

University of Alabama at Birmingham Surgical Physician Assistant Program

Technical (Performance) Standards

In order to ensure that patients receive the best medical care possible, the faculty of the UAB SPA program has identified certain skills and professional behaviors that are required for successful completion of the program. These skills and behaviors are required to perform a variety of activities within the curriculum and also to function clinically as a physician assistant. Therefore, all students in the SPA Program must be able to demonstrate these skills and professional behaviors, including students with disabilities when reasonable accommodations are made by the program.

Minimum Technical (Performance) Standards include:

Critical Thinking: Students must possess the intellectual capabilities required to complete the full curriculum and achieve the level of competence delineated by the faculty. Critical thinking requires the intellectual ability to measure, calculate, synthesize and analyze a large and complex volume of medical and surgical information. Students in the program must also be able to perform applicable demonstrations and experiments in the medical sciences.

Computer Technology Skills: Students must be able to utilize computerized information technology to access and manage on-line medical information, participate in computerized testing as required by the curriculum, conduct research, prepare multi-media presentations, and participate in the management of computerized patient records and assessments.

Communication Skills: Students must be able to speak clearly and effectively in order to elicit and relay medical information. They must also be able to communicate effectively and legibly in writing.

Visual Ability: Students must have the visual acuity needed to evaluate a patient during a physical exam and perform a wide range of technical procedures involved in the practice of medicine and surgery.

Hearing and Tactile Ability: Students must have the motor and sensory functions needed to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, and percussion, as well as perform a wide range of technical procedures involved in the practice of medicine and surgery.

Motor and Fine Skills: Students must be able to execute the physical movements required to maneuver in small places, calibrate and use equipment, position and move patients, and perform the technical procedures involved in the practice of medicine and surgery.

Interpersonal Ability: Students must possess a wide range of interpersonal skills, including (1) the emotional health required for management of high stress situations while maintaining their full intellectual abilities; (2) the ability to exercise good judgment; (3) the ability to complete all assigned patient care responsibilities; and (4) the ability to develop a mature, sensitive and effective relationship with medical colleagues, clinical and administrative staff, patients, and families.