



TECHNICAL STANDARDS for Professional Students (PharmD)

Technical Standards

The University of Wisconsin School of Pharmacy (SOP) has established technical standards for admission to, continued enrollment in, and graduation from the PharmD Program. A subcommittee of the Student Promotion and Academic Review Committee (SPARC), the Technical Standards Access to Accommodations Committee (TSAAC) oversees adherence to the technical standards. The committee is composed of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Director of Advising (also SOP Technical Standards Coordinator) and three members of SPARC (including one faculty from experiential education and one from a laboratory course). The responsibilities of this committee are:

1. Interpret, review and recommend revision of the SOP Technical Standards for pharmacy education.
2. Review situations where accommodations are needed for students to be able to meet the SOP Technical Standards.
3. Adjudicate disagreements among faculty, academic advisors, and students regarding accommodations.
4. Determine whether recommended accommodations can be provided in a reasonable manner.

Introduction

Conferral of a pharmacy degree (PharmD) certifies that the recipient has demonstrated all the requisite abilities and skills to become a practicing generalist pharmacist either with or without reasonable accommodation. This demonstration encompasses a variety of attributes critical to the provision of quality pharmaceutical care, including the physical, cognitive and emotional strengths necessary to complete the rigorous requirements of the pharmacy school curriculum, and the social and behavioral skills expected of a competent health care provider and team member.

School of Pharmacy Technical Standards and disclosure of disabilities during the admission process

Admission to the SOP PharmD Program is based primarily on each applicant's previous academic and personal experience, as well as that student's attestation that they are capable of meeting the SOP Technical Standards and reflects the judgment of the Admissions Committee that the applicant possesses the required attributes to become a practicing generalist pharmacist.

Federal and state laws prohibit discrimination against otherwise qualified applicants who may be able to meet the technical standards if provided reasonable accommodations. All applicants are held to the same academic and SOP Technical Standards, with reasonable accommodations provided as needed for students with disabilities. Students are not required to disclose their disability as part of the admission process.

Applicants must have a diagnosed and documented disabling condition in order to request reasonable accommodations. Accommodation requests made during the admissions process are reviewed by the [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#), and then are provided to the Technical Standards Coordinator.

The SOP reserves the right not to admit any applicant who cannot meet the SOP Technical Standards with or without reasonable accommodations. This right to rescind admission applies in cases where reasonable accommodations cannot be provided, would result in a fundamental alteration to the technical standards, or compromise patient care or the safety of the prospective and/or currently enrolled students.

SOP Technical Standards and disclosure of disabilities for enrolled students

Annually, enrolled students in the SOP are required to attest that they meet the SOP Technical Standards either with, or without, reasonable accommodations. The required attestation form is available online.

A need for reasonable accommodation may arise during a student's enrollment in the SOP. Upon diagnosis and documentation of a disabling condition, the [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#) will review the accommodations request. After receiving accommodations notification, the Technical Standards Coordinator will engage in an interactive process with the student to review the SOP Technical Standards and discuss implementation of reasonable accommodations.

Upon completion of the interactive process, the SOP reserves the right to determine that reasonable accommodations cannot be provided, would result in a fundamental alteration to the SOP Technical Standards, or compromise patient care or the safety of prospective and/or currently enrolled students. Continued enrollment in the SOP will be determined by the academic process applied to all students.

SOP Technical Standards for admission and graduation

The practice of pharmacy requires a broad combination of cognitive, emotional, physical, interpersonal, and technical skills and attributes in order to provide highly effective patient care. To perform satisfactorily in SOP courses, and to serve as a practicing pharmacist after graduation, the SOP has identified minimum standards required of all students who matriculate.

These standards must be met throughout pharmacy school in order for students to make satisfactory progress and graduate. Any intention of the student to practice only a narrow part of the curriculum upon graduation does not alter the requirement that all students perform satisfactorily in the full curriculum and meet all graduation requirements.

a. Observation

Observation requires not only the functional use of the sense of vision, but other sensory modalities such as hearing and other somatic senses (e.g., smell). All students must be able to perceive and interpret information in diverse learning circumstances. In addition, all students must be able to observe patients, particularly as related to drug therapy and disease state monitoring.

- 1) Requirements for all students include the ability to: read and comprehend written and illustrated material; observe and interpret presented information; observe demonstrations in the classroom or laboratory, including projected images.
- 2) Additional requirements include the ability to: observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand, noting nonverbal as well as verbal signals; visualize and discriminate numbers and patterns associated with diagnostic and monitoring tests; monitor drug response; observe anatomic structures and observe and differentiate changes in body movement; and observe a patient's environment.

b. Communication

Communication includes speech, reading, writing, hearing, and computer literacy. All students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with faculty and staff, patients, their caregivers and/or partners, and members of the healthcare team.

- 1) Requirements for all prospective and enrolled students include the ability to: communicate quickly, effectively and efficiently in oral and written English; and complete forms or appropriately document activities according to directions in a complete and timely fashion.
- 2) Additional requirements include the ability to: communicate with patients in order to gather information (e.g., elicit a thorough medication history; describe changes in mood, activity, and posture; and perceive verbal as well as nonverbal communications); communicate rapidly and clearly with members of the health care team individually and collectively (e.g., read and record observations and care plans legibly, efficiently and accurately; prepare and communicate concise but complete summaries of encounters with patients, individual activities and decisions); and communicate complex findings in appropriate terms that are understood by patients, their caregivers and/or partners. Students must learn to recognize and promptly respond to emotional situations such as sadness, worry, agitation, and lack of comprehension of communication.

c. Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function

Students must be able to carry out activities in a variety of learning circumstances. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

- 1) Requirements for all students include the ability to: be fully alert and attentive at all times in all instructional settings; and conduct experiments in the basic sciences.
- 2) Additional requirements include the ability to: perform basic tasks in the practice of pharmacy (including preparing and dispensing pharmaceuticals and specialty dosage forms, performing basic clinical laboratory tests, eliciting information from patients by various screening maneuvers, reading laboratory results, competently using instruments for monitoring drug response, and administering intramuscular and subcutaneous immunizations); execute motor movements reasonably required to participate in the general care and emergency treatment of patients (including responding promptly to urgencies within the practice setting, administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation, applying pressure to stop bleeding, participating in initiation of appropriate procedures, rapidly and accurately preparing appropriate emergency medications) while not hindering the ability of their co-workers to provide prompt care; and use current technology to access and record drug and disease information within a reasonable timeframe.

d. Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

Students must possess sufficient intellectual, conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities to complete a rigorous and intense curriculum.

- 1) Requirements for all students include the ability to: analyze and solve problems (using measurement, calculation, rational reasoning, decision making, judgment, numerical recognition, information integration, solution synthesis, and other skills); comprehend three dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relations of structures; interpret graphs or charts describing biologic, economic or outcome relationships; locate, evaluate, and appropriately use information from the literature; and incorporate new information from peers or teachers.
- 2) Additional requirements include abilities required for patient care and clinical problem-solving: calculate dosages for patient-specific conditions (e.g., renal or hepatic failure, obesity, cardiac or respiratory arrest); dilute or reconstitute drug products, electrolytes, etc. accurately and quickly; identify significant findings from history, physical assessment, and laboratory data; provide a reasonable explanation and analysis of the problem; determine when additional information is required; suggest appropriate medications and therapy; develop appropriate treatment plans to improve patient outcomes; develop patient counseling information at a level of comprehension suitable for each individual patient; and retain and recall critical information in an efficient and timely manner. Students must be able to perform all these abilities quickly, especially in emergency situations, to identify the limits of their knowledge and (when appropriate) acknowledge these to others, and recognize when the limits of their knowledge indicate further study is essential before participating in decision making.

e. Behavioral and Social Attributes

Empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, kindness, patience, good interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are required.

- 1) Requirements for all students include the ability to: attend and arrive punctually for each educational component; adapt to changing environments, displaying flexibility and the ability to function in the face of uncertainties; and accept appropriate suggestions and critique and, if necessary, respond quickly, appropriately and cooperatively by modifying behavior.
- 2) Additional requirements include the ability to: maintain the emotional and mental health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the screening and care of patients; possess adequate endurance to be able to tolerate physically, intellectually, and emotionally taxing workloads; function effectively under stress and/or with distractions; develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and their caregivers and/or partners, including those of differing cultures and backgrounds, providing comfort and reassurance when appropriate; be aware of and appropriately react to one's own immediate emotional responses and environment including maintaining a professional demeanor and organization in the face of long hours and personal fatigue, dissatisfied patients, and tired colleagues; and develop skills necessary to instruct and supervise technical personnel assisting with the delivery of pharmaceutical services.

f. Ethical Values

Students must demonstrate the highest level of professional demeanor and behavior.

- 1) Requirements for all students include the ability to: perform in an ethical manner in all dealings with peers, faculty, and staff.

- 2) Additional requirements include the ability to meet the expected ethical standards set forth by the pharmacy profession: develop professional relationships with patients and their caregivers and partners while protecting patient confidentiality; demonstrate good moral character, decent values and principled judgment; meet requirements for recognition as a pharmacist intern by the State of Wisconsin's Pharmacy Examining Board (PEB) and pass requisite criminal background checks and random illegal drug screens required by the SOP, the PEB and/or affiliated clinical institutions.

g. Additional considerations related to Experiential Education

Promoting and protecting the well-being of patients is a core value of the PharmD program:

- 1) Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (i.e., 4th year clinical rotations) are structured as full-time activities in functioning patient care settings. Reliable attendance and full participation in patient care activities are essential for successful completion of this component of the curriculum.
- 2) Certain chronic or recurrent illnesses and problems that interfere with delivering or providing patient care or compromise patient safety may be incompatible with pharmacy training or practice. Conditions that may lead to a high likelihood of transmission of disease should be carefully considered.
- 3) Deficiencies in knowledge base, judgment, integrity, character, or professional attitude or demeanor, which may jeopardize patient care, may be grounds for course failure and possible dismissal from the program.

Implementation

When a request for accommodations is received, the McBurney Disability Resource Center reviews the request and the supporting documentation and, in consultation with the SOP Technical Standards Access to Accommodations Committee (TSAAC), provides reasonable accommodations. It is within the scope of TSAAC to consult with other professionals to review, analyze and assess the implementation of the requested accommodations.

Further implementation of these standards is the responsibility of the faculty and staff of the SOP. It is the responsibility of the Technical Standards Coordinator in conjunction with the academic advisors to monitor the progress of every student during each semester. Failure to meet these standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, requires a student to appear before the Student Promotion and Academic Review Committee (SPARC) to determine a plan for the student to regain a successful path within the SOP.

Interactive education

Successful matriculation for all students is acquired through an interactive process between the individual student and SOP staff, faculty and student services. This interactive process provides the opportunity to achieve a pharmacy degree either with or without reasonable accommodations.