



## **Physical and Technical Standards for the Anesthesiologist Assistant Student**

The Master of Science in Anesthesia Program at Medical College of Wisconsin is pledged to the admission and matriculation of qualified students and wishes to acknowledge awareness of laws which prohibit discrimination against anyone on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex or qualified disability. Regarding those students with verifiable disabilities, the College will not discriminate against such individuals who are otherwise qualified, but will expect applicants and students to meet certain minimal technical standards (core performance standards) as set forth herein with or without reasonable accommodation. In adopting these standards, the Program believes it must keep in mind the ultimate safety of the patients whom its graduates will eventually serve. The standards reflect what the Program believes are reasonable expectations required of Anesthesiologist Assistant students in performing common functions. An anesthesia provider must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. In order to carry out the activities described below, candidates for the MSA degree must be able to integrate consistently, quickly, and accurately all information received, and they must have the ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data.

Anesthesiologist assistant students function as an integral part of the medical team caring for a patient. Certain essential abilities are considered necessary for the safe execution of these duties. There are 'general' abilities required of most health care practitioners and 'specific' abilities that relate more directly to the practice of anesthesia. The essential requirements include, but are not necessarily limited to those listed below:

### **General Requirements:**

- **Motor Skills**
  1. Candidates and students should have sufficient motor function to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients.
  2. Physical dexterity to master all technical and procedural aspects of patient care. Examples of treatment reasonably required of anesthesia professionals are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medication, application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, and the ability to calibrate and use various pieces of equipment. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.
  3. Students must be able to position patients for treatment.

4. Adequate physical stamina and energy to carry out taxing duties over long periods of up to 24 hours of continuous duty
  5. Adequate motor function to stand and walk for prolonged periods
  6. Ability to, on occasion run to emergent situations, such as codes and trauma emergencies. They must have the physical ability to move sufficiently from room to room and to maneuver in small places.
- Sensory Abilities
    1. The ability to gather all relevant information about a patient's physical and psychosocial status with all five senses, especially sight, hearing, touch and smell
    2. Students must be able to obtain a full medical and psychosocial history
    3. Perform a physical examination
    4. Make an accurate diagnosis and treat patients in an appropriate and timely way.
    5. Students must be capable of perceiving the signs of disease as manifested through the physical examination
    6. Students must be capable of gathering and synthesizing information derived from direct observation of the body surfaces, palpable changes in organs and limbs, auditory information (such as patient voice, heart tones, bowel and lung sounds), and detection of the presence or absence of densities in the chest, masses in the abdomen and deformities of the extremities
    7. Students' hearing and sight must be adequate enough to be able to gather information from patient monitors a short distance away in a moderately noisy environment, and be able to detect and respond promptly to auditory and visual patient alarm systems.
  - Intellectual Abilities
    1. Medical training requires essential abilities in information acquisition. A student must have the ability to understand information presented in the form of lectures, written material, and projected images
    2. An individual is expected to be able to perform multiple tasks in a diverse, dynamic, highly competitive, and challenging learning environment.
    3. Candidates and students must have critical thinking ability sufficient for good clinical judgment. This is necessary to identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations and to develop plans of care. In addition, candidates and students should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.
    4. Students must also have the cognitive abilities necessary to master relevant content in basic science and advanced anesthesia knowledge at a level

considered appropriate by the faculty. These skills can be described as the ability to comprehend, memorize, analyze and synthesize material.

5. Students must be able to discern and comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships of structures, and be able to develop reasoning and decision-making skills appropriate to the practice of medicine and anesthesia.
  6. Students must be accurate and careful in all dealings with their patients.
  7. Students must also develop the habits of life-long learning.
- Communication Skills
    1. Students must have the ability to take a medical history and perform a directed physical examination; this requires an ability to communicate fully with the patient, using language translation when necessary.
    2. Students must be able to communicate effectively with patients and families. They must also be able to communicate effectively with other anesthesia personnel, physicians, technicians, nurses and OR personnel.
    3. Candidates and students should be able to interact with and observe patients in order to elicit information, examine patients, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications.
    4. Students should be able to maintain a congenial atmosphere within their work environment, which prompts optimum patient care.
    5. Students should communicate appropriately with their supervising attendings in all aspects of patient care.
    6. Students must have the ability to assess all pertinent information, including the ability to recognize the significance of non-verbal responses.
    7. Students must be able to make an immediate assessment of information provided to allow for appropriate, well-focused, rapid follow-up inquiry.
    8. Students must be capable of responsive, empathetic listening to establish rapport in a way that promotes openness on issues of concern and sensitivity to potential cultural differences.
    9. Students must be able to process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to other anesthesia personnel, physician colleagues and other members of the health care team; this requires an ability to communicate in a succinct yet comprehensive manner and in a setting in which the time available is limited.
    10. Written or dictated patient assessments, prescriptions, etc., must be complete, legible and accurate.
    11. Adequate communication may also rely on a student's ability to make a correct judgment in seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.

- Professional Behavior

1. All students must exhibit professional behaviors, including the ability to place others' needs ahead of their own; display compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, responsibility; tolerance and possess an ability to exercise the requisite judgment in the practice of medicine and anesthesia
2. Students should possess the emotional maturity and stability to function effectively under the stress that is inherent in medicine and to adapt to circumstances that are unpredictable or that change rapidly.
3. Candidates and students must be able to physically tolerate taxing workloads, to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.
4. Students must be able to interact productively, cooperatively and in a collegial manner with individuals of differing personalities and backgrounds. They must also be an active contributor to the process of providing health care by demonstrating the ability to engage in teamwork and team building.
5. Students must demonstrate a clear ability to identify and set priorities in patient management and in all aspects of their professional work.
6. Students must be dependable, punctual and perform work in a timely manner.

### Specific Requirements

There are several essential functions, noted below, specific to the task of providing anesthesiology services. The ability to carry out these functions is a requirement for admission to, retention in, and graduation from the Anesthesiologist Assistant Program at the Medical College of Wisconsin. It is the responsibility of any student with disabilities to request specific accommodations that seem reasonable. These will be evaluated in a fair and objective manner to ensure no compromise in patient safety.

Anesthesiologist Assistant students shall be capable of the following:

1. Being on call and working in-house for up to 24-hour shifts.
2. Performing modest lifting at the height of a typical operating room stretcher (e.g. controlling a patient's head during patient transfer from operating room table to transport bed, or lifting bags of intravenous fluid and blood to the top of an IV pole, or lifting infusion pumps).
3. Standing for several minutes at a time (e.g. observing surgery over the surgical drapes at critical points in the surgery).
4. Walking and pushing a patient stretcher for long distances (e.g. moving patients from patient holding areas to the operating rooms and back to the post-anesthesia care

facility, and moving patients to and from critical care units which may be distant from the OR).

5. Reaching to a height of 6-7 feet (e.g. to place intravenous fluid bags on IV poles) Kneeling, bending, stooping, and crouching (e.g. to check lines below the level of the operating room table).
6. Reading patient monitors from a distance of 6-8 feet.
7. Hearing and understanding spoken requests and being able to detect and discriminate patient monitor alarms.
8. Hearing adequately enough to assess the lung and heart sounds of patients.
9. Comprehending, and speaking English fluently (including medical terminology).
10. Responding to cardiac arrests and urgent calls in a timely fashion (e.g. running or walking quickly to any floor in the hospital, at times without the aid of the elevators, if that would cause an undue delay.)
11. Assuming unusual positions while caring for patients on the wards and in the ICU (e.g. lying on the floor to intubate patients who have experienced cardiac arrest, leaning over equipment at the head of the patient beds to intubate patients or place central lines)
12. Reporting to work promptly, and maintaining a high level of personal hygiene.
13. Responding to all pager or telephone calls promptly during a period of duty.

Refraining from the use of alcohol, sedatives and narcotics within 8 hours of reporting to work and throughout the clinical shift: there is no tolerance for violation of this last requirement.

### **Acknowledgement of Receipt and Understanding**

I have read and understand the physical and technical standards for Anesthesiologist Assistant students outlined above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name (required)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (required)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please print, sign and return to the MCW MSA Program Staff.*