

University of Michigan School of Dentistry

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The following Technical Standards document was endorsed and put into place by the School in September of 2017. Prospective students should read through the Standards. All candidates that are invited to interview will be expected to sign the Certification of Understanding, and all students who matriculate are required to sign the Certification of Ability.

Admission to the School of Dentistry at the University of Michigan is open to all qualified individuals and complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Moreover, the School is committed to providing equal opportunities for all students. The School endeavors to select applicants who have the ability to become highly competent general dentists who are well prepared to enter private practice, or enter graduate and residency training programs. As an accredited dental school, the University of Michigan School of Dentistry adheres to the standards promulgated by the American Dental Association, Commission on Dental Accreditation. Within these standards, the School of Dentistry has the freedom and ultimate responsibility for the selection of students; the design, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum; the evaluation of student progress; and the determination of who should be awarded a degree. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on prior satisfactory academic achievement but also on non-academic factors that serve to ensure that the candidate can complete the essential functions of the academic program required for graduation.

A candidate for the DDS degree must possess abilities and skills which include those that are observational, communicational, sensory/motor, intellectual/conceptual (integrative and quantitative), and behavioral/social. The use of a trained intermediary may not be acceptable in some clinical situations if it implies that a candidate's judgment must be mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation. Reasonable accommodations for qualified persons with disabilities can be made so long as such accommodations do not require a change in fundamental program requirements of the curriculum, create a direct threat to the health or safety of others or create an undue burden. Candidates must be able to consistently, quickly and accurately integrate all information received by whatever sense(s) employed, and they must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data.

I. Observation:

The candidate must be able to acquire a defined level of required information as presented through demonstrations and experiences in the basic sciences, including but not limited to information conveyed through physiologic and pharmacological demonstrations in animals, microbiological cultures and microscopic images of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. Furthermore, a candidate must be able to:

- observe a patient accurately, at a distance, and close at hand, to acquire information from written documents, and to visualize information as presented in images from paper, films, slides or video.

- recognize and appreciate nonverbal communications when performing dental operations or administering medications.
- interpret x-ray and other graphic images, and digital or analog representations of physiologic phenomenon (such as EKGs) with or without the use of assistive devices.
- perform visual and tactile dental examinations and treatment including use of visual acuity, accommodation, and vision to discern differences and variation in color, shape, and general appearance between normal and abnormal, soft and hard tissues including variations in shade along the black-grey white scale.

Such observation and information acquisition necessitates the functional use of visual, auditory and somatic sensation while being enhanced by the functional use of other sensory modalities. In any case where a candidate's ability to observe or acquire information through these sensory modalities is compromised, the candidate must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to acquire and demonstrate the essential information conveyed in this fashion. If the alternatives are acceptable, it is expected that obtaining and using such alternate means and/or abilities shall be the responsibility of the student. Costs of necessary accommodations should be reasonable and will be properly borne by the University when not the responsibility of the student or otherwise funded.

II. Communication:

A candidate must be able to speak, to hear and to observe patients by sight in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes speech and writing. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team. While working alone and with others, an applicant must be able to communicate orally and in writing, including settings where time available is brief, such as emergencies. In any case where a candidate's ability to communicate is compromised, the candidate must demonstrate alternative means and/or ability to acquire and demonstrate the essential information conveyed in this fashion.

III. Sensory/Motor:

It is required that a candidate possess the motor skills necessary to directly perform palpation, percussion, auscultation and other diagnostic maneuvers, basic laboratory tests and diagnostic procedures. The candidate must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general and emergency medical care such as airway management, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, application of pressure to control bleeding, suturing of simple wounds, and uncomplicated oral and maxillofacial surgical procedures. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch, vision and audition. The candidate must also be able to operate controls utilizing fine movements, operate high or low speed handpieces requiring controlled dental movements of less than 0.5 millimeter, and utilize hand instrumentation (including scalpels for surgical procedures).

IV. Intellectual-Conceptual (Integrative and Quantitative) Abilities:

The candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize. In addition, the candidate must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of dentists, requires all of these intellectual abilities. The candidate must be able to perform these problem-solving skills in a timely fashion.

Candidates must be able to learn effectively through a variety of modalities, including but not limited to: classroom instruction, small group discussion, individual study of materials, preparation and presentation of written and oral reports, and use of computer-based technology.

V. Behavioral and Social Attributes:

The candidate must be able to fully use his/her intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Further, a candidate must be able to manage apprehensive patients who display a range of affects and behaviors. The candidate must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and function effectively under stress. He/she must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all requisite personal qualities that will be assessed during the admissions process and developed and assessed in dental school.

Because the dental profession is governed by high ethical values and principles and by state and federal laws, candidates must have the capacity to learn, understand, and perform in accordance with these values, principles and laws. They must be able to comply fully with the policy on student attendance for the School of Dentistry (<https://mitools.dent.umich.edu/assets/students/Student%20Attendance%20Policy.pdf?donotcache=1505233932307>). They are expected to relate to colleagues, staff and patients honestly and respectfully and to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, or other grounds set forth in the University's non-discrimination policy (<https://oscr.umich.edu/NondiscriminationPollicy>). Candidates must understand that a career in dentistry requires a high level of dedication and at times, self-sacrifice. They must be able to understand and use the power, special privileges, and trust inherent in the dentist-patient relationship for the patient's benefit, and to know of and avoid behaviors that constitute misuse of this power. They must demonstrate the capacity to examine and deliberate effectively about the social and ethical issues that impact dentistry and dentists' roles and to reason critically about these issues. Candidates must be able to identify their own personal reactions and responses, make judgments about them, recognize multiple points of view, and integrate these appropriately into decision-making in the patient care setting. Candidates must be able to respond to constructive feedback by making appropriate behavioral and/or performance changes.

VI. Accommodations:

The School of Dentistry does not inquire whether an applicant has a disability prior to making a decision on admission, nor does it inquire whether an applicant has a disability after the applicant is admitted. Upon admission, or at any time during the program, a student who desires an accommodation must request one and may be asked to provide documentation of his or her disability for the purpose of determining appropriate accommodations, including modification to the program. The School will provide reasonable accommodations, but is not required to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or provide auxiliary aids that present an undue burden to the School of Dentistry. The student must be able to perform all of the technical standards with or without accommodation to matriculate or continue in the curriculum. Costs of reasonable accommodations will be borne by the School of Dentistry unless otherwise funded.

Requests for accommodation should be discussed with Services for Students with Disabilities at the University of Michigan (<https://ssd.umich.edu>) and with the Assistant Dean for Student Services.

Technical Standards endorsed by the Executive Committee of the University of Michigan School of Dentistry, September 2017.