



# 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 MD program

Date Approved: 04/24/2020

## **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 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 and enrolled students being considered for 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 candidate or student for whom reasonable accommodation will allow the fulfillment of the graduation requirements, including all required underlying competencies.

Washington State University 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 Law Against Discrimination, RCW 49.60.

Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine is committed to offering educational and professional opportunities equitably to qualified persons. This is accomplished by reviewing each student's request for an accommodation individually and providing reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis. Accommodations are implemented in collaboration with students, faculty,

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and other university and community offices. Reasonable accommodations ensure that students are able to access and participate in opportunities available at WSU Health Sciences Spokane and the four clinical campuses of the College of Medicine.

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 Access Services in the Division of Student Affairs for the WSU Health Sciences Spokane as far in advance as possible. Medical students with a disability that is identified while in the MD program should contact Access 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 including necessary documentation the student must submit to support the request is available on the WSU Health Sciences Spokane website: <https://spokane.wsu.edu/studentaffairs/new-myaccess/>. Documentation is maintained in the Access Services office and is confidential to that office unless the student authorizes disclosure of this information to others.

Requesting an accommodation is an interactive process. The first step is for a student to submit an application and documentation to the Access Center in accordance with WSU policy. The Access Coordinator assigned to assist the College of Medicine will discuss with the student their academic and clinical needs in order to reach agreement on reasonable accommodation. The agreed upon accommodations will be forwarded to the appropriate stakeholders at the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, which may include the Office of Admissions, Student Affairs and Inclusion, a faculty member or instructor, and/or the Associate Dean for Accreditation, Assessment, and Evaluation.

Accommodations that fundamentally or substantially alter the College of Medicine's programs or standards cannot be agreed to. The interactive process will continue with a discussion with the student and the Access Center about how the needs of the student can be met. Alternative accommodations must be considered. Once a reasonable accommodation has been determined, implementation is coordinated with the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine Office of Admissions, Student Affairs and Inclusion, and/or the faculty member or instructor. The student may file a complaint regarding the process or a discrimination complaint at any time during the process at <https://access.wsu.edu/complaintsummary/>.

The Elson S Floyd College of Medicine 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 critical factors in establishing requirements involving the physical, cognitive, and emotional abilities of candidates for admission and students for 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:

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*observation; communication; motor function; intellectual-conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities; and professional, behavioral, and social skills.*

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 the College of Medicine that applicants and students must meet the technical standards of their academic program with or without reasonable accommodations in order to be admitted to, be retained in, and graduate from the MD program. All accepted applicants sign a statement attesting that they understand and are committed to the policies related to the technical standards required for admission, retention, promotion, and graduation.

## **2.0 Definitions:**

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

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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).
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/student 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/students 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/students must be fully alert and attentive at all times in clinical settings.

***Professionalism/Behavioral/Social Attributes.*** A candidate/student 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/students must possess the personal qualities of compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, sensitivity to diversity and inclusion, and behave in a professional manner. Students must maintain appropriate professional boundaries within all settings. Candidates/students 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/students must

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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 Responsibility:

Senior Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs

## 4.0 Procedures:

Accepted applicants are asked to attest to the following statement as part of their acceptance packet: As an accepted applicant to the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine at Washington State University, I attest that I have read all pages of the Technical Standards policy, that I understand its contents, that I will abide by the policies expressed therein, and that I may be dismissed from the program should I fail to demonstrate all of the Technical Standards with or without reasonable accommodations and reasonable levels of academic support.

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 Access Services in the Student Success Center as part of the Division of Student Affairs for WSU Health Sciences.

## 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, Student Affairs, and Inclusion

**Policy Contact:** Senior Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs

**Supersedes:** AD.10.02.170508 dated 05/08/2017