Physician Assistant

Physician assistants are licensed health care providers who provide medical care to patients under the supervision of a licensed physician. As physician extenders, physician assistants need to demonstrate academic standards as well as a core of technical standards to ensure competent health care is being delivered. All physician assistant applicants and physician assistant students are held to the same academic and technical standards of admission and training. Prospective Physician assistant candidates and students are held accountable for the following technical standards and these technical standards must be met with or without reasonable accommodation.

Technical Standards:

1. Observation
   a. Students and candidates for admission must have sufficient visual capacity to:
      i. visualize information presented in images from paper, slides, and video
      ii. observe laboratory and/or lecture demonstrations
      iii. observe patients accurately at a distance, and close at hand, with or without standard medical equipment

2. Communication
   a. Students and candidates for admission should be able to speak intelligibly, hear sufficiently, elicit and transmit patient information in oral and written format to members of the healthcare team, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and communicate effectively and sensitively with patients.
   b. They must possess demonstrated reading skills at a level sufficient to accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care to patients.
   c. They must possess excellent verbal and written communication skills in the English language.

3. Sensory and Motor Function
   a. Students and candidates for admission must have functional sensory and motor skills to directly perform palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers that assist in the physical evaluation of a patient.
   b. They must have sufficient motor function to utilize diagnostic instruments.
   c. They must possess functional motor skills to demonstrate basic laboratory techniques involving cadaver dissection, urinalysis, pulmonary function testing, and obtaining electrocardiographs.
   d. They must possess functional motor skills to demonstrate common clinical procedures including phlebotomy, intravenous catheter placement, injections, suturing, foley catheter placement, nasogastric tube placement, lumbar puncture, and intubation.
   e. They must possess functional sensory and motor skills to execute quick and purposeful movements during emergency treatment of patients. Emergency procedures include intubation, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, application of pressure to control bleeding, administration of intravenous medication, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers.

4. Intellectual
   a. Critical thinking is a necessary skill for physician assistants. Students and candidates for admission must have the intellectual capacity to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information from various modalities to effectively evaluate and treat patients.
   b. Students and candidates for admission must have the ability to comprehend spatial relationships of structures and three-dimensional models.
   c. They must be able to accept and learn through a variety of teaching modalities including classroom lecture, cooperative learning, small group activities, laboratory exercises, individual and group presentations, and the use of technology assisted learning.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes
   a. Students and candidates for admission must at all times demonstrate the emotional stability to be able to exercise good judgment, prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients.
   b. They must perform problem solving skills in a timely manner.
   c. They must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads.
   d. They must be able to function effectively under stress.
   e. They must have the ability to adapt to changing environment, display flexibility, and learn to function in an environment of uncertainty inherent in the clinical practice of medicine.
   f. They must treat all patients, families, colleagues, and other members of the health care team with dignity and respect.
   g. They must demonstrate honesty, integrity, dedication, compassion, nondiscrimination, and motivation.
   h. They must be able to accept constructive criticism and respond appropriately with an acceptable modification of behavior.

Upstate Medical University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All applicants and students are held to the same academic and technical standards of admissions and training. Reasonable accommodations will be made for qualified individuals with a disability. However, the student is expected to perform these functions in a reasonably independent manner.