## TECHNICAL STANDARDS

**Technical Standards for Admission to and Continuation in**

**the University of Montana Skaggs School of Pharmacy Doctor of Pharmacy Program**

## The mission of the Skaggs School of Pharmacy (SSOP) is to prepare graduates to be highly skilled scientists, educators, and patient-centered health care providers. The following technical standards describe the non-academic qualifications required in addition to academic performance that the school considers essential for admission to, and continuation in, the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) program to ensure our student/graduates are practice ready upon graduation.

## Role of Technical Standard

Technical standards are based on the characteristics identified as necessary in the practice environment. Patient safety is a major factor in establishing these requirements. These standards for pharmacy profession are the physical, intellectual, professional, behavioral, and emotional characteristics required to be a competent and practice-ready pharmacist. These characteristics contribute to the overall ability of a person to perform successfully in both the academic setting and in the profession/practice setting.

## How Technical Standards Are Used at the University of Montana Skaggs School of Pharmacy

1. *Request for accommodation*

The University of Montana (UM) SSOP is committed to helping students by reasonable means or accommodations to complete the course of study leading to the Pharm.D. degree. However, all applicants are held to the same academic and technical standards of admission and training, with reasonable accommodations as needed for students with disabilities. Applicants and continuing students must have a documented disabling condition in order to request reasonable accommodations. Accommodation requests can be made through the Office for Disability Equity. (<https://www.umt.edu/disability/>).

1. *Expectation to maintain and demonstrate technical standards*

Throughout the Doctor of Pharmacy program, a student will be expected to maintain the technical standards and demonstrate them through their coursework, interaction with peers and faculty, and in their introductory and advanced pharmacy practice experiences (IPPEs/APPEs). Students who fail to demonstrate the technical standards while in the program will be evaluated by the SSOP Student Professional and Academic Review Committee and appropriate action (e.g., remediation, counseling, or dismissal) will be taken. Because this expectation is separate from academic achievement, simply maintaining a passing GPA is not sufficient.

1. *Admission to the program and progression towards graduation*

Admission and retention decisions are based not only on satisfactory academic factors but also on non-academic factors such as professional development, mature decision making, and responsible actions. Progression toward graduation requires successful performance of the academic requirements as described in the Student Handbook. The SSOP reserves the right not to admit any applicant who cannot meet the SSOP Technical Standards with or without reasonable accommodations. This right to rescind admission applies in cases where reasonable accommodations cannot be provided, would result in a fundamental alteration to the technical standards, or compromise patient care or the safety of the prospective and/or currently enrolled students.

## Technical Standards

Candidates for the Pharm.D. degree program as well as continuing Doctor if Pharmacy students must be able to perform the essential functions in each of the following categories: Observation, Communication, Motor, Intellectual, and Professional/Behavioral/Social. The term “students” refer to both candidates and continuing students.

Observation:

Observation necessitates the effective use of visual, auditory and somatic senses. Candidates and students must have sufficient abilities to be able to observe and participate in lectures, demonstrations, experiments, laboratory exercises, practice-based activities, and written or practical examinations/assessments. They must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand, including performing physical assessments.

Communication:

Communication includes speech, reading, writing, hearing, and computer literacy. All candidates and students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with faculty and staff, patients, their caregivers and/or partners, and members of the healthcare team. As appropriate for each stage of their education, student pharmacists must communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written English; and have the proper use and recognizing implicit information and being able to distinguish it from explicit. They must be capable of completing professional communication activities in a timely manner and adjust spoken or written communication approach to match the needs of the recipient (person or audience). Apply cultural humility in conversation in a way that genuinely attempts to understand a person's identities related to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, beliefs and values, education, social needs, and others utilizing ongoing process of self-exploration and self0refelction and critique.

Motor Skills:

A student must have sufficient motor function to perform basic tasks involved in the training for and practice of pharmacy, including, but not limited to, executing all aspects of processing drug orders such as operating a keyboard, dispensing all types of dosage forms, and safe and aseptic handling as well as accurate dosing of sterile preparations. They must have the skills to draw up medication in syringes and administer injections (e.g., immunizations, insulins, monoclonal antibodies), perform point of care testing, and perform physical assessment (e.g., blood pressure, heart rate, perform diabetic foot exam). A student must also exhibit physical and mental stamina, including standing or sitting for prolonged periods of time to withstand sometimes taxing workloads while maintaining a high level of function.

**Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:**

As appropriate for each stage of their education, student pharmacists must have the cognitive ability to be able to learn and process large volumes of information through a variety of modalities and must be able to perform successfully in a variety learning environments (didactic, laboratory, simulation and experiential). Students must be able to process information and demonstrate the ability to read, reason, comprehend, recall, measure, calculate, integrate, analyze, memorize, organize, synthesize and evaluate complex material and accurately report information. In order to appreciate experiences in the laboratory, classroom, and practice settings, the student must perceive and understand visual spatial relationship structures and three-dimensional relationships. Additionally, students must be able to develop and employ critical thinking, problem solving and evidence‐based decision‐making skills and appropriately apply these skills to pharmacy practice demonstrating good judgment in patient care and assessment and possess effective and efficient learning techniques and habits that allow mastery of the pharmacy curriculum. Lastly, they should be committed to life-long learning.

Professional, Behavioral and Social Attributes:

Students must understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of pharmacy and function within the guidelines established by the law and by the ethical standards of the pharmacy profession. Students must exhibit behaviors and attitudes appropriate for a healthcare professional and demonstrate the social skills required to function effectively in the classroom, laboratories and clinical settings as well as in activities that are part of the curriculum and co-curriculum. Students must demonstrate professional demeanor and behavior; empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, kindness, patience, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are required. They should have the ability to give and receive constructive criticism and work in teams, Students must also be of sufficient emotional and mental health to utilize fully their intellectual ability, to exercise good judgment, to relate to others and to utilize appropriate coping skills in managing the stress of a rigorous academic and professional. In the event of deteriorating function, students must be willing to acknowledge the situation and seek professional help before it poses danger to themselves or others.