

UAB School of Nursing

Pre-licensure Core Performance Standards for Admission and Progression

Nursing education requires the acquisition of academic knowledge, clinical and specialized communication skills as well as professional attitudes and behaviors. All pre-licensure degrees certify that the student has acquired the broad base of knowledge and skills required for entry into professional nursing practice. This foundational education includes both academic and professional nursing courses that provide a base for clinical competence and informed judgements about health and patient care in a variety of settings. Since the treatment of patients is an essential part of the educational program, the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing (UABSON) must act to protect the health and safety of patients.

Candidates for any pre-licensure degree must have skills and abilities in ten core performance standards with or without reasonable accommodations. These ten standards include, but are not limited to, the following skills and abilities (bulleted examples included, not all-inclusive):

1. **Critical Thinking:** Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment.
 - Identifies safety issues in clinical situations
 - Identifies cause/effect relationships in clinical situations, develops, evaluates, and revises nursing plan of care as appropriate
 - Has the ability to make safe judgments when planning and implementing all psychomotor nursing prescriptions
 - Manages multiple priorities in stressful situations
 - Responds instantly to emergency situations
 - Exhibits arithmetic competence that would allow the student to read, understand and perform accurate calculations for computing medication dosages and intravenous flow rates

2. **Interpersonal:** Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds
 - Establishes appropriate rapport with clients and colleagues
 - Has the ability to work in groups on course activities
 - Maintains therapeutic relationships with clients and colleagues
 - Respects cultural diversity and rights of others
 - Works effectively in small groups as a team member and as a team leader
 - Practices verbal and non-verbal therapeutic communication
 - Recognizes and attempts to resolve adverse events for both clients and colleagues

3. **Communication:** Communication abilities (hearing, speaking, reading, and writing) sufficient for interaction with others in verbal, written, assisted, and electronic form.
 - Writes and speaks English effectively so as to be understood by the general public
 - Has the ability to complete written assignments, participate in classroom discussion/activities, and complete group projects
 - Has the ability to focus in class without making disruptive interruptions
 - Communicates therapeutically with clients, families, and groups in a variety of settings
 - Documents client data and nursing care completely and accurately
 - Provides health teaching information for clients, families, and/or groups based on assessed needs, available resources, age, lifestyle, and cultural considerations
 - Has the ability to use a variety of computer programs and platforms
 - Must be able to give and receive constructive feedback, process feedback, and utilize it to conform behavior to expected professional standards

4. **Physical Mobility:** Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces.
 - Able to attend and participate in class
 - Has the ability to push, pull and/or lift a minimum of 30 lbs. of weight
 - Has mobility and stamina sufficient to function for up to a 12-hour clinical experience in various settings
 - Lifts, moves, positions, and transports clients without causing harm to client or self
 - Has the ability to move around client's room, work spaces and treatment areas, in all clinical settings
 - Has the ability to stoop, bend, squat, and reach overhead as required to deliver care safely in emergent and non-emergent situations
 - Performs cardiopulmonary resuscitation according to recommended procedures and professional standards

5. **Gross and Fine Motor Skills:** Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care
 - Performs physical activities necessary to accomplish nursing skills, including but not limited to: putting on sterile gloves, donning mask and gown, operating a manual and electronic blood pressure cuff, using sterile technique and performing essential client care
 - Performs correct hand washing technique
 - Provides or assists with activities of daily living
 - Administers all routes of medications to maintain client safety
 - Has the ability to use computers and other electronic devices
 - Performs electronic keyboarding/documentation and/or extensive writing
 - Calibrates and uses equipment correctly (e.g. syringes, vials, ampoules, medication packages)
 - Has the gross and fine motor ability to grasp small objects (e.g. IV tubing, syringe, dropper)

6. **Auditory:** Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs
 - Has the auditory ability to participate in class lectures and contribute to discussions
 - Hears verbal exchanges among health care personnel and clients
 - Has the auditory ability to monitor alarms, emergency signals, and cries for help
 - Has the auditory ability to hear and distinguish changes in tone and pitch for example when listening to a client's respirations, cardiac, and abdominal auditory characteristics when using a stethoscope

7. **Visual:** Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment
 - Has the visual ability to observe audio-visual aids and client, peer, and faculty responses.
 - Has the visual ability to read medical documents; see small calibrations on sphygmomanometers, syringes, and thermometers; observe patient responses to interventions or health problems; and detect color changes
 - Performs nursing skills such as inserting urinary catheters and IV devices, counting respirations, and preparing or administering medications
 - Has the visual ability to discriminate colors, changes in color, size, and contour of body part
 - Has the visual ability to identify, prepare, and administer medications accurately and safely by all routes

8. **Tactile:** Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment
 - Performs palpation functions correctly for physical examination and therapeutic interventions such as pulses, temperature, texture, firmness, softness, and physical landmarks

9. **Emotional Stability:** Emotional stability sufficient to tolerate rapid and changing conditions and environmental stress
 - Establishes therapeutic interpersonal boundaries
 - Provides clients with emotional support and respect differences in patients, families and other students
 - Complete all responsibilities in the assessment and implementation of nursing care for patients in a timely, safe and effective manner
 - Adapts to stressful situations and changing environments while maintaining professional conduct and standards
 - Have adequate environmental awareness and emotional stability to remain calm and function effectively in multiple, complex settings that may be stressful, noisy and may be potential harmful

- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Poses no threat to self or others
- Performs potentially stressful tasks concurrently

10. **Professional Behavior:** Behave in a respectful, ethical and professional manner with others

- Interacts respectfully with peers, faculty, superiors, clients, and families
- Strives to provide quality client care
- Applies knowledge and clinical reasoning
- Reflects on own behavior and clinical performance with clients; engages in self-evaluations
- Has the ability to interact with peers and colleagues appropriately
- Has the ability to collaborate with clients, families, and others in nursing situations
- Integrates ethical behavior in nursing practice
- Performs activities safely, so as to not injure or harm others or self
- Recognizes that all students represent the nursing profession and must behave accordingly
- Respects and adheres to the policies and procedures of the School of Nursing and clinical agencies

Application for Accommodation Prior to Matriculation:

The UAB School of Nursing will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with approved accommodation(s). In order to request accommodations, students must contact the UAB Office of Disability Support Services and follow the registration process. UABSON faculty collaborate with Disability Support Services (DSS) within the scope of the core performance standards to establish reasonable accommodations. Throughout a student's career, the UABSON will work with the student and DSS to make ensure accommodations are reasonably facilitated and maintains safety for the student and patient.

Application for Accommodation After Matriculation:

Students seeking accommodations will be referred to the UAB Office of Disability Support Services. Personnel in the Disability Support Services Office will follow established protocol to determine if the student is eligible for accommodations. Any financial cost for documentation, assessment or evaluation will be the sole responsibility of the student. The Office of Disability Support Services will review the results of the evaluations to determine whether a condition exists, and whether accommodations are necessary. If DSS determines that accommodations are necessary to allow a nursing student to meet the Pre-licensure Core Performance Standards then they will educate students on the process of forwarding those recommendations to the appropriate faculty. The appropriate faculty will work with the student and DSS to determine if there are reasonable accommodations. If reasonable accommodations cannot be made, the student will be informed, if the student is unable to meet the Pre-licensure Core Performance Standards. A nursing student who is dismissed based on inability to meet the Pre-licensure Core Performance Standards of the UABSON will have the right of appeal through the established grievance process used in the UABSON Student Handbook. If the accommodation is approved, the UABSON will work to make sure that the accommodation is reasonably facilitated from that point forward. Retroactive accommodations will not be allowed.