

University of Northern Colorado
College of Osteopathic Medicine

Technical Standards

Responsible Party: Dean, College of Osteopathic Medicine

COCA Standard: 9.1

Review Frequency: Annually or as needed

Overview:

The University of Northern Colorado College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNC COM) prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals based on their age, race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or another protected category.

These standards reflect what has been determined to be reasonable expectations of osteopathic medical students and physicians in performing common and important functions, keeping in mind the safety and welfare of the patients for whom our graduates will care.

Standards:

An osteopathic physician must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. To perform the activities described below, candidates for the D.O. degree must be able to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data quickly, accurately, and consistently.

To facilitate the attainment of optimum care and safety, students at UNC COM must:

- Behave in a way showing high moral and behavioral standards reflecting an osteopathic physician's position and status.
- Demonstrate respect for individuals and groups with consideration to diversity, reflecting commitment to UNC COM diversity statement.
- Students of osteopathic medicine must meet minimal technical and ability standards. The practice of medicine in general and osteopathic medicine in particular requires the ability to learn, process, and utilize a great deal of knowledge and experience. Students must have the ability to see, hear, and touch independently to optimally assess the physical, mental and emotional status of patients. Where a deficiency occurs, it must be compensated for with the aid of prosthetics to the extent that the student's functioning is equal to that of a non-impaired student. Reasonable adaptations are those that will enable the osteopathic student to function independently and when necessary, in a team-like fashion with other health professionals in an unimpaired manner.

Every applicant and student of UNC COM must have the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and achieve the competence required by the faculty. The holder of a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care.

UNC COM has adopted these standards with due consideration for the safety and well-being of the patients for whom its graduates will eventually care. The specific technical standards recommended by the University of Northern Colorado College of Osteopathic Medicine are set forth below.

1. Observation: The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences including, but not limited to, physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations in animals, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation requires the functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensations. It is enhanced by the functional use of the sense of smell.
2. Communication: A candidate should be able to speak, hear, and observe the patients to elicit information; describe changes in mood, activity and posture; and perceive nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing. The candidate must communicate effectively and efficiently in verbal and written form with all healthcare team members.
3. Motor: Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers. A candidate should be able to do basic laboratory tests (urinalysis, CBC, etc.), carry out diagnostic procedures (proctoscopy, paracentesis, etc.), and read EKGs and X-rays. A candidate should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care, osteopathic manipulation, and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physicians are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.
4. Intellectual: Conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities, including measurement, calculations, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem-solving, the critical skill demanded of physicians, requires all these intellectual abilities. In addition, candidates should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures.

5. Behavior and Social Attitudes: Candidates must have the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibility's attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that will be assessed during the admission and education process.

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

This policy will be administered consistently, fairly, and in a non-discriminatory manner in compliance with the ADA and all other applicable laws. All applicants receiving supplementary application material for admission will be asked to certify they have reviewed the UNC COM Technical Standards and the Participation in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine Laboratories requirements.

The intent of this policy is to provide each student with the opportunity to excel academically, while creating an equitable environment conducive to learning. In doing so, however, the University of Northern College of Osteopathic Medicine must maintain the integrity of its curriculum and preserve those elements deemed essential to the acquisition of knowledge in all areas of osteopathic medicine, including the demonstration of basic skills required for the practice of osteopathic medicine. So, for example, technology-related accommodations may be made for disabled students in some of these areas, but a candidate must be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

Any student accepted to the University of Northern Colorado College of Osteopathic Medicine program who believes they have a mental and/or physical disability and wish to pursue a request for an accommodation must bring this information and all supporting documentation to the Dean of the College. The Dean will follow the process outlined by [Disability Resource Center](#) to begin review of the request and engage in accommodation discussions with the UNC COM.

Policy Reviewed and Approved by Deans Council 12/12/24