**DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES TECHNICAL, NON-ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

Technical Standards are the nonacademic requirements for participation in an educational program or activity. They include physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the North Carolina A&T MSPA curriculum and for entry into the profession.

The North Carolina A&T MSPA program has established Technical Standards and Essential Functions for admission, continuance, and graduation. Students must demonstrate competency in the intellectual, physical, and social tasks that cumulatively represent the essential functions of professional practice.

The MSPA program considers it essential for all physician assistant students to have the knowledge and skill to function in a variety of clinical settings and to provide a wide spectrum of patient care as required by the curriculum.

Therefore, every PA student must master a common body of basic science knowledge and master the principles, knowledge, and procedures of the clinical clerkships. This requires that every student have sufficient capacities and abilities in: **Communication, Visual Auditory, Tactile, and Motor Competencies, Intellectual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities,** Behavioral **and Social Attributes,** and **Ethical and legal standards.**

Completion of this program requires that each student independently demonstrate these capabilities continuously throughout enrollment. Surrogates cannot be used to accomplish the essential functions outlined below. Students may not have undue dependence on technology or trained intermediaries to meet these standards.

**Communication**

The candidate must be able to ask questions, receive answers perceptively, to record information about patients, and educate patients. S/he must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with patients, their families, and with other members of the health care team. This must include spoken communication and non-verbal communication such as interpretation of facial expressions, affects, and body language. Mastery of both written and spoken English is required.

**Visual, Auditory, Tactile and Motor Competencies**

A candidate must possess sufficient visual, auditory, tactile and motor abilities to allow him/her to gather data from written reference material, from oral presentations, by observing demonstrations and experiments, by studying various types of medical illustrations, by observing a patient and his/her environment, by observing clinical procedures performed by others, by reading digital or analog representations of physiologic phenomena, and by performing a basic physical examination of a patient.

Participation in hands-on laboratory activities is an essential component of PA education.

The candidate must participate in physical examination and skills lab activities in both the roles of ‘PA’ and ‘patient,’ that will necessitate the exposure of and physical contact with various parts of their body and the bodies of other students to learn and demonstrate curricular-related knowledge. This touch should always be professional in nature and should follow the same principles of respect and sensitive practice applicable to patient care.  Appropriate touch includes explaining any intended physical contact and obtaining consent before proceeding with any examination.

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

A candidate must possess a range of intellectual skills that allow him/her to master the broad and complex body of knowledge that comprises the PA curriculum. The student’s learning style must be effective and efficient. The goal will be to solve difficult problems and to make diagnostic and therapeutic decisions.   Candidates must be able to commit to memory, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information across modalities. They must recognize and draw conclusions about three-dimensional spatial relationships and logical sequential relationships among events. They must be able to formulate and test hypotheses that enable effective and timely problem-solving in the diagnosis and treatment of patients in a variety of clinical modalities.

Reasoning abilities must be sophisticated enough to analyze and synthesize information from a wide variety of sources. It is expected that the candidate can 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.

**Behavioral and Social Attributes**

Candidates must demonstrate the maturity and emotional stability required for full use of their intellectual abilities. They must accept responsibility for learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.

Candidates must be able to work effectively, respectfully and professionally as part of the healthcare team, and to interact with patients, their families, and health care personnel in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner. They must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and long work hours, to function effectively under stress, and to display flexibility and adaptability to changing environments. They must be capable of regular, reliable and punctual attendance at classes and in regard to their clinical responsibilities.

Candidates must be able to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes. It is expected that minimum accommodation will be requested with regards to this set of standards.

**Ethical and Legal Standards**

Candidates are required to understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and the functioning of the medical profession, both within the law and within the ethical standards of the medical profession. To be licensed to practice medicine, they must comply with the relevant legislation. As such, applicants for admission must acknowledge and provide written explanation of any felony offense, misdemeanor offense, or disciplinary action taken against them prior to matriculation. The Program Director should be informed immediately of convictions by students who committed a felony in the PA program. The failure to disclose prior or new offenses may lead to disciplinary action, including withdrawal of an offer of admission or dismissal from the PA Program