

## **Keck School of Medicine Essential Characteristics and Abilities Policy**

### **Policy Statement:**

All students admitted to and enrolled in the Keck School of Medicine must meet and maintain the standards set by the Essential Characteristic and Abilities upon matriculation through graduation.

**Audience:** All Keck School of Medicine students.

### **Procedure:**

1. All matriculating students must certify in writing prior to matriculation that they have read and meet the Essential Characteristics and Abilities as outlined.
2. Students returning from any leave of absence, must recertify in writing that they continue to meet the standards set by the Essential Characteristics and Abilities.
3. If at any point during a student's enrollment, the student's ability to meet the standards set by the Essential Characteristics and Abilities is compromised, it is the student's responsibility to report this change to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
4. Students who require a reasonable accommodation at any time throughout their enrollment with the School of Medicine must contact the office of Disability Services and Programs (DSP) in the Center for Academic Support on the University Park Campus.

## **ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION OF THE M.D. DEGREE AT THE KECK SCHOOL OF MEDICINE OF USC**

### ***PREAMBLE***

The Keck School of Medicine of USC awards the M.D. degree to its students who demonstrate mastery of the requisite general knowledge and basic skills necessary to continue training as interns and residents in order to practice medicine. Essential characteristics and abilities required for completion of the M.D. program consist of certain minimum physical abilities, communication skills, intellectual, conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities, and behavioral and social attributes. A candidate for the M.D. degree, herein referred to as, "candidate," must demonstrate sufficient mental stability to successfully complete the entire course of study for the M.D. degree and participate fully in all aspects of undergraduate medical training. Graduates of KSOM M.D. degree program are expected to be capable of satisfactorily completing graduate medical education programs, passing licensing exams, and obtaining medical licenses. Consistent with this goal, the University of Southern California (USC) is committed to full compliance with the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Keck School of Medicine of USC does not discriminate against qualified individuals with these essential characteristics and abilities who apply for admission to the M.D. degree program or are enrolled as medical students. Any applicant or student with

these essential characteristics and abilities requesting special accommodations based on a disability is required to register and be approved by the Disability Services and Programs (DSP) Office in the Center for Academic Support on the University Park Campus.

The Keck School of Medicine of USC is responsible for the safety of patients with whom candidates will interact. Consideration of patient safety is an essential factor in establishing requirements for physical, cognitive, and emotional capabilities for admission, continued enrollment, promotion and graduation. An avowed intention to practice only a narrow part of clinical medicine does not alter the requirement that all students demonstrate full competence in the entire curriculum. Essential characteristics and abilities as described herein are a prerequisite for admission, continued enrollment, promotion and graduation from the Keck School of Medicine of USC. All candidates for the M.D. degree must meet all essential characteristics and abilities as described in this document.

### ***I. PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS***

After reasonable training and experience, the candidate must be able to observe and participate in demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences.

After reasonable training and experience, the candidate must be capable of performing a complete physical examination. The candidate must be capable of performing required clinical procedures and tests. The observations and information acquisition discussed in this document require sensory awareness, physical mobility, coordination of both gross and fine motor neuromuscular function, and balance and equilibrium.

### ***II. COMMUNICATION***

A candidate must be able to communicate in a respectful manner with all individuals. A candidate must possess written and oral English language fluency. He/she must be able to communicate in an effective and sensitive manner with patients. The candidate must be able to produce written documentation and perform oral presentations. Also, the candidate must be able to sufficiently comprehend written materials and oral instructions.

### ***III. INTELLECTUAL-CONCEPTUAL, INTEGRATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ABILITIES***

A candidate must have sufficient cognitive (mental) capacity to assimilate technically detailed and complex information. A candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize information across modalities.

### ***IV. BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES***

A candidate must possess the emotional health, maturity, discipline, and professional attributes necessary for the competent practice of medicine. The candidate for the M.D. degree must accept responsibility for learning and exercise good judgment in decision making and actions. A candidate must possess self-awareness of limitations, beliefs, and values, capacity for improvement, and must not disrupt or interfere with the learning of others. He/she must be

able to tolerate physically taxing workloads, function effectively under stress, and demonstrate resilience and adaptability. The candidate must be physically present when required. Candidates must demonstrate a respectful and professional manner in all interactions. Candidates must be willing and able to interact with, and care for, all individuals of the community, regardless of gender, race, age, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, or any other protected status identified by the University's Non-Discrimination Policy.

#### **V. SAFETY**

The Keck School of Medicine of USC has the responsibility to consider the safety and welfare of patients and others. Should a candidate for the M.D. degree have a condition or exhibit behavior that places patients or others at risk, that condition may be the basis for denial of admission or dismissal from the school. Students must be able to comply with all requirements to work in a clinical environment and with hazardous materials.

#### **DEMONSTRATION OF ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES**

All students entering and continuing in the Keck School of Medicine of USC must demonstrate they possess all of the "Essential Characteristics and Abilities", with reasonable accommodation if necessary, and each student will be expected to certify that he/she meets these standards. At its sole discretion, the Keck School of Medicine of USC can require that a candidate for the M.D. degree undergo an evaluation to determine whether these essential characteristics and abilities can be met.

Applicants and students should contact Disability Services and Programs (DSP) in the Center for Academic Support on the University Park Campus if they have questions as to what accommodations are reasonable. As soon as a student is aware of the need for an accommodation, the student shall register with DSP. DSP will work with students who request accommodations to make appropriate recommendations to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Students who fail to register with DSP in a timely manner or to provide necessary documentation to KSOM that they have done so, may not receive accommodations.