

## Helene Fuld College of Nursing Technical Standards for Core Professional Nursing Competency Performance

HFCN is committed to producing lifelong learners who will excel in their careers. The HFCN Technical Standards for Core Professional Nursing Competency Performance (Technical Standards) are an integral component of the college academic requirements that identify core professional nursing competencies in five specific domains – Communication, Observation, Cognitive, Motor, and Behavioral and Social Attributes. Nursing students must meet all the requirements of the Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, to successfully progress through and graduate from their respective curricula. These requirements pertain to all student conduct regardless of setting (e.g. classroom/didactic, office, on-campus simulation or off-campus clinical, email communication, etc.).

Individuals interested in applying for admission are encouraged to review the Technical Standards to become familiar with the skills and abilities required to complete the programs.

### TECHNICAL STANDARDS COMPETENCY DOMAINS

**I. COMMUNICATION Competencies:** The Technical Standards include the ability to communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals. **Rationale: communication competencies include knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care in all health care settings.** Examples of communication competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

- communicate clearly in English, in a professional and sensitive manner, to patients or to a patient language interpreter ( if the patient and/or family members/significant others do not speak English), and their family members/significant others, health team members, faculty, and peers of diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds in professional nursing practice settings as well as in the academic setting.
- elicit accurate information from patients, family member/significant others, health team members, and/or faculty related to a patient’s medical history and current status necessary to adequately and effectively evaluate a patient’s condition.
- use and comprehend standard professional nursing and medical terminology when using and/or documenting a patient’s print or electronic health record.
- convey appropriate information to patients and the health care team and teach, direct and counsel a wide variety of individuals, including explaining treatment procedures and initiating health education.

**II. OBSERVATION Competencies:** The Technical Standards include the ability to make observations in connection with other identified professional nursing student competencies. **Rationale: Nursing student observation competencies include the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care to patients in all health care settings.** Examples of observation competencies include, without limitation, the ability to accurately:

- use and interpret information obtained from digital, analog, and waveform diagnostic tools (e.g., sphygmomanometer, otoscope, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, EKG, IVs) and other diagnostic tools that monitor or obtain physiological phenomena.

- observe a patient during a comprehensive or focused physical assessment to determine signs and symptoms of disease, pain, and infection.
- observe and interpret normal and deviations from normal the following: e.g., a patient’s heart and body sounds, body language, color of wounds, drainage, urine, feces, expectoration, and sensitivity to heat, cold, pain, and pressure.

**III. COGNITIVE Competencies:** The Technical Standards include the ability to demonstrate cognitive abilities in connection with the other identified professional nursing student competencies. **Rationale: Nursing student cognitive competencies include demonstrating the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care to patients in all health care settings.** Examples of cognitive competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

- demonstrate cognitive abilities related to course and program outcomes, which include intellectual, conceptual, integrative, quantitative, critical thinking, and comprehension skills that indicate that the student is able to carry out the nursing process in the care of patients.
- measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize subjective and objective data to carry out the nursing process in relation to patient assessment, diagnosis, goals, plan of care/interventions, and evaluation.
- retrieve and critically appraise patient related research to determine the best available research evidence (quantity and quality) to use in a patient’s nursing plan of care.
- comprehend extensive information from written documents, visual and/or oral presentations, and patient computer information systems in order to carry out the nursing process.
- analyze and prioritize all aspects of patient care in a prompt and timely fashion.
- synthesize objective and subjective findings and diagnostic studies in order to formulate nursing diagnoses.
- use synthesized data to initiate a nursing plan of care which appropriately integrates patient preferences in order to provide appropriate, quality, and safe patient care.
- accurately follow course syllabi, assignment directions, patient protocols, and any action plan(s) developed by deans, faculty, administrators, or health care agency staff.

**IV. MOTOR Competencies:** The Technical Standards include the ability to perform or assist with nursing interventions to provide comprehensive general nursing care and treatment in connection with other identified professional nursing student competencies. **Rationale: Nursing student motor competencies include the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care to patients in all health care settings.** Examples motor competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

- obtain accurate information from patients using gross and fine motor skills appropriate to the technique (e.g., palpation, auscultation, and percussion) and common medical/nursing digital, analog, and waveform diagnostic tools and equipment (e.g., sphygmomanometer, otoscope, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, EKG, IVs) that monitor or obtain physiological phenomena or data.

- perform and/or assist appropriately with expected nursing student procedures, treatments, and medication administration using sterile or clean techniques appropriate to the type of procedure, treatment or medication administration (e.g., drawing medications into syringes in precise measurements; giving a medication IV, IM, or subcutaneously using the appropriate syringe or apparatus; performing tracheotomy care and suctioning; inserting urinary catheters; creating sterile fields; sterile and clean dressing changes) and administering basic life support (BLS) cardiopulmonary resuscitation or advanced cardiopulmonary life support (ACLS), depending upon the nursing student's program level.
- move, transfer, and position patients or equipment safely under a variety of circumstances with or without a lift team or assistive devices during the delivery of general nursing care or in emergency situations.
- have the endurance to complete all required tasks during the assigned period of clinical practice in order to carry out the nursing process in the context of patient care delivery.
- navigate patients' rooms, workspaces, and treatment areas with appropriate precision and speed to carry out the nursing process during the delivery of general nursing care or in emergency situations.

**V. BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES Competencies:** The Technical Standards include the ability to demonstrate behavioral and social attributes in academic and in on campus clinical and off-campus clinical settings in connection with other identified professional nursing student competencies included in the AACN's Essentials of Baccalaureate, Master's and Doctoral Education for Professional Nursing Practice, the National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.® Code of Ethics: Part II Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct and Interpretive Statements, and HFCN's student academic integrity policy. **Rationale: Nursing student behavioral and social attributes competencies include the knowledge, attitude, and skills necessary to provide quality and safe patient care in all health care settings.** Examples of behavioral and social attributes competencies include, without limitation, the ability to:

- conform to all requirements set forth by HFCN/health care agency's affiliation agreements as well as any additional requirements of any clinical setting.
- uphold professional nursing standards related to the student's scope of practice.
- conform to HFCN's attendance and clinical dress code/professional appearance requirements for on-campus clinical simulation and off-campus clinical learning sessions.
- communicate in a mature, professional, culturally sensitive, therapeutic, accurate and effective manner with patients, patients' family members/significant others, members of the health care team, faculty, staff, and peers.
- maintain effective, appropriate, and sensitive relationships with patients, patients' family members/significant others, peers, faculty, staff, and other health care professionals.
- work cooperatively and with honesty and integrity with peers, faculty, and members of the healthcare team.

- adapt to changing environments and exhibit flexibility and composure in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of diverse patients.
  - use conflict resolution strategies effectively in class, on-campus clinical simulation, and off-campus clinical learning settings
  - integrate constructive criticism received in HFCN, on-campus clinical simulation and off-campus clinical learning settings.
  - correctly judge when a nursing intervention requires additional assistance and seek help from the HFCN clinical instructor, preceptor, or appropriate agency health care team member.
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## **HFCN Policy on Service Animals**

### **Service Animal**

Service animal means any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

### **Emotional Support Animal (ESA)**

Animals utilized by individuals with disabilities for emotional support, well-being, or comfort. Because they are not individually trained to perform work or tasks, ESA's are not service animals. Unlike a service animal, ESA animals do not assist with daily living tasks. Therefore, ESA's are not permitted on the HFCN campus or in off-site learning environments.

### **Service Animal:**

The College has the right to request/ask for:

- Affirmation that the service animal is required due to disability
- A description of the specific tasks or work the animal has been trained to perform
- If needed, documentation that the service animal is in compliance with all required New York State and New York City requirements associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations.

**Important Note Regarding Service Animals:** The College may prohibit the use of service animals in certain locations because of health and safety restrictions (e.g. where the animals may be in danger, or where their use may compromise the integrity of research). Restricted areas may include, but are not limited to, the following areas: custodial closets, boiler rooms, facility equipment rooms, research laboratories, classrooms with research/demonstration animals, areas where protective clothing is

necessary, wood and metal shops, motor pools, rooms with heavy machinery, and areas outlined in state law as being inaccessible to animals.

## **Responsibilities of the Owner of Service Animals**

### **Standards for Maintaining a Service or Approved Emotional Support Animal**

- The approved animal is the sole responsibility of the owner
- The owner is responsible for the overall health and well-being of the animal. This includes but is not limited to:
  - o Vaccinations: In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Students are responsible for determining local licensing requirements for an animal. Proof of health and immunizations must be provided to the College before the animal arrives on campus and can be requested as necessary. An updated statement of health may be requested annually.
  - o The college has the authority to direct that the animal receive veterinary attention if it is deemed necessary
  - o The college reserves the right to request documentation showing that the animal has been licensed (e.g., New York law requires that every dog be licensed and provides that service dogs are exempt from the license fee).

Service Animals may travel freely with their owner throughout the College unless otherwise specified (i.e. an area that is deemed unsafe). A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).

### **Standards for Interaction with the Community**

- The owner is responsible for assuring that the animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the College or cause difficulties for students and faculty. Excessive noises and behaviors such as barking and whining, chewing and scratching and aggression will not be permitted. The animal should not have access to another person's belongings or private space and should be kept clean.
- The owner is responsible for instructing others on appropriate interactions with the animal and setting clear expectations.
- The owner is financially responsible for the actions of the animal, including bodily injury or property damage. The owner's responsibility covers but is not limited to replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, and the like. The owner is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair.
- The owner is responsible for any expenses incurred for cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning or for repairs to College premises that are assessed after the student and animal vacate the residence. The College shall have the right to bill the student owner's account for unmet obligations.
- The owner is responsible for ensuring the cleanup of the animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the animal outdoors. Outdoor animal waste must follow New York City laws regarding outside waste.
- Approved animals may not be cared for by another student. Animals must be taken with the

student if they leave campus or external arrangements for care must be planned in advance of their departure/absence.

### **Additional Agreements**

- The owner agrees to continue to abide by all other college policies. Reasonable accommodation which may constitute an exception to a policy that otherwise would prohibit having an animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.
- A student may be ordered to remove their Service Animal by an appropriate HFCN representative for the following reasons:
  - o Out of control animal: A student owner may be directed to remove an animal that is out of control and the owner does not take effective action to recover control. If the improper animal behavior happens repeatedly, the Owner may be prohibited from keeping the animal in HFCN until the Owner can demonstrate that they have taken significant steps to mitigate the proper behavior.
  - o Non-housebroken animal: An Owner may be directed to remove an animal that is not housebroken.
  - o Direct Threat: An owner may be directed to remove an animal that HFCN determines to be a substantial and direct threat to the health and safety of individuals. This may occur as a result of a very ill animal, threatening or aggressive behavior of the animal or substantial lack of cleanliness of the animal.
  - o Mistreated/neglected animal: A student owner may be directed to remove an animal if they demonstrate the inability to adequately care for the animal and prompt corrective action is not taken.
- Any violation of the above rules or incidence of other violations may result in immediate removal of the animal from the College and may result in discipline for the student.

Revision approved 2020