

Appendix 8: Technical Standards for Students in Health Professions Programs

Technical Standards Statement

The technical standards outlined in this document represent the essential functions students must be able to perform to successfully participate in and complete a health professions program at Vermont State University (Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Radiologic Science, Oral Health Science, Paramedicine, Veterinary Technology).

Applicants and enrolled students must be able to meet the program's technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation. Students seeking accommodations must contact the institution's disability services office and follow the established process for documentation and accommodation determination. Reasonable accommodations will be considered; however, accommodations that would fundamentally alter program requirements, compromise patient safety, or violate clinical agency policies may not be permitted. Clinical agencies maintain the authority to determine whether individuals may participate in patient care within their facilities.

These essential functions reflect the fundamental abilities required to meet academic requirements, participate in classroom, laboratory, simulation, field, and/or clinical learning environments, and provide safe and effective care or services.

Nondiscrimination Statement

Vermont State University is committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from discrimination, harassment, and related unprofessional conduct. Discrimination on the basis of a person's race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or related conditions, parental status, creed, religion, crime victim status, disability, age, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, positive HIV-related blood test results, physical or mental condition, or any other status protected by state or federal law (collectively "protected categories") is prohibited. Sexual harassment, racial harassment, and harassment based upon a person's status in a protected category are forms of discrimination and will not be tolerated. In addition, inappropriate sexual relationships between VSC employees and students, including those that may not otherwise rise to the level of sexual harassment, are prohibited. To report a concern or issue related to discrimination and harassment, you may complete [the Title IX form](#) or contact the Title IX Coordinator via email: TitleIXCoordinator@VermontState.edu.

The university provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Reasonable Accommodations

Students who believe they may require reasonable accommodations to meet the technical standards should contact the university's disability services office via email at DisabilityServices@VermontState.edu or via the Disability Services tile on the Student Portal.

The university will engage in an interactive process with the student to determine appropriate accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be provided unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, compromise patient or animal safety, or impose an undue hardship.

Definitions

(a) clinical refers to instructional and practice-based learning activities associated with a clinical course. Clinical experiences may occur in on-campus laboratories, simulation environments, clinical agencies, community or field settings, or other off site locations affiliated with the program where students apply knowledge and perform skills under supervision.

(b) patient refers to any human/family/group/population or animal receiving care, evaluation, treatment, or services within clinical, laboratory, simulation, field settings associated with the program.

1. Observation and Sensory Abilities

- a. Students must be able to observe, assess, and interpret information necessary for safe and effective care or services in classroom and clinical settings.
- b. Students must be able to obtain and interpret information relevant to assessment, monitoring, and treatment. These abilities allow students to detect changes in patients' condition, recognize environmental safety concerns, and respond appropriately to clinical situations.
- c. Students must be able to obtain and interpret visual information necessary to assess patients' appearance, movement, behavior, and physical findings; read written materials and digital displays; and observe procedures and demonstrations.
- d. Students must be able to obtain and interpret information from verbal communication, patient responses, alarms, and other auditory cues within clinical environments to respond appropriately to patient needs and safety concerns.
- e. Students must be able to perform physical assessments and clinical procedures requiring, palpation and the interpretation of tactile information to evaluate patient conditions and provide safe care.

2. Communication

- a. Students must be able to communicate effectively, clearly, and professionally in English, in oral and written forms, with patients, families, faculty, staff, peers, preceptors, and members of the healthcare team in classroom and clinical settings.
- b. Students must be able to effectively initiate, receive, interpret, and respond to verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic communications in a timely and appropriate manner in classroom and clinical settings.
- c. Students must demonstrate professional and therapeutic communication skills, including active listening, appropriate questioning, and providing clear instructions to patients, families, and members of the healthcare team.
- d. Students must be able to comprehend, interpret, and accurately use professional medical terminology in both oral and written communication.

- e. Students are expected to accurately complete patient health records and required documentation in accordance with professional, institutional, ethical, and legal standards.

3. Interpersonal Skills

- a. Students must be able to establish and maintain professional relationships with patients, families, faculty, staff, peers, preceptors, and members of the healthcare team in the classroom and in clinical settings.
- b. Students must demonstrate respect, empathy, integrity, and professionalism when interacting with individuals from diverse social, cultural, ethnic, spiritual, intellectual, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- c. Students must demonstrate the ability to collaborate effectively with peers, faculty, preceptors, and members of the healthcare team in the classroom and clinical setting.
- d. Students must actively participate in group learning activities and patient-care assignments in the classroom and clinical setting.

4. Cognitive and Critical Thinking Skills

- a. Students must demonstrate the cognitive capacity necessary for critical thinking and clinical judgment, including the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize information.
- b. Students must collect, interpret, and integrate subjective and objective data to make timely and appropriate clinical decisions in the classroom and clinical settings.
- c. Students must apply systematic clinical decision-making processes when providing care or services to patients.

5. Motor and Technical Skills

- a. Students must be able to perform required clinical and technical procedures safely and effectively, including tasks that require motor coordination, strength, and manual dexterity.
- b. Students must be able to move within clinical environments, assist with positioning, transferring, lifting, stabilizing, and supporting patients while maintaining safety.
- c. Students must be able to manipulate instruments, and operate clinical equipment, to perform technical procedures that require fine motor coordination.
- d. Students must safely and effectively operate diagnostic, monitoring, imaging, therapeutic, laboratory and other equipment used in clinical settings.
- e. Students must be able to sustain the physical activity required to participate in patient care, including prolonged standing, walking, bending, reaching for extended periods, in clinical settings.
- f. Students must adhere to equipment safety procedures, including radiation safety practices when applicable.

6. Behavioral and Professional Attributes

- a. Students must demonstrate emotional stability, professionalism, integrity, and adaptability in the classroom and clinical settings.
- b. Students must be able to exercise sound clinical judgment, adapt to changing conditions, respond appropriately to unexpected situations, and complete assignments in a timely manner.
- c. Students must be able to regulate emotions and function effectively in stressful and demanding environments where multiple stressors may be encountered.
- d. Students must demonstrate accountability and accept constructive feedback.
- e. Students must adhere to professional ethical standards and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

7. Technology and Digital Competency

- a. Students must be able to effectively use the technology required for academic and clinical learning, including computers, learning management systems, simulation technologies, and electronic health records.
- b. Students must accurately document information electronically, retrieve relevant information, and maintain confidentiality and security of health information.

8. Clinical Environment and Exposure Conditions

- a. Students may encounter exposure to blood, body fluids, infectious diseases, chemicals, disinfectants, medications, laboratory reagents, or other occupational hazards. Students must adhere to infection prevention and control procedures, use personal protective equipment appropriately, and comply with institutional safety protocols.
- b. Students may encounter environments involving radiation or imaging equipment and must adhere to radiation safety practices.
- c. Students may participate in environments involving the care and handling of animals and must follow safety procedures for unpredictable animal behavior.
- d. Students must comply with all institutional policies, clinical site requirements, and public health guidelines related to occupational safety and exposure prevention.

9. Clinical Placement and Site Requirements

- a. Clinical placement requirements may include criminal background checks, drug screening, immunization documentation, health examinations, proof of health insurance, CPR certification, and compliance with clinical site policies.
- b. Students who are unable to meet clinical placement requirements established by the university or clinical partners may be unable to complete program requirements.
- c. Clinical agencies retain the right to remove a student from their facility at any time if the agency determines that the student's performance, conduct, or behavior is unsafe, unprofessional, or inconsistent with agency policies. The program will not assign the student to another clinical site for that course or rotation.

Technical Standards Acknowledgment Form

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Technical Standards for Students in Health Profession Programs at Vermont State University.

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Program: _____

Student ID: _____

Program Representative Signature: _____

Date: _____