Medical University of South Carolina College of Medicine
Technical Standards for Admission, Retention, and Graduation

Applicants to the College of Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina are selected for admission based on their academic, personal, and extracurricular attributes. Applicants must also have the intellectual, physical and emotional capabilities to meet the requirements of the curriculum and of a successful medical career.

The curriculum of the College of Medicine has been designed to provide a general professional education leading to the MD degree and to prepare students to enter graduate medical training in a wide variety of medical specialties and subspecialties. All candidates for admission to, and all candidates for the MD degree at the College of Medicine, should possess sufficient intellectual capacity, physical ability, emotional stability, interpersonal sensitivity, and communication skills to acquire and apply the scientific knowledge, interpersonal and technical competencies, professional attitudes, and clinical abilities required to pursue any pathway to graduate medical education and to enter the independent practice of medicine. All candidates should be aware that the academic and clinical responsibilities of medical students may, at times, require their presence during day and evening hours, seven days per week.

The MUSC College of Medicine will consider for admission and/or continuation any applicant who meets its academic and nonacademic criteria and who demonstrates the ability to perform skills and meet the standards listed in this document, with or without reasonable accommodations, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The MUSC College of Medicine believes that all applicants must possess the intellectual, physical and emotional capabilities necessary to undertake the curriculum, in its entirety, in a reasonably independent manner without having to rely on the assistance of others or intermediaries, and that all applicants must be able to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. All applicants for admission, both those with and without disabilities, are expected to be competitive with others in the applicant pool in academic, personal and extracurricular attributes. The institutional policy is to make admissions decisions on a case-by-case basis and on the basis of each applicant’s qualifications to contribute to the MUSC College of Medicine’s educational mission. For purposes of this document and unless otherwise defined, the term “applicant” or “candidate” means applicants for admission to medical school as well as enrolled medical students who are candidates for promotion and graduation.

All candidates for admission must fulfill the minimum requirements for admission and all candidates for the MD degree must complete the required courses and clerkships as indicated in the College of Medicine Bulletin. Attendance is considered an essential part of the curriculum and, where applicable, is required.

The following technical standards specify the attributes considered essential for completing medical school training and for enabling each graduate to enter residency and clinical practice. These standards, along with the academic standards established by the faculty, describe the essential functions that applicants must consistently demonstrate to meet the requirements of a general medical education, and are pre-requisites for entrance, continuation, promotion, and graduation.

All candidates for admission and all candidates for the MD degree should possess abilities and skills in the five functional areas described below, and must have the physical and emotional stamina and capacity to function in a competent manner, and consistent with these standards, in the classroom,
clinical and laboratory settings, including settings that may involve heavy workloads, long hours and stressful situations:

1. **Observation:** A candidate must be able to obtain a medical history and perform physical and mental examinations with a wide variety of patients. Candidates must be able to observe patients accurately, both close at hand and at distance. Observation requires the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing, and other sensory modalities. A candidate must be able to conduct tests and perform laboratory work, observe demonstrations, collect data, and participate in basic sciences, including, but not limited to physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations in humans, microbiologic cultures and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. Candidates should be able to learn and perform basic laboratory studies and read electrocardiograms and radiologic images.

2. **Communication:** A candidate must be able to establish appropriate relationships with a wide range of faculty members, professional colleagues, and patients. Candidates should possess the personal qualities of integrity, empathy, concern for the welfare of others, interest and motivation. Candidates should also possess the ability to work as an effective member of a health care team. A candidate must be able to speak, to hear, to read, to write, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, to describe changes in mood, activity, posture and behavior, and to perceive nonverbal communications. Candidates should be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in the English language in oral and written form with all members of the health care team.

3. **Motor:** A candidate must be mobile with or without assisted devices within the clinical environment. Candidates must have sufficient exteroceptive sense (touch, pain, and temperature), proprioceptive sense (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory), and motor function to carry out the requirements of the physical examination. Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic operations. Candidates should be able to use effectively, in a coordinated manner, those standard instruments necessary for a physical examination (e.g., stethoscope, otoscope, sphygmomanometer, ophthalmoscope, and reflex hammer). Candidates should be able to execute motor movements required to provide general and emergency treatment to patients, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers; such actions require coordination of both fine and gross muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision. Candidates should be able to perform a complete physical exam of patients, including a genitourinary exam.

4. **Intellectual: Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** Candidates should be able to ultimately make logical diagnostic and therapeutic judgments. A candidate must have the ability to make measurements, calculate and reason; analyze, integrate and synthesize data; and to problem-solve. Candidates should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. Candidates should be able to integrate rapidly, consistently, and accurately all data received by whatever sense(s) employed.

5. **Behavior and Social Attributes:** Candidates must possess the emotional health required for the full use of their intellectual abilities; the exercise of good judgment; the prompt completion of all
responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients; and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, patients' families, and professional colleagues. A candidate must have the ability to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. Candidates must be able to adapt to changing environments, be flexible, and to function in the face of ambiguities inherent in the clinical situation. Candidates must demonstrate their willingness to care for a diverse patient population with a wide range of backgrounds and characteristics.

In addition to the abilities and skills set forth above, candidates must possess the general physical health necessary for performing the duties of a medical student and physician in training without endangering the lives of patients and/or colleagues with whom the student might have contact. Candidates whose performance is impaired by use of alcohol or other substances are not suitable candidates for admission, continuation, promotion or graduation.

Technological compensation can be made in certain of these areas, but a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. The use of a trained intermediary, a person trained to perform essential skills on behalf of the candidate, or a person used such that a candidate's judgment must be mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation, is not permitted.

**Process for Assessing Compliance with the Technical Standards Prior to Matriculation**

Applicants are required to attest at the time they accept an offer to matriculate that they meet the Medical University of South Carolina College of Medicine’s Technical Standards, and thereafter must attest on an annual basis that they continue to meet the Standards. These Standards are not intended to deter any student who might be able to complete the requirements of the curriculum with reasonable accommodations. Requests from applicants for reasonable accommodations in meeting the Technical Standards will be reviewed and considered by the committee in the College of Medicine that reviews requests. For additional information about the College of Medicine's process for assessing an applicant’s compliance with the Technical Standards, the Office of Student Affairs should be contacted.