsibility to request such services and to provide appropriate current documents of the need for such services.



### **Additional Health and Regulatory Requirements**

Prior to admission to the Nursing Program, all students will be required to:

- Provide documentation of the following immunizations:
  - TB test (needs to be done yearly)
  - MMR
  - Varicella (or evidence of disease)
  - Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (within eight years of entry into the program)
  - Hepatitis B (three injection series over a six-month period)
  - Seasonal Influenza (required yearly, in the Fall)
- Complete an FBI fingerprint check, background check and drug testing.
- Hold a current BLS Healthcare Provider CPR Card (Adult/Infant CPR & AED) through the **American Heart Association**.
- Provide evidence of current health care policy coverage.