Nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, facilitation of healing, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations. (American Nurses Association, 2015, p. 1)

Nursing practice spans from health promotion and disease prevention to coordination of care and finally to palliative care when a physical cure is not possible (Institute of Medicine, 2010, p. 23). Six Standards of Practice and 11 Standards of Professional Performance make up the Standards of Professional Nursing Practice (American Nurses Association [ANA], 2015). The six Standards of Practice are incorporated in the nursing process: assessment, diagnosis, outcomes identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The 11 Standards of Professional Performance include ethics, culturally congruent practice, communication, collaboration, leadership, education, evidence-based practice and research, quality of practice, professional practice evaluation, resource utilization, and environmental health. These 17 standards apply across all nursing settings. The ANA (2015) describes nursing in the following way:

Nursing requires judgment and skill based upon principles of the biological, physical, behavioral, and social sciences. Nursing is a scientific discipline as well as a profession. Registered nurses employ critical thinking to integrate objective data with knowledge gained from an assessment of the subjective experiences of health-care consumers. Registered nurses use critical thinking to apply the best available evidence and research data to diagnosis and treatment decisions. Nurses continually evaluate quality and effectiveness of nursing practice and seek to optimize outcomes.

Nursing promotes the delivery of holistic consumer-centered care and optimal health outcome throughout the lifespan and across the health-illness continuum within an environmental context that encompasses culture, ethics, law, politics, economics, access to healthcare resources, and competing priorities. Similarly, nursing promotes the health of communities by using advocacy for social and environmental justice, community engagement, and access to high-quality and equitable health care to maximize population health outcomes and minimize health disparities. Nursing advocates for the well-being, comfort, dignity, and humanity of all individuals, families, groups communities, and populations. Nursing focuses on healthcare consumer and professional collaboration, sharing of knowledge, scientific discovery, and social welfare. (pp. 6.7)

St. Catherine University is committed to admitting qualified nursing students without regard to race, color, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, marital status, or religion. For successful admission and continuance in St. Catherine University’s prelicensure nursing programs, a specific set of essential cognitive, sensory, communication, psychomotor, and behavioral/emotional/spiritual health abilities are required to be performed with or without reasonable accommodations. These essential abilities, which are also referred to as technical standards, include but are not limited to:

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Essential Ability</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples of Baseline Ability</th>
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| **Cognitive and Sensory**         | The student must be able to holistically observe and assess a patient for alterations in health. The student must assimilate knowledge quickly and be able to demonstrate knowledge gained. All data received by the senses must be integrated, analyzed, and synthesized in an accurate manner to provide safe patient care. The student must have the problem-solving skills to set priorities in managing patient care. The student will also need to have the mathematical problem solving ability to calculate complex medication dosages and the intellectual and sensory capacity to ensure that correct medication dosages and treatments are delivered, which involves accurately reading small-print medication labels. Students must be able to work safely with chemicals used in healthcare settings and tolerate noxious odors. | • Observe changes in patient condition from a distance or close at hand  
• Assess heart, lung, and bowel sounds with stethoscope; hear monitor alarms  
• Accurately observe wounds, drainage on dressings, changes in skin color  
• Calculate dosages accurately  
• Verify correct dosage in syringe or drip chamber, read gauges  
• Consider multiple priorities and make effective decisions quickly |
| **Communication**                 | The student must be able to effectively communicate and elicit information, both verbally and non-verbally. Effective and sensitive communication is required with people across cultural and social backgrounds in a manner that upholds the human dignity of the individual. Students demonstrate effective communication with patients, families, community members, and intra- and inter-professional colleagues on the healthcare team. | • Demonstrate unconditional regard for people from all cultures  
• Speak, read, and write in the English language at a professional level  
• Hear and interpret what a patient is saying, in person or on phone  
• Interpret nonverbal cues |
| **Psychomotor**                   | The student must be able to provide holistic nursing care, and be able to protect and care for patients in emergent and urgent situations. The student is expected to maintain astute awareness of patients’ conditions and have the stamina and clinical reasoning to respond appropriately, personally or through delegation to other healthcare team members. Additionally the student must be able to position and transfer patients and move from room to room. | • Stand for extended periods, maneuver in small spaces, and move rapidly  
• Lift a small child  
• Perform therapeutic functions, such as inserting catheters, changing dressings |
| **Behavioral and Emotional**      | Students are expected to be able to exercise sound clinical judgment and to function at full cognitive and emotional capacity as they provide safe holistic care for patients. The student must be able to be flexible, respond responsibly and effectively under stress, and take immediate and appropriate corrective action if a mistake has been made or an adverse patient condition arises. Students are expected to demonstrate unconditional positive regard for patients, especially those who are poor or marginalized by society. | • Act ethically  
• Demonstrate compassion  
• Seek help when own health is impaired  
• Interact with patients and colleagues calmly and professionally, even under stress  
• Understand and articulate the perspective of the patient  
• Readily admit when a mistake has been made and take corrective action |
Nursing Essential Abilities
Criterion 3.1

Qualified applicants and students are expected to meet all admission criteria, as well as these essential abilities with reasonable accommodations if needed. St. Catherine University is committed to creating and promoting accessible and inclusive learning environments for all students. “Reasonable accommodation” refers to ways in which the University addresses any barriers to full participation in the academic and co-curricular experience. Examples of reasonable accommodation include but are not limited to: instructional materials in alternative formats; alternative testing arrangements; and use of assistive technology such as text-to-speech software. While reasonable accommodation does not mean that the students will be exempt from required tasks, it does mean that the Department of Nursing programs are committed to working with all students to assure their completion of the required tasks.

After enrollment, students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodation should contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities:

- Associate Degree Nursing Program students contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services at 651-690-8160, Education Building, Room 369, Minneapolis Campus.

- Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program students contact the O’Neill Center for Academic Development, Resources for Disabilities at 651-690-6563, Lower Level, Coeur de Catherine, St. Paul Campus.

- Master’s Degree Nursing Program students in the Entry-Level Concentration contact the O’Neill Center for Academic Development, Resources for Disabilities at 651-690-6563, Lower Level, Coeur de Catherine, St. Paul Campus.

Students should provide appropriate documentation substantiating the disability, meet the requirements of a disability as described in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and identify the accommodation which is needed.

Students seeking reasonable accommodations must request them in a timely manner in order to avoid scheduling delays. A minimum of 30 days advance notice prior to the start of the semester is required for clinical courses due to the complex nature of clinical and laboratory assignments.
References


Additional Resources


