**POLICY NAME:** TECHNICAL STANDARDS

<table>
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<th>RESPONSIBILITY For Development/Review:</th>
<th>University Admin</th>
<th>Dept.Chair/ Program Director</th>
<th>Academic Director</th>
<th>Clinical Director</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Medical Director</th>
<th>Administrative Secretary</th>
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**APPROVED BY:** Faculty

**DATE CREATED:** 5/17/2013

**DATE REVISED:** 1/9/2019

**REVIEWED:** Annually 1/9/2019

**LOGIN: (IF REQUIRED)**
- MU Employee Network Sign In
- MU Student Network Sign In

**PASSWORD: (IF REQUIRED)**
- MU Employee Network Password
- MU Student Network Password

**SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTS:** DPAS Student Handbook

**OCCURRENCE:**
- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Yearly
- As Needed

**PURPOSE:**
To define the abilities, aptitude and skills the candidate must have in the areas: observation, communication, motor, intellectual conceptual, integrative and quantitative, behavioral/social and physical demands.

**POLICY:**
The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) requires all Physician Assistant (PA) programs to publish technical standards for program admissions. The American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) assembled an Executive Council in 1979 to examine the Department of Health, Education and Welfare regulations relating to Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Executive Council recommended institutional guidelines addressing technical standards for the medical school admissions process. Technical Standards that are defined in Section 504 of this Act and refer to all nonacademic admissions criteria, these guidelines have been used to address technical standards in physician assistant education essential to participation in the program.

PA students must have the intellectual, ethical, physical and emotional capabilities required to undertake the entire curriculum and be able to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The standards describe essential functions that the student must demonstrate to meet the requirements of PA education; these standards are prerequisites for matriculation, continuation and graduation from the PA program. Furthermore, the use of an intermediary, a person trained to perform essential skills on behalf of the student, is not permitted.
Mercyhurst University physician assistant students must possess the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data. They must have functional use of the senses of vision, hearing, equilibrium and taste. Exteroceptor (touch, pain and temperature) and proprioceptor (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis and vibratory) senses must be sufficiently intact to permit them to complete the activities described below. PA students must have sufficient motor function capabilities to meet the demands of the PA program and the ability to care for patients.

The following technical standards are adapted from the AAMC guidelines. Mercyhurst University physician assistant students must have the ability, aptitude and skills in these areas: observation, communication, motor, intellectual conceptual, integrative and quantitative, behavioral/social and physical demands.

1. **Observation**
   The candidate must be able to observe required demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to anatomic dissection, microscopic studies, and patient demonstrations. A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation requires the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing and somatic sensation.

2. **Communication**
   The candidate must be able to speak, to hear and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive non-verbal communication. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech, but also reading and writing in English. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written forms with the various disciplines in health care.

3. **Motor Abilities**
   The candidate must have sufficient motor function to carry out basic laboratory techniques and to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers, perform dissection of a human cadaver and have sufficient motor ability to use a microscope. The candidate should be able to perform a complete physical examination (including pelvic and rectal examination); diagnostic procedures (e.g. venipuncture and basic laboratory tests (e.g. urinalysis). The candidate must be able to perform motor movements required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients, such examples of treatment reasonably required of physician assistant students may include cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the suturing of simple wounds, assisting in surgical operations and the performance of simple, general obstetrical and gynecological procedures. These actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch, vision and hearing.

4. **Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative**
   Problem solving is a critical skill required of physician assistants, this requires that a candidate has the ability to learn, retrieve, analyze, sequence, organize, synthesize and integrate information efficiently and reason effectively. In addition
the candidate should possess the ability to measure and calculate accurately, to perceive three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes
The candidate must have the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, the ability to exercise good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities connected to the diagnosis and care of patients and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients and family members and health care providers. Candidates must be able to work effectively as a member of the health-care team. Candidates must also be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the realm of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, collegiality, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admission and education processes.

Physician assistant students are reviewed individually and on a case basis using the standards as described. Mercyhurst University abides by federal, state and local law in admissions, and all services/programs provided. Mercyhurst University complies with federal, state and local legislation and regulations regarding nondiscrimination. Mercyhurst University does not discriminate in the admissions process or educational program against anyone on the basis of the individual’s age, race, color, religion, sex, creed, citizenship status, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, familial status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status or any other legally protected characteristic or because of any individual’s legally protected activities.

Students with Disabilities
Mercyhurst University is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations should consult with the Learning Differences Office to discuss eligibility for services or submit the online accommodation request to the Director of Equal Opportunity Programs (DEOP) at ada@mercyhurst.edu.

For students requiring accommodations for learning differences, it is the policy of Mercyhurst University that it is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation of his/her disability to the DEOP.

Students are advised to request accommodations at the time of acceptance or prior to the start of the semester. Students may request accommodations at any time throughout the program, however accommodations are not retroactive.