

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT: Technical Standards: Essential Abilities and Characteristics Required for  
Completion of the MD Degree**

I. INTRODUCTION

The University of Houston College of Medicine's mission and responsibility to society is to educate physicians who will provide high quality and compassionate care while maintaining patient safety and well-being. All candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation must be able to perform specific essential functions and possess characteristics including certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities, as well as sufficient mental and emotional stability to assure that candidates can complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of medical training with or without reasonable accommodations

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), which accredits the UH College of Medicine, requires the delineation of technical standards, which are the necessary physical and mental abilities of all candidates and graduates.

II. TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

A. OBSERVATION AND COMMUNICATION: Candidates must be able to accurately observe patients close up and at a distance to learn skills and to gather patient data. Candidates also must possess functional use of the senses of smell, vision and somatic sensation. Candidates must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with patients and other members of the healthcare team. This includes interpreting both verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication to establish therapeutic relationships with patients. Both oral and written communication skills are required and candidates must be able to read and comprehend, and retain information in complex written materials. Candidates must also be able to record information accurately and clearly.

B. PSYCHOMOTOR SKILLS: Candidates must possess the capacity to learn and perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers using tactile, auditory, and visual maneuvers. They must be able to respond to clinical situations in a timely manner and provide general and emergency care reasonably required of physicians.

C. INTELLECTUAL AND COGNITIVE ABILITIES: Candidates 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; and simulations and use of computer technology. Candidates must be able to memorize, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information across modalities. They must recognize and draw conclusions about three-dimensional spatial relationships and logical sequential relationships among events.

D. BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES: Candidates must possess the personal qualities of empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, good interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation. They must be able to relate effectively and sensitively to patients, conveying a sense of compassion and empathy. They must accept responsibility for

learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to their curriculum and to the diagnosis and care of patients.

Candidates must have the physical and emotional stamina and resilience to tolerate physically taxing workloads, function in a competent and professional manner under highly stressful situations, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and manage the uncertainty inherent in the care of patients and the health care. Candidates must also be capable of regular, reliable and punctual attendance at learning activities and in the performance of their clinical responsibilities.

**III. ABILITY TO MEET THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE'S TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

At the time an applicant accepts an offer to matriculate, he/she is required to attest that he/she can meet the University of Houston College of Medicine Technical Standards either with, or without, reasonable accommodations. Any student needing reasonable accommodations in order to meet the technical standards should contact the University of Houston Center for Students with DisABILITIES (CSD) office.

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