

Essential Requirements for Completion of Baccalaureate Nursing Education

The following essential requirements explain attributes necessary to complete the baccalaureate educational program in nursing. These standards describe the non-academic qualifications required in addition to academic qualifications that Georgia Baptist College of Nursing (GBCN) considers essential for entrance to, continuation in, and graduation from its nursing degree program. Candidates for a nursing degree must be able to meet these minimum essential skills with or without reasonable accommodation for successful completion of degree requirements.

Students are responsible for taking care of their personal, physical, and mental health. The University provides basic health insurance (at a cost) that includes coverage for both physical and mental health. Students have the responsibility for seeking out the help they may need to address mental or physical health concerns, including assistance with alcohol or drug dependency problems, should they exist or develop during the course of a student's academic program.

The College of Nursing has a process for addressing the issue of compromised Essential Requirements for Admission, Progression and Graduation requirements. The curricula leading to a degree in nursing from GBCN require students to engage in diverse and complex experiences directed at the acquisition and practice of essential nursing skills and functions. If GBCN students are observed by qualified nursing or other health care professionals to be unsafe in the clinical environment, due to an inability to meet the essential skills, the appropriate academic program office is required to take action to ensure a safe environment for students, clients, and other personnel.

Essential skills exist in the areas of: Observation, Communication and Motor Abilities; Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities; Behavioral and Social Abilities; and Health and Related Requirements.

Students with an impairment that interferes with completion of essential requirements should contact the University's ACCESS and Accommodations at (678) 547-6823. Students are encouraged to review the Atlanta campus ACCESS and Accommodations website at: <https://atlstuaffairs.mercer.edu/disability-services.cfm>. Information is also in the 2016-2017 Catalog on the following web site: <http://registrar.mercer.edu/atlanta/catalogs.cfm>

Essential Requirements

A. Observation

1. Observation necessitates the functional use of vision, hearing, tactile and somatic senses.

2. The student must be able to observe and participate in lectures, demonstrations, research, and practice situations in nursing.
3. The student must be able to observe health assessments and interventions, diagnostic procedures, and technical/electronic data (e.g. electrocardiographic waveforms) to determine a client's condition and the effect of therapy.

B. Communication

1. Communication includes speech, hearing, reading, writing, nonverbal body language, and computer literacy.
2. The student must be able to communicate clearly and effectively in English with clients, professors and all members of the health care team. Written and oral communication must include use of standard, professional medical terminology.
3. The student must communicate with clients clearly and effectively in English to elicit information regarding health history, psychosocial status and functionality; and to perceive nonverbal communications.
4. The student must be able to relay appropriate information to clients, as well as teach, explain, direct, and counsel a wide variety of individuals, e.g. varying educational and developmental levels and cultures.
5. In some instances, the student will be required to provide clear, direct communication in English during highly stressful, crisis situations. These skills necessitate a strong command of the English language and prompt, timely interpretation of pertinent patient data.
6. The student must be able to receive and deliver communication verbally, telephonically, and electronically to perform duties associated with client care needs in a timely, professional manner, e.g., enter an electronic medical record after the patient visit.

C. Motor Abilities

1. The student must have sufficient gross and fine motor skills, physical endurance, physical strength, mobility, vision, tactile abilities, and sense of smell to perform nursing procedures and to operate equipment safely.

2. The student must have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by: tactile palpation, auscultation using a stethoscope, direct hand percussion, indirect percussion using a percussion hammer, and other diagnostic maneuvers.
3. The student must possess sufficient fine motor skills to be able to perform basic laboratory tests (e.g. using a glucometer, slide preparation) and perform basic patient care procedures (e.g. tracheostomy care, urinary catheterization, insertion of intravenous catheters, administration of injections, and the use of oxygen/respiratory equipment).
4. The student must be able to execute motor movements in a prompt, timely fashion, including the ability to sit, stand, bend, and walk quickly, in order to provide routine and emergency care to patients.
 - a. Examples of emergency treatments include, but are not limited to: cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medications, application of pressure to stop bleeding, measurement and interpretation of vital signs, and opening of obstructed airways.
 - b. Examples of routine treatments include, but are not limited to: administration of scheduled and as needed medications, measurement and interpretation of vital signs, performance of a focused head-to-toe physical assessment, performance and assistance with activities of daily living including the ability to lift 30 pounds.

D. Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

1. The student must be able to read and understand written documents in English and to solve problems involving measurement, calculation, reasoning, memory, analysis, and synthesis.
2. The student must be able to synthesize knowledge, as well as integrate and prioritize all aspects of patient care in a prompt, timely fashion. This ability includes synthesis of objective and subjective findings and diagnostic studies in order to formulate and initiate a plan of care integrating the gender; age; and religious, cultural, physical and patient preferences.
3. The student must be able to integrate concepts of pathophysiology, pharmacology, and fundamentals of nursing care in order to formulate a cohesive, multidisciplinary plan of care to promote and achieve desired patient outcomes appropriate to each clinical setting.

- a. The student must be able to use the above information to identify and develop a nursing diagnosis, establish priorities, and monitor treatment plans and care modalities.
4. The student must be able to comprehend three dimensional and spatial relationships.
5. The student must be able to incorporate data from multiple patient sources (e.g. physical assessment, vital signs, lab values, interdisciplinary documentation) in a prompt manner in order to provide appropriate, safe patient care.
6. The student must be able to recognize and respond rapidly and safely to changes in a patient's status based on a variety of data such as physical assessment and pertinent laboratory findings. The student must be able to revise care to promote appropriate patient outcomes.

E. Behavioral and Social Abilities

1. The student must have the capacity to demonstrate full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities; maintain emotional stability; exercise good judgment under stressful, crisis and non-crisis situations; and promptly complete all responsibilities pertinent to the diagnosis and care of clients in a variety of settings.
2. The student must have the capacity to develop mature, sensitive, and effective therapeutic relationships with clients in a variety of settings and from multicultural backgrounds. Individual client care must be provided regardless of the client's race, ethnic group, age, gender, religious or political preference; ability to pay; and gender or sexual orientation.
3. The student will be required to perform nursing care in many settings including acute care inpatient settings (e.g. medical-surgical, obstetrics, psychiatric, pediatrics) as well as outpatient settings (e.g. public health, outpatient clinics, long term care facilities, schools, and homes). The student must have the ability to perform nursing care that may be outside his/her own personal level of comfort in these settings so that the client's needs are a top priority.
4. The student must be able to tolerate physically and mentally taxing workloads and function effectively under stress.
5. The student must be able to exhibit a level of consciousness and attentiveness that guarantees client safety. Examples of unacceptable compromise include excessive somnolence, memory impairment, emotional instability, or an inability to retain pertinent details of a client's situation.

6. As a component of nursing education, a student must demonstrate ethical behavior, including adherence to the professional nursing and student honor codes.
7. Students are not required to be involved with medical procedures that are in disagreement with individual attitudes and values. Nevertheless, students are required to learn about these procedures and participate in the professional care of the client before and after such procedures.
8. Although student safety is of utmost importance, students will be exposed to a variety of communicable pathogens and are expected to care for patients with communicable diseases using appropriate standard precautions and/or guidelines.
9. The student must possess the ability to participate in group and collaborative learning in a variety of settings that include classroom (with greater than 100 students), simulation lab, and various clinical settings.

F. Health and Related Requirements

1. The student is required, according to agency and university policy, to provide current proof of having met all health related requirements prior to participating in any clinical activities. The student is responsible for maintaining all personal health records including current immunizations, CPR (American Heart Association BLS for Health Care Providers), OSHA and HIPAA documentation.
2. All entering students are required to complete a background check prior to entering the College of Nursing in compliance with the affiliation agreement for the clinical agency and community standards for disqualifying offenses. This will include a drug screen to comply with clinical agency requirements. Re-enrolling students must re-submit an update of these requirements no greater than one month prior to the first day of classes.
3. Certain chronic or recurrent illnesses and problems that could interfere with patient care or safety may be incompatible with nursing education or practice. Some illnesses may lead to a higher likelihood of student absences and enrollment should be carefully considered by the student.
4. Deficiencies in knowledge, judgment, integrity, or professional attitude may jeopardize patient care, and as a result could become grounds for course failure and possible dismissal from the nursing program.