



MURPHY DEMING
COLLEGE OF
HEALTH SCIENCES

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Owner Barry Diduch:
Faculty - PA
Program
Area PA
Sub-Areas PA Students

Technical Standards- PA

Any printed copy of a policy is only valid for 24 hours.

Introduction

The Master of Science in Physician Assistant (MSPA) Programs has a responsibility to the public to assure that its graduates are prepared to become fully competent and caring health professionals. In order to fulfill this obligation, students must safely and proficiently demonstrate appropriate technical standards, specified below, as well as those outlined within individual course syllabi.

Technical standards refer to the physical and mental abilities, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that comprise cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains of health care practice. A student is required to develop entry-level proficiency across cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of the technical standards to achieve satisfactory completion of the curriculum, and to develop the qualities consistent with the profession of PA. Entry-level proficiency is defined as the minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities to practice legally, ethically, and safely as a certified PA. The safety and welfare of patients and others is the responsibility of each student and the PA program. Students must comply with all requirements (including vaccination requirements) to participate in all educational, clinical, and research settings. These proficiencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) are applicable in the classroom, laboratories and clinical settings.

A healthcare professional education includes contact with patients. This comes with the risk of catching or transmitting communicable diseases. Current MDCHS policy includes mandated compliance with required immunizations for adults and healthcare workers as per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The purpose of this requirement is for the health and safety of patients. It is also for the safety of our coworkers, classmates, preceptors, faculty, and ourselves. While the university may honor accommodations to vaccine recommendations, clinical sites may have a higher or different standard. Clinical placement, progression in the program, and graduation may be affected by these standards. *

Ability to meet these Technical Standards is required for admission and must also be maintained throughout the student's progression in the program. In the event that a student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, then the student may be asked to leave the program.**

Letters of admission will be offered contingent on either a signed statement from the applicant that s/he can meet the program's technical standards without accommodations, or a signed statement from the applicant stating the belief that s/he can meet the technical standards if reasonable accommodations are provided. Accessibility Services will evaluate a student who states that s/he could meet the program's technical standards with accommodations, and confirm that the stated condition qualifies as a disability under applicable laws. Accessibility Services and the PA Program will jointly decide which accommodations are suitable or possible without fundamentally altering essential functions established by the program. An offer of admission may be withdrawn and/or a student may be dismissed for any of the following reasons:

- It becomes apparent that the student cannot meet technical standards, even with reasonable accommodations
- The needed accommodations are not reasonable because they would cause undue hardship to the College
- Granting the accommodations would compromise technical standards, jeopardize patient safety or alter the educational process of the student or the institution's, including all coursework and internships deemed essential to graduation.

Reasonable accommodation offered for persons with disabilities will be in conjunction with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as published. Students and candidates for admission to this program will be required to verify that they understand and meet these technical standards.

Students in the PA Program must possess aptitude, ability, and skills in the following five (5) areas:

1. Observation
2. Communication
3. Sensory and motor coordination and function
4. Conceptualization, integration, and quantitation
5. Behavioral and social skills, abilities, and aptitudes

The functions described below are critically important and must be autonomously performed by the student. It should be understood that these are standards for minimum competence in the program.

Observation

Students must be able to observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences which includes: chemical; biological; anatomic; and physiologic sciences. Students must be able to observe details through a microscope, and observe demonstrations in the classroom, including films, projections, or other forms of visual presentation.

Students must be able to accurately observe a patient near and at a distance, noting nonverbal as well

as verbal signs. Specific vision related criteria include: detecting and identifying changes in color of fluids; skin; and culture media; visualizing and discriminating findings on x-rays and other imaging tests; and reading written and illustrated materials. Students must be able to observe and differentiate changes in body movement, observe anatomic structures, discriminate among numbers and patterns associated with diagnostic tests such as an electrocardiogram, and competently use diagnostic instruments such as an otoscope, ophthalmoscope, and microscope.

Communication

Students must be able to relate effectively to patients while conveying understanding, compassion and empathy. They must be able to clearly communicate with patients in order to elicit information, accurately describe changes in mood, activity and posture of patients, and understand verbal as well as nonverbal communication.

Communication includes not only speech, but reading and writing. A PA education presents exceptional challenges in the volume and breadth of reading required to master subject areas and impart the information to others. Students must be able to communicate quickly, effectively, and efficiently in oral and written English in the classroom, and later with all members of the health care team. Specific requirements include: rapidly and clearly communicating with the medical staff on rounds or elsewhere; eliciting an accurate history from patients; and communicating complex findings in appropriate terms to patients, and to various members of the health care team. Students must learn to recognize and promptly respond to emotional cues such as sadness or despondency, aggression or agitation.

Students must be able to accurately and legibly record or verbally dictate observations and plans in legal documents, such as the patient record whether in electronic or paper formats. Students must be able to prepare and communicate concise, complete summaries of both limited patient encounters and complex, prolonged encounters, including hospitalizations. Students must be able to complete forms in a timely fashion, and according to directions.

Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function

Students must possess sufficient sensory and motor function to perform physical examinations using palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. This requires sufficient exteroceptive sense (visual, auditory, touch, and temperature), coordination to manipulate patients, and adequate motor and diagnostic instruments.

Students must be able to evaluate various components of the voice, such as pitch, intensity, and timbre. They must also be able to accurately differentiate percussive notes and auscultatory findings, including: heart, lung, and abdominal sounds. Students must be able to accurately discern normal and abnormal findings, using instruments including tuning forks, reflex hammers, stethoscopes, and sphygmomanometers.

Students should be able to execute physical movements needed to provide general care, and emergency treatments to patients. The student, therefore, must be able to respond promptly to emergencies within the hospital or practice setting, and must not hinder the ability of co-workers to provide prompt care. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of a PA include arriving quickly when called and assisting in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), administering intravenous medications, applying pressure to arrest bleeding, maintaining an airway, suturing wounds, placement of central access lines

and assisting with obstetrical maneuvers. As further illustration, CPR may require moving an adult patient, applying considerable chest pressure over a prolonged period of time, intubation, delivering artificial respiration, and calling for help.

Students should be able to learn to perform basic laboratory tests such as: wet mount; urinalysis; gram stain; microscopic analysis; and diagnostic/therapeutic procedures such as venipuncture and placement of catheters and tubes. The administration of intravenous medication requires a certain level of dexterity, sensation, and visual acuity. Students must be able to measure angles and diameters of various body structures using a tape measure or other device to measure blood pressure, respiration, and pulse, and interpret graphs describing biologic relationships. Clinical rotations require the ability to transport oneself to a variety of settings in a timely manner.

Intellectual, Conceptualization, Integration, and Quantitation

Diagnostic reasoning and problem-solving, critical skills demanded of PAs, often requires rapid intellectual function, especially in emergency situations. These intellectual functions include: numerical recognition; measurement; calculations; reasoning analysis; judgment; and synthesis. Students must be able to identify significant findings in the patient's history, physical examination, and laboratory data, provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses, and choose appropriate medications and therapy.

It is essential that the student is able to incorporate new information from many sources toward the formulation of a diagnosis and plan. Accurate judgment in patient assessment and diagnostic/therapeutic planning is also essential. When appropriate, students must be able to identify and communicate the extent of their knowledge to others.

Behavioral and Social Skills, Abilities, and Aptitudes

Students must possess the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of sound judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships in diagnosis and care of patients. Empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest in people, and motivation are all required personal qualities. Students must be able to monitor and react appropriately to their own emotional needs. For example, students need to maintain a balanced demeanor and appropriate organizational skills in the face of long hours, fatigued colleagues, and dissatisfied patients.

Students must be able to develop appropriate professional relationships with their colleagues and patients, provide comfort and reassurance to patients and protect patient confidentiality. Students must possess the endurance to tolerate physically taxing workloads, and to function effectively in stressful situations. All students are, at times, required to work for extended periods, occasionally with rotating schedules. Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to appropriately function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine. Students are expected to accept suggestions and criticisms, and if necessary, to respond by modifying their behavior.

* Affiliated clinical sites may not be able to offer the same reasonable accommodations that are made available by the Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences.

**Students who have questions regarding reasonable accommodations should contact Accessibility

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
SAD Confirmation	Sue Stevens: Senior Associate Dean	06/2024
Program Faculty Approval (by vote)	Barry Diduch: Faculty - PA Program	05/2024
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