

# Technical Standards for Matriculation, Progression, and Graduation

## University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences

### Overview

The University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences (UND SMHS) has a responsibility to society to graduate the best possible healthcare providers. All graduates of this institution must use professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes to function in a wide variety of health care settings and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. The technical standards are designed to ensure the graduation of capable, well rounded and appropriately trained health care providers. (Each professional program may have additional technical standards specific to the requirements of the program.) In order to fulfill this responsibility, UND SMHS has established six areas of competency that must be sufficiently developed to participate in, and to graduate from a professional program.

### Competency Areas:

1. Health Care/Scientific Knowledge
2. Clinical Skills
3. Ethical and Professional Behavior
4. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
5. Lifelong Learning
6. Healthcare Systems-based Practice and Improvement

The educational programs offered at UNDSMHS are academically rigorous with the structured broad general training that is intended to produce "undifferentiated healthcare providers." The school's academic standards and technical standards are intended to support that model. Whereas a truly undifferentiated healthcare provider may not be achievable, the standards attempt to ensure that graduates of the school possess the background to pursue virtually any area of specialty. Thus all students must meet the academic standards and the technical standards to matriculate, to progress through the curriculum, and to meet the requirements for graduation.

*Academic standards* refer to acceptable demonstrations of mastery in various disciplines, before matriculation and after, as judged by faculty members, examinations, and other measurements of performance. Every effort is made to meet the academic needs of the health science student within the professional program. When a student's ability to perform the technical standards is compromised, the student must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to perform the specified tasks. The following technical standards describe the basic competencies essential to successful completion of healthcare programs at UND SMHS.

Beyond the academic standards, students must demonstrate the following technical standards **with or without accommodations**. It is the student's responsibility to identify/disclose any disabilities if requesting any needed accommodations.

### Technical Standards and Capacity

In order for a student to adequately address the six competency areas noted earlier, he/she must possess the requisite capacities/abilities in the following broad areas:

#### 1. Perception/Observation

To achieve the required competencies in the classroom setting, in the clinical setting, and in the small group setting, students must be able to perceive, assimilate, and integrate information from a variety

of sources. Students must be able to perceive and appropriately interpret nonverbal communications.

## 2. Communication

Students must be able to skillfully communicate through oral, written, and electronic means (in English) with faculty members, health care team members, patients, families, and other students in order to elicit, convey, and clarify information; create rapport; and work collaboratively. Students must be able to clearly speak and hear in order to effectively communicate sensitively with patients, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds: this includes, but is not limited to the ability to establish rapport with patients and effectively communicate judgments and treatment information.

## 3. Functional Activities

Students must possess sufficient motor, tactile, and sensory functions in order to attend and participate in activities which are part of the curriculum. This includes production of written and oral communication commensurate with the profession. Depending on the health care profession at the SMHS, students are expected to assess patients using all appropriate evaluation tools, diagnostic maneuvers and procedures perform basic laboratory procedures, and tests, provide patient care appropriate to the circumstances. Students are expected to function in a wide variety of patient care settings, including independent and potentially rapid paced/high demand environments. Motor, tactile, sensory, and proprioceptive abilities are necessary to perform a complete and thorough assessment and intervention plan with the patient. Students must also be able to safely and efficiently utilize equipment and materials necessary to assist patients.

## 4. Professional and Ethical Behavior

Students must consistently demonstrate the core attributes of professional behavior appropriate to the healthcare field, including commitment to excellence, honesty, and integrity, respect for others, empathy and compassion, professional responsibility, social responsibility, and altruism. Students must exhibit the ability to meet the challenges of any medical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems.

It is the student's responsibility to attend and be able to travel to and from classes and clinical assignments in a timely manner. He/she must possess the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames.

Students must adhere to the policies of the State Board of Higher Education, University, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the healthcare program, and the clinical sites. This includes matters ranging from professional dress and behavior to attending the program's academic schedule which may differ from the University's academic calendar and be subject to change at any time.

Students need to take the initiative to address and direct their own learning. They are required to work cooperatively and collaboratively with peers on assigned projects, and participate willingly in the supervisory process involving evaluation of abilities and acquisition of skills. The students will take initiative in becoming a contributory member of a health care team as appropriate for their program and level of education.

## 5. Cognition

Students must demonstrate critical thinking skills so that they can problem solve, understand abstract ideas, and synthesize information presented in the classroom, laboratory and clinical settings. Students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, retain and apply facts, concepts, and data related to the art and science of healthcare. Students must have the cognitive capacity to appropriately utilize technology in the classroom and in the clinical setting. They must also be able to analyze three-dimensional and spatial relationships. Sound judgment and ethical reasoning as well as clinical reasoning are essential. Students must possess the above abilities to reach diagnostic and therapeutic judgments.

## 6. Behavioral and Social

Students must demonstrate emotional stability and be capable of developing mature and effective interpersonal relationships with other students, faculty, and healthcare workers. Students must be able to tolerate physically and emotionally taxing workloads and function effectively under stress. Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, accept and integrate constructive criticism, and function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the educational and clinical settings. Students must be able to engage in personal reflection and self-awareness as a mechanism of effective personal growth, development and lifelong learning.

NOTE: Each clinical facility may have additional technical standards that may affect a student's ability to complete clinical placements. It is the responsibility of the student to request necessary accommodations through university procedures.

If any health sciences applicants or students have a question about whether he or she can meet these standards due to functional limitations from a disability, he or she should contact Disability Services for Students (DSS), the campus resource for confidential discussion and support regarding reasonable accommodations:

Disability Services for Students  
Room 190 McCannel Hall Stop 9040  
Grand Forks, ND 58202 - 9040  
dss@und.edu  
701 - 777-3425 Voice/TDD  
Fax 701 - 777 - 4170

## Department of Sports Medicine Technical Standards

These skills apply to all candidates for admission and students within the professional program. The Department of Sports Medicine (DSM) must ensure that patients are not placed in jeopardy by students with impaired intellectual, physical, or emotional functions. Prospective and current students will be evaluated on their academic record in addition to their physical and emotional capacities to meet the full requirements of the curricula and to graduate and practice as skilled and effective professionals.

A candidate of or student in the curriculum must have the abilities and skills to perform in a reasonably independent manner. While attempts to develop creative ways of opening the curriculum to competitive qualified individuals with a disability is possible, the DSM must maintain the integrity of its curriculum and preserve those standards deemed essential to the education of a student earning an Athletic Training degree.

To facilitate compliance with the Technical Standards developed by the DSM, the following skills are set forth as examples. These are not intended to be all inclusive, rather present a basic understanding of each standard.

1. **Motor (gross and fine):** Candidates/students must have sufficient motor function to perform evaluation, treatment, and emergency procedures without injury to the patient or self. Students must be able to use their abilities to move to successfully complete classroom requirements, perform a physical examination, and provide physical therapy intervention for standard treatment, as well as to provide care during emergency situations. The following specific movement abilities are required:
  - When not participating in clinical education, ability to sit between 2 to 10 hours daily.
  - When not participating in clinical education, ability to stand for 1 to 2 hours daily.

- When not participating in clinical education, ability to walk intermittently for up to 2 hours daily.
  - When participating in clinical education, ability to stand or walk for at least 7 hours daily and to sit for at least 1 hour daily – modifiable according to the schedule of the specific facility to which the student is assigned.
  - Frequently lift items less than 10 pounds and occasionally lift items between 10 and 50 pounds.
  - Carry up to 25 pounds while walking up to 50 feet.
  - Frequently twist, bend, stoop, and squat.
  - Frequently move from one location to another and from one position to another at a speed that permits safe handling of classmates and patients. Handling a workload efficiently and safely requires the ability to respond promptly with appropriate movement patterns.
  - Frequently use the hands with repetitive motions using a simple grasp and using a firm grasp and manual dexterity skills.
  - Frequently coordinate verbal and manual activities with large movement activities.
  - Ability to assess strength of patient.
  - Ambulation ability and balance sufficient to aid patients with or without assistive devices during transfers and gait training.
  - Upper and lower extremity strength and upright posture sufficient to perform patient evaluation/intervention, respond to emergency situations, and perform CPR.
2. **Visual Integration:** Adequate vision to be able to:
- Distinguish changes in symmetry, color, texture of body structures.
  - Determine range of motion, edema, joint effusion, etc.
  - Integrate examination and intervention techniques.
  - Read charts, graphs, instrument scales, etc. in whatever form presented.
  - Observe a patient at a distance and close at hand.
3. **Sensation:** Enhanced ability in sensory skills is essential for an athletic trainer. Tactile and proprioceptive abilities are necessary to perform a complete and thorough examination of and intervention for the patient including:
- Changes in skin temperature, texture.
  - Palpation of body structures, distinguish body parts by touch.
  - Assessment of arthro- and osteokinematic joint movement.
  - Ability to provide appropriate resistance, timing, pressure, etc. during examination and intervention techniques.
4. **Cognitive Skills:** The candidate/student must have the:
- Ability to problem-solve one or more problems within specific timeframes (which are often very short).
  - Ability to function effectively using all necessary cognitive and physical skills under normal working conditions and timeframes.
  - Ability to meet deadlines.
5. **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** The candidate/student must possess the abilities to critically think and problem solve both in the classroom and in clinical settings. These skills include:
- Ability to integrate examination findings into a comprehensive intervention strategy for the patient.
  - Ability to assimilate large amounts of material communicated through lecture, discussion, readings, demonstrations, and practice.
  - Ability to utilize statistical information to interpret published reports regarding efficacy of care and apply those findings in a rational manner.

6. **Communication:** The candidate/student must be able to:
  - Speak, hear, observe to gain information, examine patients, describe status of patient, changes in mood, activity, posture, etc.
  - Perceive non-verbal communication.
  - Speak, read, and write in English in an effective and professional manner to communicate to all members of the health care team.
  - Maintain appropriate written records.
  
7. **Behavioral and Social:** The candidate/student must:
  - Demonstrate sufficient emotional and mental health to fully utilize his/her intellectual and motor abilities.
  - Exercise sound judgment in all situations, including under stress.
  - Be able to promptly complete all duties involved in examination, evaluation, intervention, and discharge planning.
  - Be able to develop mature/sensitive/empathetic relationships with the patient, family, caregivers, and other members of the health care team.
  - Have the ability to cope with and tolerate heavy workloads, demanding patients, life-threatening clinical situations, rapidly changing environments and conditions; display flexibility; and function appropriately with the uncertainties involved in patient care.
  - Maintain alertness and concentration during an 8- to 12-hour work period.
  - Recognize and respond appropriately to potentially hazardous situations.
  - Be able to work independently and with others under time constraints.
  - Prioritize requests and work concurrently on at least two different tasks.
  - Project image of professionalism at all times.

Students who need accommodations should contact Disability Support Services at 701-777-3425 or refer to their website at: <http://www.und.edu/dept/dss/toc.htm> for more information on the services offered at the University of North Dakota.

## Technical Standards Reply

After reading and understanding the technical standards, this sheet should be signed and returned to:

Steven Westereng, MA, ATC, LAT, CSCS  
Chair, Department of Sports Medicine  
School of Medicine and Health Sciences  
1301 N. Columbia Road, Stop 9037  
University of North Dakota  
Grand Forks, 58202-9013  
(701)777-3886

**As a candidate for selection into the University of North Dakota Athletic Training Education Program understand and verify that I have read and understand the technical standards of the program as listed above. I believe that I meet these standards. I understand that if I do not meet these standards that I may not be admitted to the program or that I may request possible accommodations through the Office of Disability Student Services located in McCannell Hall (777-3425).**

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_