



# SUNY DOWNSTATE Health Sciences University

MIDWIFERY EDUCATION PROGRAM

## MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION AND CONTINUATION

**Read this information sheet carefully and retain for your records**

### Introduction

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act require that no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University's services, programs or activities or be subjected to discrimination by SUNY Downstate. The term "qualified individual with a disability" means an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or for participation in programs or activities. The Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. Students must be able to perform the essential functions of the program in order to meet certain minimum academic and technical standards. In carrying out their functions, the Committee will be guided by the technical standards set forth in this proposal as standards necessary for admissions, continuance and successful completion of the program. This information is used in conjunction with the policies and procedures as delineated in the *Midwifery Education Program student handbook*.

### Technical Standards

The purpose of the Midwifery Education Program at Downstate Health Sciences University is to graduate safe, beginning midwives. This is accomplished by assisting each student to:

- acquire depth and breadth of midwifery and related theory
- acquire competence in the performance of midwifery skills
- apply theoretical knowledge, including evidence based research, to clinical practice
- utilize the midwifery management process in all aspects of midwifery care
- develop cultural respect and humility as a primary health care provider for women

Students are required to successfully complete both the academic and clinical requirements of the program to receive the MS in midwifery, MS in nurse-midwifery, or Advanced Certificate in midwifery. In order to carry out the activities described below, candidates for these degrees must be able to consistently, quickly, and accurately learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. The activities described below are the technical standards necessary to complete the Midwifery Education Program and to perform as a safe beginning midwife.

A candidate for a midwifery degree must have abilities, attributes, and skills in five major areas: 1) Observation, 2) Communication, 3) Motor Coordination, 4) Intellectual, including conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities, and 5) Behavioral and Social. Performing in a reasonably independent manner is an essential function of the program and profession.

#### 1. Observation

Students must have sufficient vision to be able to observe demonstrations, experiments, and laboratory exercises in the basic sciences. They must be able to observe a patient accurately at close range and at a distance, be able to obtain an appropriate medical history directly from the patient or guardian, and observe digital and waveform readings and other graphic images to determine a patient's condition. Students must be able to perceive the signs of disease and infection through visual inspection, palpation of changes in various organs and tissues, such as the uterus, ovaries, and pelvic adnexal area, and auscultation of sounds such as those of the heart, lung, and bowel. Such observation necessitates the functional use of vision, hearing and other sensory modalities.

## 2. Communication

Students should be able to communicate, understand and observe patients in order to elicit information, examine patients, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. They must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing. Students must also be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral, written and electronic form with all members of the health care team to convey information for safe and effective care.

## 3. Motor Coordination

Students should be sufficiently mobile to execute movements required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Students should be able to do basic screening and examination procedures, including but not limited to physiological measures such as heart rate and respiration; palpation; percussion; and auscultation. They should be sufficiently mobile, and possess the eye-hand coordination and motor strength, to execute movements required to provide general treatment of patients (including transfers), and provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of midwives are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, and the performance of maneuvers to manage shoulder dystocia in a rapid manner. Additionally, students must be able to perform the maneuvers involved in vaginal assessment in labor, delivery, and suturing. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscle movements and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

## 4. Intellectual—conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities

These abilities include measurement, calculation, memorization, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of midwives, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, students should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

## 5. Behavioral and Social

Students must be able to fully utilize their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and develop mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. The student must be able to experience empathy for the situations and circumstances of others and communicate that empathy. Compassion, integrity, concern for others from all levels of society, respect for human diversity, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admissions and educational process.

## Conclusion

The SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Midwifery Education Program and its sponsoring institution will attempt to develop creative ways of opening the Program to competitive, qualified individuals with disabilities. In doing so, however, the Program and sponsoring institution must maintain the integrity of the curriculum and preserve those elements deemed essential to the education of a Midwife. The Program and sponsoring institution cannot compromise the health and safety of patients. An applicant or student who is unable to meet the minimum academic and technical standards is not qualified for the practice of the profession.

## Signature

I have read, understand and agree to the technical standards as published above.

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Signature

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Date