



Charles R. Drew University
of Medicine and Science
Physician Assistant Program

Technical Standards

Medical education requires the accumulation of medical knowledge, and the acquisition of clinical skills, professional attitudes, and behaviors. Successful completion of the program requires the student to utilize intellectual ability and maintain emotional stability in high-stress environments common to healthcare and healthcare training. This curriculum requires demonstrated proficiency in a variety of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills.

Receipt of a Master of Health Science degree from the Physician Assistant Program indicates that the graduate is prepared to enter the practice of medicine. To ensure that graduates provide excellence in patient care, it is essential that students meet minimum academic and technical standards prior to matriculation.

Charles R. Drew University and the Physician Assistant Program are committed to the principle of equal opportunity. Both the University and the Program do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or disability. When requested and approved through the office of the Dean for the College of Science and Health, the program will provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are modifications that do not result in undue financial or administrative burden to the PA program. Accommodations must not prevent the student from meeting the Technical Standards and graduation requirements for the PA program. Please review Disability Resources website at <https://www.cdrewu.edu/students-campus-life/student-services/academic-support/disability-resources/> and the 2023-24 University Catalog (page 53-54) at: <https://docs-cdrewu.cloud/assets/students/files/University-Catalog-2023-24.pdf>.

Applicants with the following issues may not be accepted for admission into the program:

- 1) Health problems of a recurring and unpredictable nature that produce a serious impairment of cognitive, psychological, or physical function.
- 2) Diseases that are communicable or poorly controlled, incurable by present standards and produce a serious impairment of cognitive, psychological, or physical function.
- 3) Diseases that may be treatable but where the treatment itself is known to produce a serious impairment of cognitive, psychological, or physical function.
- 4) Diseases significantly affecting neuromuscular coordination, tactile sensitivity, and general or specific paralysis of the upper extremity.



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All students should have the following:

- 1) Sufficient posture control, neuromuscular control and eye-hand coordination to effectively use an ophthalmoscope, stethoscope, otoscope, and similar instruments required to perform physical examinations, patient evaluations and interpretation of diagnostic studies such as radiographs and electrocardiograms.
- 2) Sufficient visual and auditory perception and the mental capacity to assimilate large volumes of detailed and complex information presented in formal lectures, small group discussion, individual teaching settings and practical laboratory or clinical experiences.
- 3) Sufficient communication skills to:
 - a. Elicit all components of a medical history from patients with a wide range of literacy.
 - b. Perform the history-taking task at a pace that would not pose a potential hazard to the patient.
 - c. Transmit findings quickly and effectively as may be necessary in the medical setting.
 - d. Initiate emergency measures on a verbal basis.
 - e. Effectively interact in two-way communication with patients to provide and clarify information, reduce apprehension, and provide counseling.

To work effectively in a clinical situation, the student is expected to adequately perform a number of technical functions required of the practicing physician assistant. Such functions include, but are not limited to, those of the special senses that allow for examination of the patient. Those persons deprived of their special senses to the point they cannot recognize normal versus abnormal may not be able to acquire sufficient factual material to assess accurately a patient's health status. This ability to differentiate is fundamental for the practicing physician assistant. Students must also have sufficient motor skills to respond promptly in an emergency.

Physician assistant students are expected to meet all the standards outlined here. Students who develop conditions while in the program which may impair their ability to meet the technical standards, will be reevaluated. If the student's abilities appear to be compromised, the program may request a physical assessment of the student's cognitive, psychological, or physical ability. The student assumes any cost for this evaluation. After review of available information, the program may terminate a student's enrollment if the student does not meet the technical standards.



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In summary, every precaution is taken to ensure that students with substantially impaired intellectual, physical, or emotional functions do not place the educational process, themselves or patients in jeopardy. All students awarded a degree from the Charles R. Drew University Physician Assistant Program must meet the basic technical standards for practice.

Summary of Required Skills

Observation Skills: Physician Assistant students must be able to observe and actively participate in demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, visual presentations in lectures and laboratories, and laboratory diagnostic procedures. The PA student must be able to observe a patient accurately and completely at a distance and at a close range (within a few feet of the observer). Observation necessitates the functional use of special senses.

Communication Skills: Physician Assistant students must be able to communicate clearly so that it is understandable to a listener in order to elicit information, perceive non-verbal communication and describe changes in patient behaviors. The PA student must demonstrate active listening and be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing. Communication in oral and written form with the health care team must be effective and efficient.

Motor Skills: Physician Assistant students must be able to demonstrate sufficient motor function to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and treatment of patients such as physical examinations, diagnostic procedures and documentation. Such skills require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the special senses.

Intellectual, Conceptual and Quantitative Skills: Physician Assistant students must be able to demonstrate sufficient calculation, reasoning, analysis, synthesis, problem solving and critical thinking skills.



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Behavioral and Social Skills: Physician Assistant students must demonstrate the emotional and mental health 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. The PA student must be able to tolerate physically and mentally demanding workloads, effectively carry out responsibilities and to function effectively under stress. The PA student must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainty inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. The PA student must be capable of developing constructive and cooperative working relationships with others.

Physical Skills: Physician Assistant students must demonstrate the physical ability to learn and implement the various technical skills required by the program. The PA student must possess an adequate range of body motion and mobility, with or without accommodation to perform the following essential functions: prolonged periods of sitting and/or standing, occasional bending and stooping and the ability to lift and carry books and other items such as medical instruments. Physical demand requirements are in excess of those for sedentary work.



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