

Name of Policy

Policy #

Date Adopted: August 8, 2016

Date Amended

## **Technical Standards Policy**

### **I. Purpose:**

The University of Minnesota School of Dentistry recognizes that the award of a oral health professional degrees carries with it the full authority of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents and communicates to those who might seek the services of the bearer that he or she is competent to practice general dentistry, dental hygiene, or dental therapy. This degree is a professional degree, unique in that the graduate is prepared upon licensure to practice all disciplines within their scope of practice. This requires that the students in the curriculum acquire didactic knowledge as well as psychomotor skills and the attitudes essential to the profession and agreed upon by the faculty as requisite for practice. To successfully negotiate the curriculum, students must have a level of cognitive aptitude, ethical competency and hand-eye coordination. The purpose of this policy is to describe technical standard requirements for students in the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry.

### **II. Policy:**

All applicants accepted in the School of Dentistry are required to meet the School of Dentistry technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation in order to matriculate into the Doctor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene, or Master of Dental Therapy programs.

Students that are accepted into these programs will receive a document from the Assistant Dean of Admission that describes in full the current minimum technical standards that are required for enrollment. Students must be examined by a physician, and have their signature to attest that the students meets the technical standard required by the school as outlined in the document. This physical examination must have been completed within one year prior to matriculating into the school of Dentistry.

Dental education requires the accumulation of scientific knowledge accompanied by simultaneous development of specific skills and competencies. Students cannot fulfill these requirements in coursework or patient care if they are unable to meet technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation. Therefore, students must continue to be able to meet the technical standards in order to progress in their respective programs, and in order to graduate from the School of Dentistry. Enrolled students will not be required to verify that they meet the standards by a physician's

examination unless requested due to an academic performance issue, or a behavioral issue.

Enrolled students unable to meet technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation will be referred to the academic review committee for their programs (e.g., Core Scholastic Standing Committee). These committees will have the authority to make decisions regarding students' academic status, which including a recommendation for a leave of absence, suspension, or dismissal.

School of Dentistry applicants and enrolled students with questions about whether they can meet technical standards due to a documented disability should contact the Disability Resource Center - <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>.

School of Dentistry Minimum Technical Standards for Doctor of Dental surgery, Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene and Master of Dental Therapy can be found as appendices to this policy.

### **III. Definition(s):**

- Students: For the purposes of this policy, students are those enrolled in the doctor of dental surgery, dental therapy, or dental hygiene programs.

Policy Owner:	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
External References:	University of Minnesota School of Dentistry Minimum Technical Standards
Related Policies:	
Approved by:	<b>Council of Chairs</b>
Approval Date:	<b>August 8, 2016</b>
Effective Date:	
Revision Date:	

**University of Minnesota School of Dentistry**  
MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSIONS AND MATRICULATION



The University of Minnesota School of Dentistry is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status or sexual orientation.

In adhering to this policy, the University abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Minnesota Human Rights Act and other applicable statutes and regulations relating to equality of opportunity. In this venue, the School of Dentistry encourages all qualified individuals to apply for admission to its Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS), Dental Therapy (BSDH/MDT) and Dental Hygiene (BSDH) programs.

The University of Minnesota School of Dentistry recognizes that the award of a School of Dentistry degree carries with it the full authority University of Minnesota Board of Regents and communicates to those who might seek the services of the bearer that he or she is competent to practice general dentistry. Each degree is a professional degree, unique in that the graduate is prepared upon licensure to practice each discipline within its scope of practice. This requires that the student in the curriculum acquire didactic knowledge as well as psychomotor skills and the attitudes essential to the profession and agreed upon by the faculty as requisite for the practice of each discipline. To successfully negotiate the curriculum, students must have a level of cognitive aptitude, ethical competency and hand-eye coordination.

The School of Dentistry is mindful of the unique nature of the dental curriculum. Applicants must possess the skills and abilities that will allow them to successfully complete the course of study and receive the full benefit of the education. In the process, the student is required to direct or perform treatment on the patients of the University of Minnesota Dental Clinics and its affiliates. This includes the completion of treatment safely and within an acceptable amount of time. With this in mind, the student must be able to meet the following technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations.

## **1. MOTOR SKILLS**

**GENERAL:** A candidate should have a sufficient level of manual dexterity such that he/she is able to execute the fine movements required to provide general dental care and treatment to patients within a specified amount of time.

**SPECIFIC:** It is required that a candidate possess the manual motor skills necessary to directly perform, diagnostic and treatment maneuvers associated with the practice of general dentistry. Such maneuvers require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional uses of the senses of touch, hearing and vision.

**SPECIFIC:** A candidate must be able to perform basic life support (including CPR), transfer and position disabled patients, and position and reposition self around patients in various treatment settings. The candidate must be able to operate dental equipment controls utilizing fine hand movements, position and move dental instruments and move in all directions within one millimeter of tolerance. Candidates must be able to work in the proper ergonomic positions appropriate to the delivery of dental treatment for extended times.

**Meets Standards**

## **2. SENSORY/OBSERVATION**

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### **BASIC SCIENCES**

**GENERAL:** A candidate must be able to acquire a defined level of required information as presented through demonstrations and experiences in the basic and dental sciences.

**SPECIFIC:** This includes, but is not limited to, information conveyed through physiologic, pharmacological demonstrations in animals and microscopic images of microorganisms and human or animal tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must be able to acquire information from written documents and to visualize information presented in images from paper, films, slides, video and computer. A candidate must be able to interpret radiographs (x-rays) and other graphic images, with or without the use of assistive devices. A candidate must have functional use of visual, auditory, and somatic sensation while using appropriate enhancement of sensory modalities.(such and microscopes, stethoscopes, etc.)

### **CLINICAL SCIENCES**

**GENERAL:** A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately, at a distance and close at hand, and observe and appreciate non-verbal communications when performing general dental treatment or administering medications.

**SPECIFIC:** A candidate must be able to perform visual and tactile dental examinations and treatment including use of visual acuity, with or without accommodation, to discern slight differences and variations in color, shape, and general appearance between normal and abnormal, soft and hard tissues. Use of tactile senses may be either direct palpation or indirect through instrumentation. A candidate must also possess the visual acuity to read charts, records, small print and handwritten notation, and distinguish small variations in colors intra and extra orally.

**Meets Standards**

## **3. COMMUNICATION**

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**GENERAL:** A candidate must be able to communicate clearly and effectively with a degree of sensitivity with patients, parents and/or guardians; establish good rapport, convey or exchange information at a level allowing development of a health history; identify problems presented; explain alternative solutions; and give directions during treatment and post-treatment. For effective patient treatment, the candidate must be able to communicate with patients, parents, guardians and all members of the dental and medical health care team effectively and efficiently and communication must be culturally appropriate. Communication includes oral and written modes.

**SPECIFIC:** A candidate must have sufficient facility with English to retrieve information from literature, computerized data bases and lectures and to communicate concepts on written exams and patient charts. Patients, faculty, students, and staff must be able to easily understand the candidates' oral and written communication in order to effectively evaluate performance and to work collaboratively in the care of patients. Patients must be able to understand the candidate easily to help establish patient rapport, understand what information is requested and needed by the candidate and understand the explanation of treatment procedures, treatment options, informed consent, and follow up or home care.

**Meets Standards**

#### **4. COGNITIVE**

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**GENERAL:** A candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information.

**SPECIFIC:** A candidate must be able to comprehend and mentally visualize three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. Problem solving and clinical decision making, and critical thinking skills demanded of a general dentist, requires all of these intellectual abilities. A candidate must be able to perform these problem-solving and critical thinking skills in a timely fashion for effective patient treatment.

**Meets Standards**

#### **5. BEHAVIORAL**

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**GENERAL:** A candidate must possess the emotional health and maturity required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, maintenance of patient confidentiality, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, faculty, staff and students.

**SPECIFIC:** A candidate must recognize that the curriculum is physically, mentally and emotionally taxing. He or she must be able to tolerate physically and emotionally demanding workloads, function effectively under stress, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that will be assessed during the admission and educational processes. Further, a candidate must be able to manage apprehensive patients with a range of moods and behaviors in a tactful, culturally sensitive, congenial, personal matter so as not to alienate or antagonize them. A candidate must reasonably be expected to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior.

**Meets Standards**



#### MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR MATRICULATION AND GRADUATION STANDARDS

Each degree is a professional degree unique in that the graduate is prepared upon licensure to practice each discipline within its scope of practice. This requires that the student in the curriculum acquire didactic knowledge as well as psychomotor skills and attitudes essential to the profession and agreed upon by the faculty as requisite for the practice of each discipline. The candidate requires both cognitive and technical skills in order to negotiate this curriculum. In the process, a matriculated candidate is required to direct or perform treatment on the patients of the School and its affiliates. The School has the responsibility of insuring the safety of the patients. This includes the rendering of treatment in a safe manner and within a specified amount of time. To that end, the student must be able to meet the *School of Dentistry Minimum Technical Standards for Admissions and Matriculation* with or without reasonable accommodations.

#### PHYSICAL EXAM CERTIFICATION

A University of Minnesota School of Dentistry candidate is required to have a physical examination within one year of matriculating into the School. By signing this form, the physician is verifying he/she has examined the candidate and to his/her best assessment, the candidate meets the technical standards needed for successful completion of the DDS, BSDH/MDT or BSDH program as described in the document entitled "Minimum Technical Standards for Admissions and Matriculation." If the candidate has not had the required physical examination, they understand that this will preclude them from matriculating in the School of Dentistry.