

## Essential Functions Required of Students Entering The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School

The MD degree is a broad undifferentiated degree attesting to general knowledge in medicine and the basic skills required for the practice of medicine. Essential abilities and characteristics required for completion of the MD degree consist of certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities and sufficient mental and emotional stability to assure that candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation are able to complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of medical training, with or without reasonable accommodation.

UT Southwestern Medical School intends for its graduates to become competent and compassionate physicians who are capable of entering residency training (graduate medical education) and meeting all requirements for medical licensure. UT Southwestern Medical School is committed to educating and training future leaders in medicine, many of whom will pursue careers in academic medicine. For purposes of this document and unless otherwise defined, the term “candidate” means candidates for admission to the MD program as well as enrolled medical students who are candidates for promotion and graduation.

The following abilities and characteristics are defined as technical standards, which, in conjunction with academic standards established by the faculty, are essential functions of the Program and therefore requirements for admission, promotion, and graduation. Delineation of technical standards is required for the accreditation of U.S. medical schools by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. Although these standards serve to delineate the necessary physical and mental abilities of all candidates, they are not intended to deter any candidate for whom reasonable accommodation will allow the fulfillment of the complete curriculum. Candidates with questions regarding technical standards are encouraged to contact the Learning Specialist in Student Academic Support Services immediately to begin to address what types of reasonable accommodations may be considered for development to achieve these standards as outlined in EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities. Admission to UT Southwestern Medical School is conditional on the candidate’s having the ability to satisfy these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation.

UT Southwestern Medical School has an ethical responsibility for the safety of patients with whom students and graduates will come in contact. Although students learn and work under the supervision of the faculty, students interact with patients throughout their medical school education. Patient safety and well-being are therefore major factors in establishing essential functions involving the physical, cognitive, and emotional abilities of candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation. Candidates must have the physical and emotional stamina and capacity to function in a competent manner in the hospital, classroom, and laboratory settings, including settings that may involve heavy workloads, long hours, and stressful situations.

**Observation:** Candidates must be able to observe demonstrations and participate in experiments of science, including but not limited to such things as dissection of cadavers; examination of specimens in anatomy, pathology and neuroanatomy laboratories; and microscopic study of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. Candidates must be able to accurately observe patients and assess findings. Candidates must also possess functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensation. Observation is enhanced by the functional use of the sense of smell. They must be able to obtain a medical history and perform a complete physical examination in order to integrate findings based on these observations and to develop an appropriate diagnostic and treatment plan.

**Communication:** Candidates must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently orally and in writing with patients, their families, and members of the health care team. They must be able to obtain a medical history in a timely fashion, interpret non-verbal aspects of communication, and establish therapeutic relationships with patients. Candidates also must be able to read and comprehend written material. Candidates must be able to record information accurately and clearly, and communicate effectively in English with other health care professionals in a variety of patient settings.

**Motor Function:** Candidates must possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers. They must have sufficient motor function to obtain data from patients using tactile, auditory, and visual maneuvers. They must be able to respond to emergency situations in a timely manner and provide general and emergency care. They must adhere to universal precaution measures and meet safety standards applicable to inpatient and outpatient settings and other clinical activities.

**Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative & Quantitative abilities:** Candidates must have sufficient cognitive (mental) abilities and effective learning techniques to assimilate the detailed and complex information presented in the medical student curriculum. They must be able to learn through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, classroom instruction; small group, team and collaborative activities; individual study; preparation and presentation of reports; and use of computer technology. Candidates must be able to memorize, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information across modalities. They must recognize and draw conclusions about three-dimensional spatial relationships and logical sequential relationships among events. They must be able to formulate and test hypotheses that enable effective and timely problem-solving in diagnosis and treatment of patients in a variety of clinical modalities.

**Behavioral and Social Attributes:** Candidates must demonstrate the maturity and emotional stability required for full use of their intellectual abilities. They must accept responsibility for learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, as well as the administrative responsibilities required of healthcare personnel. They must understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and function within both the law and ethical standards of the medical profession. Candidates must be able to work effectively, respectfully, and professionally as part of the healthcare team, and to interact with patients, their families, and health care personnel in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner. They must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and long work hours, to function effectively under stress, and to display flexibility and adaptability to changing environments. They must be capable of regular, reliable, and punctual attendance at classes and in regard to their clinical responsibilities. Candidates must be able to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes. It is expected that minimum accommodation will be requested with regards to this set of standards.

**Ethical and Legal Standards:** A candidate must demonstrate professional demeanor and behavior, and must perform in an ethical manner in all dealings with peers, faculty, staff, and patients. Candidates must treat all patients equally without regard to ethnicity, race, gender, religion or any other attribute. Candidates must meet the legal standards to be licensed to practice medicine in the State of Texas. Students have a continuing duty to self-report to UT Southwestern any arrest, criminal complaint, charge, bill of information, indictment, citation in lieu of arrest, issuance of a protective order, no contest plea, guilty plea, plea bargain, deferred adjudication, or conviction that occurs any time after the date of acceptance, excluding minor traffic offenses punishable only by fine. Reports must be made in writing and submitted to the Vice Provost and Senior Associate Dean for Education within ten (10) days of the incident, irrespective of the status or final disposition of any criminal justice or court proceeding or the pendency of any appeal. This self-reporting requirement applies regardless of where the incident occurred (on or off campus, in Texas or another jurisdiction) or whether the University is in session at the time. Failure to self-report in compliance with this policy will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## Process for Requesting Reasonable Accommodations Due to Disability

As stated above, admission, promotion and graduation at UT Southwestern Medical School are conditional on the candidate's willingness and ability to satisfy the technical standards and essential functions of the program, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Admitted candidates who have a disability and need accommodations should initiate discussions with the Learning Specialist as soon as the offer of admission is received and accepted. It is the responsibility of a candidate with a disability to contact the Learning Specialist, provide sufficiently current information documenting the general nature and extent of his/her disability, and the functional limitations proposed to be accommodated. Evaluating and facilitating accommodation requests is a collaborative effort between the candidate, UT Southwestern Medical School, and the Learning Specialist.

**Please check below and sign:**

**In order to matriculate at UT Southwestern Medical School, you must be able to perform the essential functions as determined by the faculty, with or without reasonable accommodations due to disability. Please read the enclosed Essential Functions for UT Southwestern Medical School Degree Candidates and respond to the following:**

- ( ) **I can perform** the specified Essential Functions for my academic program without reasonable accommodations.
- ( ) **I cannot perform** the specified Essential Functions for my academic program with accommodations and I wish to **REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS** due to disability. Students who check this box will receive a formal request packet and instructions from the Office of Student Academic Support Services. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Arlene Sachs, Director of Student Academic Support Services, at 214-648-9590.

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Revised 2019*