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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Essential Skills and Abilities (“Technical Standards”)
for Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Program
of the
University of British Columbia
MD Undergraduate Education Program**

The 2007 Essential Skills and Abilities (“Technical Standards”) for Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Undergraduate Program document has been reviewed and revised in response to changes in legislation and the requirement to reflect the needs of the program.

April 2013

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Faculty of Medicine

**Essential Skills and Abilities (“Technical Standards”)
For Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Program**

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of British Columbia is committed within its Social Responsibility and Accountability Framework to educate undergraduate medical students to meet the needs of British Columbians and other Canadians. The MD Undergraduate Program ensures that graduates have the knowledge, skills, professional behaviors and attitudes necessary to enter postgraduate training, and then proceed successfully to independent practice of medicine. Graduates must be able to diagnose and manage health problems, and provide comprehensive, compassionate care to their patients in a timely manner. For this reason, students in the MD program must become competent in interviewing, examining and counseling patients, and acquire the technical skills to safely perform a range of procedures. They must also become experts at communicating in-depth medical knowledge honestly, accurately and efficiently to other health professionals.

In addition to obtaining an MD degree and completing an accredited postgraduate residency training program, an individual must pass the licensure examinations of the Medical Council of Canada (MCC) to practice medicine. Prospective candidates should be aware that these examinations evaluate cognitive, physical examination and management skills as well as communication skills and professional behaviors in time-limited simulations of patient encounters.

All students must demonstrate competence in the skills and abilities described in the following section on “Technical Standards for Students in the MD Program”. Individuals with disabilities may be able to meet the standards and successfully complete the program with appropriate accommodation. Successful applicants who anticipate they will require disability-related accommodation should notify the medical school and Access and Diversity at the University at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the necessary medical documentation is provided and that appropriate steps can be taken to assess the student’s accommodation needs prior to the commencement of the academic year.

The MD curriculum is cumulative and integrative in nature, and each year has different requirements. In general, students are expected to complete their MD degree within four years. Students with a disability may be granted additional time, with disability accommodation being considered on a case-by-case and year-by-year basis.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS IN THE MD PROGRAM

A candidate for the MD degree must demonstrate the following abilities, all of which will be assessed during the program:

Observation

A student must be able to participate in learning situations that require skills in observation. In particular, a student must be able to accurately observe a patient and acquire visual, auditory and tactile information.

Communication

A student must be able to communicate with and observe patients in order to effectively and efficiently elicit information, e.g. describe mood, activity and posture, and to perceive non-verbal communication. A student must communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, families and all members of the health care team. A student must also be able to coherently summarize and efficiently communicate a patient's condition and management plan.

Dexterity/Motor Skills & Procedural Skills

A student must have sufficient dexterity to safely perform common medical procedures. In addition, a student must be willing and able to provide general and emergency medical care to patients, including the performance of relevant procedures at any time, day or night.

Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

A student must demonstrate the cognitive skills and memory necessary to measure, calculate, and reason in order to organize, integrate, synthesize and analyze information in order that competence may be achieved in key areas in diagnosis and management of patients. In addition, a student must be able to comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships. All of these problem-solving activities must be completed in a timely fashion.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

A student must be able to tolerate the physical, emotional, and mental demands of the program and function effectively under stress. The prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients is essential. In achieving this, a student must be able to work under a variety of conditions that may arise in the course of patient care. The conditions include, but are not limited to, the following: prolonged hours of work, unpredictable hours and demands, and distractions from people and the environment. Adaptability to changing environments and the ability to function in the face of uncertainties that are inherent in the care of patients are necessary traits of a student.

Behavioural and Social Attributes

The application of good judgment is necessary. A student must consistently demonstrate the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, interpersonal awareness and self-awareness. A student must also behave in a mature, sensitive manner with patients, families, teachers, peers and other health professionals.

Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are personal qualities that physicians must demonstrate and, thus, are expected of students.

Students with Disabilities

UBC's Faculty of Medicine is committed to diversity and recognizes its moral and legal duty to provide reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Each student with a disability is entitled to accommodation in accordance with UBC policies¹, the BC Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. While accommodations will be made to assist a student to meet the technical standards and facilitate his/her progress, such accommodation cannot compromise patient safety and well-being.

Also, accommodation cannot compromise the educational environment or sustainability of the program, e.g. by requiring excessive financial or other resources.

To a great extent the success of a student with a disability in completing the MD program depends on his or her ability to assume personal responsibility in identifying and reporting accommodation needs in a timely fashion and in compliance with UBC policies. While sensitive personal information related to a request for accommodation will be treated in confidence it will be necessary to share some information with the teaching team to ensure proper implementation of the appropriate accommodation.

Approval:

Senate: January 2009

Approved with Revisions:

MD Undergraduate Education Committee (MDUEC): April 15, 2013

MD Undergraduate Regional Executive (MDUREX): April 29, 2013

¹ UBC's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment, Policy #3; and Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities, Policy #73.