

Technical Standards

The goal of the UTHSC College of Medicine is the broad preparation of students and trainees (residents/fellows) for the practice of medicine. This goal is achieved in part by undergraduate medical education, postgraduate medical education, and preparation for life-long learning. Modern medical education requires that the accumulation of scientific knowledge be accompanied by the simultaneous acquisition of skills and professional attitudes and behavior. Our faculty has the responsibility to graduate the best possible physicians; thus, admission to medical school and residency/fellowship programs is offered to those who present the highest qualifications for the study and practice of medicine.

Applicants to the UTHSC College of Medicine must possess the following general qualities: critical thinking, sound judgment, emotional stability and maturity, empathy, physical and mental stamina and the ability to learn and function in a wide variety of educational settings. In all phases of medical education, students of medicine must use their intellectual ability and must maintain emotional stability, particularly when under stress. Graduates of this College of Medicine must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care.

The Committee on Admissions and Graduate Medical Education maintain that prospective students and trainees must meet certain minimum technical standards. These standards must be maintained throughout a student's or trainee's enrollment and graduation. Students and Trainees must have the following essential functions: motor skills; sensory and observational skills; communication skills; conceptual, integrative and quantitative skills; and behavioral and social skills and professionalism.

Motor Skills

Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. Candidates should be able to execute motor functions necessary to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients.

Sensory and Observational Skills

Candidates must be able to observe demonstrations and participate in experiments as required in the curriculum. They must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance, as well as, close at hand and be able to obtain a medical history directly from the patient, while observing the patient's medical condition. This observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing and other sensory modalities.

Communication Skills

Candidates must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively in oral and written form with patients. These skills must be performed at times in clinical settings when the time available for communication may be limited.

Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Skills

These skills include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis. Problem-solving and diagnosis, the critical skills demanded of physicians, require all these intellectual abilities. In addition, candidates must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

Behavioral and Social Skills and Professionalism

Empathy, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that will be assessed during the admissions process and throughout medical education. Candidates must possess the emotional well-being required for the full use of their intellectual abilities; the exercise of sound 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 tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively when stressed. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainty inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.

In summary, the mission of the College of Medicine faculty is to prepare students and trainees for the comprehensive practice of medicine. The College of Medicine, in accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, has established the aforementioned essential functions of medical students and physicians. The College of Medicine, through its Graduate Medical Education Programs, will consider for admission, applicants who demonstrate the ability to perform or learn to perform the essential skills listed in this document. The College must ensure that patients are not placed in jeopardy by the students or physicians with substantially impaired intellectual, physical or emotional functions. Students and trainees will be judged not only on their scholastic accomplishments, but also on their physical and emotional capacities to meet the full requirements of the school's curriculum and to graduate as skilled and effective practitioners of medicine.