

<i>This policy is tied to LCME Element 10.5</i>	<b>MD Program Technical Standards</b>	Implementation Date/ Effective Date	3/8/2024
		Last Reviewed/Update	3/8/2024
		Approved by	SOM Executive and Policy Committee
		Initially Approved	SOM MD Admissions Committee

### Purpose

The delineation of technical standards for the M.D. program in the Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine is intended to ensure graduates will be able to provide patient care across a broad spectrum of medical situations and settings.

### Background

Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) intends for its MD program graduates to become highly skilled and competent doctors who can provide compassionate, culturally competent health care in accordance with its mission, who can satisfy PHSU-SOM academic and performance requirements, and who are eligible for graduate medical education and medical licensure. Medical students are expected to develop a robust medical knowledge base and clinical skills, with the ability to appropriately apply their knowledge and skills, effectively interpret information, and contribute to patient-centered decisions. Furthermore, patient safety and wellbeing are major factors in establishing requirements involving the physical, cognitive, and emotional abilities of candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation.

PHSU is committed to fostering a diverse and accessible environment for its community by supporting medical students with access to the facilities, technology, and information needed for an equal opportunity to succeed in their medical education. PHSU-SOM provides reasonable accommodations to students on a nondiscriminatory basis consistent with legal requirements as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The essential abilities and characteristics described herein are also referred to as technical standards. They are described below in several broad categories including observation; communication; motor function; intellectual-conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities; and social and behavioral skills. These technical standards are based upon, and adhere to, the standards set forth by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC).

All candidates accepted to the MD Program in the PHSU School of Medicine must be able to meet the school's technical standards. Candidates are asked to review the standards and sign a form certifying that they have read and understood them and can meet them with or without reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodations are available in accordance with PHSU's Reasonable Accommodation Policy. However, candidates should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner all skill levels described in the technical standards, which PHSU holds as mandatory for the safe and effective practice of medicine.

The term “candidates” refers to individuals who are seeking admission to the MD program at Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine as well as current students who are candidates for retention, promotion, or graduation.

## Policy

The following abilities and characteristics, defined as “technical standards”, are requirements for admission, retention, promotion, and graduation. These technical standards were reviewed and approved by the School of Medicine Admissions Committee and the Executive and Policy Committee:

1. **Observation:** Candidates must be able to obtain information from demonstrations and participate in experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to, dissection of cadavers, examination of specimens in anatomy, pathology, microbiology, and neuroanatomy laboratories. Candidates must be able to accurately acquire information from patients and perform a complete physical examination to develop an appropriate diagnostic or treatment plan encompassing their relevant health, behavioral, and medical information. They must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. These skills require the use of vision, hearing, and touch or the functional equivalent.
2. **Communication:** A candidate must be able to communicate with patients to elicit information, detect changes in mood and activity, and establish a therapeutic relationship. Candidate should be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, their families, colleagues, faculty, staff, members of the healthcare team, and all other individuals with whom they come into contact, both in person and in writing form, in English for St. Louis Campus candidates, and English and Spanish for Ponce Main Campus candidates. Candidates must be able to record information clearly and accurately and accurately interpret verbal and nonverbal communication.
3. **Motor:** A candidate should be able to execute reasonable motor movements required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients and respond to emergency situations in a timely manner. Candidates must, after a reasonable period of training, possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers. They must be able to respond to clinical situations in a timely manner and provide general and emergency care. Some examples of emergency treatment are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the opening of obstructed airways, and psychiatric emergencies, among others. Candidates must be able to carry out basic laboratory techniques and to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. They must perform anatomical dissections; must be able to use a microscope; be able to do basic laboratory tests, carry out diagnostic procedures, and interpret EKG's and X-rays. Candidates must meet safety standards appropriate for healthcare settings and adhere to universal precautions procedures. These actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and some physical mobility.
4. **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** Candidates must be able to effectively interpret, assimilate, and understand the detailed and complex information required to function within the medical curriculum, including but not limited to: the ability to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand and draw conclusions about the spatial relationships of structures and logical sequential relationships among events. Candidates are expected to possess the abilities to measure, memorize, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize, and transmit information both in person and via remote technology. They must be able to correctly interpret diagnostic

representations of patients' physiologic data and engage with detailed and complex information presented through both the didactic curriculum and clinical coursework, as well as formulate and test hypotheses that enable effective and timely problem solving in diagnosis and treatment of patients in a variety of clinical and health care system settings.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes: Candidates must possess and demonstrate the physical and emotional stability and maturity required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of all responsibilities inherent to their studies and to the diagnosis and care of patients. Candidates are expected to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and to interact with patients and their families, health care personnel, colleagues, faculty, staff, and all other individuals with whom they come in contact in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner. Candidates must have the physical and emotional stamina to be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, to tolerate taxing workloads, to function in a competent and professional manner under highly stressful situations and learn to function with the uncertainties inherent to clinical problems of many different patients. Compassion, integrity, service orientation, interpersonal skills, ethical responsibility, and motivation are personal and professional attributes that are assessed during the admission process and must be kept and/or improved during the educational process. Candidates should understand and function within the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and maintain and display ethical and moral behaviors commensurate with the role of a physician in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, students, and the public. Interest and motivation throughout the educational processes are expected of all candidates.

## Procedures

1. All candidates accepted to the MD Program in the PHSU School of Medicine must be able to meet the school's technical standards. All candidates receive a copy of the Technical Standards Policy with their acceptance and enrollment documentation. Candidates are asked to review the standards and sign a form certifying that they have read and understood them and can meet them with or without reasonable accommodation. Candidates are also oriented about the Technical Standards during orientation and are required to sign the Technical Standards Acknowledgement prior to enrollment.
2. Prior to the enrollment period, any candidate who may require reasonable accommodation to meet the technical standards must contact PHSU's designated coordinator, Grace M. Morales, LRC, Rehabilitation Counselor, [gracemorales@psm.edu](mailto:gracemorales@psm.edu) to be confidentially oriented and evaluated so the appropriate accommodation may be provided, in accordance with the school's Reasonable Accommodation Policy. The role of the designated coordinator facilitates compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and all its amendments of 2008 which became effective January 1, 2009. Also, with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
3. All candidates are required to re-certify and sign the Technical Standards Acknowledgement prior to the start of each academic year and upon returning from any leave of absence.
4. Reasonable accommodation to meet the technical standards are provided in accordance with PHSU's Reasonable Accommodation Policy. Candidates are responsible for requesting re-evaluation and approval of reasonable accommodations prior to medical school enrollment, as well as prior to the start of clinical years (3 and 4) to ensure that partner hospitals and clinical sites are equipped to meet the accommodations required by the candidate. PHSU is not responsible for the Reasonable Accommodation Policies established by each of the affiliated hospitals.

5. Once matriculated, if a candidate cannot meet these technical standards with approved reasonable accommodations, the student may not be able to meet the requirements of a medical degree successfully.

Approved by SOM Executive and Policy Committee on March 2024  
Appendix: MD Program Technical Standards Attestation Form



# PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

ADMISSIONS OFFICE

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** PHSU MD Program Candidates and Students

**FROM:** Admissions Office

**SUBJECT:** Technical Standards Policy, MD Program

Enclosed you will find the Technical Standards Policy for the MD Program. We request you carefully read this policy, sign, detach this page and return it to the Admissions Office. If you have any questions, please contact the Admissions Office.

## CERTIFICATION

I have read and understood Ponce Health Sciences University- School of Medicine Policy on Technical Standards. I hereby certify by my signature, that to the best of my knowledge, I comply with all the requirements stated in the policy. I understand that I am expected to meet these technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation.

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Name (Print)

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Signature

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Date