

Technical Standards for Admission to the College of Dentistry (Dentistry and Dental Hygiene)

The University of Nebraska Medical Center/College of Dentistry is committed to the principle of providing an educational setting that facilitates the greatest success for all students, within their individual abilities, who are qualified for admission into the College. In that spirit, admission to the College is open to all qualified individuals in compliance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The College is mindful of the unique nature of the dental curriculum. As a primary surgical specialty, the dental curriculum must include, in addition to the accumulation of certain scientific knowledge, the simultaneous acquisition of essential surgical skills, technical functions, and professional attitudes and behaviors. In the process, the student is required to direct or perform treatment on patients safely and within an acceptable amount of time. Students must possess the skills and abilities that will allow them to successfully complete the course of study and receive the full benefit of the education. With this in mind, any student or applicant seeking admission as a student (subsequently referred to herein as "student") must be able to meet the following technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations.

1. MOTOR SKILLS

GENERAL: A student should have sufficient motor function such that she/he are able to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and treatment to patients.

SPECIFIC: A student must possess the motor skills necessary to directly perform palpitation, percussion, auscultation and other diagnostic maneuvers, basic laboratory tests, and diagnostic procedures. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional uses of the senses of touch and vision.

SPECIFIC: A student must be able to perform basic life support (including CPR) and to position himself/herself around the patient and chair at heights and locations necessary to achieve effective patient treatment. The candidate must be able to operate all dental equipment and tools commonly necessary to the effective treatment of patients, operate high and low speed dental movements of less than one millimeter and utilize hand instrumentation (including scalpels for surgical procedures).

2. SENSORY/OBSERVATION

GENERAL: A student must be able to acquire a defined level of required information as presented through demonstrations and experiences in the basic and dental sciences.

SPECIFIC: This includes, but is not limited to: information conveyed through physiologic and pharmacological demonstrations in animals; and microbiological cultures and microscopic images of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A student must be able to acquire information from written documents, including charts and patient records, and to visualize information presented in images from paper, films, slides or video. A student must interpret x-ray and other graphic images.

GENERAL: A student must be able to observe a patient accurately, at a reasonable distance and close at hand, and observe and appreciate non-verbal communications when performing dental operations of administering medications.

SPECIFIC: A student must be able to perform visual and tactile dental examination and treatment including use of visual acuity with an ability to discern differences and variations in color, shape, and general appearance between normal and abnormal, soft and hard tissues. Use of tactile senses may be either direct palpation or indirect through instrumentation. A student must also possess the visual acuity to distinguish colors intra and extra orally and to make such visual observations as are necessary to provide diagnosis and treatment.

3. COMMUNICATION

GENERAL: A student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, convey or exchange information at a level allowing development of a health history, identify problems presented, explain alternative solution, and give directions during treatment and post-treatment. Communications include speech and writing. The student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team.

SPECIFIC: A student must have sufficient facility with English to: retrieve information from tests and lectures and communicate concepts on written exams and patients charts, elicit patient backgrounds, describe patient changes in condition, symptoms, moods, activity, and posture, and coordinate patient care with all members of the health care team.

4. COGNITIVE

GENERAL: A student must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize.

SPECIFIC: In addition, a student must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. Problem solving, a critical skill demanded of dentists, requires all of these intellectual abilities. A student must be able to perform these problem solving skills in a timely fashion.

5. BEHAVIORAL

GENERAL: A student must possess the behavioral qualities and mannerisms 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.

SPECIFIC: A student must be able to tolerate intellectually and physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. He/she 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 patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interests, and motivation are all personal qualities that will be assessed during the admissions and educational processes. Further, a student must be able to manage apprehensive patients with a range of moods and behaviors in a tactful, congenial, personal manner so as not to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior.