

NAP Technical Standards for Admission, Continuation and Graduation

Applicants to the Wake Forest Nurse Anesthesia Program are selected on the basis of their academic, personal and extracurricular attributes. Applicants must also have the intellectual, physical and emotional capabilities to meet the requirements of the School's curriculum and to function as a safe anesthesia provider.

The following technical standard guidelines are based on those recognized as essential to the study and practice of nurse anesthesia. These guidelines specify the attributes considered essential for completing nurse anesthesia training and for enabling each graduate to enter clinical practice. Because these standards describe the essential functions that students must demonstrate to meet the requirements of nurse anesthesia training, they are prerequisites for admission, continuation, and graduation.

Wake Forest Nurse Anesthesia Program will consider for admission any applicant who meets its academic and nonacademic criteria and who demonstrates the ability to perform skills listed in this document, with or without reasonable accommodations, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act. Our institution is committed to considering all qualified applicants without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, veteran status, disability or sexual orientation. The Admissions Committee believes that all students must possess the intellectual, physical and emotional capabilities necessary to undertake the required curriculum in a reasonably independent manner without having to rely on intermediaries, and that all students must be able to achieve the levels of competence required by the program goals and objectives. All candidates for admission, both those with and without disabilities, are expected to be competitive with others in the applicant pool in academic, personal and extracurricular attributes. The institutional policy is to make admissions decisions on the basis of each applicant's qualifications for the study and practice of nurse anesthesia. The School of Nurse Anesthesia's commitment to nondiscrimination against any applicant or admitted student on the basis of disability is consistent with applicable law.

Admitted students with documented, qualified disabilities have access to support personnel within the Office of Student Services. An agent of this office will collaborate with other faculty and staff as necessary to provide reasonable accommodations for courses and examinations. The goal is to help students with qualified disabilities find access to the necessary resources to assist them in meeting the technical standards for nurse anesthesia program admission, continuation and graduation.

Requests for accommodation of a disability must be made in a timely manner to the Director of the Nurse Anesthesia Program and the Office of Student Services. At that time, the following information must be provided at the student's expense:

1. Documentation of the disability from a licensed professional.
2. The diagnosis of the disability using standard nomenclature.
3. A description of the student's functional limitations due to the disability.
4. Copies of the evaluation report(s) on or accompanied by a letter on the evaluating professional's letterhead.
5. A description of the requested accommodation.

Accommodations that may be appropriate will depend on individual circumstances. In evaluating a request for an accommodation, the School of Nurse Anesthesia will take into account the individual's specific limitations and needs to determine whether the requested accommodation is reasonable and will permit the applicant or student to satisfy the Technical Standards. An accommodation is not reasonable if it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of self and/or others, if making it requires a substantial modification in an essential element of the curriculum, if it lowers academic standards, or poses an undue administrative or financial burden. As mentioned above, except in rare circumstances, the use by a student of an intermediary to perform any of the functions described in the Technical Standards would constitute an unacceptable substantial modification.

For students seeking accommodations, a comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation conducted by a qualified professional must be provided. The evaluation must appear on, or be accompanied by a letter on, the evaluating professional's letterhead.

Technical Standards for Nurse Anesthesia Studies Required for Admission, Continuation and Graduation

A candidate for the Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia must be able to demonstrate intellectual-conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities; skills in observation, communication and motor functions; and mature behavioral and social attributes. Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in certain areas, but a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner ***without a trained intermediary***. The use of a trained intermediary means that a candidate's judgment or performance must be mediated by someone else's power of selection, observation, or performance.

Sensory

- A candidate must be able to detect and interpret changes in monitoring alarms and equipment.
- A candidate must have sufficient sensory capacity to observe in the lecture hall, the laboratory, the outpatient setting, and the patient's bedside.
- Sensory skills adequate to perform a physical examination are required. Functional vision, hearing and tactile sensation must be adequate to observe a patient's condition and to elicit information from computerized monitors, and through procedures regularly required in a physical examination, such as inspection, auscultation and palpation.
- A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand.

Communication

- A candidate should be able to speak, hear and observe patients in order to elicit information; describe changes in mood, activity, and posture; and perceive nonverbal communications.
- A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes speech, as well as reading and writing.
- A candidate must be able to communicate effectively via oral and written modalities interacting with all members of the health care team.

Motor

- Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers.
- A candidate must be able to negotiate patient care environments and must be able to move self/patients between settings, such as clinic, classroom building, and hospital.
- A candidate should be able to execute motor activities reasonably required to provide general care, to perform direct laryngoscopy, arterial and venous line placement, and performance of peripheral and central nerve blocks, anesthesia gas machine operation and troubleshooting, and to provide emergency and urgent treatment to patients such as fiberoptic intubation and therapies of the difficult airway algorithm.

- Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of a nurse anesthetist are cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the administration of intravenous medication. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

- Intellectual-conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis. Problem-solving, the critical skill demanded of a nurse anesthetist, requires all of these intellectual abilities.
- A candidate should be able to comprehend 3-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures for the performance of peripheral and central nerve blocks.
- A candidate must be able to read and understand medical and nursing literature. In order to complete the degree, candidates must be able to demonstrate mastery of these skills and the ability to use them together in a timely and often critical fashion in problem-solving and patient care.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

- A candidate must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and other healthcare personnel.
- A candidate must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.
- Commitment to excellence, service orientation, goal-setting skills, academic ability, self-awareness, integrity and interpersonal skills are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admission and education process. Because the nature of nurse anesthesia education is based on a mentoring process, candidates are expected to be able to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivations are all personal qualities that are required.

Annotations to the Technical Standards

In addition to the existing text incorporated within the **Technical Standards for Nurse Anesthesia Studies** for Admission, Continuation and Graduation, there are specific needs that are relevant to successful completion of curriculum requirements. This addendum provides specific examples to enhance the interpretation of the Technical Standards, particularly within the “Motor” and “Behavioral and Social Attributes” categories.

- Students are required to master the skills of a complete physical examination.
- They must complete Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Pediatric Advanced Cardiac Life Support (PALS) and Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) instruction and certification processes
- Students must be available to meet when sessions are available for the mastery of the curriculum objectives. This may include evening, night and weekend obligations.
- During the clinical internship, several mandatory rotations require extended hours, with start times as early as 5:00 am. Evening, on-call and weekend shifts are common and may extend into 12 to 16 hour days. As a result, students must be able to physically and psychologically perform capably and competently with moderate degrees of sleep deprivation.
- Many surgical procedures essential to training may last for 3 or more hours. Students may be required to stand in a relatively fixed position for the entirety of the procedure with minimal rest or breaks.
- In emergency situations, patients may need to be moved, turned or resuscitated, and the

student may be in situations that necessitate short periods of bending, lifting or partial lifting, reaching, squatting or straining.

- Within WFBH rotations, students may be required to cover large areas of space (different patient-care floors, different wings or sections within institutional building structures). They must be able to transport themselves and patients from one location to another in a timely fashion in order to facilitate patient care responsibilities and to receive educational training, such as during rounds.