

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Policy on Technical Standards for the Admission, Retention, and Graduation of Applicants and Medical Students

I. POLICY

To fulfill the requirements for the MD degree, a candidate must have abilities and skills in six areas: observation, communication, motor, intellectual (conceptual, integrative, and quantitative), behavioral and social, and demonstrate ethics and professionalism. Students must meet these requirements at matriculation and for advancement in the curriculum.

Observation: Students must be able to obtain information from demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences. Students must be able to comprehensively assess a patient and evaluate findings accurately.

Communication: Students must be able to interact with patients in order to elicit information, detect changes in mood, activity, and to establish a therapeutic relationship. Students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with all patients and all members of the health care team both in person and in written form.

Motor: Students must, after a reasonable period of time, possess the capacity to perform a physical examination and perform diagnostic maneuvers. Students must be able to provide or direct motor movements required to provide general care to patients and provision of emergency treatment of patients. Such actions require coordination of some gross and fine muscular movements, balance and equilibrium.

Intellectual, conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities: Students must be able to assimilate detailed and complex information presented in both didactic and clinical coursework, and engage in problem solving. Students are expected to possess the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information. In addition, students must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures, and to adapt to different learning environments and modalities.

Behavioral and social abilities: Students must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, attend to the responsibilities necessary for the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, fellow students, faculty, and staff. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, professionalism, interest, and motivation are all personal

qualities that are expected during the education processes. The student must be able to undertake the physical and mental demands of a medical school curriculum.

Ethics and professionalism: Students must maintain and display ethical and moral behaviors commensurate with professionalism as a physician in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, students and the public. The student is expected to understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and function within the law and ethical standards of the medical profession.

The technical standards delineated above must be met with or without accommodation.

Students who, after review of the technical standards, determine that they require reasonable accommodation to fully engage in the program should contact the Disability Resources and Services (DRS) Office to confidentially discuss their necessary accommodations. Given the clinical nature of our programs, time may be needed to create and implement the accommodations. Accommodations are never retroactive; therefore, timely requests are essential and encouraged.

II. PURPOSE

Graduates of UPSOM are expected to have a broad competence in the basic skills underlying the general practice of medicine and surgery. All graduates must be able to take a history and synthesize the findings into a diagnosis and plan of evaluation and treatment. Medical students must possess the requisite technical skills with or without accommodations to accomplish these requirements in a reliable manner and become competent and safe medical practitioners.

Our technical standards specify the abilities and skills needed to successfully complete our curricular requirements. Essential abilities and characteristics required for completion of the MD degree consist of certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities and emotional characteristics to assure that candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation are able to complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of medical training, with or without reasonable accommodation. Accommodations may involve the use of an intermediary performing a task on the candidate's behalf, but this must not be done in a manner that compromises the candidate's independent judgement.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Medical school applicants
- Medical students

IV. POLICY AUTHORS

Office of Admissions

V. RELATED POLICIES

University of Pittsburgh Academic Accommodation Request: Disclosing a Disability

VI. REFERENCES

LCME Element 10.5 Technical Standards: A medical school develops and publishes technical standards for the admission, retention, and graduation of applicants or medical students in accordance with legal requirements.

VII. APPROVALS

Education Policy Council

Faculty of the School of Medicine

Dean, School of Medicine April 1, 2019