

Technical Standards for Admission, Continuation and Graduation

(Reviewed by Student Affairs and MEC 2/2025, Approved by Administrative Council 6/2025)

A. Purpose

The University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine (USD-SSOM) affirms that no applicant to Medical School will be excluded based on sex, race, color, creed, rural background, socioeconomic status, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, gender, gender identification, transgender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, genetic information, and veteran status.

Because the MD degree signifies that the holder is a person prepared for entry into the practice of medicine within postgraduate training programs, it follows that graduates must have the knowledge, skills, and ability to function in a broad variety of clinical situations, render a wide spectrum of patient care and the capacity to qualify for medical licensure and enter residency training. Therefore, candidates for the MD degree from the USD-SSOM must have abilities and skills in six areas including:

- I. Observation
- II. Communication
- III. Motor
- IV. Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative abilities
- V. Behavioral and Social Attributes
- VI. Ethics and Professionalism

Our core values of compassion and kindness permeates our interactions with all students, including those with disabilities. USD-SSOM endeavors to ensure accessibility and to create a respectful, accountable culture through our confidential disability support system. We encourage students with disabilities to disclose and seek accommodations.

B. Policy

Fulfillment of the technical standards for graduation from medical school does not mean the graduate will be able to fulfill the technical requirements of any specific residency program.

I. Observation:

The candidate and student must be able to obtain information from demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences. They must be able to assess a patient and evaluate findings accurately. These skills require the use of vision, hearing and somatic sensation or the functional equivalent.

II. Communication:

The candidate and student must be able to skillfully (in English) communicate verbally and in written form with faculty members, other members of the healthcare team, patients, families, and other students, in order to:

- Elicit information
- Convey information

- Clarify information
- Create rapport
- Develop therapeutic relationships
- Demonstrate the USD-SSOM Competencies required for graduation

III. Motor:

The candidate and student must have sufficient motor function with accommodations, if needed, to perform a physical examination and perform diagnostic maneuvers. They must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care to patients and provide or direct the provision of emergency treatment to patients. Such actions require some coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, balance and equilibrium.

IV. Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:

The candidate and student must have sufficient cognitive abilities which would include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physicians, requires all these intellectual abilities. In addition, they must be able to comprehend three dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. They must be able to perform these problem-solving skills in a timely manner.

V. Behavioral and Social Attributes:

The candidate and student must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of their 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, fellow students, faculty and staff. Students should be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, recognize multiple points of view, identify personal reactions and responses, and integrate these into clinical decision-making. They must be able to communicate with and care for, in a non-judgmental way, persons whose culture, sexual orientation, or spiritual beliefs are different from their own.

VI. Ethics and Professionalism:

Students should maintain and display ethical and moral behaviors commensurate with the role of a physician in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, students and the public. The student is expected to understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and function within the law and ethical standards of the medical profession.

C. Procedure

The technical standards delineated above must be met with, or without accommodation. Students who, after review of the technical standards, determine that they require reasonable accommodation to fully engage in the program should contact USD Office of Accessibility to confidentially discuss their accommodations needs. Given the clinical nature of our programs, time may be needed to create and implement the accommodations. Accommodations are never retroactive; therefore, timely requests are essential and encouraged.

To learn more about accommodations at USD-SSOM please contact:

USD Office of Accessibility

605-658-3745
accessibility@usd.edu

Statement of Understanding and Agreement

I understand that fulfillment of the technical standards for graduation from the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine does not mean that I will be able to fulfill the technical requirements of any specific residency program.

This document applies to all years of my medical school training at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine.

I have read, understand, and am able to meet the technical standards. I agree to adhere to the stated procedures.

Signature

Printed Name

Date