



Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Title: Technical Standards Policy

Policy Number: AD.10.02.170508

Applies to: This policy applies to applicants and current students of the College of Medicine

Date Approved: 5/8/2017

Purpose:

The MD degree is a broad undifferentiated degree attesting to general knowledge in medicine and the basic skills required for the practice of medicine. The Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine (ESFCOM) intends for its graduates to become competent and compassionate physicians who are capable of entering residency training (graduate medical education) and meeting all requirements for medical licensure. Essential abilities and characteristics required for completion of the MD degree consist of certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities and sufficient mental and emotional stability 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. Although these standards serve to explain the necessary abilities of all students, they are not intended to deter any student for whom reasonable accommodation will allow the fulfillment of the complete curriculum.

Washington State University (WSU) is committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment for all students, staff, faculty, and visitors who participate in WSU's programs or services. WSU will ensure that students, faculty, staff, and visitors have access to university facilities, technology, and information needed to have an equal opportunity to succeed in their education, employment, and community activities.

In addition, WSU is committed to complying with state and federal laws regarding individuals with disabilities, including, but not limited to: Sections 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Washington State Office of the Chief Information Officer Policy 188, and Washington State RCW 49.60.

ESFCOM is committed to offering educational and professional opportunities equitably to qualified persons. This is accomplished by reviewing each student's situation individually and providing accommodations on a case-by-case basis. Accommodations are implemented in collaboration with students, faculty, and other university and community offices. Reasonable accommodations ensure that students are able to access and participate in opportunities available at WSU Spokane.

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Reasonable accommodations are available for medical students with a documented disability. Accommodations are unique for each individual and some require a significant amount of time to prepare, so it is essential that students notify Disability Services as far in advance as possible. Medical students with a disability that is identified during the semester should contact Disability Services as soon as possible to arrange for an appointment and a review of their documentation by a disability specialist. Accommodations will not be provided retroactively. The process for requesting accommodations is available on the WSU Health Sciences Spokane website: <https://spokane.wsu.edu/studentaffairs/new-myaccess/>. Reasonable accommodations are determined by the Disability Services office, and implementation is coordinated with ESFCOM Student Affairs office. Documentation is maintained in the Disability Services office and is confidential to that office.

All students must meet the technical standards of their academic program with or without reasonable accommodations. Course expectations will not be lowered, and the fundamental nature of the course will not be altered at the request of a student with a disability. All requests for accommodations must go through the Disability Services office.

ESFCOM has a societal responsibility to train competent healthcare providers and scientists who demonstrate critical judgment, extensive knowledge and well-honed technical skills. Although students learn and work under the supervision of the faculty, students interact with patients throughout their medical school education. Patient safety and wellbeing are therefore major factors in establishing requirements involving the physical, cognitive, and emotional abilities of candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation. The essential abilities and characteristics described herein are also referred to as technical standards. They are described below in several broad categories including: *observation; communication; motor function; intellectual-conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities; and social and behavioral skills*. Candidates must adhere to universal precaution measures and meet safety standards applicable to inpatient and outpatient settings and other professional activities. Individuals whose performance is impaired by use of alcohol or other substances are not suitable candidates for admission, retention, promotion or graduation.

The avowed intention of an individual student to practice only a narrow part of clinical medicine, or to pursue a non-clinical career, does not alter the requirement that all medical students take and achieve competence in the full curriculum required by the faculty. Delineation of technical standards is required for the accreditation of U.S. medical schools by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). The following abilities and characteristics are defined as technical standards, and are requirements for admission, retention, promotion, and graduation.

1.0 Policy Statement:

It is the policy of ESFCOM that applicants sign a statement attesting to compliance with the technical standards required for admission, retention, promotion, and graduation before enrollment.

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2.0 Definitions:

Observation: A candidate must be able to acquire information from demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to physiologic and pharmacologic demonstration, evaluation of microbiologic cultures and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. Candidates must be able to accurately acquire information from patients and assess findings. They must be able to perform a complete physical examination in order to integrate findings based on this information and to develop an appropriate diagnostic and treatment plan. These skills require the use of vision, hearing, and touch *or* the functional equivalent.

Communication: A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, patients, and healthcare providers from different social and cultural backgrounds, varying degrees and types of infirmities, and varying personalities.

Indicators include but are not limited to the following examples:

1. Clear, efficient, and intelligible articulation of English language, including the written English language.
2. Ability to prepare and communicate concise summaries of patient encounters including changes in mood, activity, posture, and perceived nonverbal communication.
3. Ability to provide appropriate patient counseling and instruction to patients.
4. Record examination and diagnostic results clearly, accurately, and efficiently.

Motor/Sensory: A candidate must be able to perform typical functions of physicians, including, but not limited to, physical examinations, treatment interventions, and general care of patients.

Indicators include but are not limited to the following examples:

1. Functional and sufficient sensory capacity to adequately perform a complete physical examination and elicit information gained from proper use of examination tools and maneuvers (inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers).
2. Execute fine and gross motor movements in a timely manner with sufficient coordination, postural control, and hand-eye coordination to safely participate in foundation sciences laboratory sessions, use standard medical/surgical instruments, assess patients, provide patient general care and emergency treatments, and participate in basic diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers and procedures.
3. Execute motor movements in a timely manner that demonstrate safety and efficiency in the various learning settings (i.e., classroom, and clinical settings, including appropriate negotiation of self and patients in various patient care environments).

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4. Physical stamina sufficient to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study, which may include prolonged periods of sitting, standing, and/or rapid ambulation or functional equivalent.
5. Coordination of motor skills necessary to respond to emergency situations quickly and appropriately.

Intellectual (conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities).

A candidate must be able to assimilate the detailed and complex information presented in the medical student curriculum. They must be able to learn through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, classroom instruction; small group, team and collaborative activities; individual study; preparation and presentation of reports; simulations and use of computer technology to the satisfaction of the faculty. Candidates must be able to memorize, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information. They must recognize and draw conclusions about three-dimensional spatial relationships and logical sequential relationships among events. They must be able to formulate and test hypotheses that enable effective and timely problem-solving in diagnosis and treatment of patients in a variety of clinical settings and health care systems. Candidates must be fully alert and attentive at all times in clinical settings.

Behavioral/social attributes. A candidate must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. 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. Candidates must demonstrate a commitment to excellence, service orientation, goal-setting skills, academic ability, self-awareness, integrity, compassion, motivation and interpersonal skills to the satisfaction of the faculty.

3.0 Responsibilities:

The Admissions Standing Committee

The Student Evaluation, Promotion & Awards Committee

4.0 Procedures:

Applicants will be asked to sign the following statement: By signing this, I certify that I am able to comply with the “Technical Standards required of the medical student” outlining essential functions that I must perform satisfactorily (as determined by the program faculty). I understand that should I fail assessments due to issues related to the technical standards required above, with or without accommodations, I may be unable to successfully complete the MD degree, and may be dismissed from the program due to inability to meet the technical standards.

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Candidates and current students who have questions regarding the technical standards or who believe they may need to request reasonable accommodation(s) in order to meet the standards are encouraged to contact Disabilities Resources.

5.0 Related Policies: NA

6.0 Key Search Words

Technical, standards, accommodations

7.0 Revision History

Original Approval	Policy Number	Revision Date Approval
5/9/2016	AD.10.02.160509	2/28/2017
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Responsible Office: Office of Admissions and Recruitment

Policy Contact: Associate Dean for Admissions, Recruitment, and Inclusion

Supersedes: The policy version approved on 2/28/2017*

*Reviewed by Equity Committee and Admissions Committee April 2018