

Technical Standards

The West Virginia University School of Medicine (WVU SoM) is committed to fostering a learning environment that supports students from all backgrounds. The following technical standards inform incoming and enrolled students of the essential skills, knowledge, and abilities they must demonstrate to safely and successfully participate in this program.

To successfully matriculate through the program, students must meet these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodations. Consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Guidance from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), an individualized interactive process is used with each student with disabilities to determine whether reasonable accommodations would allow that student to meet the technical standards of a program without fundamentally altering its essential requirements. If you believe you need accommodations to meet the technical standards listed below, contact the West Virginia University Office of Student Accommodations (OSA) at <https://osa.wvu.edu/>.

These technical standards were formally adopted by the WVU SoM Committee on Admissions for the MD degree program and are reviewed at least every 5 years. A candidate for the MD degree at the West Virginia University School of Medicine must be capable of acquiring and demonstrating all program objectives across the six core competencies, which include medical knowledge, patient care, interpersonal and communication skills, practice-based learning and improvement, professionalism, and systems-based practice with or without reasonable accommodation.

The MD degree is a **broad undifferentiated** degree attesting to general knowledge in medicine and the basic skills required for the practice of medicine. Candidates must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of care across ALL patient populations. Candidates who intend to practice only a narrow part of clinical medicine, or to pursue a non-clinical career, are still required to achieve competence across all six core competencies to earn an MD degree. Candidates must also demonstrate the highest ethical and moral behavior. Essential abilities and characteristics required for completion of the MD degree consist of physical and cognitive abilities and sufficient mental and emotional stability to ensure that candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation are able to complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of the medical education program with or without reasonable accommodation.

Although students learn and work under the supervision of the faculty, students interact with patients throughout their medical school education. Patient safety and well-being are therefore major factors in establishing requirements involving the physical, cognitive, and emotional abilities of candidates for admission, promotion, retention, and graduation. The abilities and characteristics are defined below as technical standards, which are requirements for admission, retention, promotion, and graduation. A candidate for the MD degree must have abilities and skills in six categories, including Observation; Communication; Clinical Skills; Conceptual, integrative and quantitative; Behavioral and social and Ethical and legal standards as outlined below.

I. Observation:

The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues and organs in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must also be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand.

A candidate must be able to:

- Acquire information quickly and accurately from patients and assess findings, which are skills that are necessary for urgent or emergent patient care.
- Observe a patient accurately and acquire relevant health and medical information, including written documents, digital images, images from the medical literature, slides and/or video.
- Perform a complete physical examination independently, correctly observe and interpret diagnostic representations of patients' physiological data, and accurately evaluate patients' conditions and responses in order to integrate this information and develop an appropriate diagnostic and treatment plan.
- Interpret radiographic, ultrasound and other graphic images, and digital or analog representations of physiologic data (e.g., EKGs).

II. Communication:

Candidates must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with all patients, their families, health care personnel, colleagues, faculty, staff, and all other individuals with whom they come in contact.

Candidates must be able to:

- Obtain a medical history in a timely fashion.
- Interpret non-verbal aspects of communication or the way a disease or illness may present.
- Establish therapeutic relationships with patients.
- Record information accurately and clearly and communicate with other health care professionals in a variety of patient settings.
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients.
- Communication includes not only speech but reading and writing, especially in the electronic medical record. Candidates must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team, including online electronic medical records that are common to hospital systems.

III. Clinical Skills:

Candidates must possess the capacity to independently perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers, such as palpation, auscultation, and percussion. A candidate should be able to:

- Perform basic laboratory tests (urinalysis, CBC, etc.), carry out diagnostic procedures (lumbar puncture, proctoscopy, paracentesis, etc.), and read EKG's and radiographic images.

- Provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physicians are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers.
- Meet safety standards appropriate for settings and adhere to universal precautions procedures.

IV. Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Skills:

Candidates must be able to assimilate and engage with detailed and complex information both written and verbally presented through both the pre-clerkship and clerkship phases of the curriculum in a timely manner, which are skills that translate to urgent or emergent patient care competencies. These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Candidates must also be able to:

- Interpret and transmit information quickly and efficiently in both remote and in-person situations.
- Demonstrate problem solving, the creative skills demanded of physicians, requires all these intellectual abilities.
- Comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.
- Participate in learning activities such as individual, small group, and lecture formats, in both the classroom and the clinical setting.
- Effectively learn, participate, collaborate and contribute as a part of a team.
- Synthesize written and verbal information effectively and expeditiously both in person and using remote technology.
- Interpret causal connections, and make accurate, fact-based conclusions based on available data and information.
- Formulate a hypothesis, investigate the potential answers and outcomes, and formulate appropriate and accurate conclusions.

V. Behavioral and Social Attributes:

A candidate must exhibit sufficient maturity and emotional stability for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, which includes, but is not limited to, the exercise of good judgment and the prompt completion of all responsibilities associated to the diagnosis and care of patients. Candidates must be able to:

- Manage workloads and function effectively under stress, as patients may require emergency care above and beyond a typical workday. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.
- Demonstrate compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that should be assessed during the admissions and education processes.
- Interact with patients and their families, health care professionals, colleagues, faculty, and staff in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner.

- Accept responsibility for learning and exercising good judgment and are expected to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes in response to feedback.
- Examine any patient regardless of the patient's age, color, disability, national origin, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, veteran status, or political beliefs.

VI. Ethical and Legal Standards:

Candidates who enroll as medical students are on the pathway toward medical licensure to practice medicine in the state of West Virginia or in another state. Accordingly, candidates must meet and maintain the legal standards to earn a medical license. Candidates for admission must acknowledge and provide written explanation to the SoM of any felony offense(s), misdemeanor offense(s), and institutional action(s) taken against them prior to matriculation or while enrolled at the WVU SoM. This disclosure is required of all charges and convictions, including expunged and diverted offenses. This includes, but is not limited to, violent misdemeanors and substance use violations. Institutional actions include, but are not limited to, Title IX or Title VII violations. After matriculation, students admitted to WVU SoM must immediately notify the Associate Dean of Student Services of any arrest, charge, conviction or institutional investigation or action occurring thereafter. Felony conviction or failure to disclose prior or new offenses can lead to disciplinary action by the school that may include dismissal.

Procedure for Attesting to the Technical Standards and Consideration of Accommodations

Enrolled students must reaffirm and again sign the Technical Standards signature page during the first week of medical school. During the transition to the clerkship phase of the curriculum, all students reaffirm they have read the standards and again sign the Technical Standards signature page during orientation activities to the clerkship phase of the curriculum.

Additionally, should the student have or acquire an infectious disease or other condition that could put patients or the public at risk through exposure to their blood or other bodily fluids (e.g., hepatitis, tuberculosis, HIV), the student must notify the Associate Dean of Student Services immediately. While student services works in consultation with OSA to determine and coordinate implementation of reasonable accommodations, documentation related to any medical condition remains confidential. Implementation of accommodations by the school may not be the same as granted by external licensing examination agencies. If a student, with or without reasonable accommodation(s), cannot satisfy these Technical Standards, is unable to meet all competencies, or otherwise cannot complete the undifferentiated MD degree program and advance to graduation, residency training or licensure, then the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards (CAPS) may suspend or dismiss the student from the MD degree program.

LCME Standard 7: Curricular Content

The faculty of a medical school through its curriculum governance process ensures that the medical education curriculum provides content and experiences of sufficient breadth and depth to prepare medical students for entry into any graduate medical education program, for the subsequent practice of

contemporary medicine, and for applying self-directed learning and critical thinking across the educational program competencies.

LCME Standard 10: Medical Student Selection, Assignment, and Progress

A medical school establishes and publishes admission requirements for potential applicants to the medical education program, and uses effective policies and procedures for medical student selection, enrollment, and assignment.

Applicable Element 10.5: Technical Standards

A medical school develops and publishes technical standards for the admission, retention, and graduation of applicants or medical students in accordance with legal requirements.

Initial Approval: January 2012

Effective date: January 2012

Most recent review or revision: October 2026

Next required review: October 2031

Policy owner: School of Medicine Committee on Admissions for the MD Degree

Administrative office: Admissions Office

Technical Standards**West Virginia University School of Medicine**

I acknowledge that as a part of my offer of a position in the MD degree program at the West Virginia University School of Medicine, I have been provided a copy of the program's technical standards. I have read the technical standards, as my signature below signifies. I understand that while technological compensation can be made for some disabilities, I must be able to perform the expected tasks in a reasonably independent manner. I understand that the West Virginia University Office of Student Accommodations (OSA) determines if these accommodations can be granted and are reasonable for someone pursuing the MD degree.

As a condition of admission and continued enrollment in the School of Medicine at West Virginia University, I acknowledge that I have received and understand the Technical Standards for Admission, Advancement, and Graduation. I understand that these Technical Standards identify the essential competencies required to successfully complete the curriculum and to perform the essential functions of a medical student. I understand that I must be able to meet these Technical Standards throughout my enrollment in the program.

☐ **I accept this offer of acceptance.** I understand that by accepting this offer, I am also accepting my campus assignment.

☐ **I do not accept this offer of acceptance.**

Signature Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

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