



**Policy No:**

**Responsible Office:** Whiddon College of Medicine—Office of Student Affairs

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**Next Required Review:** TBD

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## Technical Standards Policy for the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine

### 1. Purpose

The education of a physician requires mastery not only of medical knowledge and skills but also the ability to practice and apply said knowledge and skills in a variety of clinical settings and within a variety of communities. The Whiddon College of Medicine (Whiddon COM) Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) degree affirms to the public that any recipient, therefore, has the general knowledge and skills to function in an environment appropriate to the recipient's level of training.

The essential abilities and characteristics described herein are defined as the technical standards for the Whiddon COM M.D. degree-seeking students and are required to be met either without or with reasonable accommodations for admission, retention, promotion, and graduation. In order for candidates to be fully informed of expectations for the rigorous training, candidates for the M.D. degree must attest to the validity of these standards prior to Phase I—preclerkship—and Phase III—clerkship—medical training.

The Whiddon COM is able to train physicians with disabilities and, in conjunction with the University of South Alabama's Center for Educational Accessibility and Disability Resources (CEADR), provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. The responsibility of initiating and applying for accommodations for qualified disabilities remains with the candidate/matriculated/enrolled student (hereafter collectively referred to as *student*). While the Whiddon COM Office of Student Affairs can facilitate the introduction of the student to CEADR, the request for accommodations and documentation necessary for review must originate with the student. Only those students who have followed the procedures designated by CEADR and subsequently granted reasonable academic modifications, accommodations, or auxiliary services (hereafter collectively referred to as *accommodations*) will be considered as receiving accommodations. Accommodations are not applied retroactively, and a disability-related explanation will not negate poor performance in the academic or clinical learning environment.

Once a student is granted accommodations through CEADR, the accommodations must be renewed each semester utilizing CEADR's semester request procedure. Students may complete their semester request for accommodations at any point during a term; however, students are highly encouraged to complete the semester request at the beginning of each semester. Once requested, faculty notification letters are disseminated to directors and instructors in the courses in which the student is registered. Accommodations in the clinical learning environment may be shared with members of the healthcare team if the implementation affects the daily workflow as it impacts patient care.

## **2. Applicability**

The technical standards apply to all Whiddon COM students who choose to enroll as candidates for the M.D. degree and continue their progression through the academic cycle.

## **3. Policy Guidelines**

This section delineates the Technical Standards (3.1-3.5)

### **3.1 Observation**

Candidates must be able to participate in all activities requiring observation and processing of information. These activities include the candidates' ability to perceive and interpret information gained through visual, auditory, and/or tactile delivery methods.

### **3.2 Communication (verbal and non-verbal)**

Candidates must be able to communicate and transmit information effectively and efficiently, as well as demonstrate sensitivity in communication with peers, instructors, staff, patients, caregivers, and healthcare team members. This may include the candidates' ability to assess the need to engage in alternative communication modalities and to perceive non-verbal communications. Candidates must proficiently demonstrate skills in reading and writing to accurately document information both within the academic and clinical learning environments. Both verbal and non-verbal communication and that documented through charting or other recording modalities must be completed without discrimination or bias.

### **3.3 Motor**

Candidates must demonstrate sufficient motor function skills to examine patients and thus elicit information from them, including but not limited to palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. Candidates must also demonstrate the ability to execute movements that would allow the delivery of general and emergent care to the patient, including but not limited to cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medications, drawing blood for laboratory analysis, applications of pressure, assessment of airways, suturing of simple wounds, and performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers.

### **3.4 Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, Quantitative, and Reasoning Abilities**

Candidates must demonstrate analytical, conceptual, integrative, quantitative, and reasoning skills necessary for clinical problem-solving to provide the best clinical care to the patient and community served. In utilizing the aforementioned skills, candidates must be able to adapt to changes in the educational and clinical learning environments and changes in learning modalities. Moreover, candidates must be able to work with a diverse team, including persons with whom they may have different beliefs.

### **3.5 Behavioral, Ethical, Emotional, Legal, and Social Attributes**

Candidates must have the emotional health and demonstrated maturity required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, including abilities to exercise good judgment to promptly complete all responsibilities required in the learning environment as they relate to their curricular pursuits and the diagnosis and care of patients and to develop sensitive and effective relationships with patients, families and members of the healthcare teams. Candidates must also be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads, display flexibility in the face of change, and function when uncertainties present themselves.

Because the medical profession holds its candidates and practicing physicians to high ethical and moral standards and state and federal laws govern the profession and its practice, candidates must be willing to accept these responsibilities as they relate to their learning, behavior, and practice. Candidates for admission must pass a criminal background check, as required by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). After entering Phase I of medical education, enrolled Whiddon COM students who are arrested, charged, or convicted, or enrolled students who are subject to institutional investigations, must immediately notify the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. Violations of the law or institutional investigations can be escalated to the Whiddon COM Student Promotions and Evaluations Committee (SPEC).

## **4. Procedures**

Candidates must review and attest to the Technical Standards at least during the process of entering Phase 1 of medical education and before beginning clinical training in Phase III.

## **5. Enforcement**

Candidates who are non-compliant with the initial review and attestation or who falsely attest to the Technical Standards must meet with the Assistant Dean for Admissions for the Whiddon COM. Candidates who are non-compliant with the review and attestation prior to beginning the clinical clerkship year or who falsely attest to the standards must meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Cases of non-compliance with the document can be escalated to the SPEC for their review of the demonstrated lack of professionalism.

Notifications that arise during a candidate's admission criminal background check will be referred to the Assistant Dean of Admissions.

Upon entering Phase I of medical education, enrolled Whiddon COM students who are arrested, charged, or convicted, or enrolled students who are subject to institutional investigations, must immediately notify the Associate Dean of Student Affairs of said affair. Violations of the law or institutional investigations can be escalated to the Whiddon COM SPEC.

## **6. Related Documents**

6.1 Technical Standards Attestation

6.2 [Student Promotions and Evaluations Committee Policies](#)