

Mercer University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Technical Standards for Admission, Promotion, and Graduation
Doctor of Pharmacy Program

The mission of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is to prepare its professional and postgraduate students to effectively contribute to and improve healthcare through excellence in patient-centered care and research. These technical standards describe the non-academic abilities and skills required, in addition to academic performance standards, which the College faculty consider essential for admission, promotion, and graduation in the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree program. These standards include skills and attributes that are necessary for the practice of pharmacy.

The College acknowledges Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and PL-336, the 1993 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and is committed to enabling students with identified disabilities by any reasonable means or accommodations to complete the course of study leading to the Pharm.D. degree. The College reserves the right, however, not to admit any applicant who is unable meet the Technical Standards with reasonable accommodations.

The applicant should evaluate him or herself in regards to compliance with these technical standards prior to submission of an application.

Behavioral, Social, and Ethical Attributes

Students must possess the emotional and mental health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, to exercise sound judgment, and to promptly and carefully complete all responsibilities pertaining to pharmacy practice. Students must also be able to develop and maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Students also must understand and use the power, special privileges, and trust inherent in the patient/healthcare provider relationship for the patient's benefit and know how to avoid the behaviors that constitute misuse of this power. Students are expected to uphold ethical standards set forth by the pharmacy profession. Good moral character, values, and principled judgment are vital attributes for being a professional.

Students must possess adequate endurance and flexibility to be able to tolerate physically, intellectually, and emotionally taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress or with distracting situations. Students must cultivate and maintain a professional demeanor that is not affected by long hours, personal fatigue, dissatisfied patients, or unreasonable colleagues. As part of this professional demeanor, students must also be able to accept appropriate suggestions and constructive criticism and, if necessary, modify their behavior accordingly.

Communication Skills

Appropriate communication between a patient and members of the healthcare team demonstrates respect and empowers the patient to make healthcare decisions. Students must be able to communicate effectively, sensitively, clearly, and efficiently with patients, caregivers, preceptors, faculty, and other members of the healthcare team.

Effective communication skills include the ability to ask questions, and to thoughtfully receive, record, and disseminate information. Students must understand the impact of verbal and non-verbal communication and be able to decipher changes in mood, activity, and posture. Communication skills include not only the ability to speak, but also the ability to read and write proficiently in English. Students must develop the ability to provide appropriate care for all patients, regardless of nationality and the ability to speak English, and understand issues such as empowerment, advocacy, and confidentiality that need to be considered when caring for non-English-speaking patients.

Intellectual Skills

Students must be able to possess a sufficient range of intellectual skills including conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities that allow him / her to complete a rigorous and complex didactic and experiential curriculum.

Problem solving and critical skills involving measurement, calculation reasoning, analysis, synthesis and evaluation are essential to appropriately and efficiently develop effective treatment plans to improve drug therapy and patient outcomes. The ability to incorporate new information from peers, faculty, and other professional or scholarly sources in formulating medication therapy management plans is vital, as is the practice of sound judgment in patient assessment and therapeutic planning.

Students must be able to identify and remedy the limits of their knowledge where appropriate. Students must be able to learn effectively through a variety of educational methods including, but not limited to: classroom instruction, small group discussion, individual study, preparation and presentation of written and oral reports, and use of technology.

Visual, Auditory, Tactile and Motor Competencies

Students must possess sufficient visual, auditory, tactile and motor abilities to allow him / her to gather data from printed and electronic resources, from oral presentations, and from observation of demonstrations and experiments in the basic, pharmaceutical, and applied sciences. Additionally, students must be able to accurately observe a patient at a distance and close at hand. This requires students be alert and attentive at all times in all settings of pharmacy education.