

University of Vermont
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF STUDENTS

Introduction

The University of Vermont is committed to a policy of equal educational opportunity, and welcomes individuals with diverse backgrounds and abilities. The University therefore prohibits discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of disability. At the same time, all students in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS) must be able to perform the essential clinical as well as academic requirements, as the overall curricular objectives are to prepare students to actually practice in their chosen fields. The purpose of this document is to assure that all students entering the programs in this College know and understand the requirements, and can make informed decisions regarding their pursuit of these professions. Nursing and Health Sciences students must be able to meet these standards either with or without reasonable accommodations. This document is subject to modification from time to time.

Basic Requirements

Due to the varied nature of the programs in this college, the essential functions may vary to some degree from one program to another. All programs in the departments of Medical Laboratory and Radiation Sciences, Nursing and Rehabilitation and Movement Science require specific essential functions, as indicated in the following sections. The nature of the professions for which students in our College are being prepared necessitates the following requirements: the capacity to observe and communicate; sufficient gross and fine motor ability to perform physical diagnostic examinations and basic laboratory and clinical procedures; physical strength, dexterity, agility, and endurance; emotional stability to exercise good judgment and to work effectively in stressful situations; and intellectual ability to synthesize data and solve problems. If a student cannot perform each function in the manner described below, she or he will not necessarily be precluded from participating in the program, but will need to be able to perform all essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation. Efforts will be made by the program in which the student is enrolled to arrange clinical experiences in environments where appropriate accommodations can be made; however, the availability of certain accommodations in specific clinical environments may be beyond the University's control.

University Support Offices

Services and accommodations for students with disabilities are coordinated by the ACCESS office. Services to equalize opportunities in the classroom and course accommodations are arranged through this office. Current and comprehensive documentation of disability will be required. Students are encouraged to inform the staff of the appropriate certifying office of any desired services or accommodations in advance of each semester. Early disclosure and consultation enable students to have the benefit of expertise from the certifying office and the student's academic program, and generally make for more effective accommodations.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR NURSING STUDENTS

Cognitive functions - The student must be able to thoroughly, efficiently and reliably:

1. recall, interpret, extrapolate and apply information from a variety of sources, including reading material, lecture, discussion, patient observation, examination and evaluation/assessment;
2. determine what data are needed to solve problems; and
3. analyze, synthesize and evaluate information from a variety of sources, including, for example, reading material, lecture, discussion, and patient evaluation/assessment.

Affective functions – The student must be able to:

1. establish professional, trusting, empathetic relationships with a variety of individuals;
2. demonstrate respect and engage in non-judgmental interactions regardless of, for example, an individual's age, gender, race, socio-economic status, religion, life-style, and/or culture;
3. work effectively in groups;
4. meet deadlines;
5. be an active and engaged learner in classroom, lab and clinical settings;
6. attend to cognitive, communication and psychomotor tasks for as long as three hours at a time within the academic environment, and as long as ten hours at a time within the clinical environment;
7. identify sources of stress and develop effective coping behaviors; and
8. recognize and respond appropriately to potentially hazardous situations.

Communication functions – The student must be able to:

1. attend selectively and in a controlled and respectful manner to various types of communication, including the spoken and written word and non-verbal communication;
2. relay information in oral and written form effectively, accurately, reliably, thoroughly and intelligibly to individuals and groups, using the English language;
3. read English (typed and hand-written).

Psychomotor functions – The student must be able to:

1. accurately and reliably inspect and observe the skin, facial expression, anatomical structures, posture and movement of others;
2. examine and evaluate/assess blood pressure, and lung and heart sounds;
3. accurately and reliably read equipment dials and monitors;
4. feel pulses, skin condition, muscle and tendon activity, and joint and limb movement;
5. negotiate level surfaces, ramps and stairs to assist patients/classmates appropriately;

6. lead patients/classmates through a variety of examinations and treatments typically requiring sitting, standing, squatting and kneeling on the floor or treatment table;
7. move from one surface level to another (e.g., floor to stand, stand to treatment table);
8. exert moderate resistance to limb and body movements of patients/classmates while maintaining one's own balance in a variety of positions;
9. react and effectively respond quickly to sudden or unexpected movements of patients/classmates;
10. manipulate dials, knobs, electrodes and other small to large parts and pieces of equipment;
11. maintain activity throughout an eight to ten-hour work day;
12. transport self/patients from one room to another, from one floor to another; transport self from community to community, to and from agencies, homes, etc.
13. put on and take off clothing, including gowns, masks and gloves;
14. exhibit sufficient manual dexterity to manipulate small equipment such as syringes for intravenous injections, common tools for screening tests of sensation, etc.; provide support and resistance as needed through complex exercise movements; perform CPR; and treat acutely ill patients without disturbing sensitive monitoring instruments and lines;
15. manipulate another person's body in transfers, gait, positioning, exercise and other treatment or diagnostic techniques;
16. to move dependent real or simulated patients, generating lifting forces of up to 75 pounds. Frequency of this activity will be occasional during laboratory experiences, and will vary from occasional to frequent in clinical experiences depending on the type of practice at the specific clinical site, and

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR REHABILITATION AND MOVEMENT SCIENCE MAJORS

Cognitive functions - The student must be able to thoroughly, efficiently and reliably:

4. recall, interpret, extrapolate and apply information from a variety of sources, including reading material, lecture, discussion, patient observation, examination and evaluation/assessment;
5. determine what data are needed to solve problems; and
6. analyze, synthesize and evaluate information from a variety of sources, including, for example, reading material, lecture, discussion, and patient evaluation/assessment.

Affective functions – The student must be able to:

9. establish professional, trusting, empathetic relationships with a variety of individuals;
10. demonstrate respect and engage in non-judgmental interactions regardless of, for example, an individual's age, gender, race, socio-economic status, religion, life-style, and/or culture;
11. work effectively in groups;
12. meet externally established deadlines;
13. be an active and engaged learner in classroom, lab and clinical settings;
14. attend to cognitive, communication and psychomotor tasks for as long as three hours at a time within the academic environment, and as long as ten hours at a time within the clinical environment;
15. identify sources of stress and develop effective coping behaviors; and
16. recognize and respond appropriately to potentially hazardous situations.

Communication functions – The student must be able to:

4. attend selectively and in a controlled and respectful manner to various types of communication, including the spoken and written word and non-verbal communication;
5. relay information in oral and written form effectively, accurately, reliably, thoroughly and intelligibly to individuals and groups, using the English language;
6. read English (typed and hand-written).

Psychomotor functions – The student must be able to:

17. accurately and reliably inspect and observe the skin, facial expression, anatomical structures, posture and movement of others;
18. examine and evaluate/assess blood pressure, and lung and heart sounds;
19. accurately and reliably read equipment dials and monitors;
20. feel pulses, skin condition, muscle and tendon activity, and joint and limb movement;

21. negotiate level surfaces, ramps and stairs to assist patients/classmates appropriately;
22. lead patients/classmates through a variety of examinations and treatments typically requiring sitting, standing, squatting and kneeling on the floor or treatment table;
23. move from one surface level to another (e.g., floor to stand, stand to treatment table);
24. exert moderate resistance to limb and body movements of patients/classmates while maintaining one's own balance in a variety of positions;
25. react and effectively respond quickly to sudden or unexpected movements of patients/classmates;
26. manipulate dials, knobs, electrodes and other small to large parts and pieces of equipment;
27. maintain activity throughout an eight to ten-hour work day;
28. transport self/patients from one room to another, from one floor to another; transport self from community to community, to and from agencies, homes, etc.
29. put on and take off clothing, including gowns, masks and gloves;
30. exhibit sufficient manual dexterity to manipulate small equipment such as syringes for intravenous injections, common tools for screening tests of sensation, etc.; provide support and resistance as needed through complex exercise movements; perform CPR; and treat acutely ill patients without disturbing sensitive monitoring instruments and lines;
31. manipulate another person's body in transfers, gait, positioning, exercise and other treatment or diagnostic techniques;
32. to move dependent real or simulated patients, generating lifting forces of up to 75 pounds. Frequency of this activity will be occasional during laboratory experiences, and will vary from occasional to frequent in clinical experiences depending on the type of practice at the specific clinical site, and

MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE STUDENTS

If you major in Medical Laboratory Science, you will be choosing a health care profession where honesty and integrity are critical personal characteristics required both in your academic studies and in the practice of the profession. To ensure that your decision to pursue this career is the correct one for you, we ask that you review the Essential Functions by which you will be assessed as a Medical Laboratory Science major. The following Essential Functions are the non-academic requirements of the Program, comprising the physical, emotional and professional requirements.

Physical requirements include:

Ability to perform manual laboratory procedures with dexterity.

Ability to operate state-of-the-art instruments, including computers.

Ability to use a microscope and differentiate microscopic components.

Ability to perform delicate manipulations that require good hand-eye coordination.

Emotional requirements include:

Ability to perform laboratory procedures accurately and quickly, even under stressful conditions.

Ability to exercise independent judgment and to think logically in the performance of one's duties.

Ability to organize and to assume responsibility for one's work.

Professional requirements include:

Ability to communicate in a professional, positive and tactful manner with patients, physicians, nurses, and other health-care and non-health-care employees, as well as fellow laboratory personnel.

Ability to maintain patient confidentiality and to exercise ethical judgment, integrity, honesty, dependability and accountability in the performance of one's laboratory responsibilities.

Ability to perform laboratory tests carefully while maintaining efficiency and organization.

Ability to exercise critical thinking skills to solve problems.

NUCLEAR MEDICINE TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS

If you major in Nuclear Medicine Technology, you will be choosing a health-care profession where honesty and integrity are critical personal characteristics required both in your academic studies and in the practice of your profession. To ensure that your decision to pursue this career is the correct one for you, we ask that you review the Essential Functions by which you will be assessed as a Nuclear Medicine Technology major. The following Essential Functions are the non-academic requirements of the Program, comprising the physical, emotional and professional requirements.

Physical requirements include:

Ability to perform manual clinical procedures with dexterity.

Ability to operate state-of-the-art instruments, including computers.

Ability to perform delicate manipulations that require good hand-eye coordination.

Emotional requirements include:

Ability to perform procedures accurately and quickly, even under stressful conditions.

Ability to exercise independent judgment and to think logically in the performance of one's duties.

Ability to assume responsibility for one's work.

Professional requirements include:

Ability to communicate in a professional, positive and tactful manner with patients, physicians, nurses, and other health-care and non-health-care employees, as well as fellow clinical personnel.

Ability to maintain patient confidentiality and to exercise ethical judgment, integrity, honesty, dependability and accountability in the performance of one's responsibilities.

Ability to perform clinical procedures carefully while maintaining efficiency and organization.

Ability to exercise critical thinking skills to solve problems.

RADIATION THERAPY STUDENTS

If you major in Radiation Therapy, you will be choosing a health-care profession where honesty and integrity are critical personal characteristics required both in your academic studies and in the practice of your profession. To ensure that your decision to pursue this career is the correct one for you, we ask that you review the Essential Functions by which you will be assessed as a Radiation Therapy major. The following Essential Functions are the non-academic requirements of the Program, comprising the physical, emotional and professional requirements.

Physical requirements include:

Ability to perform manual clinical procedures with dexterity.

Ability to operate state-of-the-art instruments, including computers.

Ability to perform delicate manipulations that require good hand-eye coordination.

Emotional requirements include:

Ability to perform procedures accurately and quickly, even under stressful conditions.

Ability to exercise independent judgment and to think logically in the performance of one's duties.

Ability to assume responsibility for one's work.

Professional requirements include:

Ability to communicate in a professional, positive and tactful manner with patients, physicians, nurses, and other health-care and non-health-care employees, as well as fellow clinical personnel.

Ability to maintain patient confidentiality and to exercise ethical judgment, integrity, honesty, dependability and accountability in the performance of one's responsibilities

Ability to perform clinical procedures carefully while maintaining efficiency and organization.

Ability to exercise critical thinking skills to solve problems.

I have read the above information. I understand that I am expected to be able to accomplish, with or without reasonable accommodations, the essential functions of the program to which I have been accepted. I understand my rights with respect to such accommodations and that if I seek such accommodations, it is my responsibility to disclose the disabilities for which I am seeking accommodations through the UVM ACCESS Office. I understand that once the ACCESS Office notifies the faculty of my need for accommodations, the program in which I am enrolled will provide reasonable accommodations in the classroom and laboratory setting. In addition, efforts will be made to arrange clinical experiences in environments where appropriate accommodations can be made; however, such accommodations in the clinical environment may be beyond The University's control.

Print Name: _____ Student ID#: 950- _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Please return to:
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Office of Student Services
106 Rowell Building
Burlington, Vermont 05405-0068**

Procedure for new students:

1. The College will send the policy regarding essential functions to candidates following notification of acceptance, with a cover letter explaining its purpose and the process that will be used, and inviting questions any time before orientation.
2. Following a presentation of the standards and an opportunity for questions, the College will ask accepted students to sign a form indicating they understand the policies related to essential functions, as well as their rights and responsibilities to be answered. This presentation will occur during orientation.
3. It is the responsibility of all students seeking disability accommodations to self-identify by contacting the UVM ACCESS Office and supplying adequate and comprehensive documentation of the disability. Students are strongly encouraged to self-identify as early as possible. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively.
4. It is the responsibility of the staff of the ACCESS Office to certify student disabilities and to recommend reasonable and appropriate accommodations in light of the nature of a student's disability and academic program requirements.
5. Once accommodations have been agreed upon by the student and the ACCESS Office, the faculty for whom the accommodation is relevant will be notified, in writing. A student's specific disability will not be revealed to faculty unless communicated directly by the student or as necessary to facilitate provision of the accommodation/s.
6. Once the faculty member has been notified of the need for accommodations, she/he may meet and/or communicate in other ways with the student and/or the disability specialists to discuss the recommended accommodations, and work in a collaborative manner to determine their feasibility, and effective ways of meeting the student's needs.
7. If accommodations are required in the clinical setting, the faculty responsible for the clinical course will attempt to find a placement site willing to make the requested accommodations. In addition, the student must adhere to the procedures for medical clearance required of all students participating in clinical education experiences. The student is not guaranteed that a site will be available.
8. For detailed explanation of policies on disabilities, please see <http://www.uvm.edu/%7Edosa/handbook/?Page=Disability.html>

Procedure for current students with newly identified conditions:

1. Any student not requesting accommodation at the time of admission may not be granted accommodation after beginning the program until the student has contacted the UVM ACCESS Office, that office has certified that a disability exists, and that office has recommended reasonable accommodations, in writing, to the faculty involved.
2. Faculty who suspect that a student may have an unrecognized disability may discuss the concern with the student, but are not obliged to do so. The student may determine whether to pursue the issue further through diagnosis or request for accommodation, but is not obliged to do so.
3. If a student develops a health condition, has a worsening of an existing health condition, or is diagnosed with a disability while a student and requests accommodations, s/he must provide documentation of the condition from a recognized professional capable of identifying such a condition to the ACCESS Office. It is the responsibility of the staff of the ACCESS Office to certify student disabilities and to recommend reasonable and appropriate accommodations in light of the nature of a student's disability and academic program requirements.
4. Once accommodations have been agreed upon by the student and the ACCESS Office, the faculty for whom the accommodation is relevant will be notified in writing. A student's specific disability will not be revealed to faculty unless communicated directly by the student or as necessary to facilitate provision of the accommodation/s.
5. Once the faculty member has been notified of the need for accommodations, she/he may meet and/or communicate in other ways with the student and/or the disability specialists to discuss the recommended accommodations, and work in a collaborative manner to determine their feasibility, and effective ways of meeting the student's needs.
6. If accommodations are required in the clinical setting, the faculty responsible for the clinical course will attempt to find a placement site willing to make the requested accommodations. In addition, the student must adhere to the procedures for medical clearance required of all students participating in clinical education experiences. The student is not guaranteed that a site will be available.
7. For detailed explanation of policies on disabilities, please see <http://www.uvm.edu/%7edosa/handbook/?Page=Disability.html>