



## Standards and Functional Abilities of Nursing Students

Colby Community College will consider reasonable and appropriate accommodations for the student to participate fully in the educational program. To successfully progress through the nursing program curriculum and function as a practicing nurse upon graduation, an individual must be able to perform certain physical and mental activities. The following standards and functional abilities are based largely upon the Functional Ability Categories and Representative Activities/Attributes provided by the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing Inc.](#) and are necessary for participation in the nursing program.

**Critical Thinking Ability:** Your critical thinking skills must be sufficient for clinical judgment, including sufficient intellectual functioning and emotional stability to plan and implement care for clients, and critical thinking to identify cause-effect relationships, plan/control activities for others, synthesize knowledge and skills, and sequence information.

**Analytical Thinking Ability:** Your analytical thinking skills must be sufficient to transfer knowledge from one situation to another, process information, evaluate outcomes, problem solve, prioritize tasks, and use long- and short-term memory.

**Interpersonal Skills:** The candidate's skills must be sufficient to interact with individuals, families and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds; negotiate interpersonal conflict; respect differences in clients; and establish rapport with clients and co-workers.

**Emotional Stability:** You must be able to establish therapeutic boundaries, provide clients with emotional support, adapt to changing environment/stress, deal with the unexpected, focus attention on task, monitor your own emotions, perform multiple responsibilities concurrently, and handle strong emotions (e.g., grief).

**Gross Motor Skills:** You must be able to move within confined spaces, sit and/or stand and maintain balance, reach above shoulders (e.g., IV poles), and reach below waist (e.g., plug electrical appliances into wall outlets).

**Manual Dexterity:** You must have the ability to handle small objects, pick up objects, grasp small objects (e.g., IV tubing, pencil), record information (e.g., pen, pencil, keyboard, typing), pinch, pick (e.g., manipulating a syringe), twist (e.g., turn objects/knobs), squeeze (e.g., eye dropper), and perceive texture.

**Physical Endurance:** You must have the ability to remain at the client's side during surgical or therapeutic procedures, sustain repetitive movements (e.g., CPR), and maintain physical tolerance (e.g., work the entire shift).

**Physical Strength/Mobility:** You must have the ability to push and pull 25 pounds (e.g., position clients), support 25 pounds of weight (e.g., ambulate client), lift 25 pounds (e.g., pick up a child, transfer client), move light objects weighing up to 10 pounds (e.g., IV poles), move heavy objects weighing from 11 to 50 pounds and carry up to 25 pounds frequently, but occasionally may exceed these limits. You should have sufficient motor functions to be able to execute movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all healthcare settings. You are required to have the motor skills necessary for assessment and therapeutic procedures such as palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers and procedures. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional uses of the senses of touch, vision and hearing. You must be able to perform basic life support (including CPR), transfer and position patients, and position and reposition yourself around patients. You must also be able to operate equipment typically found in the health care environment (i.e., IV pump, cardiac monitor, electric and manual blood pressure equipment, electric beds).

**Sensory/Observation:** You must be able to acquire information presented through demonstration and experience in the basic and nursing sciences. You must be able to observe and appreciate non-verbal communication when performing nursing assessment and intervention or administering medication. You must be capable of perceiving the signs of disease and infection and images of the body surfaces, palpable changes in various organs and tissues, and auditory information (e.g., patient's voice, heart tones, bowel and lung sounds).

**Reading Ability:** You must be able to read and understand written documents (e.g., policies, protocols).

**Cognitive Ability:** You must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize information. You must be able to quickly read and comprehend extensive written materials. You must also be able to evaluate and apply information and engage in critical thinking in the classroom, lab and clinical setting. You must be able to read and understand columns of writing (flow sheet, charts), digital displays, graphic printouts (e.g., EKG), graphs (e.g., vital sign sheets) and measurement marks (e.g., measurement tapes, scales, etc.); calibrate equipment, convert numbers to and/or from the metric system, tell time, measure time (e.g., count duration of contractions, etc.), count rates (e.g., drips/minute, pulse), use measuring tools (e.g., thermometer), add, subtract, multiply and/or divide whole numbers, compute fractions (e.g., medication dosages), use a calculator, write numbers in records, and perform algebraic equations to calculate medication dosages.

**Communication:** You must have the ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, patients, family and other professionals. You must be able to express ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback. You must be able to convey or exchange information at a level that allows the development of a health history, identify problems presented, explain alternative solutions, and give directions during treatment and post-treatment. You must be able to effectively communicate in English on oral, written and electronic forms, and to retrieve information from literature, computerized databases and lectures. You must be able to process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to members of the healthcare team. The appropriate communication may also rely on the candidate's ability to make a correct judgment, seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.

**Professional Conduct:** You must possess the ability to reason morally and practice nursing in an ethical manner. You must be willing to learn and abide by professional standards of practice. You must have compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility and tolerance. You must be able to engage in patient care delivery in all settings and be able to deliver care to all patient populations, including but not limited to children, adolescents, adults, individuals with disabilities, medically compromised patients, and vulnerable adults.

**Notice of Nondiscrimination**

Colby Community College provides equal opportunity to its applicants for admission, enrolled students, graduates, and employees. The College does not discriminate with respect to hiring, continuation of employment, promotion, tenure, other employment practices, application for admission or career services and placement on the basis of race, color, gender, age, disability, national origin or ancestry, sexual orientation or religion. For inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies, contact the Vice President of Student Affairs, Title IX and ADA Coordinator, Colby Community College, 1255 S. Range Ave., Colby, KS 67701, or call 785.460.5490.