

Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Policy Title: Technical Standards

Policy & Procedure Statement: Technical Standards

Technical Standards for Admission to OCOM

The requirements to succeed at OCOM will be those necessary to successfully complete the curriculum and to practice osteopathic medicine with full practice rights. Students must be able to function in a variety of learning and clinical settings, and to quickly, accurately, and consistently learn and process data. Osteopathic physicians utilize palpation (clinically appropriate touching) as part of the physical examination and osteopathic approach to treatment.

As part of the educational process, OCOM students must be able to tolerate being palpated, examined, and receive osteopathic manipulation by members of all genders, and to touch, examine and provide osteopathic manipulation to others (of all genders) in order to acquire the skills necessary for palpation and examination. This palpation is performed in a professional and appropriate manner.

Acquiring the skills to palpate and examine patients requires a student to examine disrobed patients of all genders and is mandatory for successful completion of the curriculum at OCOM. Students are required to participate fully as both the examiner and examinee in various clinical laboratory experiences. In clinical skills and osteopathic manipulative medicine laboratories experiences, as well as other clinical laboratories where examination skills are acquired, students are required to participate in the examination of fellow students of all genders who may be partially disrobed.

To be able to gain appropriate clinical exposure to the regions being examined and osteopathic manipulative techniques to be provided, students need to wear attire such as shorts and are expected to partially disrobe for certain laboratory experiences. Please refer to Dress Code Policy in the Course Syllabi for additional information.

Additionally, OCOM utilizes virtual cadavers as part of anatomy laboratories. As such, OCOM students must be able to tolerate working with virtual cadavers.

OCOM students also participate in ultrasound labs and, as such, may be required to perform ultrasound examinations of fellow students of all genders who may be partially disrobed. These are requirements for all students, regardless of cultural or religious beliefs, in order for the student to acquire the skills necessary to practice osteopathic medicine. Students who have any concern should discuss them with the Director of Admissions prior to applying.

OCOM will make reasonable accommodations as required by law for students whose disabilities will not prevent them from successfully completing the entire OCOM curriculum and graduating as an osteopathic physician. Students, however, are required to function with independence and perform at all skill levels described below which OCOM holds as mandatory for the safe and effective practice of osteopathic medicine.

OCOM is committed to patient safety and ensuring a safe and effective environment that does not place patients, students, or others at risk. Each technical standard has been chosen from standards osteopathic physicians deem necessary for the safe and effective practice of osteopathic medicine.

Applicants who do not meet the above technical standards should not apply to OCOM.

Applicants must possess the abilities and skills in the following six (6) areas:

1. Observation

The student must be able to visually observe laboratory demonstrations, microscopic tissue with the aid of the microscope, and electronic images used in classroom presentations and computer-based pictures used in laboratory demonstrations. The student must be able to accurately observe physical signs and symptoms of a patient used in diagnosis and management. The use of a trained intermediary in such cases would compromise performance, as it would be mediated by another individual's power of selection, observation, and experience. Observation requires the functional use of vision and somatic sensations and is enhanced by the sense of smell.

2. Communication

The student must be able to communicate effectively in English as the curriculum and clinical experiences are offered in English. Students are encouraged to learn other languages for medical communication; however, all curriculum and assessments are given in English. OCOM requires the functional ability to speak, hear, and observe patients in order to elicit accurate medical information. The student must be able both to describe changes in mood, activity, posture, and other physical characteristics and to perceive nonverbal communication.

The student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in verbal and written form. The student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with the patient and with all members of the health care team in order to successfully complete the curriculum.

3. Motor

Students must have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, percussion, and other diagnostic measures. The student must have sufficient motor function to carry out maneuvers of general and emergency care and of osteopathic manipulation. Examples of emergent motor functions are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous fluids and intravenous medications, management of an obstructed airway, hemorrhage control, closure by suturing of wounds, and obstetrical deliveries. In addition, the delivery of osteopathic manipulation requires the use of extremities in palpation, positioning, and carrying out maneuvers of manipulation. These actions require fine and gross motor and sensory function, as well as the senses of touch and adequate vision for inspection. Students must be able to generate sufficient force, and be able to receive these same forces, to successfully learn and provide effective osteopathic manipulative treatment for all techniques which include, but are not limited to, muscle energy, counterstrain, Still technique, and high-velocity, low amplitude (HVLA) taught in the curriculum.

4. Intellectual

Students must have the ability to reason, calculate, analyze, measure, and synthesize information delivered in a variety of formats including, but not limited to electronic/digital sources, EKG's, medical images and similar modalities. The student must be able to comprehend, learn, synthesize, and recall a large amount of information without assistance, to successfully complete the curriculum. The student must be able to comprehend and understand/apply three dimensional relationships and to understand spatial relationships to successfully complete the curriculum and apply fundamental concepts to the provision of patient care. The student must be able to acquire and

synthesize knowledge through various types of learning materials that are part of the OCOM curriculum. In addition, students must be able to perform pattern recognition, recall information, identify and discriminate important information, to problem solve, calculate and make decisions in timed situations and in the presence of noise and distraction.

The above intellectual abilities are essential, as students and graduates will be expected and required to perform pattern recognition, immediate recall of learned material, discrimination to elicit important information, problem solving, and decision-making as to emergent diagnosis and treatment of patients. Students must be able to recall and apply important information for diagnosis and to calculate therapeutic management of emergent conditions. This type of demonstrated intellectual ability must be performed in a rapid and time-efficient manner in order to provide care to patients with emergent conditions. It is common for emergent situations to occur in the presence of visually distracting and noisy environments. Such emergent situations include, but are not limited to, cardiopulmonary compromise, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, obstetrical and neonatal emergencies, trauma presentations, toxic exposures, shock, and hemorrhage.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes

The student must possess the emotional health needed for full use of the student's intellectual capabilities at all times. The emotional health required for effective communication and for professional, mature, sensitive, and compassionate patient/physician or patient/student relationships must be present. Students must be able to function effectively under stress and with physically taxing workloads. Students must have the emotional health to be able to function without the aid of medications that are known to affect intellectual abilities and judgment. The student must have the emotional stability and motivation to deliver patient care and to make emergent decisions at all times. The ability to adapt to changing environments and stressful situations and to display compassion and integrity, while maintaining the necessary intellectual capacity to care for patients is one that is observed during the interview process and throughout the progress in medical school. An ability to demonstrate the emotional health necessary for the delivery of quality and safe medical care is mandatory throughout medical school. OCOM considers drug and alcohol addiction or abuse as a risk factor for unsafe care.

6. Vaccination Requirements

Verification that all vaccination requirements are fully met or in progress is required by July 1. Accepted students who have not verified vaccination requirements are fully met

or in progress by July 1 prior to matriculation may have their offer of admission rescinded. Students who have their offer of admission rescinded will forfeit their seat in the class.

Applicants must identify to the Office of Admissions all areas where there is any question regarding their ability to meet the required vaccination requirements and the Technical Standards. If an applicant has a question about the student's ability to meet the Technical Standards, the applicant is required to notify the Office of Admissions before applying.

An offer of acceptance may be rescinded should an accepted applicant be found to not be able to meet the required vaccination requirements and the Technical Standards.

For matriculated students, inability to maintain compliance with the required vaccination requirements and the Technical Standards may result in dismissal from the program.

If an applicant signs that the applicant meets the minimum health requirements including required vaccination requirements and the Technical Standards for admission, but it is discovered after matriculation that the student signed knowing the student did not meet these standards, then the student may receive sanctions up to and including dismissal from the program.

This policy shall be posted at ocom.org/policies.