Essential Requirements of Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) Education
University of Washington School of Medicine
Department of Rehabilitation Medicine

INTRODUCTION
Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) is a specialized health care profession that provides clinical services to individuals who have neuromuscular and/or musculoskeletal disorders (including partial or total absence of a limb). Prosthetists-orthotists collaborate with patients, their families, and other members of the health care team to provide treatments that allow individuals to lead more active and independent lives. Treatments provided by prosthetists-orthotists often include a prosthesis (i.e., artificial limb intended to replace the structure and function of an absent limb or limb segment) or orthosis (i.e., brace or other device intended to correct alignment or provide support to body structures and functions), as well as the training necessary to apply, use, and maintain the prosthesis/orthosis. Practice as a prosthetist-orthotist requires a unique combination of clinical and technical skills that are developed through focused education, advanced through experience, and honed through a lifetime of providing care.

A Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics (MPO) is an advanced, entry-level degree intended to prepare students to enter the Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) profession. Pursuit of a MPO degree requires students learn to assimilate new knowledge, acquire skills essential to practice, and develop the behaviors needed to provide ethical care to a diverse range of individuals requiring prosthetic and/or orthotic services. This document describes the admissions policy and program requirements for all students admitted to the University of Washington (UW) MPO Program. All students admitted to the MPO Program are required to confirm they have read and agree to the terms presented in this document.

ADMISSIONS AND RETENTIONS POLICY
The UW Division of Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) has a responsibility to the public to assure that its graduates can become fully competent and caring practitioners. As an accredited program, the UW MPO program adheres to standards and guidelines of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetics Education (NCOPE). Under CAAHEP standards, programs are granted the authority to select students for admission, evaluate student progress, and ultimately determine which students should be awarded a degree. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on prior satisfactory academic achievement but also on non-academic factors, which serve to ensure that the candidate completes the academic program and meets the essential requirements for graduation. Thus, it is important that persons admitted to the UW MPO Program possess the intelligence, integrity, compassion, humanitarian concern, physical capacity, and emotional awareness necessary to practice prosthetics and orthotics.

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PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
Successful completion of the MPO degree requires students possess an array of physical, cognitive and behavioral abilities that reflect their potential to provide sound, ethical, and effective care. The UW Division of P&O requires students demonstrate skill in the following areas of practice: motor, sensory, cognitive, communication, and ethics.

Motor: A major component of prosthetics-orthotics practice is the assessment, treatment, and management of people with movement disorders. Therefore, the student must have the ability, within reasonable limits, to safely assist a patient to transfer or move from one place to another. The student must also have the ability to position themselves and the patient in order to conduct an evaluation, acquire anthropometric information, assess the fit and function of a prosthesis or orthosis and provide education and functional training. Additionally, the student must be able to ensure the physical safety of a patient at all times. The student must also have sufficient body muscle coordination to practice safe use of those hand and machine tools required to fabricate, modify, and evaluate prostheses and orthoses.

Sensory: A prosthetist-orthotist must be capable of perceiving the signs of disease, especially neuromusculoskeletal dysfunction, via observation and physical examination. Therefore, the student must have the ability to discern skin, subcutaneous masses, muscles, bones, and joints through palpation of body structures. The student should also be able to identify impairments in body functions through direct observation and functional assessment. The student must have the ability to take and document, in a patient’s record, an appropriate history, and perform a physical examination. The student must also acknowledge and adapt to his or her own limits related to knowledge in and practice of prosthetics and orthotics.

Cognitive: Practice as a prosthetist-orthotist requires mastery of a broad range of general and discipline-specific information. The student must understand content in basic science and clinical courses at a level deemed appropriate by the faculty. These skills may be described as the ability to comprehend, memorize, analyze, and synthesize information presented in course work in the form of lectures, written material, and projected images in a timely manner. They 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 prosthetics and orthotics.

Communication: A prosthetist-orthotist must be able to communicate effectively with a broad range of individuals. The student must be able to acquire rapidly all types of information (including information derived from forms of non-verbal communication) from patients and their family members. The student must be capable of responsive, empathetic listening to establish rapport in a way that promotes openness on issues of concern and sensitivity to potential personal and cultural differences. The student must also be able to transmit information effectively to patient’s, family members and caregivers; physicians and other
health care professionals; clinical, technical, and administrative staff, organizational managers and administrators; and insurance providers.

Ethics: Like all health care providers, prosthetists-orthotists are required to provide responsible and ethical care to those who require their service. The student must be able to understand the basis and content of ethical prosthetics and orthotics practice. The student must possess and demonstrate compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, responsibility and tolerance. He or she must have the emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment, which may change rapidly, without warning, and/or in unpredictable ways.

Access and Accommodations
It is the policy of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. You can establish services through Disability Resources for Students (DRS) for temporary health conditions or permanent disability that requires accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to contact DRS directly to set up an Access Plan. DRS facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

Equal Opportunity Policy
The University of Washington Division of P&O supports a policy of affirmative action and equal opportunity. All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, genetic information, disability, or protected veteran status.

Signature:_____________________________ Date: _______________