

# TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION TO, CONTINUATION IN AND GRADUATION FROM THE DOCTOR OF CHIROPRACTIC PROGRAM



**PALMER**  
College of Chiropractic

*The Trusted Leader in Chiropractic Education®*

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## INTRODUCTION

The College seeks to prepare students to become competent, caring Doctors of Chiropractic who serve as primary care providers for the prevention, diagnosis and conservative management of health conditions. In serving the patients’ best interest, a Palmer graduate utilizes the academic and clinical education received in order to make clinical decisions, deliver care and manage identified health concerns and conditions.

The academic, clinical, social and personal preparation for the practice of chiropractic requires both mental and physical abilities. In addition to academic admission requirements, the College requires that all qualified applicants and enrolled students must be able to meet the essential Technical Standards.

It is the College’s experience that a number of individuals with disabilities (as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as Amended) are qualified to study and ultimately practice chiropractic with the use of reasonable accommodations. To be qualified for the study of chiropractic at Palmer, those individuals must be able to meet not only the academic but also the technical standards, with or without approved reasonable accommodations/academic adjustments (hereafter referred to as reasonable accommodations). Such reasonable accommodations are viewed as a means of assisting students with disabilities to meet these essential standards, not to circumvent them, and to ensure equal opportunity as much as reasonably possible.

All individuals considering, applying or enrolling in the Doctor of Chiropractic Degree Program (DCP) are encouraged to read this document to better understand what is expected at Palmer College of Chiropractic.



## TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Contemporary chiropractic education requires not only the acquisition and utilization of academic, scientific, clinical and professional knowledge but also meeting technical standards necessary to achieving course outcomes as well as the Council of Chiropractic Education (CCE) meta-competencies necessary to function as a doctor of chiropractic.

Chiropractic education is delivered in a variety of settings including but not limited to:

- Campus clinics
- Classrooms
- Laboratories
- Internships/preceptorships
- Groups/teams
- Private offices
- Remote technologies

Students must also be able to meet the technical standards under often fast-paced and stressful conditions.

If at any point an enrolled student ceases to meet any technical standard the student must notify the campus disability services coordinator (refer to page 15).

# OBSERVATION AND PERCEPTION

Students must be able to accurately perceive, comprehend and synthesize, by the use of senses and mental abilities, the presentation of information through:

- Small group discussions and presentations
- Large-group lectures
- One-on-one interactions
- Demonstrations
- Laboratory experiments
- Direct, simulated, live or recorded patient interactions
- Diagnostic instruments
- Diagnostic findings
- Diagnostic and/or clinical procedures
- Physiotherapeutic modalities and procedures
- Rehabilitative modalities and procedures
- Written material
- Audio-visual material
- Web-based materials

These skills are requisite to educational achievement in the classroom, laboratory, clinic and other chiropractic education settings such that a student can identify all necessary details, receive and record relevant clinical information and read and interpret all forms of diagnostic imaging and therapeutic procedures.



### *Observation and Perception Examples*

Representative examples to meet this technical standard include, but are not limited to: learning management systems; web-based lecture or other course content or activities; books; videos; presentation slides; diagrams; discussions; physiologic demonstrations; gross and microscopic studies of organisms and tissues including human cadaver dissections and the axial and appendicular skeleton; chemical reactions and representations; photographs; radiographs; anatomical models; live human case presentations; patient interviews; verbal communication and nonverbal cues (as in taking a patient's history or working with a health care team); live and taped instruction; stethoscopes, otoscopes, sphygmomanometers, reflex hammers and other diagnostic instruments; patient x-rays, MRIs, CT's and other diagnostic findings; documentation and maintenance of records.

Students must also be able to perform a thorough physical examination using customary diagnostic instruments and techniques including but not limited to: otoscope (magnifying device for examining the ear); ophthalmoscope (magnifying device for examining the eye); auscultation (listening with a stethoscope); percussion (tapping of the chest or abdomen to elicit a sound indicating the relative density of the body part); palpation (feeling various body parts such as the spine, extremities or abdomen so as to discern the size, shape, and consistency of masses and other pathologies); simulations of rectal and pelvic exams; visual observation sufficient to note changes such as color and condition of the skin, the eyes and other areas of the body and to note subtle changes in grey scale (viewed on x-rays and other diagnostic imaging); visual observation sufficient to not only perceive nonverbal affective and gesture communication but also changes in mood, activity and posture in order to integrate findings based on this information and develop an appropriate diagnostic and treatment plan.

This required observation standard necessitates the functional use of visual, auditory and somatic sensation. Whenever an individual's ability to observe or acquire information through these sensory modalities is compromised, the individual must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to acquire essential observational information.

# COMMUNICATION

Students must be able to elicit, convey, exchange, transmit, interpret, receive, explain, clarify and respond to information (in English) with faculty members, clinician mentors, other members of the health care team, patients, patients' families, student peers, preceptors, and other members of the public through appropriate modes, mediums and methods as taught in the curriculum. This technical standard includes, but is not limited to:

- Oral interactions and presentations
- Physical non-verbal cues (body posture, facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, volume, tone and pace of speech, body stance, touch, overall movements of the body)
- Written documents
- Small or large group interactions
- Telephone conversations
- Electronic communication devices

Students must be able to select and use appropriate modes, mediums and methods of communication for each situation by considering such factors as the nature of communication; the proximity between the communicator and recipient; and the urgency of communication.

Students must be able to appropriately communicate as specified above in a manner that is:

- Effective
- Efficient
- Sensitive
- Empathetic
- Timely
- Professional
- Accurate
- Concise
- Clear
- Relevant
- Courteous





## *Communication Examples*

Representative examples to meet this technical standard include but are not limited to: collaborating with others; establishing rapport; developing appropriate professional relationships; writing papers; answering oral and written examination questions; conveying information to others in oral, written and/or electronic form; making formal and informal presentations; eliciting a complete history from a patient; accurately and completely recording patient histories and physicals; recording elicited information accurately and clearly; participating in clinical rounds and conferences; interacting with all members of the health care team; discussing health care issues with patients and families; obtaining informed consent; participating in video-recorded exercises; illustrating instructions to a patient; interacting with clinician mentors; writing radiology reports; writing notes; navigating and inputting information into electronic health records; succinctly and accurately relaying relevant patient information to other members of the health care team.



## STRENGTH, MOTOR, TACTILE, FLEXIBILITY, COORDINATION AND MOBILITY

Students must have sufficient upper and lower body strength; neuromuscular control; eye-to-hand coordination; manual dexterity; motor skills; tactile perception; and mobility function to attend and participate in all classes, groups and activities taught in the curriculum. This technical standard includes, but is not limited to:

- Examine patients
- Perform basic laboratory procedures and tests
- Perform diagnostic procedures
- Perform X-rays with proper patient positioning
- Perform physiotherapeutic modalities and procedures
- Perform rehabilitative modalities and procedures
- Perform manual and instrument assisted soft-tissue procedures
- Perform chiropractic adjustive procedures as demonstrated and taught in the core curriculum
- Provide general and emergency patient care
- Function in clinic settings
- Perform in a reasonably independent and competent way in oftentimes fast-paced and demanding clinical environment
- Read and write





### *Strength, Motor, Tactile, Flexibility, Coordination and Mobility Examples*

Representative examples to meet this technical standard include but are not limited to: transporting oneself from room to room and location to location; independently standing upright with adequate balance and equilibrium, coordination and stability; proficiently applying manual chiropractic techniques; using a computer; interpreting sensory information; performing a complete physical exam – including observation, auscultation, palpation, inspection, percussion, range of motion and other diagnostic maneuvers; performing simple lab tests; performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation; demonstrating venipunctures; demonstrating gynecological and rectal exams; performing physical, orthopedic, neurological, and pediatric evaluation and examinations (with the appropriate instruments); maintaining appropriate health care records; acting as a clinician's assistant or scribe; performing basic laboratory and clinical tests; carrying out diagnostic procedures; reading EKG's and X-rays; navigating and inputting information into electronic health records; determining depth and intensity of manual pressure and force; managing and operating diagnostic and therapeutic health care equipment; maneuvering to assist with patient-care activities such as lifting and mobility; being in physical attendance and participating in lectures, small groups, patient presentations, review sessions, dissections, laboratory and other work; applying pressure to stop bleeding; opening obstructed airways; exhibiting the physical stamina and endurance to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, bending, lifting, reaching, pushing, pulling, moving and other physical exertion required for satisfactory and safe performance in classroom, laboratory clinical and other chiropractic education settings.

## COGNITIVE, INTELLECTUAL, CONCEPTUAL, INTEGRATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE

Students must be able to demonstrate high-level cognitive abilities requisite to educational achievement in classroom, laboratory, clinical and other chiropractic education settings. This technical standard includes but is not limited to:

- Rational thought
- Measurement
- Calculation
- Visual-spatial comprehension
- Conceptualization
- Interpretation
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Assimilation
- Integration
- Organization
- Representation (oral, written, diagrammatic, three dimensional)
- Memory and recall
- Application
- Clinical reasoning
- Ethical reasoning
- Evidence-based reasoning
- Sound judgment



### *Cognitive, Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Examples*

Representative examples to meet this technical standard include, but are not limited to: understanding, synthesizing, and recalling material presented in classes, labs, small groups, patient interactions and meetings with faculty; integrating new information into clinical education; understanding and drawing conclusions regarding 3-dimensional relationships and logical sequential relationships such as those demonstrated in the anatomy lab; understanding concrete and abstract variables; formulating and testing hypotheses that enable effective and timely problem-solving in diagnosis and treatment of patients; successfully passing oral, written, laboratory and practical exams; understanding ethical issues related to the practice of chiropractic; engaging in problem-solving, alone and in small groups; judging adequacy of information; interpreting nonverbal communication; asking for assistance when needed; interpreting the results of patient examinations and diagnostic tests; analyzing complicated situations, and determining the appropriate sequence of events to effect successful treatment; working through problems; integrating historical, physical, social, and ancillary test data into differential diagnoses and treatment plans; understanding indications for various diagnostic tests and treatment modalities; understanding methods for various procedures; understanding instructions to operate diagnostic equipment, simulations and use of computer technology; assimilating detailed and complex information presented in both didactic and clinical coursework; thinking through health care issues and exhibiting sound judgment in a variety of clinical settings, including emergency situations; making concise, cogent, and thorough presentations based on various kinds of data collection, including web-based research; knowing how to organize information, materials, and tasks in order to perform efficiently in clinic; understanding how to work and learn independently; understanding, learning, participating, collaborating and contributing as a part of a health care team; adapting to different learning environments and modalities; and executing multiple tasks simultaneously.

## BEHAVIORAL (PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL)

Students must demonstrate professional and ethical conduct in complying with College policies, procedures, rules, protocols and applicable law taught in the curriculum.

### *Behavioral Examples*

Representative examples to meet this technical standard include, but are not limited to:

#### PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

- Applying appropriate principles and practices of patient case management
- Applying appropriate principles and practices during interactions with others
- Developing and maintaining appropriate professional relationships with patients, health care teams, other members of the Palmer community and the public
- Consistently listening and displaying empathy, caring, fairness, courtesy and respect for self and others
- Consistently exhibiting initiative, diligence, dedication, and dependability in the performance of academic assignments and other responsibilities
- Arriving on time and completing all assignments and responsibilities in a timely, effective and accurate manner
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Maintaining neat and orderly appearance; good hygiene and complying with the clinic dress code guidelines
- Accepting and applying constructive feedback from academic and clinical faculty and staff



## ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- Assuming personal responsibility for knowing and complying with the ethical principles and practices of the chiropractic profession and applicable law as taught in the curriculum
- Assuming personal responsibility for knowing and complying with the Student Code of Ethics and all other College policies, procedures, protocols and directives of the College and its agents.
- Consistently demonstrating personal integrity through moral decision-making
- Exercising critical self-discipline and judgment
- Communicating with, engaging with and providing care for individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds including those whose gender, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, or spiritual beliefs are different from the student's own.
- Reporting to College premises or at College-sponsored or College-related activities or service functions on or off College premises or at non-College activities on or off College premises fit for duty. Fit for duty refers to a physical, mental and emotional state which enables the student to perform technical standards in a manner that does not threaten the safety or health of self, others, or damage College property and complies with the College's Drug and Alcohol Use Policy.
- Assuming personal responsibility for being informed about applicable protocols, policies, procedures and laws
- Accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions





# REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Applicants and students are invited and encouraged to voluntarily self-identify any disability which may apply to the technical standards. Such self-identification may take place at four different stages in the educational process:

1. Prospective applicant for admission;
2. Actual applicant for admission;
3. After acceptance as a student but prior to attending classes; or
4. While currently attending classes.

Applicants and students themselves must identify the need for reasonable accommodations and give adequate notice of the need.

The College grants reasonable accommodations for qualified applicants and students with disabilities on an individual basis. Individuals are provided reasonable accommodations based upon specific information and assessment data documented by a qualified professional.

While the College strives to accommodate qualified applicants and students as fully as possible, reasonable accommodations do not include measures which fundamentally alter the academic program and/or technical standards.



Applicants and students seeking reasonable accommodations must contact any of the following individuals:

### **MAIN CAMPUS**

Holly Fischer, BA, PHR, Director of Academic Support  
Also serving as Disability Services Coordinator  
Student Academic Support Services  
1000 Brady Street, Davenport, IA 52803  
563-884-5257  
holly.fischer@palmer.edu

### **FLORIDA CAMPUS**

Victor Hidalgo, M.S., Academic Counselor  
Also serving as Disability Services Coordinator  
Office of Student Administrative Services  
4777 City Center Parkway, Port Orange, FL 32129  
386-763-2780  
victor.hidalgo@palmer.edu

### **WEST CAMPUS**

Michael Crump, M.Ed., Director of Student Services  
Also serving as Disability Services Coordinator  
Office of Student Services  
90 E. Tasman, Drive, San Jose, CA 95134  
408-944-6122  
michael.crump@palmer.edu

For more information, you may access the Handbook for Students and Applicants with Disabilities on the College website.

Applicants and students must comply with the process outlined in the Handbook for Students and Applicants with Disabilities for requesting and receiving reasonable accommodations.



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[www.palmer.edu](http://www.palmer.edu)