Technical standards are defined as the attributes necessary for a student to be able to enter and progress in the physician assistant program and ultimately enter clinical practice. These standards are prerequisites for entrance to, continuation within, and graduation from the West Chester University Physician Assistant program. They are reflective of the prerequisites for licensure by state professional boards and credentialing by medical institutions. The functions described below are critically important and must be autonomously performed by the student. It should be understood that these are standards for minimum competence in the program.

Students selected for admission must verify that they understand and meet these technical standards with or without a reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation will be offered for persons with disabilities in conjunction with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A student with a condition who may need a reasonable accommodation to meet the technical standards will be referred to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) for an evaluation of whether the condition is a disability as defined by applicable laws, and a determination of what accommodations are reasonable. The determination will specifically take into consideration whether the requested accommodations might jeopardize the safety of the patient, and the ability to complete the classroom, laboratory, and clinical coursework required for the physician assistant program. The OSSD, with input from the physician assistant program, will make this determination. Whenever possible, reasonable accommodations will be provided for those individuals with disabilities to enable them to meet these standards and ensure that students are not denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination.

1.**Observation**:  The student must be able to observe demonstrations in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical setting, and be able to effectively gather, assimilate, and apply relevant information.  The student must have sufficient visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactile senses to accurately observe a patient at a distance and at close range, in order to gather necessary data, such as that needed to describe anatomy, posture, habitus, affect, manner, activity, and non-verbal communications. The student must be able to evaluate clinical data and diagnostic findings by recognizing normal and abnormal findings such as changes in color, odor, sound, or smell and changes in numbers or patterns on diagnostic studies.

2.**Communication**:  The student must be able to effectively communicate in all manners of communication, including affect, manner, speech, reading, and writing. The student must be able to demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication in the English language, both in lay terms as well as medical terminology. The student must be able to both understand information and impart the information effectively to others. The student must be able to communicate quickly, effectively, and sensitively with patients and families from different social and cultural backgrounds, and involve them in shared decision-making. They must also be able to develop effective professional rapport with other members of the health care team and communicate with the community at large.  The student must recognize and respond to a wide range of emotional cues; communicate clearly to elicit and relay information; accurately and legibly record observations and plans in the patient record and legal documents, communicate summaries of patient encounters; and complete forms and tasks according to directions in a timely manner.

3.**Motor:**  The student must possess sufficient postural and neuromuscular control and eye-to-hand coordination in order to utilize the typical instruments used in the physician assistant profession.  They must possess sufficient control of the upper and lower extremities to meet the physical requirements for patient care, perform physical assessments, and implement management plans (Ex: sitting/standing for long periods of time, lifting, grasping, holding, transferring.)  They must have adequate sensory function to fulfill minimum competencies in order to be able to elicit information from patients through palpation, auscultation, percussion and other assessment maneuvers.  Additionally, candidates must be able to learn and perform the fundamental skills associated with assessment, management, and rehabilitation, and be able to quickly and appropriately provide care to patients.

4. **Intellectual:**  Candidates must have the mental capacity to learn and assimilate a large amount of complex information, solve clinical problems through critical analysis, perform measurements, and apply information from various disciplines in order to formulate therapeutic plans. Students must constantly incorporate new information from many sources toward the formulation of a diagnosis and plan. These intellectual functions include numerical recognition, measuring, performing calculations, using clinical reasoning, utilizing good judgment, and synthesizing information from multiple sources. Students must be able to quickly identify significant findings in the patient’s history, physical examination and diagnostic results, provide explanations for likely diagnoses, and implement a management plan. Students must be able to identify when it is necessary to involve others or review the medical literature to inform their evaluation and decision-making. Students must also be able to evaluate the medical literature in order to provide evidence-based care.

5.**Behavioral and Social Attributes:**  The student must possess the emotional stability and mental health required to fully utilize their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, promptly complete of all classroom and patient care responsibilities, and develop and maintain mature, effective, and empathetic relationships with others.  Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and have the ability to maintain composure and emotional stability during periods of high stress.  They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and function in the face of uncertainties inherent to the practice of medicine.  Students must be able provide comfort and reassurance to patients and protect patients’ confidentiality. Empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, good interpersonal skills, respect for boundaries, interest in people, motivation, and emotional intelligence are all required personal qualities. Students must be able to monitor and react appropriately to their own emotional needs. Students are expected to accept suggestions and criticisms, and if necessary, to respond by modifying their behavior.