

Technical Standards for Admission, Matriculation, Continuation, and Graduation

Physicians and medical students must possess physical, cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and communication skills to successfully complete their medical education and practice proficiently in medicine. These abilities and characteristics are defined as technical standards. In conjunction with academic standards established by the faculty of the Medical College of Georgia, these standards are required for admission, matriculation, continuation, and graduation. Delineation of technical standards is required for the accreditation of U.S. medical schools by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education.

Candidates for the M.D. degree must possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in observation; communication; motor function and coordination; intellectual abilities involving conceptualization, integration and quantitation; and behavioral and social skills. Students must personally demonstrate these technical standards in order to fulfill the essential course requirements of a general medical education as well as eventual practice. Reasonable accommodation is available to assist with a variety of disabilities and may be permitted for disabilities in certain areas. Under all circumstances, clerkship and pre-clerkship students should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. Therefore, third parties cannot be used to assist students in accomplishing curricular requirements in the five areas specified below.

The Medical College of Georgia acknowledges Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational and Rehabilitation Act and PL 101-336, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and maintains minimum technical standards for medical students enrolled in medical school:

I. Observation: Clerkship and pre-clerkship students must have sufficient visual acuity to make accurate observations, both close at hand and at a distance. Examples are studies of microbiological cultures; identification of normal and abnormal cells; identification of anatomical structures; direct visual observation of patient physical findings and interpretation of radiographic images. Observation necessitates the use of the multiple sensory modalities including vision, hearing, olfaction, and tactile perception. 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.

II. Communication: Clerkship and pre-clerkship students must demonstrate proficiency in the English language to be able to communicate effectively orally and in writing possessing reading skills at a level sufficient to accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients. They must be able to read and to record observations and plans legibly, efficiently, and accurately in documents such as the patient medical electronic record. Clerkship and pre-clerkship students must be able to communicate effectively with patients and family members to elicit a clinical history. They must be able to communicate sensitively with patients and colleagues of diverse backgrounds including all genders, ages, races, sexual orientations, and cultural backgrounds.

III. Motor Function and Coordination: Clerkship and pre-clerkship students should have

sufficient motor function such that they are able to perform a physical examination as well as provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Performing a given skill requires the use of a variety of senses which must be integrated effectively with sensorimotor function. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physicians are cardiopulmonary resuscitation; administration of intravenous medication; the application of pressure to stop bleeding; the opening of obstructed airways; or the closure of simple wounds and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

IV. Intellectual Abilities including Conceptualization, Integration and Quantitation:

Clerkship and pre-clerkship 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. They must be able to analyze clinical data and make logical diagnoses and therapeutic judgments for patients. Clerkship and pre-clerkship students must be able to perform these problem-solving skills in a timely manner.

V. Behavioral and Social Attributes: Clerkship and pre-clerkship students must possess the emotional stability required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities. Personal qualities that are necessary in medical students and physicians include honesty, compassion, integrity, and concern for others. They must be able to work within a team; function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical problems; and to function under stress. They must be able to develop mature, sensitive, non-judgmental, non-prejudiced, and effective relationships with patients. Throughout the clinical curriculum, students must be able to consistently complete a history and physical examination in any patient, regardless of the patient's race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

The Medical College of Georgia will, if requested, provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified enrolled students and applicants with disabilities unless: (a) such accommodations impose an undue hardship to the institution or threaten harm to the health and safety of others or (b) such accommodations fundamentally alter the educational program or academic standards of the university. A student whose behavior or performance raises questions concerning their ability to fulfill these technical standards may be required to obtain evaluation and/or testing by a health care provider designated by the school, and to provide the results to Student Health Services for the purpose of determining whether the student is fit to pursue the educational program. If the student is deemed fit to pursue the program, the school reserves the right to require actions recommended by the health care provider, including further testing, counseling, monitoring, leave of absence, etc.