Technical Standards

PURPOSE: Graduates must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. Candidates for the Medical Degree must have observation, communication, motor, conceptual, integrative, quantitative, behavioral and social abilities and skills which are essential to complete the educational program.

POLICY: Qualified and accepted applicants to Cooper Medical School of Rowan University must be able to complete all requirements inherent in and leading to the Doctor of Medicine degree. CMSRU will not discriminate against individuals with disabilities, and shall provide reasonable accommodation and support to qualified disabled individuals. Technological compensation can be made for some handicaps in certain areas but a candidate must be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. CMSRU will attempt to maximize the opportunity for success of every applicant and student while maintaining the integrity of the educational program and the ability of the program to accommodate the individual’s particular disability and/or handicap. CMSRU will provide an equal opportunity for an individual with a disability to participate in the application process and be considered for enrollment. Decisions to offer acceptance to the medical school will include the ability of the applicant to meet all of the technical standards for the MD degree.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all applicants and medical students at CMSRU.

DEFINITIONS:
Discrimination includes; adversely limiting, segregating, or classifying an applicant or student because of a disability; utilizing standards, criteria, or methods of administration that result in discrimination on the basis of disability; denying equal educational benefits or opportunities because the applicant or student has a relationship or association with an individual with a known disability; the employer not making reasonable accommodations.

PROCEDURE:
CMSRU is committed to making reasonable accommodations for its students with disabilities who are capable of completing all requirements and fulfilling all responsibilities leading to the Medical Degree. CMSRU will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and will adhere to AAMC Technical Standards. All students that are invited for an interview will be sent a copy of the technical standards for the admission of applicants.

Upon receipt of an offer of acceptance, each successful applicant will be required to file an affidavit with the CMSRU that attests to meeting these standards or successfully meeting them with reasonable accommodations.

A. Technical Standards
   1. Summary
      The Association of American Medical College’s Advisory Panel on Technical Standards notes candidates for the MD degree must have the functional use of the senses of vision and
hearing. Candidates’ diagnostic skills will be lessened without the functional use of the senses of equilibrium and smell. Candidates must have sufficient exteroceptive sense (touch, pain and temperature), and sufficient motor functions to permit them to carry out the activities described in the sections that follow. They must be able to integrate consistently, quickly and accurately 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 MD degree must have abilities and skills of five varieties, including: observation; communication; motor; intellectual-conceptual, integrative and quantitative; and behavioral and social. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to qualified individuals with documented disabilities, although students should still be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. These accommodations may include technological adaptations or use of trained intermediaries. However, no disability can be reasonably accommodated with a technological adaptation or a trained intermediary that provides cognitive support or medical knowledge, substitutes for essential clinical skills, or supplements clinical and ethical judgment. Accommodations may not eliminate program elements.

2. Required Abilities and Skills

I. Observation: The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of micro-organisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision. It is enhanced by the functional use of the sense of smell.

II. Communication: A candidate should be able to speak, to hear and to observe patients in order to elicit both verbal and non-verbal information, and must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with and about patients. Communication therefore includes speech, reading and writing. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with the patient, the patient’s family, and all members of the health care team.

III. Motor: Candidates should have sufficient motor function to carry out basic laboratory techniques and to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. Candidates must be able to perform anatomical dissections. They must have sufficient motor ability to use a microscope. A candidate should have the motor skills which will allow him/her to do basic laboratory tests (urinalysis, gram stain, preparation of a blood smear, etc.), carry out diagnostic procedures (proctoscopy, paracentesis, etc.), perform and read EKGs and read x-rays. A candidate should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physicians are 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, general gynecologic procedures. Such 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, the critical skill demanded of physicians, requires all of 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 physical and 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 diagnosis and care of patients; and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates 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, ability to work within a team, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admission and education process.

B. Accommodation Requests

Any applicant or student who believes that he/she has a disability or handicap which requires a reasonable accommodation with respect to his/her duties and responsibilities should make a request for an accommodation with the Office of Student Affairs by completing a Verification of Medical Documentation for Disability Services form. Requests for accommodations from accepted students will be considered by the Student Needs Committee, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, prior to the applicant's matriculation into the class, or as a visiting student enrolling in an elective at CMSRU. Applicants or admitted students may be required to submit to a medical examination regarding the request and/or fitness for duty. An individual must at all times be able to perform the essential functions. A request for an accommodation must not, in the opinion of the Office of Student Affairs and/or Clerkship or Course Director, fundamentally alter the academic program involved.

Additionally, should the student have or acquire an infectious disease or other condition that could put patients or the public at risk through exposure to the student’s blood or other bodily fluids (e.g. hepatitis, syphilis, tuberculosis, HIV), he or she should notify the Office of Student Affairs immediately.

REFERENCES:
Recommendations of the AAMC Special Advisory Panel on Technical Standards for Medical School Admission (Memorandum #79-4), approved by the AAMC Executive Council on January 18, 1979

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 [ADA], including changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act of 1973 (PL 93-112)