Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine (MUJCESOM)

Admissions Procedural Document

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine is a community-based, Veterans Affairs affiliated medical school dedicated to providing high quality medical education and postgraduate training programs to foster a skilled physician workforce to meet the unique healthcare needs of West Virginia and Central Appalachia. The School of Medicine will admit capable, qualified, and properly motivated applicants who upon graduation possess a high probability of meeting the health care needs of our state and region. Equally important and to add value to our learning environment is the infusion of students from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds to ensure that our students are prepared for life and practice in an expanded environment. Therefore, qualified students from groups currently underrepresented in medicine, students from rural areas, and women are especially encouraged to apply.

II. STRUCTURE OF ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

A. GOVERNANCE

1. The governance of the Admissions Committee consists of the Chair, Vice Chair and the Executive Committee. The Dean appoints the Chair and Vice Chair of the Admissions Committee. The Executive Committee of the Admissions Committee includes the Chair, Vice Chair and all the Vice Deans, Assistant and Associate Deans serving at that time on the Admissions Committee.

2. The Executive Committee is responsible for reviewing recommendations for new membership to the Admissions Committee and the Interview Selection Workgroup, among other duties. The Executive Committee is also responsible for designating ad hoc workgroups to evaluate and study admissions related issues. The final approval of new members to the Admissions Committee is made by Faculty Council of the Medical School.

B. MEMBERSHIP

1. The Admissions Committee may be composed of full-time basic science and clinical faculty, community physicians, medical students, medical residents, medical school administrators, undergraduate faculty members from the main Marshall University campus and community representatives. The Admissions Committee is an independent body and acts free of external influence. The duties of this committee are to develop and recommend criteria for admissibility of applicants, to determine methods and procedures for evaluating applicants and to select from among applicants those to be accepted. The authority for the final
decision on applicants to the medical school, to include traditional applicants, applicants to a combined program such as the MD/PhD program, and the accelerated BS/MD program, rests with the full Admissions Committee. The Admissions Committee has developed policies and procedures to ensure compliance with non-discrimination laws and regulations, training for the holistic approach to admissions and decisions free from political and/or financial conflicts of interest.

2. Member Selection

a. With the exception of medical student members, recommendations for new members are taken from current and former members of the Admissions Committee, and from departmental chairs. The Executive Committee reviews all recommendations, talks with the suggested members to discern interest and availability to interview and attend meetings. The available vacancies are filled by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee using a holistic approach to determine the best members for the Admissions Committee, including considerations of diversity, judgment, clinical and administrative experience and willingness and availability to serve. The final approval of new members to the Admissions Committee is made by Faculty Council of the Medical School. As a matter of standard practice, the Executive Committee ensures faculty representation of at least fifty-one percent on the Admissions Committee. Each new member is asked to serve a three-year term, although members may remain on the Admissions Committee for multiple terms at the discretion of the Chair.

b. Medical Student membership will include up to six medical students. Each year, two third-year medical students will be elected by their class after successful promotion to third year for a total of four elected medical students. Up to two additional medical student representatives of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) will be appointed by the Chapter Advisor of the SNMA. Medical student members will be expected to serve until graduation unless otherwise determined by the Chair.

SUBCOMMITTEES/STANDING WORKGROUPS

1. Executive Committee

a. The Executive Committee is responsible for forming a variety of ad hoc workgroups to study and analyze the admissions process and related issues from time to time as circumstances warrant. The members of these workgroups shall be determined by simple majority vote of the Executive Committee, and shall be dissolved upon completion of the task assigned.
b. The Executive Committee has the formal delegated authority from the Admissions Committee to move applicants from the waitlist to the accepted list.

2. Interview Selection Workgroup

a. A standing workgroup titled the Interview Selection Workgroup is a workgroup of the Admissions Committee with a specific charge as delineated herein.

b. Charge of the Interview Selection Workgroup – The Interview Selection Workgroup shall be responsible for the evaluation of applications after the admissions staff has determined which applicants meet minimum qualifications. The Interview Selection Workgroup will then forward recommendations for applicants to be interviewed directly to admissions staff for interview scheduling.

c. Membership of the Interview Selection Workgroup - the Admissions Committee Chair or his/her designee will facilitate the meeting. The Interview Selection Workgroup shall be composed of representatives from the Office of Diversity & Inclusion, the Basic Sciences Department, the Executive Committee, and clinical faculty and all shall be members of the Admissions Committee. The members of this workgroup shall be determined by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee and shall be dissolved upon completion of the task assigned.

d. Interview Selection Workgroup members serve at the will and pleasure of the Chair, with no defined term limits. Interview Selection Workgroup members shall undergo training along with the rest of the Admissions Committee to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and policies surrounding the admissions process, and the concept of the holistic admissions approach as well as the use of personal characteristics for effective decision-making.

III. PROCEDURE

A. As a State of West Virginia medical school, MUJCESOM gives interview preference to West Virginia residents.

B. A limited number of interviews will be available to well-qualified nonresidents in the following categories: residents from Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia; nonresidents who can demonstrate strong ties to West Virginia. Nonresidents who meet the minimum requirements and who have completed one of the following pipeline programs will also receive interview preference:
• Project P.R.E.M.E.D. (Providing Real world Experiences for future Marshall Educated Doctors) – an information and exploration program designed for college students of color. Selected students will participate in an immersion program that exposes them to life as a medical student and life in medical school.

• The Hampton University Mentoring Program-This is a pipeline program with MUJCESOM and Hampton University to provide mentoring, onsite workshops of application preparation and interview skills. Five slots per year are allocated for Hampton students to participate in a residential Summer Academy program at Marshall University.

C. Regardless of their state of residency, applicants are considered only if they are U.S. citizens or have permanent resident visas.

D. Following inquiry, information about the medical school and the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) website is forwarded to the applicant. AMCAS is a central application processing service which allows applicants to apply to any participating medical school with only one application and set of transcripts. Applications for admissions are accepted by AMCAS from June 1 to November 1 of the year prior to enrollment.

E. Supplemental application will be automatically forwarded to applicants with a verified AMCAS application who are residents of West Virginia or an adjoining state. Nonresident applicants from non-bordering states with ties to West Virginia or to the School of Medicine are required to demonstrate a strong tie to the state of West Virginia, such as previous residency, family currently residing in the state, attending a West Virginia college/university, etc. Once ties are verified, the supplemental application will be made available. There is a nonrefundable supplemental application fee of $75.00 for West Virginia residents and $100.00 for nonresidents. If the applicant has received a fee waiver from AMCAS, the supplemental application fee to Marshall is also waived. Supplemental application materials must be submitted by December 15 of the year prior to enrollment.

After admissions staff ascertains if the application is complete and if applicants meet the minimum qualifications as set out in the admissions policy, the applications are reviewed and selected for interview by the Interview Selection Workgroup. The Interview Selection Workgroup will then forward recommendations for interview applicants directly to admissions staff for interview scheduling.

F. Appropriate applicants are invited to participate in two individual interviews with members of the Admissions Committee.
G. Following the interviews, each applicant’s file is presented to the Admissions Committee.

H. The Admissions Committee takes a holistic admissions approach that incorporates screening, interviewing and selection. Selection is based on the consensus of the Admissions Committee and the evaluation of the following items:

1. Academic Background – Both quantity and quality are assessed with a four-year program of study suggested.Exceptionally well-qualified applicants may be considered after ninety semester hours of academic work if other requirements are met. Specific entrance requirements include one year each of English, zoology or biology with lab, general chemistry with lab, organic chemistry with lab, physics with lab and social or behavioral sciences. Three semester hours of biochemistry lecture are also required. Recommended courses include cell and molecular biology, statistics or biostatistics or epidemiology. A major criterion is the overall grade point average for undergraduate studies with particular emphasis in correlating the grade point average in science and science related courses. A minimum undergraduate GPA of a 3.0 is preferred. Scholastic performance in graduate studies and other professional courses is also taken into consideration.

2. Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) – The MCAT is required and is used along with other data to predict success in preclinical course work. Certain exclusions apply for the MCAT requirement. Applicants from the BS/MD program who meet program specific criteria are exempt from the MCAT requirement. The MCAT must be taken within three calendar years prior to matriculation. Applicants are encouraged to review the Profile of Entering Students to determine competitiveness for acceptance.

3. Letters of evaluation/recommendation - Three written recommendations from professors and/or a premedical advisory committee must be provided. If submitting individual letters, two of these references must be from science faculty who have taught the applicant and one from the applicant’s major department. Additional pertinent letters of recommendation are welcomed, but not required.

4. Interviews – Interviews are arranged only by invitation and upon recommendation by the Interview Selection Workgroup. The purpose of the interview is to assess personal characteristics that are pertinent to the admissions decision. These characteristics include communication skills, work ethic, community service, honesty/ethics and resilience. Additional attributes assessed include leadership and teamwork. In addition, the applicant has a chance to become acquainted with the medical campus in a general way, and at the same time provide the Admissions Committee better insight into his/her personal interests and attitudes. Equally important and to add value to our learning environment is the infusion of students from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds to ensure our students are prepared for life and practice in an expanded environment.
5. Highly-qualified West Virginia applicants who are eligible for first round acceptance may be immediately notified of acceptance without having his/her application reviewed by the full Admissions Committee if space in the class is available. Eligibility requirements include:

1. 3.5 or better GPA in all sections: science, non-science and overall
2. A total score of 500 or above on the MCAT (no individual section below 125)
3. Strong letters of recommendation
4. Recommendation of “Accept” by both interviewers
5. Verification of state residency

6. MD/PhD applicants - Criteria for applicants to the MD/PhD program will include those listed herein for MD applicants. In addition, prior significant research experience as evidenced by authorship in peer reviewed publications is necessary. Further, applicants for the MD/PhD program will undergo a series of interviews specific to the clinician scientist training portion of the program, focusing on research experience, among other qualifications. As with all applicants, final approval of the selection for the MD/PhD program rests with the Admissions Committee. Applicants who are not accepted into the MD/PhD program may be considered for the MD program in that application cycle.

7. Following presentation, discussion and evaluation of each application, the Admissions Committee by majority vote will make a recommendation to ACCEPT, REJECT or HOLD each applicant.

8. Applicants who are in the ACCEPT or REJECT category are notified by the Admissions Office. ACCEPTED applicants are provided information explaining and specifying the mechanism for executing and confirming intent to matriculate.

SPECIAL NOTE – Applicants in the BS/MD program at Marshall may be subject to different procedures as outlined in the BS/MD policies and procedures specific to their program.

IV. ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE PROCESS OUTLINE

It is in the best interests of the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine and of the applicants that a careful and thorough consideration of each candidate selected for interview is conducted. The Admissions Committee to that end has adopted the following process. As an independent committee, the mechanisms, practices, procedures and guidelines for the functioning of the Admissions Committee are set by majority vote of the Committee. It should be noted that in some cases, circumstances will require that actions outside the procedures outlined herein must be taken in order to ensure a balanced and appropriate review. In those cases, an agreement by the majority of Committee members attending that meeting may alter the procedures set out herein to ensure a fair and balanced process, acting within the
parameters required by federal and state non-discrimination laws and guidelines as set forth by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. A change to procedures as described above shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

A. A quorum of the Admissions Committee is defined as the majority of admissions committee membership present of which at least fifty-one percent must be faculty members.

B. Committee meetings are typically held on a Tuesday evening from September through March.

C. Interviews are conducted at the MUJCESOM medical campus, unless otherwise noted.

D. All recorded data of the Admissions Committee is secured by the Assistant Dean of Admissions and retained following AAMC Records Guidelines.

E. The interview need not be formally structured. The report to the committee will be on the interview data form and this written summary of the interview is held in the applicant’s folder until a final decision is rendered. The purpose of the interview is to:

   1. Corroborate and/or supplement data present in the application folder.
   2. Explain and potentially upgrade data.
   3. Identify personal characteristics pertinent to the admissions process and as allowed by law and policy.
   4. Permit strengthening, weakening or confirming (no change) the application.

F. Interviews are typically conducted on Saturday mornings. Weekday interviews may be arranged as requested. Saturday interviews include the opportunity to meet socially for breakfast, a scheduled time to meet with current students and a tour of the education floor of the Byrd Clinical Center, and a driving tour around the main Marshall University campus area. Weekday interviewees have the opportunity to tour the education floor of the Byrd Clinical Center and to talk with a current medical student, if available. As far as it is feasible, applicants are given the choice of days for interviews. Note that interviews for the MD/PhD program may follow a slightly different format and will include additional interviews specific to the PhD portion of the program.

G. An applicant has the right to request an additional interview if he/she feels that one of his/her interviewers presented a conflict of interest or a perceived bias. The additional interview could be held on the same day as the two primary interviews or the applicant can elect to come back at a later date to re-interview.
H. Following interviews, each interviewer will present the candidate to the committee. At least one of the interviewers must be present to discuss the candidate before the entire committee.

I. Following initial presentation by the interviewers, the applicant is discussed by the committee and one of three recommendations is made:

1. ACCEPT: Committee action of acceptance is immediately forwarded to the Admissions Office with the committee vote included.

2. HOLD: Applicants in this category present qualifications that are less competitive than applicants in the ACCEPT category. Applicants in the HOLD category will be re-evaluated and are considered to remain in an active category. Applicants may also be placed in Hold by the committee in anticipation of the receipt of additional information.

3. REJECT: A rejected applicant’s application is immediately forwarded to the Admissions Office with the committee vote included.

J. A majority vote of those present will be necessary to designate the application as accepted or rejected. If a majority vote for acceptance or rejection is not reached, then the application shall remain on active status as a HOLD. Following committee recommendation of either ACCEPT or REJECT, Admissions Committee activity regarding the applicant ceases unless important additional information is received that should be reviewed and considered by the Admissions Committee.

K. Those applicants remaining in the HOLD category will undergo a second discussion and vote by the Admissions Committee. This process is defined as second-round evaluation. Those applicants typically will not undergo second-round evaluation until all applicants have undergone the initial first-round discussion and voting procedure, although an interviewer may request recall of an applicant prior to this timeframe based on additional information received.

L. At the second-round evaluation of applicants in the HOLD category, the applicant must be recommended as either an ACCEPT or REJECT. Second-round evaluations are conducted in a similar manner to the first-round process including presentation by interviewers; one interviewer should be present. Once the class is filled, applicants deemed acceptable by vote of the Admissions Committee will be placed on the waitlist.

M. An applicant’s application can be “recalled” for a second or additional review due to receipt of additional information and/or at the request of any member of the Admissions Committee. A request that a candidate be re-interviewed must receive a majority consensus of the Admissions Committee members attending that meeting. This request would be considered only if the member could provide specific cause for such action.
N. The Admissions Committee will extend acceptances to approximately 85 applicants. Once all slots have been filled, the remainder of the applicants acceptable for admission will go on the waitlist. In addition, the Admissions Committee will finalize decisions about applicants who have previously been placed on HOLD, and those will either be REJECTED, or will be moved from HOLD to the waitlist. The waitlist is not ranked. The Executive Committee has the formal delegated authority from the Admissions Committee to move applicants from the waitlist to the accepted list. The Executive Committee will use the following criteria to move a student from the waitlist to the accepted list:

1. West Virginia residents
2. Underrepresented Minorities in Medicine
3. Applicants from rural communities
4. Applicants who have had experiences or indicate interest in serving in a rural community

O. Review of Admissions Committee activities prior to forwarding letters of final disposition to applicants will be made by the Assistant Dean of Admissions, who will ensure that all documentation regarding entrance requirements, residency determination and other process compliance areas have been evaluated and verified.

P. Once a final decision has been made, applicants are notified in writing regarding their status. Applicants who are placed on the waitlist are encouraged to provide updated grades and information. The Executive Committee will make a selection from the waitlist to fill any openings per admissions policy and procedures.

Q. Accepted applicants may request delayed/deferred matriculation into the school of medicine for a period of one year. To request delayed/deferred matriculation, the applicant must forward a letter addressed to the Admissions Committee describing the reason for the request. The request must be received by June 1 prior to matriculation. It is the responsibility of the Admissions Committee to review and approve all requests. Requests for delayed/deferred matriculation received after June 1 prior to matriculation, will be considered for medical reasons only. Deferred applicants are directed to contact the Office of Admissions for instructions on this process.

R. The Admissions Office will provide the Admissions Committee a report of the finalized class which will include how many waitlist individuals were admitted and on what general basis the admission decisions were made.
V. AAMC ACCEPTANCE PROTOCOLS

A. Marshall University JCESOM follows the AAMC Application and Acceptance Protocols defined below:

- **In fairness to other applicants**, if you have decided before April 30 not to attend a medical school or program that has offered you an acceptance, promptly withdraw your application from that school(s) or program(s).
- **Out of respect for other applicants**, if you receive an offer of acceptance from more than one school or program:
  - Withdraw your acceptance from any school or program you do not plan to attend as soon as you have made that decision;
  - On or before April 15, narrow your selection(s) to no more than three schools or programs, and withdraw your acceptance(s) from all other schools or programs; and
  - On or before April 30, choose the school or program to which you plan to matriculate and promptly withdraw your acceptances from all other schools or programs.
- **If you receive additional acceptances following April 30**, it is your responsibility to promptly notify any school(s) you have decided to not attend. Your decision should be made by the deadline established by the medical school(s).

B. MUJCESOM strongly encourages applicants on the accepted roster to finalize decisions no later than three weeks prior to orientation.

VI. CONFIDENTIALITY

All functions of the Admissions Committee are to be held in confidence by members of the Admissions Committee, per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. Information gathered and/or discussed during the admissions process shall only be disseminated to those individuals with a need to know so, as to ensure a lawful and effective admissions process.

The Assistant Dean of Admissions secures all recorded data of the Admissions Committee.

VII. NONDISCRIMINATION

There is no discrimination because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, pregnancy, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs or veteran status.
VIII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Faculty, staff, students and community members are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional integrity. To that end, the Admissions Committee members are annually required to sign the Conflict of Interest policy. (https://jcesom.marshall.edu/media/57552/coi-policy.pdf)

IX. ADVANCED STANDING TRANSFER ADMISSIONS

MUJCESOM considers application for advanced standing transfer admissions under very limited situations. (http://jcesom.marshall.edu/media/53892/transfer-student-policy.pdf)

X. TECHNICAL STANDARDS

A. These technical standards for admission are set forth by the MUJCESOM to establish the expectations and requisite abilities considered essential for students admitted to its educational and training programs to achieve the levels of competency stipulated by MUJCESOM, its accrediting agency (the Liaison Committee on Medical Education of the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Medical Association), and the Higher Education Policy Commission of the State of West Virginia. Technical Standards are reviewed by campus legal counsel annually.

B. A practicing physician must possess the physical, mental, behavioral and social competencies to function in a variety of clinical situations and to render a broad spectrum of patient care in multiple and varied settings.

C. Accepted students must be able to perform the academic and clinical competencies to meet the full requirements of the school’s curriculum.

D. Accepted students with disabilities which may compromise their educational process, and their ability to practice medicine or which might compromise the educational process of their classmates may be required to undergo appropriate evaluation to assess their ability to meet the school’s technical standards and/or continue in the program.

E. The academic and clinical competencies of the school’s curriculum include the capacity to observe, communicate and demonstrate sufficient motor ability to perform physical examinations and basic laboratory and diagnostic procedures. Students must demonstrate emotional stability, exercise sound judgment, work effectively in stressful situations, and have the intellectual ability to synthesize data and solve problems.

F. Applicants for admission to MUJCESOM who are invited for an on campus interview are required to certify on the day of their interview that they understand and are able to meet the
technical standards described herein with or without reasonable accommodations. A description of any actual disability and the need for accommodations should not be disclosed at this time.

G. Reasonable accommodations can be made for accepted students with appropriately documented disabilities. An accommodation is not reasonable if it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of self and/or others, if making it requires a substantial modification in an essential element of the curriculum, if it lowers academic standards or poses an undue administrative or financial burden for the School of Medicine. Except in rare circumstances, the use by the candidate of a third party (e.g., an intermediary) to perform any of the functions described in the Technical Standards set forth would constitute an unacceptable modification.

H. An accepted student who has a disability and needs accommodations should initiate discussions with the MUJCESOM Office of Medical Education as soon as the offer of admissions is received and accepted. It is the responsibility of an accepted student to provide current information documenting the general nature and extent of his/her disability and the functional limitations proposed to be accommodated. The student must recertify that he/she is able to meet the technical standards with their specific accommodations. The School of Medicine reserves the right to request new or additional information.

I. Accepted students to the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine:

- Must be able to obtain, process and learn information presented in classroom, laboratory and clinical experiences, including but not limited to lecture, anatomical dissection and simulated and real treatment situations;
- Must be able to acquire information from a variety of sources, including but not limited to texts, journals, written documentation, videotapes, films, slides and advanced media resources;
- Must have the mental capacity to, in a timely manner, assimilate, learn and communicate large volumes of complex, technically detailed information; perform clinical problem-solving and synthesize and apply concepts and information from different disciplines to formulate evaluative and therapeutic judgments;
- Must be able to measure, calculate, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information;
- Must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand spatial relationships of structures;
- Must be able to process information in a timely manner;
- Must be able to solve clinical problems in a timely manner;
- Must be able to observe simulated and real patients accurately close at hand and at a distance;
- Must be able to assess verbal and non-verbal communication from others;
- Must be able to demonstrate effective, efficient and sensitive verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills with faculty, peers, patients and other members of the health care team from different cultural and social backgrounds;
• Must be able to consistently perform a complete history and physical exam on any patient regardless of the patient’s race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, age or sexual orientation.
• Must be able to tolerate long periods of sitting as well as long periods of physical activity;
• Must be able to manipulate parts of, or whole bodies of, simulated and real patients;
• Must be able to tolerate close physical contact with patients for instructional purposes while maintaining professional deportment;
• Must possess the emotional health necessary for the full use of intellectual abilities, the exercise of sound judgment and the effective completion of all responsibilities attendant to the educational expectations, assessment and treatment of patients and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, family members, colleagues and others;
• Must be able to endure physically and mentally stressful workloads and function effectively and professionally under stress;
• Must be able to adapt to changing environments and expectations;
• Must be able to prioritize activities effectively;
• Must possess adequate sensory function to fulfill the minimum competency objectives for auscultation, percussion and other physical assessment and treatment procedures commonly used in the medical practice;
• Must have the capacity to learn, model and abide by the professional competencies of the profession;
• Must have the ability to record examination and diagnostic results clearly, accurately and efficiently, and communicate them effectively to the patient and colleagues.

SPECIAL NOTE – Applicants in the BS/MD program at Marshall may be subject to different procedures as outlined in the BS/MD policies and procedures specific to their program. Accelerated BS/MD applicants are often minors at the time of their initial interview for the program as high school seniors. For that reason, these applicants are asked to sign indicating that they have read and understood the technical standards but are not asked to certify that they meet the standards at that time. BS/MD students are again given the copy of the standards at the end of their second undergraduate year in the program and are asked to read and certify at that time that they are familiar with the standards and are able to meet the standards as described with or without reasonable accommodation.