



## COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

### Physician Assistant Program Technical Standards

The abilities and skills which candidates and students must possess in order to successfully complete the training associated with physician assistant education is referred to as the "Technical Standards." The five categorical areas listed below represent the essential qualities that are considered necessary in order for students to achieve the knowledge, skills and levels of competency stipulated for graduation by the faculty and expected by the physician assistant profession. Prior to matriculation, all candidates must attest that they meet all Technical Standards as established by Physician Assistant Program. Additionally, these standards must be maintained throughout the student's progress while enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program. Students found to be in violation of the Technical Standards are at risk of dismissal from the program.

Candidates and students for the Physician Assistant Program must possess the following abilities and skills:

#### I. Observation

- A. Accurately and in entirety observe patients both at a distance and close at hand. This ability requires functional vision, hearing and somatic sensation.
- B. Ability to visually observe materials presented in the classroom and laboratory environment to include audiovisual presentations, written documents, microbiology cultures, microscopic examination of microorganisms, tissues and gross organs, and diagnostic images (e.g. ECG, X-ray, C.T.).

#### II. Communication

- A. Effectively speak, hear, and observe patients in order to elicit information, perceive nonverbal communication, and describe changes in mood, activity and posture.
- B. Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and their families through oral and written language.
- C. Communicate accurately and efficiently in oral, written, and electronic form with members of the healthcare team.

#### III. Motor

- A. Elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, and percussion, and clinical diagnostic testing.
- B. Execute movements required to provide general medical care and emergency treatment to patients. Such skills require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and sensation.
- C. Properly use clinical instruments and medical devices for therapeutic intervention (e.g. stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, venipuncture and intravenous equipment, gynecologic speculum, suturing and casting equipment).
- D. Possess 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.

#### **IV. Critical Reasoning Skills**

- A. Demonstrate the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize information.
- B. Demonstrate the ability to acquire, retain and apply new and learned information.
- C. Demonstrate appropriate judgment in patient assessment, diagnosis, monitoring, evaluation and intervention including planning, time management and use of resources.
- D. Comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures.

#### **V. Behavioral and Social Attributes**

- A. Possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.
- B. Demonstrate mature, receptive and effective relationships with faculty, patients, fellow students, and members of the health care team.
- C. Possess qualities of flexibility and the adaptability in functioning in an environment of uncertainty inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.
- D. Demonstrate the capacity to tolerate taxing workloads and function effectively under stress.
- E. Display the personal qualities of compassion, integrity, commitment, motivation, and genuine concern for others that are intrinsic to the medical profession, and will be assessed during the admissions and educational process.

Candidates for admission to the Physician Assistant Program, who are accepted, will be required to verify that they understand and meet these technical standards. Admission decisions are made on the supposition that he/she believes that he or she meets the technical standards with or without a reasonable accommodation.

Candidates are urged to ask questions about the program's technical standards for clarification and to determine if they meet the standards with or without reasonable accommodation. The Physician Assistant Program acknowledges Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and asserts that the ability to meet certain essential technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation must be present in the prospective candidate. Disclosure of a disability is voluntary; however, admitted students who wish to request accommodations should contact the Mercer University Disability Services Office located on the Atlanta Cecil B. Day Campus.

During enrollment, the program's Progress/Promotions Committee will monitor students for continuing compliance with the technical standards. The faculty of the Physician Assistant Program recognizes and embraces the responsibility of presenting candidates for graduation that have the education and skills to function in a wide variety of clinical situations and to provide competent patient-centered care to a diverse population of patients.