

Technical Standards for Admission to and Progression in the Columbia College of Nursing Program

Final acceptance to Columbia College of Nursing is contingent upon the applicant's ability to meet essential requirements to meet program outcomes and ensure the health and safety of patients, peers, faculty, and other healthcare providers. The applicant must be able to engage in a variety of complex and specific experiences that are necessary in the acquisition and practice of essential nursing skills and functions.

The applicant must initially meet these requirements to gain admission and is required to continue to meet them throughout their participation in the nursing program. Essential requirements consist of a combination of physical abilities and motor skills, sensory abilities, interpersonal and communication skills, cognitive abilities, behavioral and emotional sensitivity, and professionalism. Though Columbia College of Nursing may modify certain course requirements to provide a person with disabilities an equivalent opportunity to achieve success equal to that of a person without disabilities, there are no substitutes for the following essential skills.

Physical Abilities and Motor Skills

The applicant/student must have sufficient physical abilities and motor function so that he or/she can engage in movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all healthcare settings. For example, for the safety and protection of individuals, the applicant must be able to perform basic life support, including CPR, and function physically in an emergency situation. They must have the ability, within reasonable limits, to safely assist patients in moving, for example, from a chair to a bed, or wheelchair to a commode. The applicant/student must have the ability to perform essential tasks that require fine motor skills to pick up objects with hands and grasp small objects. In addition, an applicant/student accepted into the program at Columbia College of Nursing is required to undergo and meet satisfactory requirements of a physical examination, drug screen, and occupational skills evaluation within the Columbia-St. Mary's system.

Sensory Abilities

The applicant/student must have sufficient visual acuity to see details near and at a distance and be able to accurately differentiate among the full spectrum of colors. Auditory acuity is required to accurately assess and protect the health and safety of individual patients and perform appropriate professional nursing functions. Sight and hearing are essential in communicating accurately, effectively, and performing most essential nursing functions.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

The applicant/student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, patients, family and other professionals. This includes the ability to express thoughts and ideas clearly to express or exchange information to conduct an appropriate health history, identify problems presented, explain alternative solutions, and give directions during treatment and post-treatment. Effective oral and written communication is vital and the applicant/student must be able to process and communicate information on the patient's status accurately and in a timely manner to other members of the healthcare team.

Cognitive Abilities

The applicant/student must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize in the classroom and various clinical settings. They must be able to effectively gather information to assess and evaluate individuals, groups, and community situations, and act in a timely manner using critical thinking through their ability to quickly read and comprehend extensive written material.

Behavioral and Emotional Sensitivity

An applicant/student must possess the emotional health necessary to fully use his or her cognitive abilities, and exercise good judgment to carry out all responsibilities in the completion of professional nursing functions. In addition, maintenance of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff, and other professions under all circumstances, which may be stressful, is essential.

The applicant must have the emotional stability to function appropriately under stress and be able to adapt to change. It is vital that the applicant/student develop awareness of his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences and how this may influence his/her perceptions and relationships with others. The applicant/student must be willing to examine and change behaviors when it interferes with relationships with others to function effectively and collaboratively in diverse academic and working environments.

Professional Conduct

The applicant/student must be able to engage in the practice of nursing in an ethical and professional manner based on the professional code of ethics and professional standards. The applicant/student must possess characteristics that include empathy, integrity, honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. Applicants/students must be able to engage in the delivery of healthcare in all settings and be able to provide care to all patient populations including but not limited to children, adolescents, adults, persons with developmental disabilities, medically compromised patients, and vulnerable populations.

Drug Screen and Criminal Background Checks

The applicant/student is required to complete a drug screening and criminal background check. The drug screen will be completed during the physical examination and occupational skills evaluation.

The applicant must understand that final admission is dependent upon meeting all technical standards, results of the physical and occupational skills examination, a negative drug screen, and criminal background check.

Columbia College of Nursing reserves the right to reject the application and/or drug screen of a candidate or remove a student from the program if the College determines that the results of the criminal background check demonstrate that the applicant/student does not exhibit behavior and social attributes consistent with the College's Technical Standards.