

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (UTMB) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and federal, state, and local requirements regarding students with disabilities. Under these laws, no otherwise qualified and competitive individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities of UTMB solely on the basis of disability.

UTMB is committed to providing equal opportunity for students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability or would like to obtain information regarding services for students with disabilities at UTMB, please contact the Institutional ADA Officer, who is located in 2.126 Lee Hage Jamail Student Center, or by phone at (409) 747-4818. This information will be confidential and only those individuals responsible for ensuring reasonable accommodations will be given this information.

Guidelines for establishing a disability and requesting accommodations are contained in *Students with Disabilities: An Institutional Policy (1997)* which may be acquired at the following locations on campus:

- UTMB School of Medicine Office for Student Affairs, (409) 772-1442.
- UTMB Institutional ADA Officer, (409) 747-4818.

It can also be accessed on the internet at the following address:

<http://www.utmb.edu/studentervices/disabilities.asp>

Essential functions for the School of Medicine have been identified and are enclosed.

Once accepted into the School of Medicine, any student who believes he or she requires an accommodation as the result of a disability is encouraged to contact any of the above listed offices and identify his or her needs as soon as possible to allow UTMB time to review and, if required, provide a reasonable accommodation. A student or prospective student is not obligated to disclose a disability unless he or she requests an accommodation. Any information provided will be regarded as confidential and will be shared only on a "need to know" basis.

If a student chooses not to disclose this information, neither the academic nor the clinical sites are obligated to make accommodations. Whether or not a requested accommodation is reasonable is determined by UTMB as guided by applicable law.

**My signature below indicates that I have read the above document, that I understand where I can obtain detailed information regarding UTMB's policy on students with disabilities, and that I understand that I may request an accommodation if I believe one is needed. Furthermore, my signature below verified that I have read and understand the School of Medicine's Essential Functions, and that I hereby affirm that I can perform all of them, either with or without reasonable accommodations.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return this form to the UTMB School of Medicine Office of Admissions, 301 University Blvd., Galveston, TX 77555-1317

## Policy on Essential Functions Required for the MD Program for Admissions, Continuation, and Graduation, and Disability Accommodation

Purpose: The medical profession is unique. It enjoys a unique public trust and public responsibility. Because of the nature of the medical profession, from caring for the well to caring for the dying, the public has the right to expect the highest standards from those who join the ranks of the healthcare community. It is incumbent upon us, as medical school faculty, to ensure that all applicants and graduates are competent in the basic skills necessary to both continue their education and to practice medicine. UTMB recognizes that the MD degree is a broad, undifferentiated degree requiring the acquisition of general knowledge and basic skills performed in a reasonably independent and autonomous manner in all fields of medicine. The education of a physician requires the assimilation of knowledge, the discipline of life-long learning, the acquisition of skills, and the development of critical judgment in preparation for independent and appropriate decisions required in medical practice. The abilities and attributes listed below reflect the critical activities a student must be able to perform to complete a generalist medical school curriculum. These include but are not necessarily limited to: observation, communication, psychomotor skills, intellectual and cognitive abilities, professional and social attributes, and application of legal and ethical standards.

### Identification of Essential Functions:

Definition of Graduate Competencies: A graduating student should have the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary to continue training in a graduate medical program, with the understanding that, with further training, the School of Medicine faculty is comfortable with that student practicing medicine.

### Essential Functions

- 1> **Observation/Sensory Modalities:** candidates must be able to master a defined level of information. This information will be presented in a variety of formats including but not limited to demonstrations in the basic sciences, computer demonstrations, observations of microbiology cultures, and gross and microscopic studies of human tissues in normal and pathologic states. Candidates must also be able to accurately observe close at hand and at a distance, for the purpose of learning skills and gathering data. Candidates must possess functional use of vision, hearing, smell, and somatic sensations that permit such observations. *Examples include but are not limited to the ability to observe (see) an instructor's movements, a patient's gait or verbal responses, a chemical reaction, a microscopic image; feel vibrations, detect temperature, distinguish color and intensity, such as a red skin lesion or skin paleness, hear faint body sounds such as heart and lung sounds, smell odors such as alcohol breath.*
- 2> **Communication:** candidates must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently, both verbally and in writing, with patients and members of the health care team. This would include stressful or demanding situations. The candidate must be able to respond to questions, formulate problems and solutions to problems, and to ask pertinent questions in a one-on-one, small group or large group format. Candidates must be able to read and comprehend written material in English. *Examples would*

- include but not be limited to the ability to educate patients, convey important updates on a patient's status, both through written means (e.g., progress notes) and verbally (e.g., presentation to a consultant), and read information about a patient, such as a consultant's note or a radiology report.*
- 3> **Psychomotor Skills:** candidates must have sufficient motor capacities and mobility to attend class. They must have sufficient motor function to obtain data from patients using tactile, auditory and visual maneuvers. The candidate must possess adequate strength, mobility and dexterity to obtain all the important information and perform reasonable procedures in the care of patients. Candidates must have the motor skills to provide general care and emergency treatment that are reasonably required of physicians. Candidates must have adequate endurance to carry out activities reasonably required of physicians in clinical activities for extended periods of time. *Examples would include but are not limited to the ability to dress in protective clothing in the performance of clinical duties (e.g., tolerate a mask on the face), perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, perform chest compressions, manually ventilate a patient; take vital signs measurements, take blood pressure readings, take pulse rate; and perform catheter insertions, intravenous lines. The candidate should also be able to stand and maintain balance, move in confined spaces, pick up or grasp small objects, and complete assigned clinical practice within an acceptable time period and, on occasion, for extended periods of time, including night call.*
- 4> **Intellectual and Cognitive Abilities:** candidates must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, integrate, and apply information. The candidate must possess adequate strength, mobility and dexterity. Candidates must be able to apply information from a variety of sources, such as knowledge obtained in classroom settings, interaction with other healthcare professionals, written materials such as textbooks or literature searches. Problem solving, a clinical skill required of physicians, requires all of these intellectual abilities. Candidates must be able to perform these functions not only during times of quiet reflection but must also during stressful situations and in a rapid manner, such as might occur in a medical emergency. In addition candidates must be able to visualize and comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures. Candidates must also be able to demonstrate higher-level cognitive abilities including rational thought, conceptualization, clinical reasoning, ethical reasoning, and sound judgment. *Examples would include but not be limited to the ability to transfer knowledge from one situation to another; assimilate and apply knowledge acquired from multiple learning experiences; comprehend and apply abstract concepts; handle multiple tasks and problem-solve simultaneously; synthesize knowledge and skills; prioritize tasks; use long and short term memory; be able to process information and reach appropriate conclusions in urgent situations; gather and process patient information, in either verbal or written formats, in a timely manner. Candidates should be aware that, in addition to written examinations, they will also be subject to assessment exercises to evaluate these abilities (e.g., standardized patient exams, and direct observations of a candidate's performance between the candidate and a patient).*
- 5> **Professional, Behavioral and Social Attributes:** candidates must possess the emotional health required to fully use their intellectual abilities. *Examples of these would include but not be limited to the ability to exercise good judgment, promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and*

*develop mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically, emotionally and mentally taxing workloads, and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to pay attention to detail and perform their learning activities, especially experiential activities, accurately and thoroughly, and assume responsibility and accountability for their actions. They must be able to adapt positively to stress and changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties and ambiguities inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. They must be able to function effectively in new, different, and/or distant social environments where they are separated from their customary support structure or family unit. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal competence and motivation are all personal qualities important to the educational process and the future care of patients. Students must have the emotional maturity to self-assess, know their limitations and seek advice or counseling in situations that might impair their learning or their performance in the care of patients. They must know their limits, recognize when they should seek consultation and/or supervision, and do so in a timely manner. The capacity of healthcare professionals to self-assess their ability to function at a high level for the best care and safety of their patients, regardless if this is secondary to a physical, emotional or mental impairment, and to proactively seek appropriate treatment, including leaves of absence, is an important ability for a physician to have. Besides the examples listed above, other examples of attributes that candidates would be expected to exhibit would include but are not limited to the following: respect differences in patients and staff; establish rapport with patients; negotiate interpersonal conflict; participate in partnered and group efforts in classroom and clinical learning activities; practice in a manner that is non-judgmental and non-discriminatory; interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds; adapt effectively to changing environments and increasing tension levels in a variety of situations (e.g., emergencies); deal with the unexpected (e.g., death of a patient, patient whose condition is acutely worsening); focus attention on tasks; perform multiple responsibilities concurrently; and handle strong emotions.*

- 6> **Legal and Ethical Standards:** candidates must demonstrate professional attitudes and behaviors, and must perform in an ethical manner in all dealings with peers, faculty, staff and patients. They must demonstrate honesty, integrity and reliability, and adhere to the standards that reflect the values and functions of the healthcare profession and as required by regulatory agencies. This includes a responsibility to acquire and share data in an honest and timely manner, respect rights of privacy, apply an ethical decision-making process in their studies, (e.g., *in writing papers, taking examinations, collecting data*), avoid plagiarism and adhere to the other legal/ethical standards set forth by UTMB.