

University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine Essential Program Standards

The Essential Program Standards outlined in this document reflect the performance abilities and characteristics that are necessary to complete the requirements of the advanced dental education, dental, or dental hygiene programs at the school, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

The University fosters a culture of inclusiveness and is committed to providing an accessible environment for its faculty, staff, residents and students. These standards describe the nonacademic essential functions that are required for admission to, advancement through, and graduation from, the program. Applicants or students who would like to request reasonable accommodations to these standards should contact the [Office of Disability Resources and Services](#), 412-648-7890.

1. Communications:

General: Residents/students must be able to communicate effectively, compassionately, sensitively, and efficiently with patients, their families, faculty, residents, staff, and classmates. A resident/student must have sufficient facility with English to elicit, retrieve, and understand verbal and non-verbal information in all forms.

Examples of effective, compassionate, sensitive, and efficient communication include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Convey or exchange information at a level allowing development of a health history in a timely manner
- Communicate concepts on written and electronic exams and patient charts accurately and clearly
- Describe non-verbal communication with patients such as changes in moods, activity, and body language
- Give directions during treatment and post-treatment
- Establish and maintain a therapeutic rapport with patients
- Communicate in lay language so that patients and their families can understand the patient's condition

2. Ethics/Professionalism:

General: Residents/students must uphold the standards of conduct for ethics and professionalism as set forth in the American Dental Association's Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct, Principles of Ethics of the American Dental Hygienists Association, the University's [Student Code of Conduct](#), as well as policies, procedures and protocols as outlined by the school.

Examples of ethical and professional behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Act in the best interest of the patient and society even when there is a conflict with the resident/student's personal self-interest
- Conduct oneself as a trustworthy and responsible citizen and act with impeccable integrity in their actions with fellow students, residents, staff, faculty, and the public
- Care for all individuals in a respectful and effective manner, regardless of race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or any other protected status identified in the University of Pittsburgh's Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action Policy 07-01-03.
- Practice honesty and ethical behavior and be able to take responsibility for their behavior, which includes being open to feedback from their supervisors and academic instructors

3. Behavioral/Social Demeanor:

General: Residents/students must have sufficient behavioral, social, and emotional skills to meet their own needs and the needs of others. This includes being able to interact effectively and appropriately with others including faculty, staff, residents, students, patients, families, caregivers, and other health care professionals.

Examples of the types of behavioral, social, and emotional skills required to meet this standard include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Demonstrate emotional maturity and maintain emotional stability to positively contribute to the learning environment
- Function both physically and emotionally under heavy workloads and ongoing psychosocial stress to maintain a healthy status
- Tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity while being flexible and adaptable without showing undue signs of distress
- Be organized, manage time, and meet deadlines and time limits
- Demonstrate good judgment and insight as expected from a healthcare profession
- Reflect and self-evaluate, including examining personal attitudes and stereotypes, to offer respect to the individual needs of faculty, staff, peers, as well as patients from diverse cultural and complex medical and psychological backgrounds

- Accept criticism and take responsibility for behavior; make changes to own behavior as needed, to include identifying when resources are needed and obtaining them and advocating for own needs
- Identify emotions in and desires of others and demonstrate compassion, respect, concern and empathy for others
- Balance own views with those of others
- Collaborate with others as a member of a team and appropriately delegate responsibilities to others in accordance with an approved treatment plan in the patient care setting

4. Intellectual/Cognitive/Conceptual/Executive Functioning:

General: Residents/students must be able to develop and apply skills in reasoning, analysis, synthesis of information, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

Examples of intellectual, cognitive, conceptual and executive function include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interpret, assimilate and apply information from the didactic, preclinical, and clinical coursework presented throughout the curriculum to simulated cases or problems and to live patient experiences in a timely manner
- Critically interpret and analyze scientific information and apply it to patient care
- Participate in and learn from different teaching modalities, such as lecture, question-and-answer, small-group and team-based activities, and presentation of projects, including the use of technology to facilitate learning
- Work independently, as well as part of a collaborative and interprofessional team
- Understand three-dimensional relationships sufficient to achieve competence as defined by the school in the preclinical, laboratory, and clinical procedures required

5. Motor Skills:

General: Residents/students must have sufficient motor skills, physical mobility, strength, equilibrium, endurance, and coordination required to perform tasks in didactic, preclinical, laboratory, and clinical settings.

Examples of sufficient motor skills include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide all aspects of patient care within a time frame that maintains safety and comfort for patients
- Apply both gross and fine motor skills and demonstrate controlled instrumentation techniques, which includes equilibrium and touch, to patient care
- Operate controls, move high speed and/or low speed dental drills with precision of less than a millimeter
- Distinguish depth and width accurately
- Be certified in basic life support, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Reposition or direct the reposition of patients with disabilities to include physically restraining adults and children who lack motor control
- Position and reposition oneself around the patient and chair and perform dental procedures for prolonged periods of time

6. Sensory/Observational:

General: Residents/students must have sufficient ability to obtain information accurately in didactic, preclinical, laboratory, and clinical settings.

Examples of sensory and observational skills include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Observe and assess oral health conditions with acuity
- Detect subtle changes in radiographic density and normal/abnormal variations in oral soft and hard tissues
- Observe tissue conditions and changes
- Distinguish depth and width accurately
- Acquire information from written documents, microscopic slides, projected images, and video

Contact Information:

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Adapted from the Following:

- [American Dental Association \(ADA\) Statement on Substance Use Among Dental Students.](#) Accessed on: March 25, 2019.
- Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) Current Accreditation Standards for [Predoctoral Dental Education, Standard 5 – Patient Care Services.](#) Revised January 01, 2018. Accessed on: March 25, 2019.
- [Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Board of Dentistry Dental Law, Act 216 of 1933.](#) Revised April 2016. Accessed on: March 25, 2019.
- [Lane Community College Health Professions Dental Hygiene.](#) Accessed on: March 25, 2019.
- [Technical Standards College of Dentistry the University of Tennessee Health Science Center.](#) Accessed on: March 25, 2019
- [Technical Standards School of Dental Medicine Case Western Reserve University.](#) Accessed on: March 25, 2019.
- [Technical Standards of the Dugoni School.](#) Accessed on: March 25, 2019.
- [The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program Technical Standards.](#) Accessed on: March 25, 2019.
- [University of Michigan Medical School Technical Standards 2016.](#) Accessed on: March 25, 2019.