

Technical Standards for Admission, Advancement, and Graduation

In accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act of 1973 (PL 93-112 and incorporating the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA PL 101-336) enacted by Congress in 1990, the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy has adopted **minimal technical standards** for the assessment of admission, scholastic advancement, and graduation for its professional degree (Doctor of Pharmacy) program. The West Virginia University does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities who apply for admission to the Pharm.D. degree program or who are enrolled as student pharmacists. Otherwise, qualified applicants shall not be excluded from admission or participation in the School of Pharmacy's educational programs and activities solely by reason of their disability or medical condition. The School of Pharmacy provides reasonable accommodation in its academic program to qualified individuals with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is one that does not require substantial program modification or lower academic standards. Learning disabilities are included under this policy.

Because the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree signifies that the holder is a pharmacist prepared for entry into the practice of pharmacy, it follows that graduates must have the knowledge, skills, and demeanor to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to conduct a wide spectrum of pharmaceutical care activities.

Candidates for admission, progression, and graduation in the Pharm.D. program must have the functional use of the senses of vision and hearing. Candidates' pharmaceutical skills will also be lessened without the functional use of the senses of equilibrium, smell, and taste. Additionally, they must have sufficient motor function to permit them to carry out the activities described in the Sections that follow. They must be able to consistently, quickly, and accurately integrate all information received by whatever sense(s) employed, and they must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data.

A candidate for the Pharm.D. degree must have abilities and skills of five varieties including observation, communication, motor, conceptual, integrative and quantitative, and behavioral and social. Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in certain of these areas, but a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. The use of a trained intermediary means that a candidate's judgment must be mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation.

- I. **Observation:** The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic, pharmaceutical and applied sciences. A candidate must also be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand, which necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision.
- II. **Communication:** A candidate must be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to exchange information and perceive nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, caregivers, and other healthcare providers. Communication includes not only speech but reading and writing in English. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the healthcare team.

- III. **Motor:** Candidates must have sufficient motor function to prepare pharmaceuticals, prepare compound and dispense medications, prepare sterile dosage forms, and perform selected aspects of patient assessment (e.g. blood glucose, blood pressure).

A candidate must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide or direct the general care and emergency treatment to patients. Such motor actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

- IV. **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem solving requires all these intellectual abilities. In addition, the candidate should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

- V. **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** A candidate must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the care of patients, the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, their caregivers, and other healthcare providers. Candidates must be able to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that should be assessed during the admissions and education processes.

In its evaluation of applicants to the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy, the Committee on Admissions will approach each applicant with the following questions in mind. When an applicant does not meet a nonacademic standard as defined above, and when this would in the professional judgment of the Committee not satisfy the School of Pharmacy's objectives for the student in pharmaceutical care, education, and research, such opinion will be documented in the minutes of the Committee on Admissions.

The questions are not designed to disqualify applicants, but rather to give the Committee on Admissions more complete information about an applicant's ability to meet the nonacademic standards adopted by the School of Pharmacy.

1. Is the individual able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic, pharmaceutical, and applied sciences?
2. Is the individual able to analyze, synthesize, solve problems, and reach therapeutic judgments?
3. Does the individual have sufficient use of the senses of vision and hearing?
4. Can the individual reasonably be expected to relate to patients and establish sensitive, professional relationships with patients?
5. Can the individual reasonably be expected to communicate with the patient and to healthcare providers with accuracy, clarity, and efficiency?
6. Can the individual reasonably be expected to learn and prepare, compound and dispense pharmaceuticals, prepare sterile products, and perform selected aspects of patient assessment?
7. Can the individual reasonably be expected to display good judgment in the care of patients?

8. Can the individual reasonably be expected to perform with appropriate actions in emergency situations?
9. Can the individual reasonably be expected to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior?
10. Can the individual reasonably be expected to possess the perseverance, diligence, and consistency to complete the pharmacy school curriculum and enter the practice of pharmacy?

It should be noted that Technical Standards are reassessed at the regular meetings of the Academic Standards Committee and as reported by the faculty to the Committee. Should a student be found deficient in one or more of Standards, every effort will be made to mitigate the impact of the deficiency and allow the student to progress. There may be exceptional circumstances when the Committee recommends separation from the program due to a deficiency. Should a recommendation of program separation be made, the student shall be allowed due process through the appeals process outlined in the WVU School of Pharmacy Policy on Academic and Professional Standards.