

HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

A physician must have the knowledge and skills to function effectively in a broad variety of laboratory and clinical situations. Students matriculating in and graduating from Howard University College of Medicine must be able to meet the technical requirements of the academic program and not pose a threat to the well-being of patients or themselves. The COM faculty has declared that matriculating students and candidates for admission should have the capabilities and skills described below in order to graduate. The COM requires compliance with these technical standards *with or without accommodation*.

Observation

Candidates and students must be able to observe demonstrations and participate in experiments in the basic sciences determined essential by the faculty. Students must be able to observe a patient accurately both at a distance and close at hand, noting nonverbal as well as verbal signals. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and other sensory modalities.

Communication

Candidates and students should be able to speak intelligibly, hear sufficiently, and observe individuals closely in order to elicit and transmit information; they should be able to describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and to perceive nonverbal communication. They must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and with all members of the health care team. Communication includes not only speech, but also reading and writing; students and candidates must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in both oral and written English, as well as possess reading skills at a level sufficient to fulfill curricular requirements. Physicians must be capable of completing appropriate medical records, documents, and plans according to protocol, in a complete and timely manner.

Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function

Students and candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. They should be able to do basic laboratory tests, carry out diagnostic procedures, and evaluate EKGs and radiological studies. Students and candidates should be able to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physicians are basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medication, application of pressure to stop bleeding, opening of obstructed airways, suturing simple wounds and 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.

Intellectual-conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physicians, requires that students and candidates possess all of these intellectual abilities. Students must be able to identify significant findings from history, physical examination, and laboratory data; to provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses, and to retain information and recall it in an efficient and timely manner. The ability to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans is essential. In addition, students and candidates must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

Good judgment in patient assessment, diagnostic, and therapeutic planning is essential; students must be able to identify and communicate their knowledge to others when appropriate.

Behavioral-Social

Students and candidates must possess the emotional health required for the full use of their 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 – these skills are required of students. Students must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, 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, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that must be evaluated positively during the admissions and educational process. Students must be open to examining personal attitudes, perceptions, and stereotypes that may negatively affect patient care and professional relationships, and candidates must possess the requisite flexibility to self-examine. Students and candidates must also possess the requisite maturity and insight to respond quickly, positively and appropriately to constructive feedback provided by teachers, peers and other colleagues, and to maintain a professional demeanor in the face of challenging circumstances. Students must be able to care for, in a non-judgmental way, persons whose ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, or spiritual beliefs are different from their own. They must be able to examine the entire patient, male or female, regardless of their social, cultural, or religious beliefs. Candidates must therefore be similarly non-judgmental in interactions with others.

Ethical - legal

Students and candidates must be of the highest ethical and moral character. Graduates of the COM are expected to meet the legal standards to be licensed to practice medicine. As such, candidates for admission must acknowledge and provide written explanation of any felony or misdemeanor conviction prior to or during matriculation. In addition, should a felony or misdemeanor conviction occur after application, but prior to matriculation, or while in medical school, a student must immediately notify the Associate Dean of Students in writing as to the nature of the conviction, as certain felony convictions will preclude future licensure. Failure to disclose felony or certain misdemeanor convictions can lead to disciplinary action by the school that may include dismissal.

Statement on Equal Access to the College of Medicine's Educational Program

The Howard University College of Medicine does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities who apply for admission to the MD degree program or who are enrolled as medical students. Otherwise qualified individuals shall not be excluded from admission or participation in the COM's educational programs and activities solely by reason of their disability or medical condition. The COM provides reasonable accommodation in its academic programs to qualified individuals with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is one that does not require substantial program modification or lower academic standards. Learning disabilities are included under this policy.

A Note to Candidates and Students:

Should a candidate or student have or develop a condition or disability that would place patients or others at risk, or that would jeopardize his or her ability to satisfy the above technical standards (with reasonable accommodation, if needed, as adjudged by the Howard University Office of the Dean for Special Student Services) and complete medical student education, pursue residency training and become licensed, the candidate may be denied admission or, if a student, may be dismissed from school.

It is the responsibility of a candidate or student with a disability or other condition, or a student who develops a disability, and who requires accommodation to notify, in writing, the Office of the Dean for Special Student Services (ODSSS) of the disability or condition, and to provide adequate documentation of the general nature and extent of the disability, the functional limitations to be accommodated, and the accommodation requested. In the event that additional documentation is required regarding the nature and extent of a disability, the COM or the ODSSS may require that a candidate/ student undergo an evaluation by experts for purposes of determining whether the candidate/student, with or without accommodation, is able to meet these technical standards. A student who has or develops any chronic disease or condition will be expected to seek and continue in the care of a qualified health care provider.

Approved by the COM Executive Committee 11/20/08

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____