

**TECHNICAL, ACADEMIC AND  
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR  
ADMISSION TO, CONTINUATION IN  
AND GRADUATION FROM THE  
PALMER COLLEGE, DOCTOR OF  
CHIROPRACTIC PROGRAM**



**PALMER**  
College of Chiropractic

*The Trusted Leader in Chiropractic Education®*

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# INTRODUCTION

The Palmer College of Chiropractic seeks to prepare students at both of their campuses as well as students in joint programs 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 by the College in order to make clinical decisions, deliver care and manage identified health concerns and conditions.

The academic, clinical, professional and personal preparation for the practice of chiropractic requires both mental and physical capability. In addition to academic admission requirements, as well as to meet the academic requirement for each individual course, the College requires that all qualified applicants and enrolled students must be able to meet the essential Technical, Academic and Professional Standards as well as other published College policies.

This standard is applicable to all 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

It is the College's experience that individuals with disabilities (as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as Amended) may be successful in the field of chiropractic with appropriate and reasonable accommodations to provide equal access to their education. To be qualified for the study of chiropractic at Palmer, those individuals must be able to meet the academic standards as well as the technical and professional standards, with or without approved reasonable accommodations/academic adjustments (hereafter referred to as reasonable accommodations) as well as the course-based standards. Reasonable accommodations are a means of providing an equal opportunity to meet these essential standards, not to circumvent them, and to ensure equal opportunity as much as reasonably possible.

The Technical, Academic, and Professional Standards established by Palmer College of Chiropractic set forth the essential elements required for a Palmer College student. These essential elements are adapted from the Accreditation bodies, from the Counsel of Chiropractic Education and State law standards for the profession in order to meet the required elements for a Palmer College graduate.

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.



## **ESSENTIAL PROGRAM ELEMENTS: TECHNICAL, ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

Contemporary chiropractic education requires not only the acquisition and utilization of academic, scientific, clinical and professional knowledge but also meeting technical, academic and professional standards necessary to achieve course outcomes as well as to meet the Council of Chiropractic Education (CCE) meta-competencies, Accreditation standards and State requirements 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
- Educational events (on and off-campus)
- Internships/preceptorships
- Groups/teams
- Private offices
- Remote technologies

Students must also be able to work in all these environments, often under fast-paced and stressful conditions.

If at any point an enrolled student ceases to meet these technical, academic and professional standards with or without reasonable accommodation, the student will not be allowed to continue in the program.

# TECHNICAL STANDARDS: OBSERVATION AND PERCEPTION

Students must be able to actively and accurately perceive, comprehend and synthesize, by the use of their senses and mental capability, the presentation of information through written materials, audio-visual material and web-based material in the following learning environments:

- Small group discussions and presentations
- Large-group lectures
- One-on-one interactions
- Demonstrations
- Laboratory experiments
- Direct, simulated, live or recorded patient interactions
- Clinical settings, including performing in a reasonably independent and competent way

In addition, students must be able to operate and utilize the following diagnostic modalities:

- Diagnostic instruments
- Diagnostic findings
- Diagnostic and/or clinical procedures
- Physiotherapeutic modalities and procedures
- Rehabilitative modalities and procedures

These skills are requisite to the 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 being competent in the following educational delivery modalities: 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 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.





## TECHNICAL STANDARDS: 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 in physical attendance in the classroom and laboratory and participate in lectures, small groups, patient presentations, review sessions, dissections, and other work;

For example, when communicating with patients a Palmer student 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.



## TECHNICAL STANDARDS: STRENGTH, MOTOR, TACTILE, FLEXIBILITY, COORDINATION AND MOBILITY

Students must have sufficient upper and lower body strength to enable them to effectively conduct the essential physical requirements for chiropractic work. This includes: neuromuscular control; eye-to-hand coordination; manual dexterity; motor skills; tactile perception; and mobility functions to enable the student to fully participate in all classes, groups and activities taught in the curriculum. This technical standard includes, but is not limited to the ability 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



## *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; 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.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS: 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 academic standard includes but is not limited to:

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



## *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.

## PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

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

### *Examples*

Representative examples to meet this Professional and Ethical standard include, but are not limited to:

### PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

- Applying appropriate principles and practices of patient case management
- Ensuring the highest standards for patient safety
- Maintaining fitness for duty which 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.
- 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
- Maintain professional dress while in class and at school related functions.





## 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 premises fit for duty.
- 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 represents a functional limitation or boundary to academic, technical or professional standards.

Applicants to the College must carefully review the technical, academic and professional standards set forth in this Policy to ensure they are otherwise qualified to engage as a Palmer College student. Students must self-identify if they require disability-based accommodations and provide adequate notice of the need for accommodation.

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: 1) measures that pose a direct threat to the health or safety of self and/or others, 2) measures which lower or fundamentally alter the College's academic, technical or professional standards, academic requirements for each individual course or other published College policies or 3) measures that pose an undue administrative or financial burden.



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](mailto:holly.fischer@palmer.edu)

### **FLORIDA CAMPUS**

Victor Hidalgo, M.S., Manager of Academic Support

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](mailto:victor.hidalgo@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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