

Essential Abilities, Professionalism Standards, Students and Disabilities, and Language Requirements for MSN students

Policy Number: S - 4

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Scope

Division of Health Sciences at Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) students.

Policy Statement

The IUPUC Division of Health Sciences faculty have specified essential abilities critical to the success of students in the MSN program. These essential abilities guide the preparation of graduates for diverse areas of practice in any healthcare setting.

1. Background for Practice from Sciences and Humanities: Recognizes the master’s prepared nurse integrates scientific findings from nursing, biopsychosocial fields, genetics, public health, quality improvement, and organizational sciences for the continual improvement of nursing care across diverse settings.
2. Organizational and Systems Leadership: Recognizes organizational and systems leadership are critical to the promotion of high quality and safe patient care. Leadership skills are needed that emphasize ethical and critical decision making, effective working relationships, and a systems-perspective.
3. Quality Improvement and Safety: Recognizes a master’s prepared nurse must articulate (in) the methods, tools, performance measures, and standards related to quality, as well as (be) prepared to apply quality principles within an organization.
4. Translating and Integrating Scholarship into Practice: Recognizes the master’s prepared nurse applies research outcomes within the practice setting, resolves practice problems, works as a change agent, and disseminates results.
5. Informatics and Healthcare Technologies: Recognizes the master’s prepared nurse uses patient-care technologies to deliver and enhance care and uses communication technologies to integrate and coordinate care.
6. Essential culturally competent skills based on the [United States Department of Health and Human Services standards](https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards) (https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards). A student must treat and care for all patients with dignity and respect without exception.
7. Other examples of essential behavioral attributes: ability to engage in activities consistent with safe nursing practice free from the influence of any substance that may impair behavior or judgment. The student must demonstrate responsibility and accountability for actions as a student in IUPUC Division of Health Sciences and as a developing advanced practice professional nurse.

**Students and Disabilities:**

IUPUC Division of Health Sciences must conform to the applicable federal, state and university policies, regulations and definitions regarding students with disabilities. These include:

1. Providing services which comply with external and internal policies and laws to qualified students through Adaptive Educational Services (AES).
2. Providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids for students with disabilities upon a timely request from the student, unless such disabilities preclude the student from providing safe patient care or complying with curriculum requirements.
3. Upholding academic standards in the context of these policies and services.
4. Assisting qualified students with disabilities by providing auxiliary aids and obtaining reasonable accommodations including modifications of programs and courses that do not fundamentally alter the essential nature of the program, through collaborative efforts with AES and academic and service units of IUPUC.
5. Maintaining legally appropriate confidentiality for students with disabilities except where permitted by law.

Language requirements for ESL students prior to admission into the Division of Health Sciences program: Students must demonstrate competency of the English language consistent with the writing and speaking standards established by the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs on the IUPUC campus prior to admission to the Division of Health Sciences program.

Reason for Policy

To facilitate the success of all students admitted to the Division of Health Sciences at IUPUC MSN program in achieving MSN program outcomes including but not limited to students with disabilities and ESL students.

Procedures

**Essential Abilities:**

The essential abilities and professional standards criteria will be located in the student handbook and on the Division of Health Sciences website.

1. All applicants accepting admission to the MSN program are required to sign a letter of agreement that specifies the essential abilities criteria included in the MSN program admission acceptance letter. This agreement states they have read and understand that they will be expected to meet the essential abilities. Students questioning their ability to meet the essential abilities criteria will be encouraged to address their inquiries to the Division Head at IUPUC in addition to the appropriate campus AES office prior to the admission deadline.

1. Faculty have the responsibility to determine whether a student has demonstrated these essential abilities. Faculty may utilize the Division of Health Sciences Learning Contract with the student, if the student displays a lack of ability in clinical and didactic courses as they relate to essential abilities. If lack of professionalism is the issue, the Division of Health Sciences Professionalism Alert form will be utilized. When the Professionalism Alert form has been filed, the student, the MSN Director, administrative representative, and the Health Sciences Division Head at IUPUC will be notified. Confirmation of this notification will be sent to the person who filed the alert.
2. The student will receive a copy of this form and the student signature is required as an acknowledgement of the Professionalism Alert form receipt. The student, the MSN Director, administrative representative, and the person filing the Professionalism Alert will meet to discuss the issues/reasons which prompted the filing of this form. The Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee will review all submissions. In most cases, corrective action will be taken, although such a review may result in termination of the student from the program.
3. Faculty should refer any student, who is unable to meet the essential abilities, to the MSN Director, administrative representative, and Health Sciences Division Head at IUPUC to determine if it is possible to meet the required abilities with reasonable accommodation.

2. Students failing to meet the essential abilities at any point in their academic program may have their progress interrupted until they have demonstrated their ability to meet these essential abilities within negotiated time frames.

3. Students in the process of disciplinary action will not be able to receive verbal or written recommendation from any faculty or staff member from Division of Health Sciences at IUPUC.

4. Students will be dismissed from their program of study if they are unable to meet the essential abilities even if reasonable accommodations are made.

5. The Health Sciences Division Head at IUPUC will determine the final ruling for student progress in the MSN program related to the student essential abilities and professional standards criteria.

6. The student will be made aware of any ruling related to program dismissal or out of sequence determination. The student may appeal the determination with the Admission, Progression, and Graduation Committee or Division Head, as appropriate.

**Disabilities:**

1. The Division Head (or designee) will contact the AES office annually to determine if there are any changes in policies, regulations or definitions in regard to disabilities
2. All students must request and receive appropriate professional documentation that supports requests for accommodation, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aide and service;
3. All students must follow specified procedure for obtaining reasonable accommodation, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and service.

**ESL:**

For students for whom English is a second language, the following expectations need to be met prior to admission to the Division of Health Sciences program:

1. Complete the IUPUC English language assessment process: Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and EAP placement evaluation.

2. Complete all recommended English language improvement courses prior to admission. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that a medical terminology related course, if available, be successfully completed prior to program or major admission.

Students who are unable to complete the above prior to the admission decision for the semester to which they apply will be counseled to reapply following successful completion of the ESL courses.

References:

United States Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.) *National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care*. [PDF]. Retrieved from <https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/>

EnhancedNationalCLASStandards.pdf

History

Approved at Faculty Staff Council 11/14/19.

Last reviewed by Policy and Procedure Committee 9/25/19.