It is the policy of the School of Nursing and the College of Health and Human Sciences to adhere to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Students admitted to the School of Nursing are expected to be able to complete curriculum requirements which include physical, cognitive, communication and behavioral core competencies that are essential to the functions of the entry level professional nurse. These core competencies are considered to be the minimum and essential necessary to protect the public.

An applicant for any of the degree programs in Nursing must be competent in the following areas: observation, communication, motor, and intellectual-conceptual. An applicant must meet the competencies in spite of any handicap with or without reasonable accommodation.

Examples of competencies for each of the areas follow. Note that these descriptions are intended to be examples rather than all-inclusive.

- **Observation:**
  The applicant must be able to observe a client accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation relies on the functional use of vision and touch, enhanced by the sense of smell.

- **Communication:**
  The applicant should be able to speak, hear, and to observe clients to obtain information, describe changes and perceive non-verbal communication. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with clients and peers. Communication includes speech, writing, and reading. The applicant must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with clients, families, peers and other members of the health care team.

- **Motor:**
  An applicant should have sufficient motor function to obtain information from clients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other assessment techniques. The applicant should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to perform general care and emergency treatment of clients such as (but not limited to) cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medications, and manipulation of life support devices. These actions require coordination of both gross and fine motor muscular movements, equilibrium, functional use of the senses of touch and vision, and the ability to think critically.

- **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:**
  The applicant must be able to demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills required of nurses. Essential intellectual abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis.
IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

A statement will be added to the admission application that the applicant must be able to demonstrate that he/she can meet core competencies, which include physical, cognitive, and communication skills with or without reasonable accommodation. These core competencies are further described in the Policies of the School of Nursing and in the Undergraduate Student Handbook for Nursing Majors. Prospective majors who believe they may have difficulty meeting the core competencies in one or more areas are encouraged to contact the School of Nursing for more information.

However, students applying for admission to the program are not required to disclose any disability prior to admission.

After students have been admitted to the program, each student will be sent a packet of information which will also include a statement to be signed by the student that the student is capable of meeting the core competencies. This statement will become part of the student’s record.

If a student requires accommodation due to a stated disability, the disability must be documented through the Office of Student Support Services for academic disabilities or through the Office for Student Affairs for Section 504/ADA issues. Students need to be aware that the first nursing course in the Fall Semester will require demonstration of physical mobility skills such as lifting, positioning, and the ability to see and hear, etc. The student provides documentation of the disability to the instructor and requests accommodation.

The instructor then brings the issue to the Student Affairs Committee which determines methods of “reasonable accommodation” in consultation with the instructor, student, and either the Office of Student Support Services or Office of Student Affairs. Examples of “reasonable accommodation” might include use of an amplified stethoscope (purchased by the student) or extra time to take a test for a student with dyslexia. If “reasonable accommodation” cannot be agreed upon by the instructor, student, and the Student Affairs Committee, the issue is then taken to the School of Nursing Director and on to the Associate Dean, if necessary. In each of these steps, the student’s right to confidentiality must be protected.

Sources Used:
American Association of Colleges of Nursing: Guidelines for Accommodating Students with Disabilities in Schools of Nursing, approved by AACN Board of Directors October 21, 2000; distributed to AACN member schools January 4, 2001.

West Virginia University School of Nursing Technical Standards

National Council of State Boards of Nursing Position Paper 9/9/92: Implications of the ADA for Boards of Nursing


Approval
Student Affairs Committee, December 4, 2000
Legal Counsel review and approval, January 23, 2001
Faculty, School of Nursing, January 24, 2001
Core Competencies Verification

Applicant Name (print)______________________________________________________________

Documentation of baccalaureate nursing student of Core Competencies

I have reviewed the Core Competencies of the WCU School of Nursing sent with the Admission Packet. I state that I am able to perform in each of these areas I have checked off below without accommodation:

_____Observation Skills

_____Motor Skills

_____Communication Skills

_____Intellectual/Conceptual Skills

Any areas that I am able to perform only with accommodation are listed below. (For each of these areas student must include how the student’s ability to function may be affected.)

Signature of applicant ________________________________   Date ________________