



## **Essential Qualifications for Associate Degree Nursing Program (Year One and Year Two)**

The following essential qualifications address the physical, cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral abilities essential to the nursing program at State Fair Community College. Students must meet these essential qualifications in order to be admitted and retained in the program. Students with documented disabilities who wish to request reasonable accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act must follow the college's procedure for requesting accommodations. The college reserves the right to reject requests for accommodations that would fundamentally alter the nature of an educational program, lower the academic standards, cause an undue hardship on the college, or endanger the health or safety of a student with a disability, other students, or any other member of the college community.

State Fair Community College Associate Degree in Nursing signifies that the holder of that program may apply for licensure in the state of Missouri as a Licensed Practical Nurse after Year One and as a Registered Nurse after Year Two and has been educated to competently enter nursing practice in all healthcare settings as outlined in the Missouri State Board of Nursing Practice Act. The education of an associate degree nurse requires the acquisition of substantial specialized skill, the assimilation of knowledge and the ability to make appropriate judgments in healthcare settings. The practice of a nurse emphasizes collaboration among physicians, nurses, health science professionals, and the patient.

The curriculum requires students to engage in diverse, complex, and specific experiences essential to the acquisition and practice of essential nursing skills and functions. Unique combinations of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, physical and social abilities are required to satisfactorily perform these functions. In addition to being essential to the successful completion of the requirements of the certificate in Practical Nursing or the Associate Degree in Nursing, these functions are necessary to ensure the health and safety of patients, fellow candidates, faculty and other healthcare providers.

The essential abilities necessary to acquire or demonstrate competence in a discipline as complex as nursing and needed for successful admission and continuance by candidates of the Practical Nursing and Associate Degree Nursing program at State Fair Community College include, but are not limited to, the following abilities.

### **Motor Skills**

Candidates should have sufficient motor function so that they are able to execute movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all health care settings. Candidates should have the ability to reach items overhead, stand for 8-12 hours, and lift 15-25 pounds of a client's body weight. (For example: For the safety and protection of the patient, the candidate must be able to perform basic life support, including CPR, and function in an emergency situation. The candidate must have the ability, within reasonable limits, to safely assist a patient in moving, for example, from a chair to a bed, or from a wheelchair to a commode.)



## **Sensory/Observation**

A candidate must be able to acquire the information present through demonstrations and experiences in the basic nursing sciences. He or she must be able to observe a patient accurately, and at a distance and close at hand, and observe and appreciate non-verbal communications when performing nursing assessment and intervention or administering medications. The candidate must be capable of perceiving the signs of disease and infection as manifested through physical examination. Such information is derived from images of the body surfaces, palpable changes in various organs and tissues, and auditory information (patient voice, heart tones, bowel and lung sounds).

## **Communication**

The candidate must communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, patient, family, and other professionals. He or she must express his or her ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback. A candidate must be able to convey or exchange information at a level allowing development of a health history, identify problems presented, explain alternative solutions, and give directions during treatment and post-treatment. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively in oral and written format. The candidate must be able to process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to members of the health care team. The appropriate communication may also rely on the candidate's ability to make a correct judgment in seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.

## **Cognitive**

A candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize in the context of nursing study. The candidate must be able to read and comprehend extensive written material. He or she must also be able to evaluate and apply information and engage in critical thinking in the classroom and clinical setting.

## **Behavioral/Emotional**

A candidate must possess the emotional health required for the full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patient and families. In addition, he/she must be able to maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff and other professionals under all circumstances including highly stressful situations. The candidate must have the emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways. The candidate must be able to experience empathy for the situations and circumstances of others and effectively communicate that empathy. The candidate must know that his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect his or her perceptions and relationships with others. The candidate must be able and willing to examine and change his or her behavior when it interferes with productive individual or team relationships. The candidate must possess skills and experience necessary for effective and harmonious relationships in diverse academic and working circumstances.



## Professional Expectations

“Professional behavior is manifest in person, acts and attitudes including elements of what we wear, how we perform, and how we think – if we make our thoughts and beliefs public... It is how others see nursing that is so important to the nursing profession. And it is how others see us in our behavior to each other as well as to our clients that defines us as professionals.” Veronica D. Feeg (Copyright 2001, *Pediatric Nursing and Jannetti Publications, Inc.* Used with permission of the publisher).

Therefore, how one presents him or herself either elevates or diminishes their professional image in the eyes of others. We expect candidates to maintain the highest standards of professionalism in the classroom, all clinical settings, in any campus building or property, in the community, and in related public settings.

Candidates must:

- Possess the ability to reason morally and practice nursing in an ethical manner
- Be willing to learn and abide by standards of practice for nursing
- Possess the attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility, and tolerance
- Be able to engage in patient care delivery in all settings
- Be able to deliver care to all patient populations including but not limited to children, adolescents, adults, developmentally disabled persons, medically compromised patients, and vulnerable adults

### General professional behaviors to be exhibited in all areas at all times include:

"*Twelve Points on Professionalism*" that can serve as a good reminder to us all of those subtle, interpersonal qualities we should reconsider from time to time.

- Be civil - Treat people with respect.
- Be ethical - Stand up for personal and professional standards.
- Be honest - Be forthright; do not participate in gossip and rumor.
- Be the best - Strive to be better than good.
- Be consistent - Behavior should coincide with values and beliefs.
- Be a communicator - Invite ideas, opinions, feedback from others.
- Be accountable - Take responsibility for your own actions.
- Be collaborative - Work in partnership with others for the benefit of patients.
- Be forgiving - Everyone makes mistakes; give people a fair chance.
- Be current - Keep knowledge and skills up to date.
- Be involved - Be active at local, state, and national levels.
- Be a model - What a person says and does reflects on his or her profession.

(Adapted from Bruhn, J., in Nativio, 2001. Copyright 2001, Pediatric Nursing and Jannetti Publications, Inc. Used with permission of the publisher.)