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

A candidate for the ECU Nurse Anesthesia Program DNP Degree 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.

- Example 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 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 judgement, 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 the physically taxing workloads and 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 Anesthetist 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 any other instruction and certification processes required by the program.
- 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 practicum courses, 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 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 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.
- Students are responsible to ensure that they arrive fit for duty, which is defined as being in sound emotional, physical, and mental health to provide safe anesthesia care. Students are required to update the Program on changes in their health status (including medications) which may impact their vigilance, alertness, or ability to provide safe patient care. The presence of communicable disease (such as HIV, Hepatitis, or COVID) may impair the student’s ability to provide safe care, and the program abides by NC law and the College of Nursing policies. Students infected with a communicable disease should consult with the program director to ensure that they are able to safely care for patients.