Technical Standards
Admission and Fulfillment of Requirements of the Doctor of Pharmacy Degree

Mission of the PharmD Program
Through our commitment to personalizing education, PittPharmacy inspires students to use their unique interests and talents to improve the lives of people through the safe, effective, and responsible use of medications and other interventions.

The PharmD program prepares students to be practitioners who advance the profession by fostering innovation, leadership, interprofessional collaboration, civic engagement, advocacy, life-long learning, and a professional attitude of inclusion.

In addition to academic qualifications, students must possess the broad range of attributes enumerated in the School of Pharmacy’s technical standards. These attributes facilitate mastery of all elements of the PharmD curriculum.

The School’s technical standards include categories of physical, intellectual, and emotional attributes necessary to accumulate knowledge, acquire skills and professional behaviors, attitudes and values to practice pharmacy, and advance the profession of pharmacy. Ensuring optimal medication therapy outcomes and patient safety are pivotal forces that underlie the establishment of technical standards required for all students entering, progressing and graduating with a doctor of pharmacy degree. Applicants should also be familiar with the requirements and licensure application questions for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (http://www.dos.pa.gov/ProfessionalLicensing/BoardsCommissions/Pharmacy/Pages/default.aspx) or requirements of any other state board of pharmacy where the student intends to become licensed.

The School of Pharmacy is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for those otherwise qualified individuals with a disability and adheres to the policies set forth by the University of Pittsburgh. A reasonable academic accommodation is a modification or adjustment that allows an individual to gain equal access and have equal opportunity to participate in the School’s and the University’s courses, services, activities and use of facilities. The School is not obligated to provide an accommodation that requires a substantial change in the curriculum or alteration of any essential elements or functions of the program. The University’s process (http://www.drs.pitt.edu/policies.html) for requesting accommodations is voluntary and confidential.

All students entering, progressing and graduating with a doctor of pharmacy degree must meet or exceed the following technical standards that include all of the following attributes and abilities but are not limited to:

1. **Intellectual:** Students must possess intellectual attributes that include intelligence, rational judgment, ability to reason and understand, as well as conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities to master the PharmD curriculum and fulfill all requirements of the PharmD program. Problem solving, critical thinking and development of knowledge are key skills necessary for the practice of pharmacy. Students must:

   - demonstrate a fundamental and sustained ability to measure, calculate, retrieve, comprehend, interpret, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information.
   - be able to use critical thinking skills to identify, manage, solve, and prevent problems and make appropriate decisions about a patients pharmaceutical plan.
- be able to use analytical reasoning and problem solving skills independently and in collaboration with a health care team to formulate a pharmaceutical plan that maximizes the patient’s response to drug therapy, evaluate its success, and make modifications when necessary.
- be able to understand the research process, the scientific method, and be able to incorporate and utilize new information to provide evidence based pharmaceutical care plans for patient care and clinical problem-solving.
- have the ability to develop life-long-learning. This may require the ability to recognize knowledge and skill deficits and to formulate a learning plan to address, compensate and improve professional knowledge and skills to ensure optimal patient care.
- be able to identify and analyze emerging issues that may affect individual health as well as public health.
- be able to process information and perform all these abilities independently and in an efficient and timely manner.

2. Communication: Students must be able utilize all verbal and non-verbal communication methods to communicate accurately, effectively, professionally, confidentially, and sensitively in English with patients, care-givers, families of patients, members of the health care team, faculty, staff, and fellow students. This includes the abilities of speech, reading, writing, hearing and listening, and comprehension while utilizing a variety of communications mediums. These abilities primarily utilize the special senses of vision and hearing, somatic sensations as well as intellect and fine motor skills. Students must be able to:

- perceive and respond to non-verbal communications such as mood, activity, temperament, and cultural differences.
- create a patient database utilizing data obtained from the medical chart and/or by direct patient assessment and/or communication to create a pharmaceutical care plan.
- counsel and educate patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and the community about drug therapy and health issues.
- read, write, hear, comprehend, and assimilate scientific and medical information from a variety of electronic and written sources, as well as from didactic, laboratory, clinical and experiential curricular requirements (components).

3. Motor and Sensory Functions: Students must have sufficient gross and fine motor function, equilibrium and functional use of vision and touch to perform all movements required for delivery of pharmaceutical care. Students must be able to:

- provide first aid treatments such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and elicit information from patients by physical touching (e.g., blood pressure recordings, pulse reading).
- perform the basic tasks in the practice of pharmacy: compound and /or dispense medications consistent with patient needs and in compliance with local policy, state and federal pharmacy laws.
- withstand the physical requirements and stresses imposed by the typical daily routine of the student pharmacist and practitioner in a variety of settings.

4. **Behavioral and Social Attributes**: Students must possess personal qualities that include integrity, maturity, compassion, sensitivity, patience, interpersonal skills, initiative and motivation to develop the professional behaviors, attitudes and values to effectively practice pharmacy. Students must:

   - act with the highest level of integrity and ethics in all they do while complying with all local policies, and state and federal pharmacy laws.
   - possess the emotional and mental health required to fully utilize their intellectual abilities, exercise sound judgment and decision making skills to complete the curriculum and execute patient care responsibilities.
   - be able to adapt to changing environments, work under stress, and display flexibility
   - be able to take responsibility for the outcomes of medication therapy and make rational and ethical decisions that represent the best interests of the patient.
   - be committed to self-improvement and life-long learning, be able to recognize their own limitations, seek help when necessary and accept and respond appropriately to constructive feedback by modifying their behavior.
   - be able to develop mature and effective relationships with patients, caregivers, family members of patients, other health care professionals, faculty, staff, and fellow students while showing respect and sensitivity to cultural diversity, exercising compassion and maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of health information.
   - demonstrate concern for the health and well-being of individuals and the community.
   - contribute to the advancement of the profession, and promote a culture of professionalism.
   - adhere to the School of Pharmacy’s professional code of conduct.
   - meet the ethical standards set forth by the pharmacy profession for licensure.

5. **Observation**: Students must have the functional use of auditory, visual and tactile senses for observation and performance of experiments and demonstrations, participation in didactic course requirements and practice based activities. Students must be able to:

   - observe and evaluate a patient’s activity and behavior, perform basic physical assessments and conduct patient interviews.
   - accurately conduct all steps related to medication order processing.
   - read, comprehend and interpret in English all written, presented and illustrated information from diverse learning environments including diagnostic and tests monitoring therapy.