

Physician Assistant Program

Technical Standards for Admission, Academic Progress, and Graduation:

The technical standards for the Penn State College of Medicine Physician Assistant Program have been established to ensure that students have the ability to demonstrate academic mastery, competence when performing clinical skills, and ability to communicate clinical information. These technical standards are intended to ensure that each student has the academic and physical ability to acquire competencies, as defined by the National Commission on Accreditation of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), the Accreditation Review Commission for Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The technical standards are consistent with the technical standards set forth by the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). These activities include patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism, and systems-based practice. These technical standards are required for admission and must be maintained throughout a student's progress through the Physician Assistant Program. In the event that a matriculated student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, the student may be counseled to pursue alternate careers.

All students must be able to independently meet the following standards:

- **General abilities** – Students must possess:
 - a functional sense of vision, touch, hearing, taste, and smell in order to be able to integrate, analyze, and synthesize data in a consistent and accurate manner
 - the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, equilibrium, and movement

- **Observational abilities** – Students must be able to:
 - observe demonstrations, exercises, and patients accurately at a distance and close at hand
 - note non-verbal as well as verbal signals

- **Communication abilities** – Students must be able to:
 - speak intelligibly
 - hear sufficiently
 - elicit and transmit patient information in oral and written English to members of the healthcare team
 - describe changes in mood, activity and posture
 - communicate effectively and sensitively with patients
 - read at a level sufficient to accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients
 - write or type appropriate medical documents according to protocol in a thorough and timely manner

- **Sensory and Motor ability** – Students must:
 - possess gross and fine motor skills sufficient to directly perform palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other basic diagnostic procedures
 - be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide basic medical care, such as airway management, placement of catheters, suturing, phlebotomy, application of sufficient pressure to control bleeding, simple obstetrical maneuvers, and extended standing and retraction in surgery

- **Critical thinking ability** –Students must:
 - be able to independently access and interpret medical histories or files
 - identify significant findings from history, physical examination, and laboratory data
 - provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses and prescribed medications and therapy
 - recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner and be able to see the relationship between this retained information and its application in clinical practice
 - calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize
 - incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and the medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans

- **Behavioral and Social Attributes** – Students must:
 - possess the ability to use their intellectual capacity, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis under potentially stressful circumstances, emergency situations, and extended hours
 - be able to develop empathic, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients
 - be able to adapt to changing environments and to learn in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine
 - be able to respond to supervision appropriately and act within the scope of practice, when indicated

DIVISION MINIMUM SKILLS FOR ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The following are skills needed by matriculation to the PA Program. Applicants and matriculating students should possess these abilities, or with the help of compensatory techniques and or assistive devices, should be able to demonstrate ability to become proficient.

- **Manual Dexterity:**
 - Ability to measure:**
 - Wrists (both) Body (height, weight, range, strength, etc.)
 - Hands (both) Psychological status (general)
 - Fingers (all) Coordination
 - Arms (both) Vital signs
 - Grasping
 - Fingering
 - Pinching
 - Ability to use sterile technique and universal
 - Pushing
 - Pulling
 - Holding
 - Twisting (rotating)
 - Cutting
 - Ability to operate and maintain equipment (e.g. ventilator, monitor, defibrillator)

- **Sensation:**
 - Palpation
 - Auscultation
 - Percussion
 - Vision

- **Physical strength:**
 - To support another person
 - To position another person

- To transfer to/ambulance with walker, cane, crutches, bed, chair
- Provide motion exercises
- To stand for long periods of time
- To perform CPR/resuscitation

- **Other:**
 - To be poised and self-confident.
 - To be able to read, write, understand and communicate proficiently and effectively in the English language.
 - To be able to remain calm during emergency situations.
 - To be able to meet and deal with people of differing backgrounds and behavioral patterns.
 - To display and maintain mental and emotional stability.
 - To be free from any active diseases that are infectious and may be spread by routine means, such as handshakes, skin contact, and breathing

If an applicant states she/he is unable to meet the technical standards without accommodation, the Penn State College of Medicine will determine whether the student can meet the technical standards with reasonable accommodation. This includes a review of whether the accommodations requested are reasonable, taking into account whether the accommodation would jeopardize patient safety or the educational process of the student or the institution, including all coursework and clinical rotations deemed essential to graduation. Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations should contact the College of Medicine Disability Services Coordinator at hmanning@hmc.psu.edu. For further information visit the Office for Disability Services Web site at <http://equity.psu.edu/ods/>.

Student Signature

Date

Student Printed Name