All applicants and students at the South Plains College Nursing programs must be able to adhere to and perform the essential skills included in this document either with or without AFDA accommodations. These core performance standards are congruent with the Texas State Board of Nursing expectations for a registered nurse/licensed vocational nurse. The use of trained intermediaries is not permissible, in that the candidate’s judgement would be mediated by some else’s power of observation and selection.

Core statements which apply to students in the nursing major are congruent with:

1. The Differentiated Essential of Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (2021).
2. The criteria and guidelines for the evaluation of Associate Degree programs established by Accreditation Commission for Nursing Education (ACEN).
3. The Standards of Clinical Nursing Practice established by the American Nurses Association.
4. The Social Policy Statement of the American Nurses Association.
5. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (2015).

To practice nursing, a licensee must possess a multitude of knowledge, skills and abilities in order to provide safe and effective patient care (National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc., 1992). It is the nursing program’s responsibility to assure that these requirements are met before a graduate can be certified.

**Core Requirements are as follows:**

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| **Requirements** | **Descriptions** | **Examples** |
| * Communication | * Must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and their families. * Must be able to professionally communicate with other students, staff, faculty and other health care disciplines. * Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. * Communication abilities sufficient for verbal, written and electronic format. | • Document client data and nursing care completely and accurately use correct medical terminology.  • Obtain health history information from client/family.  • Interpret nonverbal cues and behaviors.   * Write and speak English effectively in order to be understood clearly by the public. * Communicate therapeutically with clients, families, and groups in a variety of settings. * Communicate appropriately with faculty, peers and other health care professionals. * Provide health teaching information for clients, families, and/or groups based on assessed needs, available resources, age, lifestyle, and cultural considerations. * Remember pertinent information and communicate to all interdisciplinary team members, client and family where consented. |
| **Requirements** | **Descriptions** | **Examples** |
| * Physical Ability | * Physical abilities sufficient for movement from room to room and in small spaces. Gross and fine motor abilities for providing safe, effective nursing care. | * Must be able to move quickly for any type of emergency. * Administration of recure procedures-cardiopulmonary resuscitation. * Left, move, position and transport clients without causing harm, undue pain, or discomfort to the client or one’s self. * Stoop, bend, squat, and reach overhead as required to safely reach equipment and provide nursing care. * Correctly administer oral and parenteral medications to maintain client safety. Calibration and use of equipment. * Provide or assist with activities of daily living such as bed bath, hygiene, and toileting, positioning clients, making an occupied or unoccupied bed. * Need to be able to have motor skills of lifting, carrying, pushing and pulling * Physical ability to lift and transfer 50 pounds and carry objects up to 25 pounds. |
| **Requirements** | **Descriptions** | Examples |
| * Gross and fine motor skills | * Gross and fine motor skills sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care. | * Perform physical activities necessary to do basic fundamental nursing skills such as putting on sterile gloves, donning mask and gown, operating a manual and/or electronic blood pressure cuff, sterile technique and other essential fundamental nursing skills. * Perform correct hand washing technique and behaviors. * Provide or assist with activities of daily living such as bed bath, hygiene, toileting, positioning clients, making an occupied and unoccupied bed. * Manipulate instruments, supplies, and equipment with speed, dexterity, precision, and adequate eye-hand coordination. * Correctly administer oral and parenteral medications to maintain client safety. * Perform electronic keyboarding/documentation and/or extensive writing with a pen and/or pencil. * Maintain and safely operate orthopedic devices such as traction equipment, casts, and assistive devices. * Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation procedures maintaining health teams and client safety. * Calibrate and use equipment (i.e. syringes, vials, ampoules and medication packages, manual blood pressure cuff, don sterile gloves, etc.). Grasp small objects with hands (e.g. IV tubing, pencil). Pinch/pick or otherwise work with fingers (e.g. manipulate a syringe, eye dropper, etc.). Twist (turn objects/knobs using hands). |
| **Requirements** | **Descriptions** | **Examples** |
| * Visual Ability * Hearing * Smell * Tactile | * Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary for safe client care. * Hearing ability sufficient for auscultation (hearing) and assessment necessary for safe client care. * Have the ability to detect odors from clients, detect gases, noxious smells and smoke. * Must have tactile ability to sufficiently perform physical assessments, examinations, and procedures | • Perform basic nursing skills such as insertion of a catheter, insertion of an IV, counting respirations, preparing and administering medications.  • Observe client responses (level of consciousness, respirations patterns) and recognize subtle physical changes.  • Read the small print, gauges, thermometers, measuring cups, syringes, and other equipment.  • Discriminate colors, changes in color, size, and continuity of body part.  • Accurately identify, prepare, and administer medications.  • Identify hazards in the environment (safety rails, restraints, water spills and harmful situations).  • Correctly visualize written words and information on paper and on a computer screen.   * Hears background noises, monitor alarms, emergency signals, auscultatory sounds, and cries for help. * Need to be able to hear faints sounds and hear in situation when not able to see lips (e.g. when masks are in use) * Hear acuity sufficiently enough to assess changes in heart, breath, abdominal, vascular sounds. * Identify distinct body odors or body fluids * Detect gas smells * Have finger dexterity to perform palpation and percussion functions of a physical examination and or those related to therapeutic intervention * Need to be able to assess rashes, vibrations, detect temperature, and different surface characteristics. |
| **Requirements** | **Descriptions** | **Examples** |
| * Emotional stability | * Emotional stability sufficient to tolerate rapidly changing conditions and environmental stress | * Establish therapeutic interpersonal boundaries * Provide clients with emotional support * Adapt to changing the environment and stress while maintaining professional conduct and standards without displaying hostility, agitation, rudeness or belligerence. * Establish therapeutic interpersonal boundaries. * Provide clients with emotional support. * Adapt to changing the environment and stress while maintaining professional conduct and standards without displaying hostility, agitation, rudeness or belligerence.   • Poses no threat to self or others.  • Perform potentially stressful tasks concurrently. |
| **Requirements** | **Descriptions** | **Examples** |
| * Interpersonal Skills | * Interpersonal skills sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. | • Establish rapport (relationship) with clients/colleagues.  • Maintain therapeutic relationships with clients and colleagues.  • Respect cultural diversity and the rights of others.  • Work effectively in small groups as a team member and as a team leader  • Practice verbal and non-verbal therapeutic communication  • Recognize adverse events and attempt to resolve for both client and colleague. |
| **Requirements** | **Descriptions** | **Examples** |
| * Professional Behavior | * Student nurses are expected to respect the nursing profession to which they aspire and perform and behave in a respectful, ethical and professional manner with others in the class, and lab or clinical. | Adapted from guidelines from American Nurses Association (2012):  • Interacts respectfully with peers, superiors, and patients  • Strives to provide quality care to patients  • Applies knowledge and learning in nursing situations  • Reflects on own behavior and practice performance with patients, engages in self-evaluation  • Is able to interact with peers and colleagues appropriately.  • Is able to collaborate with patients, family and others in nursing situations  • Integrates ethical behavior in nursing practice  • Performs activities safely, so as not to injure or harm others  • Recognizes that as a student they represent the nursing profession, and must behave accordingly  • Respects and adheres to the policies and procedures of the School of Nursing and clinical agencies. |