

## **The Dental College of Georgia at Augusta University**

### **Essential Functions for Admission, Matriculation, Progression and Graduation**

The Dental College of Georgia at Augusta University (DCG) is committed to the principle of diversity in all areas. In that spirit, admission to the college is open to all qualified individuals and the DCG is in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The following abilities and characteristics are defined as technical standards, which in conjunction with academic standards established by the faculty of The Dental College of Georgia are requirements for admission, matriculation, continuation and graduation. Delineation of technical standards is required for the accreditation of U.S. dental schools by the Commission on Dental Accreditation.

The DCG recognizes the award of a Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) degree carries with it the full authority of the institution and communicates to those who might seek the services of the bearer that he or she is competent to practice dentistry. The DMD degree is a broad degree; unique in that the graduate is prepared and upon licensure is allowed to practice all disciplines of the dental profession. This provision requires that the student in the curriculum acquire didactic knowledge as well as learn skills and attitudes essential to the profession and agreed upon by the faculty as requisite for the practice of dentistry. The student requires both cognitive and technical skills to negotiate this curriculum.

A candidate for the DMD degree must demonstrate and maintain abilities and skills, which include those that are observational, communicational, sensory/motor, intellectual/conceptual (integrative and quantitative), and behavioral/social. In the process, the student is required to direct or perform treatment for the patients of the College. The College has the responsibility of ensuring the safety of the patients. This includes the completion of treatment safely, at an acceptable level of quality and within an acceptable amount of time. With this in mind, the student must be able to meet the following essential functions with or without accommodation.

The observed failure or inability of a dental student to demonstrate acceptable abilities and skills, as described below may require an evaluation of the student's fitness for duty, temporary suspension from clinical patient care, and/or dismissal/expulsion.

#### **1. Motor Skills**

Students must have sufficient motor function such that they are able to execute and coordinate both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional uses of the senses of touch and vision to enable them to perform palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers, basic laboratory tests, and diagnostic procedures. Students must have sufficient manual dexterity to manipulate and control dental instruments and devices so that they can perform dental procedures in a safe, effective and efficient manner and within the regularly scheduled clinic hours.

#### **2. Sensory/Observation**

Students must have the visual acuity to be able to acquire information as presented through demonstrations and experiences in the basic and clinical sciences to enable them to observe a

patient accurately at a distance and close at hand; to discern differences in shape, and general appearance between normal and abnormal, soft and hard tissues; to read charts, records, small print and handwritten notation; and interpret digitized radiographic images and other images, with or without the use of assistive devices (e.g. glasses, magnifiers of any type). Observation necessitates the use of the sense of vision as well as other sensory modalities such as touch, hearing and somatic sensation. It is enhanced by the use of smell. In any case, where a candidate's ability to observe or acquire information through these sensory modalities is compromised, the candidate must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to acquire and demonstrate essential information conveyed in this fashion.

### **3. Communication**

Candidates and students must be able to communicate with patients and colleagues and to relate effectively and sensitively with patients of all genders; as well as ages, races, life-styles, sexual orientations and cultural backgrounds. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing. Candidates and students must be able to read and to record observations and plans legibly, efficiently and accurately in documents such as the patient medical electronic record. The candidate and student must be able to communicate effectively with patients and family members and elicit a clinical history thus possessing reading skills at a level sufficient to accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients. The candidate must be able to demonstrate proficiency in the English language and communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with patients and all members of the health care team.

### **4. Cognitive/Mental Acuity**

Candidates and students should possess intellectual abilities including measuring, calculating, reasoning, analyzing and synthesizing information. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physicians, requires all of these intellectual abilities and often must be performed quickly, especially in emergency situations. In addition, candidates and students should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. Students must be able to analyze clinical data and make logical diagnoses and therapeutic judgments for patients. The candidate and student must be able to perform these problem-solving skills in a timely manner.

### **5. Health: Emotional/Physical**

Candidates and students must possess the emotional stability required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities including good judgment, prompt completion of all duties attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients and development of mature, sensitive, non-judgmental, non-prejudiced and effective relationships with patients. Candidates and students must be able to work within a team, to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients and to function under stress. Candidates and students must maintain appropriate personal hygiene and appearance. Honesty, compassion, integrity and concern for others are all personal qualities that are necessary in dental students and dental faculty. Throughout the clinical curriculum, students must be able to consistently complete a history and comprehensive dental examination on any patient, regardless of the patient's race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, age or sexual orientation.

### **6. Ethics and Professionalism**

Students must maintain the standards of conduct for ethics and professionalism as set forth in the DCG Code of Conduct, the American Dental Association's Principles of Ethics and Code of

Professional Conduct, and the Augusta University Student Code of Conduct. A student must always act in the best interest of the patient and society even when there is a conflict with the student's personal self-interest. Students must conduct themselves as trustworthy and responsible citizens with impeccable integrity in their interactions with all members of the dental educational community, including the public. A student must refrain from actions that detract from the professional atmosphere of the DCG or University at all times while on the University campus as well as when attending any school-sponsored activities or off-campus professional meetings.

The DCG will consider for admission any applicant capable of acquiring the necessary knowledge and having the ability to perform or learn to perform the skills specified in these standards. The DCG has determined that these skills are essential to the program of instruction.

### **Applicants and Enrolled Students with Disabilities**

The DCG will provide reasonable accommodation in the admissions process for applicants with disabilities. An applicant is not disqualified from consideration due to a disability. If an applicant needs accommodations during the admissions process, the applicant should contact Augusta University Testing and Disability Services to make arrangements.

Upon admission, a student who discloses a disability and requests accommodation will be required to submit, in writing, the request for accommodation and pertinent supporting documentation to the Augusta University Testing and Disability Services. The pertinent information will include documentation of the disability by an appropriately credentialed professional. If available, documentation should also include history of accommodations granted previously in other educational programs and references who can discuss the experience of the student in other educational settings.

Requests for accommodation should be initiated with the Augusta University Testing and Disability Services. With some types of accommodation requests, Testing and Disability Services will work in conjunction with the DCG to determine if the essential functions of the program can be met. Reasonable accommodations for qualified persons with disabilities can be made so long as such accommodations do not require a change in fundamental program requirements of the curriculum, create a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or create an undue burden to the College or those involved in the education of the student. Candidates must be able to consistently, quickly and accurately integrate all information received by whatever sense(s) employed, and they must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data.

**Dental Applicant's Attestation of Understanding of The Dental College of Georgia's Essential Functions**

I have read and understand the above technical standards, and if I enroll as student at The Dental College of Georgia, I understand that I will be expected to continuously meet these standards with or without reasonable accommodations.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_