

Policy 1.1.5 UAMS COM Undergraduate Medical Education
Section Admissions
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Technical Standards

The University of Arkansas College of Medicine believes that earning a Doctor of Medicine degree requires mastery of a coherent body of knowledge and skills. Because the M.D. degree signifies that the holder is a physician prepared for entry into the practice of medicine within postgraduate training programs, it follows that graduates must be prepared to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. Therefore, there are certain minimum technical standards for physicians and medical students that must be met by applicants and students, with or without reasonable accommodation. The UAMS standards are based on the recommendations of the Association of American Medical Colleges and the requirements for accreditation of medical schools by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. These technical standards are also included in the Student Handbook. A medical student must acquire substantial competence in the principles and facts of all the curriculum's required basic science courses, must understand and appreciate the principles and practice of all of the basic fields of clinical medicine, and must be able to relate appropriately to patients and other health care professionals. The following technical standards describe the non-academic qualifications, required in addition to appropriate academic achievements, which the College considers essential for successful completion of the educational objectives of its curriculum as well as the ability to effectively practice medicine (This list of required skills and qualifications is not all inclusive, but is meant to be representative.).

Attitudinal, Behavioral, Interpersonal, and Emotional Attributes:

Because the medical profession is governed by ethical principles and by state and federal laws, a medical student must have the capacity to learn, and understand these values and laws and to perform within their guidelines. Medical students should be able to relate to patients, as well as staff and colleagues, with honesty, integrity, non-discrimination, self-sacrifice, and dedication. Medical students must be able to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Medical students must be able to identify personal reactions and responses, recognize multiple points of view, and integrate these appropriately into clinical decision making. Medical students must be able to communicate and care for, in a non-judgmental way, persons whose culture, sexual orientation, or spiritual beliefs are different than their own. A medical student must be able to examine and treat the entire patient regardless of the medical student's social, cultural, or religious beliefs.

A medical student must be of sufficient emotional health to utilize fully his/her intellectual ability, to exercise good judgment, to complete patient care responsibilities promptly, and to relate to patients, families, and colleagues with courtesy, compassion, maturity, and respect for their dignity. The medical student must display this emotional health in spite of stressful work, changing environments, and clinical uncertainties. The medical student must be able to modify behavior in response to constructive criticism. They must be capable of being non-judgmental when caring for a patient and not let their own personal attitudes, perceptions, and stereotypes compromise care of the patient. An individual with a diagnosed psychiatric disorder may function as a medical student as long as the condition is under sufficient control to allow accomplishment of the above goals.

Intellectual Skills

Medical students must possess a range of intellectual skills that allow them to master the broad and complex body of knowledge that comprises a medical education. They must be able to recall large amounts of information, perform scientific measurements and calculations, and understand and cognitively manipulate three-dimensional models. Medical students must be able to learn effectively through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to: classroom instruction, small group discussion, individual study of materials, preparation and presentation of written and oral reports, and use of computer based technology. The ultimate goal of the student will be to solve difficult problems and to make diagnostic and therapeutic decisions. Reasoning abilities must be sophisticated enough to analyze and synthesize information from a wide variety of sources.

Communication

Medical students must be able to communicate, in an appropriate fashion, with a patient in order to obtain a medical history. This communication with patients must, at times, involve hearing the patient and speaking with the patient because some patients do not read or write, or at least they may not be able to do so under certain medical situations. Medical students must be able to document in patients' records in standard format, and must be able to interact with a variety of standard computers networked to hospital information systems to obtain patient information, order tests, and document patient progress. Medical students must be able to prepare a legible,

comprehensive patient work-up, and present a new patient's case orally in a focused manner to fellow classmates, resident physicians, and attending physicians as appropriate.

Observation

Medical students must be able to observe a patient to, for example, identify a rash, edema, or other conditions, and detect and interpret non-verbal communication from the patient. Each student must be able to use a microscope to, as examples, view and interpret a blood smear, a bacterial stain, a urine sample, identify normal tissues, and identify pathologic changes in tissues which are brought about by disease processes, as well as studying other microscopic specimens. Medical students must be capable of viewing and interpreting such diagnostic modalities as various radiological imaging techniques (X-ray films, angiograms, CT scans, etc.) and electrocardiograms, in order to assess the accuracy and importance of the examination. Medical students must be able to perform auscultation of the patient and do such things as describe normal and abnormal heart sounds, detect bruits (sound of abnormal blood flow), and detect abnormal abdominal sounds. Medical students must be able to communicate appropriately with a patient and respond appropriately to the patient verbally.

Motor Skills

Medical students must be able to position a patient properly for a physical examination. Medical students must be able to perform a physical examination on a patient, including the ability to inspect various physical signs and recognize normal versus abnormal findings, including fine visual differentiations such as the ability to see a non-palpable skin lesion to determine its malignant potential, and to perform a funduscopic examination to evaluate the retina of the eye for changes suggestive of diabetes mellitus or hypertension. They must be able to elicit information from patients using the techniques of palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. They must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of treatment reasonably required of physicians are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of an obstructed airway, the introduction of intravenous catheters, and the suturing of simple wounds. Medical students must be able to utilize gross and fine manual palpation, touch, vibratory sensation, and temperature sensation to describe and evaluate lymph nodes, thyroid nodules, breast tissue, the pulse, joints, and other body parts.

General

Medical students must demonstrate the ability to tolerate physically challenging workloads and to function effectively under stress. The unpredictable needs of patients are at the heart of becoming a physician. Academic and clinical responsibilities of medical students may require their presence during day and evening hours, any day of the week.

In evaluating candidates for admission and candidates for the M.D. degree, it is essential that the integrity of the curriculum be maintained, that those elements deemed necessary for the education of a physician be preserved, and that the health and safety of patients be maintained. While compensation, modification, and reasonable accommodation can be made for some

disabilities on the part of the candidate for admission or for the M.D. degree, candidates must be able to perform the duties of a medical student or physician in a reasonably independent manner. The use of a trained intermediary would result in mediation of a candidate's judgment by another person's powers of selection and observation. Therefore, the use of trained intermediaries to assist students in meeting the technical standards for admission or graduation is not permitted.

The College of Medicine will consider for admission any candidate who demonstrates the ability to perform or to learn to perform the skills and abilities specified in these technical standards. Candidates for the M.D. degree will be assessed on a regular basis, according to the Academic Standards of the College of Medicine, not only on the basis of their academic (cognitive) abilities, but also on the basis of their scholastic non-cognitive abilities to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

Approved by the Academic Standards Committee
Approved by the Basic Science Chairs
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