

**Policy Name:** Student Essential Functions

**Approval Authority:** RBHS Chancellor

**Originally Issued:** 03/18/08

**Revisions:** 08/10/09, 04/17/13

**1. Who Should Read This Policy**

All Rutgers University students within Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, School of Health Related Professions, Rutgers School of Dental Medicine, New Jersey Medical School, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, School of Public Health, and School of Nursing (former UMDNJ School of Nursing).

**2. Related Documents (refer to [policies.rutgers.edu](http://policies.rutgers.edu) for additional information)**

- A. Disabilities and RBHS Students/Applicants
- B. Student Involuntary Leave of Absence and Involuntary Withdrawal
- C. Student Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures

**3. The Policy**

**DEFINITION**

“Essential Functions” – requirements essential for the successful completion by students of all stages of a curriculum, including physical, cognitive and behavioral standards, as established by each stated RBHS School pursuant to the University policy, Disabilities and RBHS Students/Applicants.

**POLICY**

- A. Prior to and during enrollment, each RBHS School shall inform students of the Essential Functions required for participation in the School’s programs. Students must be able to fulfill all Essential Functions, with or without reasonable accommodations, in order to enroll or continue enrollment in an RBHS educational program.
- B. In accordance with the Schools’ procedures for requesting accommodations for disabilities, students must immediately report to the School any condition that renders the student unable to fulfill any Essential Function. Such report may be accompanied by a request for reasonable accommodations in accordance with the School’s procedures for requesting accommodations for disabilities.
- C. If a student’s behavior or performance deviates significantly from the requirements of the Essential Functions or suggests that the student may not be able to fulfill all of

the Essential Functions, the School shall designate an appropriate official(s) to engage in a dialogue with the student. Such dialogue shall explore whether resources are available to assist the student, whether an evaluation by a health care provider or other evaluator is appropriate, and whether the student is otherwise qualified to participate in the academic program, with or without reasonable accommodations.

- D. The student may be required to obtain evaluation and/or testing by a health care provider or other appropriate evaluator designated by the School, and to provide the results to the campus Student Health Service or Student Wellness Program or Student Assistance Facilitator for the purpose of determining whether the student is fit to pursue the educational program. If the student is deemed able to fulfill all Essential Functions, the School reserves the right to require actions recommended by the health care provider or other evaluator, including further testing, counseling, monitoring, leave of absence, or such other requirements as the School deems appropriate.
- E. If the School official who conducts the dialogue with the student concludes that the student is not able to fulfill all of the Essential Functions, the official may recommend that the student request a leave of absence or withdraw from the School.
- F. If the student does not request a leave of absence or withdraw, the official may refer the matter to the School committee authorized to make recommendations concerning student academic standing. The committee shall conduct a review in accordance with its academic hearing procedures and shall make a recommendation to the Dean as to whether the student should be dismissed due to inability to fulfill the Essential Functions. The Dean shall consider the committee's recommendation and render a final decision in accordance with the School's procedures for review of academic actions.
- G. If the School official who conducts the dialogue determines that the student's conduct or statements seriously interfere with the University's missions, or jeopardize the safety and/or welfare of the student and/or others, or constitute a threat to property, the School may place the student on Involuntary Leave of Absence or Involuntary Withdrawal without referring the matter to the School committee, pursuant to applicable University and School policies and procedures.