Technical Standards
The Technical Standards of Tufts University School of Dental Medicine define the essential functions that an applicant and dental student must be able to perform in order to: be admitted to TUSDM, progress satisfactorily through our program of study, and graduate. Tufts University School of Dental Medicine is committed to the principle of diversity in all areas. In that spirit, admission to TUSDM is open to all qualified individuals and complies with all applicable state and federal non-discrimination laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities act of 1990.

The Dental School’s technical standards refer to all non-academic criteria that are necessary to participate in the educational program. In developing these criteria, the dental school and its faculty affirm the following expectations of our graduates:

The awarding of the Doctor of Dental Medicine degree certifies that the individual possesses a broad base of knowledge and skills requisite for the practice of dental medicine. The dental education process must prepare the individual to be a competent general dentist. Therefore, a comprehensive dental education, rooted in common knowledge, skills and behaviors, is the prerequisite for general practice, as well as for entry into specialized post graduate training programs. Tufts University School of Dental Medicine must act to protect the health and safety of patients and others, and therefore must ensure that the TUSDM graduate has the ability to function in a variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care.

The acquisition of scientific knowledge must be accompanied by the development of technical skills and basic intellectual attitudes, ethical and professional attitudes and behaviors, and humanistic and moral principles that are essential for a responsible dentist to possess. The goal of our faculty and curriculum is to produce a competent general dentist. As such, every student must satisfactorily complete all aspects of the required curriculum as determined by the faculty.

The following technical standards are considered essential for fulfillment of the D.M.D. degree. A candidate for the D.M.D. degree must have abilities and skills of six varieties as detailed below:

Motor
The candidate must have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. The candidate must be able to execute motor activities reasonably required to provide general care and safe restraint when performing all general dentistry procedures.

Sensory/Observation
The candidate must be able to observe and participate in lectures, demonstrations and experiments in the basic and clinical sciences. The candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing and somatic sensation.

Communication
The candidate should be able to communicate effectively and accurately, in English, with patients and to hear and observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, posture, and status and perceive nonverbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, caregivers, peers, staff and faculty. Communication includes not only speech, but also reading and writing in English. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team.
Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities
Problem solving, a critical skill demanded of dentists, requires the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize. In addition, the candidate must be able to comprehend three dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. The candidate must be able to learn and manage the clinical problems of many patients simultaneously. The candidate must have the capacity to perform these problem-solving skills in a timely fashion. The ability to incorporate new information from peers, patients, teachers and the medical/dental literature in formulating diagnoses and treatment plans is essential. Good judgment in patient assessment, diagnostic and therapeutic planning is crucial; students must be able to identify and communicate their knowledge to others when appropriate.

Behavioral and Social Attributes
The candidate must possess the mental and emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all course responsibilities and responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients, faculty, staff and colleagues. The candidate must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. He/she must be able to withstand the rigors of dental education and practice, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, function in the face of uncertainties inherent in dental education. He/she must be able to learn the clinical problems of many patients and be able to interact with a diverse community of patients, students, faculty, and staff. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, cultural competency, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that should be assessed during the admissions and education process. Both dental education and practice may entail physical, mental and emotional stress such as long hours, close patient contact and treating seriously ill patients and requires the candidate to maintain composure throughout.

Ethics/Professionalism
The candidate must maintain the standards of conduct for ethics and professionalism as set forth in the American Dental Association’s Principle of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct (Appendix XVIII) and the TUSDM Student Handbook. The candidate must always act in the best interest of the patient and society even when there is a conflict with the candidate’s personal self-interest. The candidate must conduct oneself as a trustworthy and responsible citizen and act with impeccable integrity in their interactions with all students, faculty, staff, patients and the public. The candidate must refrain from actions that detract from the professional atmosphere or orderly appearance of TUSDM or Tufts University. This expectation would also apply when attending any school-sponsored or related activities, such as externships and rotations, as well as outside public activities.

The above are considered by TUSDM to be minimum abilities required in the educational process of a dentist. TUSDM will provide reasonable accommodations to those candidates who have documented disabilities and seek such accommodation as set forth by the dental school. However, TUSDM will not undertake modifications or provide auxiliary aids or services that would fundamentally alter the nature and substance of the D.M.D. curriculum, present an undue burden for the institution, pose a direct threat to the safety of patients, students, faculty, assistants or staff, or compromise the academic integrity of the D.M.D. program. TUSDM will also not provide services or equipment of a personal nature. Candidates should understand that they will be required to demonstrate competency without personal assistance, such as the use of an intermediary. The candidate must be able to meet the technical standards of the D.M.D. curriculum, including the functions described above, with or without reasonable accommodations, in order to begin the program or to continue in the program, or to graduate from the program.

I have read and understand the above technical standards and I hereby certify that I believe that I am able to meet these standards, with or without reasonable accommodations.

Print Name

Signature           Date