INTRODUCTION

Responsibilities and standards in nursing practice are determined by the Board of Nursing, national accreditation guidelines, and clinical agency policies. The education of a nurse requires assimilation of knowledge, acquisition of psychomotor skills and the development of clinical judgment. The practice of nursing also emphasizes interdisciplinary communication and collaboration among patients, families, physicians, nurses and other allied healthcare professionals. A combination of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, physical, and social abilities is required to promote the knowledge and skills needed to perform in the role of a professional nurse. In addition to being essential to the successful completion of the requirements for a nursing degree, these skills are also necessary to ensure the health and safety of patients, fellow students, faculty and other healthcare providers. The curriculum at the DeWitt School of Nursing (SON) is designed to engage students in diverse and complex experiences directed toward the acquisition and practice of these essential skills.

The following standards comprise the five core professional nursing competencies. In addition to the academic qualifications, the SON considers these personal and professional qualifications essential for entrance into, continuation in and graduation from its nursing program. All nursing students must be able to meet these qualifications, with or without accommodation.

Communication

- Communication ability sufficient for effective verbal, nonverbal, and written professional interactions.
- Included is effective communication in both written and spoken English.

Examples of required activities and behaviors:

1. Communicate verbally with other members of the healthcare team.
2. Elicit and record information about health history and responses to treatment from patients or family members.
3. Convey to patients and others as necessary to teach, direct, and counsel individuals.

Observation

- Ability to observe demonstrations and participate in simulated clinical exercises.
• Ability to gather data from written reference materials, oral presentations, demonstrations and observation of a patient and their environment.
• Ability to perform health assessments and interventions through physical observation, including the ability to obtain information from digital, analog, auditory, and waveform representations of physiologic findings to determine a patient’s health status.

Examples of required activities and behaviors:
1. Monitor device alarms, alerts for help, and bodily functions using a stethoscope.
2. Draw up correct amount of medication in a syringe and detect nonverbal changes in patient’s condition.
3. Detect temperature changes, pulses, and edema.

**Motor Function**

• Motor and psychomotor function necessary to execute movements required for safe and effective patient care in all healthcare settings.
• Motor functions include: gross and fine motor skills, physical endurance, strength, stamina and mobility to safely provide nursing care, including in emergency situations.

Examples of required activities and behaviors:
1. Obtain health assessment information through palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic methods.
2. Complete assigned periods of clinical rotations.
3. Carry out repositioning of patients and rescue procedures such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

**Behavioral, Interpersonal and Emotional**

• Ability to relate to colleagues, patients and families with honesty, integrity and nonjudgmental demeanor.
• Ability to work effectively in stressful and fluctuating environments with the ability to modify behavior in response to constructive criticism and maintain a high level of performance in the face of taxing workloads and stressful situations.
• Capacity to demonstrate ethical behavior to include adherence to the professional nursing and student honor codes, as well as rules and regulations governing the profession of nursing.

Examples of required activities and behaviors:
1. Maturity and emotional skills to remain calm in an emergency situation.
2. Interpersonal skills needed for successful conflict resolution and effective communication with diverse populations.
3. Behavioral skills to demonstrate good judgment and prompt completion of all responsibilities needed for safe and effective patient care.

Cognitive, Conceptual and Quantitative

- Ability to exhibit behavior and intellectual functioning that adheres to acceptable professional standards.
- Ability to solve problems involving measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis.
- Ability to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationship.
- Ability to learn effectively through a variety of modalities, including, but not limited to, classroom instruction, small group discussion, individual study materials, oral presentations, and use of computer based technology.

Examples of required activities and behaviors:

1. Calculation of appropriate medication dosage given specific patient parameters.
2. Conceptual ability to analyze and synthesize patient data and develop an appropriate plan of care.
3. Ability to collect data, prioritize needs and anticipate patient reactions.
4. Ability to assess spatial relationships adequate for proper administration of intramuscular injections or evaluate wounds of varying depths.

Students who seek accommodations for a disability are responsible for contacting the University’s department of Disability Services at (936) 468-3004 or by visiting their web site at http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/. The department of Disability Services will determine a student’s eligibility for accommodations and will engage with the student and recommend appropriate accommodations and services.

I have read and understand Stephen F. Austin DeWitt’s School of Nursing’s professional and technical standards for nursing practice and acknowledge and understand that I must meet these standards, with or without accommodation, in order to successfully complete the program.

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Student Signature        Date