

**PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM
TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION AND MATRICULATION**

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The granting of a Master of Science (MS) degree and completion of the professional phase signifies that the student is prepared for employment as a Physician Assistant. In such a professional role, the physician assistant can provide medical services with the supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathic medicine in accordance with applicable laws of medical practice. The services must, for the safety and welfare of the patient, be of the same professional quality that would be rendered by the supervising physician. The physician assistant must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care.

Candidates for the physician assistant profession must have somatic sensation and the functional use of the senses of vision and hearing. Candidates' diagnostic skills will also be lessened without the functional use of the senses of equilibrium, smell and taste. Additionally, they must have sufficient exteroceptive sense (touch, pain, and temperature), sufficient motor function to permit them to carry out the activities described in the sections that follow. They must be able to integrate all information received by whatever sense(s) employed, consistently, quickly, and accurately, and they must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data.

A candidate for the physician assistant program must have abilities and skills of six varieties including observation, communication, motor, conceptual, integrative and quantitative, behavioral and social. Technological compensation can be made for some handicaps in certain of these areas, but such a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

A. GENERAL ABILITIES

The student is expected to possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, taste, and smell. All data received by the senses must be integrated, analyzed and synthesized in a consistent and accurate manner. In addition, the individual is expected to possess the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, equilibrium, and movement.

B. OBSERVATIONAL ABILITY

The student is expected to participate in and observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences including but not limited to physiologic and pharmacological demonstrations in animals, microbiological cultures and microscopic study of organisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. The student is expected to observe the patient accurately at a distance and close at hand and accurately assess health/illness alteration. Inherent in this observation process is the use of the senses and sufficient motor capability to carry out the necessary assessment activities.

C. COMMUNICATION ABILITY

The student is expected to be able to effectively communicate verbally and non-verbally and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and postures and to perceive nonverbal communications. This requires the ability to read, write, and effectively utilize the English language. The student must be able to communicate effectively with patients and other professionals.

D. MOTOR ABILITY

The Student is expected to be able to perform gross and fine motor movements required to perform

complete physical examination. The student is expected to have the psychomotor skills necessary to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medication, managing of equipment, and emergency intervention. The student is expected to be able to maintain consciousness and equilibrium, and stamina to perform satisfactorily in clinical experiences.

E. OTHER MOTOR ABILITIES

The student should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. The student must be able to do laboratory tests and work with scientific and other instruments and machinery utilized in practice as a Physician Assistant.

F. CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY

The student is expected to have the ability to develop and refine problem solving skills. This includes the ability to measure, calculate, analyze and synthesize objective as well as subjective data and make decisions that reflect consistent and thoughtful deliberation and clinical judgment. In addition, the student should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures.

G. INTERPERSONAL ABILITIES

The student is expected to have the emotional stability required to exercise sound judgment and complete assessment and intervention activities. The student is expected to establish rapport and maintain sensitive, interpersonal relationships with individuals, families and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds. The student is expected to have the flexibility to function effectively under stress. Concern for others, integrity, accountability, interest and motivation are necessary personal qualities.

H. BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES

A student must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his/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. The student must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. The student must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that will be assessed during the admission and education process.

I. PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Teaching during all phases of the program may involve attendance during any hour of the day and any day of the week. Students are required to be available to attend any required learning/teaching session held during any of the twenty-four hours of the day, seven days of the week.

A core component of physician assistant medical education is using touch for diagnosis and therapeutic purposes. To acquire competencies in physical diagnosis and medical treatment, all students are required to touch others and to be touched.

All students are also required to participate in physical examination by fellow students. This physical examination is critical to learning the skills required of practicing physician assistants; therefore, it is mandatory that all matriculating students understand and accept these responsibilities. These responsibilities include:

1. Adhering to appropriate dress as determined by the faculty, i.e. gym shorts, tee shirt, sports bra, or other attire as necessary to participate in the physical examination experience.
2. Allowing other students to see and touch them so that all become proficient in physical

examination and diagnosis.

3. Seeing and touching other students of both genders to gain proficiency in physical examination and diagnosis.

SPECIAL STUDENTS

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply to the program. However, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the Department of Physician Assistant Studies in writing (with medical documentation, address and telephone number listed of provider) and verbally if there is any reason why the abilities and/or expectations described cannot be met. Students who indicate verbally and in writing (with medical documentation) that they cannot meet one or more of these requirements will be reviewed by the Departmental Faculty to determine what, if any reasonable accommodations might be possible to facilitate successful completion of the degree requirements should they be admitted to the program.