

Technical Standards for Physician Assistants

All candidates and students for the physician assistant program must possess certain capabilities and skills, with or without reasonable accommodation. These include the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. They must have functional use, with or without accommodation, of the senses of vision, hearing, and equilibrium. Their exteroceptive (touch, pain, temperature) and proprioceptive (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory) senses must be sufficiently intact to enable them to carry out all activities required for a complete P.A. education. Candidates must have motor function capabilities to meet the demands of P.A. education and the demands of total patient care. The candidate for the PA Program must possess the following capabilities and skills:

1. **Observation:** The ability to observe is required for demonstrations, visual presentations in lectures and laboratories, laboratory evidence and microbiological cultures, microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissue in normal and pathologic states. Candidates and students must be able to observe patients accurately and completely, both at a distance and closely. This ability requires functional vision and somatic sensation and is enhanced by a sense of smell.
2. **Communications:** Candidates and students should be able to communicate intelligibly, and to observe patients closely in order to elicit and transmit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive non-verbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication in oral and written form with the health care team must be effective and efficient.
3. **Motor:** Candidates and students should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation (with or without accommodation) and percussion, as well as carry out diagnostic maneuvers. A candidate should have motor function sufficient to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Such skills require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and sensation.
4. **Intellectual** - Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities: Problem solving is a critical skill demanded of P.A.s and this requires all these abilities. Candidates and students must also be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and the spatial relationships of structures.
5. **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** Candidates and students must have the emotional health to fully use his/her intellectual ability, exercise good judgment, complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.

The practice of medicine requires physician assistant candidates and students be able to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and colleagues. To provide high quality patient care, physician assistant candidates and students must possess characteristics of adaptability, flexibility, and be able to function in the face of uncertainty. The healthcare environment requires candidates and students be able to tolerate physical and emotional stress and continue to function effectively and efficiently. He/she must have a high level of compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity, and a consciousness of social values. Candidates and

students must possess sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems.

Candidates for admission to the PA Program are encouraged to ask questions about the program's technical standards for clarification and to determine whether they can meet the requirements with or without reasonable accommodation. Any information and inquiries about disabilities are handled in a confidential manner, to the extent possible within the accommodation process, and should be directed to the PA Program Director.

The Physician Assistant Program faculty recognizes the responsibility to present candidates and students for the P.A. degree that have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of high quality patient care. The responsibility for these technical standards is primarily placed on the P.A. Program Interview Committee to select entering P.A. students who will be the candidates for the P.A. degree.