The faculty and administration of the University of the Sciences PA program have developed this student handbook to provide specific guidelines, rights, and responsibilities regarding the PA program. This handbook is designed to supplement rather than supplant existing University policies and procedures, including those set forth in the University Catalog and University Student Handbook. We encourage every student to become familiar with, and refer to, those and other University publications for further information.

Any questions regarding policies contained within this handbook should be directed to the Director of the PA program. Although every effort has been made to make this handbook as complete and up-to-date as possible, circumstances will occur that the handbook does not cover, and changes will be necessary due to changes within the PA program. Changes or additions to the handbook will become effective immediately, and students will be notified in writing, in a timely manner.

When the handbook does not cover a specific circumstance or the interpretation is ambiguous, the Program Director will make the necessary decision or interpretation. The fact that written policies are not in the handbook should not be interpreted as an absence of a policy or regulation. If students have questions, they should discuss them with the Program Director.

Please note that if there is any conflict between the specific policies and procedures set forth in this handbook and general University policies and procedures, the policies and procedures of the University shall supersede the policies of the PA program.

*New policies approved after publication of this handbook may add to or supersede those contained herein. This document was last updated August 2020

All policies are derived from the Accreditation Standards for PA Education, 5th edition©

Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA)
ACCREDITATION STATUS

The ARC-PA has granted Accreditation-Provisional status to the University of the Sciences Physician Assistant Program sponsored by the University of the Sciences.

Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding accreditation-provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students. Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class.

As part of the licensing process in most states, including Pennsylvania, both successful completion of an accredited program and passing the PANCE are required to practice medicine as a physician assistant. Specific information regarding the licensing process can be obtained by contacting the licensing authority in the state in which you intend to practice.
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GENERAL INFORMATION

All program policies contained within this handbook apply to all students, principal faculty and the Program Director, regardless of location.
GENERAL INFORMATION

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the University of the Sciences Physician Assistant Program is to educate future physician assistants with a foundation in primary care, with a focus on interprofessional health care and exposure to underserved and diverse populations.

GOALS

1) Matriculate qualified applicants who will successfully complete the Master of Science Degree in Physician Assistant Studies.

2) Prepare students with a foundation in primary care with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to function as entry-level members of the health care team in varied clinical settings and disciplines.

3) Engage students in interprofessional medical education that will enable them to adapt to the changing health care environment with a focus on evidence-based practice.

4) Model an interdisciplinary approach to medicine which utilizes effective oral and written communication between members of the health care team and patient.

5) Facilitate and cultivate the development of professional, moral and ethical attitudes essential to the role of a PA.

6) Educate students in a patient-centered environment which promotes critical thinking and medical problem-solving skills.

7) Prepare students for the successful completion of the PANCE.

SPONSORSHIP

On February 7, 2012, the Pennsylvania Department of Education approved the University of the Sciences PA Program. The University of the Sciences is accredited by The Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The University of the Sciences PA Program is administered by the department personnel listed below.

The program administration is responsible for class selection, curriculum design and development, student and course evaluation, student advising, and other matters relevant to the PA program.

It is important to the faculty of the University of the Sciences PA Program that there is continual and open communication between students, faculty, and staff. It is our intention that all department personnel be available for student consultation as required.
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

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HISTORY OF THE PA PROFESSION

In the 1960s, during the wake of a large number of military corpsmen re-entering the civilian population, Eugene Stead, then chairman of the Department of Medicine at Duke University, recognized the need for a midlevel health practitioner, whose function would be of a generalist, primary care nature. He intended this midlevel health practitioner to complement the services and skills of physicians, often times in more remote areas, and areas of high need. Collaboration was taking place among organized physician groups, educators, the United States government, and medical regulatory bodies in establishing a foundation for the components of the needed PA profession.

In 1965, four ex-Navy corpsmen were enrolled in the first PA program - a two-year, intensive, generalist-model program at Duke University. Following this lead, training programs began to proliferate in the United States - many supported by grants from federal and private foundations.

With the increase in the number of PA training programs came a need to develop a program evaluation mechanism. In 1971, the American Medical Association (AMA) Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA) developed training program guidelines and implemented a program accreditation mechanism, in an effort to maintain consistency throughout PA programs. Simultaneously, the recognition of a need for an agency to represent the professional interests evolved, and the American Academy of PAs (AAPA) was established. Soon after, the Association of PA Programs, APAP, (currently known as the PA Education Association) was formed to provide a forum for the exchange of information between educators.

In 1972, the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) and the AMA convened representatives from fourteen different organizations, including the AAPA and PAEA, to discuss the need for establishing an independent certifying authority for the PA profession. Three years later, the National Commission on Certification of PAs (NCCPA) was formed to fulfill that role.

NCCPA is the only nationally recognized certifying body for PAs in the United States. Established as a not-for-profit organization in 1975, NCCPA is dedicated to assuring the public that certified PAs meet professional standards of knowledge and clinical skills. All U.S. states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories rely on NCCPA certification criteria for initial licensure, or regulation of PAs. More than 65,000 PAs have been certified by NCCPA.

To attain certification, PAs must graduate from an accredited PA program and pass the PA National Certifying Exam (PANCE). PANCE is a multiple-choice test that comprises 360 questions that assess basic medical and surgical knowledge.

After passing PANCE, PAs become NCCPA-certified, which entitles them to use the PA-Certified (PA-C) designation until the expiration of their first cycle (approximately two years). To maintain NCCPA certification and retain the right to use the PA-C designation beyond the expiration of their initial certification, they must follow a multifaceted process, involving documentation of continuing medical education (CME) hours every two years and successful completion of a recertification exam in the ninth or tenth year of a ten-year certification maintenance cycle.
PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Part of the mission of University of the Sciences states that, through academic and personal development, our graduates will gain the intellectual, cultural, and ethical understanding and awareness necessary to become leaders and innovators in a global society.

Along with the University, the PA program strives to create a safe and welcoming environment that embraces diversity and inclusion. The University of the Sciences recognizes that a diverse campus community is essential to enriching intellectual exchanges, enhancing cultural understanding, and promoting equality of opportunity with mutual respect. In accordance with University policy and as delineated by Federal and Pennsylvania law, the University does not discriminate in admission, educational programs, employment, or administration against any individual on the basis of that individual's gender, gender identity, age, handicap or disability, race, color, religion, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or in violation of federal, state or local laws or executive orders.

The USciences PA Program MSPAS degree signifies that the graduate is prepared for entry into the practice of medicine. It shows that the graduate must have the skills and knowledge to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. It is essential for good patient care to require minimum standards for the education of the physician assistant. The minimum standards required for the education of the physician assistant is essential for quality care of the patient.

In the admission process, the University must judge not only the scholastic accomplishments and potential of the applicant, but also consider the applicant's current physical and emotional status, cumulative and progressive disability, and drug-induced impairments that may pose obstacles to the safe application of the student's knowledge and skills, which may also impede interaction between patients and co-workers.

Candidates for the PA program must possess the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data. They must have functional use of the senses of vision, hearing, equilibrium and taste. Their exteroceptor (touch, pain, and temperature) and proprioceptor (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory) senses must be sufficiently intact to enable them to carry out all the activities required to complete the activities described below. Candidates must have sufficient motor function capabilities to meet the demands of the PA program and the demands of total patient care. Additionally, they must be able to complete the didactic and clinical curriculum in its entirety.

The candidate for the PA program must possess ability, aptitude and skills in five areas: observation, communication, motor, intellectual, behavioral and social.

1. **Observation:** The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, visual presentations in lectures and laboratories, laboratory evidence and microbiologic cultures, microscopic studies of microorganisms, and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate should be able to observe a patient accurately and completely at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensation and is enhanced by a sense of smell.
2. **Communication:** A candidate should be able to speak, hear, and observe patients in order to elicit information, perceive non-verbal communication, and describe changes in mood, activity and posture. A candidate should be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but reading and writing. Communication in oral and written form with the health care team must be effective and efficient.

3. **Motor:** Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. A candidate should be able to carry out basic laboratory tests (urinalysis, CBC, wet mount, gram stain, etc.), carry out diagnostic and therapeutic procedures (phlebotomy, venipuncture, placement of catheters and tubes), and read ECG’s and X-rays. A candidate should have motor function sufficient to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment for patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of a physician assistant are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medications, the application of pressure to arrest bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Such skills require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

4. **Intellectual (Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities):** These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem solving, which is the critical skill demanded of PA’s, requires all these abilities. The candidate must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships, and understand the spatial relationships of structures, in order to understand the pathophysiology of the human body.

5. **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** A candidate should possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates should be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads, and to function effectively under stress. They should be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainty inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admission and education processes.

**DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY**

University of the Sciences recognizes that a diverse campus community is essential to enriching intellectual exchanges and enhancing cultural understanding and, as such, values equality of opportunity, mutual respect, and an appreciation of diversity. Therefore, the University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to all members of the University community who have documented disabilities.

Two pieces of legislation, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in the
programs, services, and activities of public entities, including postsecondary institutions. Therefore, the University has both a legal obligation and an ethical commitment to provide reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified individuals. This applies to virtually all aspects of campus activities, including employment, academic studies, student programming, and services provided to the community at large. The University’s reasonable accommodation process is intended to provide reasonable support to meet the individual needs of this diverse population, which includes faculty, staff, prospective and enrolled students, and others involved in the University’s services and programs. Accommodations may be altered based on the individual’s needs; changes in the law; or changes in the University’s curriculum, programs, job requirements, or services.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS
Whitecar Hall – Suite 1110 215.596.8758

University of the Sciences supports the educational endeavors of all its students. If a student believes that he or she has a disability that may impact his or her ability to fulfill any degree requirements, or other educational endeavors, and would like more information on applying for an accommodation, please contact the Office of Student Accommodations at 215.596.8758. To learn more about the University’s policy, please see the General Information and University Policies section of the Student Handbook under Disability Support Services Policy at:
https://www.usciences.edu/academics/academic-resources/student-accommodations/index.html

DIVERSITY, THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSION, & USCIENCES PA PROGRAM

“As the general population of the United States has grown increasingly diverse, issues of health equity and the provision of culturally competent care have received greater attention among stakeholders throughout the health care sector. This is particularly true among health care educators who recognize the role that diversity plays in the delivery of high-quality patient care. While the value of diversity among health care professionals is clear, much work is needed to create a health care workforce fully equipped to provide culturally competent care.” (Retrieved from: https://paeaonline.org/research/program-report)

“The term health disparity refers to a population-specific difference in disease, health outcome, quality of health care and/or access to health care service. In order to minimize health care disparities, it is imperative for health care providers to be educated on the prevalence, root causes and consequences of these disparities.” (Retrieved from: https://paeaonline.org/diversity-and-inclusion-resources/)

“Understanding the social determinants of health can shed insight into the health status of our population. True health equity will not be achieved until we address the effects of physical environment, social environment, health services systems, individual behavior, biology and genetics.” (Retrieved from: https://paeaonline.org/diversity-and-inclusion-resources/)

“An often under-looked area in the goal towards minimizing health disparities is in the area of LGBT health. Some educators feel ill-equipped to teach LGBT-competent care or to assist students in facing biases in this area. This page contains numerous resources to help the PA educator accomplish this task.” (Retrieved from: https://paeaonline.org/diversity-and-inclusion-resources/)

“Understanding the social determinants of health can shed insight into the health status of our
population. True health equity will not be achieved until we address the effects of physical environment, social environment, health services systems, individual behavior, biology and genetics.” (Retrieved from: https://paeaonline.org/diversity-and-inclusion-resources/)

With this information in mind, the following plan for increasing diversity has been implemented at the University of the Sciences Physician Assistant Program:

**POLICY ON DIVERSITY**

The University of the Sciences Physician Assistant Program strives to create PAs who accurately reflect the population that they are graduating to serve. A diverse student body, faculty, and staff serves to enrich all of our experiences, both as educators and as students. An important aspect to the policy is that higher-up University officials and the administration will support and carry out our diversity goals. The PA program will strive to be actively involved in the University-level Diversity Task Force.

As a program, we understand that each individual is unique, and that differences serve to enrich all of our lives. Race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, physical abilities, and religious beliefs, and others, all create an incredible, diverse society. We recognize the importance of diversity of health care providers to reflect the patient population and the role that awareness, respect, and understanding have on excellent patient care.

The plan to achieve our goals of increasing diversity not only involves steps to recruit a diverse pool of applicants, but working to prepare local students to become outstanding PA applicants, and to ensure their success once matriculated.

The University of the Sciences Physician Assistant Program will work to enrich our experiences, and grow both personally and as a program, with the following steps:

**Recruitment of a diverse group of applicants**
- Community outreach with high school students in the greater Philadelphia area
- Open house marketing to local high school students in the greater Philadelphia area
- Advising local high school students
- Inviting local high school students to explore science opportunities and foster excitement of the field

**Consideration for diversity in the application process during the screening process**
- Underrepresented in Medicine
- First Generation College
- Economically Disadvantaged

**Recruitment of a diverse faculty and staff**
- University/HR involvement in marketing
- Involve current students in future academic roles after graduation
- Invite guest lecturers with diverse professional and personal backgrounds
- Advertise in minority PA chapters/groups and other organizations that will diversify our pool of candidates.
Providing resources to retain students who diversify our student body

Providing resources to retain faculty and staff who diversify our program

Use our curriculum to create culturally aware PAs including learning objectives related to:

- Exploring personal implicit bias
- Racism in medicine
- Clinical ethics
- Cultural awareness
- LGBTQ health
- Health equity
- Health literacy
- Considerations for care of marginalized, underrepresented, and minority populations
- Respecting patient’s wishes
- Respecting cultural, religious, or spiritually-based decisions for health care
- Access to care
- Socioeconomics of health care
- Community resources
- Social determinants of health

Diversity and Inclusion training for all faculty, and staff

PA COMPETENCIES - Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession

Preamble

Between 2003-2004, the National Commission on Certification of PAs (NCCPA) led an effort with three other national PA organizations (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the PA (ARC-PA), American Academy of PAs (AAPA), and PA Education Association (PAEA) -- formerly Association of PA Programs (APAP)) to define PA competencies in response to similar efforts conducted within other health care professions and the growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice. The resultant document, Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession, provided a foundation from which physician assistant organizations and individual physician assistants could chart a course for advancing the competencies of the PA profession.

This document was updated in 2012 and then approved in its current form by the same four organizations.

Introduction

This document serves as a map for the individual PA, the physician-PA team, and organizations committed to promoting the development and maintenance of professional competencies among physician assistants. While some competencies will be acquired during formal PA education, others will be developed and mastered as physician assistants progress through their careers. The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and educational experiences requisite for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies.
The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Professional competencies for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice.

Patient-centered, physician assistant practice reflects a number of overarching themes. These include an unwavering commitment to patient safety, cultural competence, quality health care, lifelong learning, and professional growth. Furthermore, the profession’s dedication to the physician-physician assistant team benefits patients and the larger community.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT COMPETENCIES

Medical Knowledge

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Physician assistants must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In addition, physician assistants are expected to demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. Physician assistants are expected to understand, evaluate, and apply the following to clinical scenarios:

- Evidence-based medicine
- Scientific principles related to patient care
- Etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical conditions
- Signs and symptoms of medical and surgical conditions
- Appropriate diagnostic studies
- Management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and other treatment modalities
- Interventions for prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance
- Screening methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual
- History & physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses

Interpersonal & Communications Skills

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass the verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic exchange of information. Physician assistants must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients’ families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- Use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information
- Adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction
- Work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
- Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
- Accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes

**Patient Care**

Patient care includes patient and setting specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care
- Demonstrate compassionate and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
- Obtain essential and accurate information about their patients
- Make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and informed clinical judgment
- Develop and implement patient management plans
- Counsel and educate patients and their families
- Perform medical and surgical procedures essential to their area of practice
- Provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance
- Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education

**Professionalism**

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one’s own. Physician assistants must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PAs practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency or mental illness. Physician assistants must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Physician assistants are expected to demonstrate:

- Understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the PA
- Professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
- Respect, compassion, and integrity
- Accountability to patients, society, and the profession
- Commitment to excellence and on-going professional development
- Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
- Sensitivity and responsiveness to patients’ culture, age, gender, and abilities
- Self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative
- Healthy behaviors and life balance
- Commitment to the education of students and other health care professionals

**Practice-Based Learning & Improvement**
Practice-based learning and improvement includes the processes through which physician assistants engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self and practice-improvement. Physician assistants must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team
- Locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients’ health
- Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
- Utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education
- Recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others

**Systems-Based Practice**

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which health care is delivered. Physician assistants must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost, while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient. PAs should work to improve the health care system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
- Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care and use the systems effectively
- Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
- Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
- Partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of health care and patient outcomes
- Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care
- Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide effective, efficient patient care
- Recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to health care disparities
- Apply the concepts of population health to patient care

*Adopted 2012 by ARC-PA, NCCPA, and PAEA Adopted 2013 by AAPA*
PROGRAM-LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES & COMPETENCIES

The University of the Sciences PA Program learning outcomes and competencies were developed using several sources. The faculty reviewed the following documents: the competencies from PAEA, AAPA, ARC-PA, and NCCPA to address medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities; the NCCPA Content Blueprint for entry level medical content and tasks; the ARC-PA Standards, and the most common diseases and skills used in medicine.

*The PA student will be able to:*

1. Evaluate the structures of the human body and how they function at the biochemical and physiological level
2. Integrate and apply their knowledge of the basic sciences and clinical medicine to the care of the patient
3. Analyze the etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical conditions
4. Describe and understand the principles of drug absorption, distribution, action, toxicity, and elimination, and have a practical, working knowledge of commonly prescribed drugs
5. Differentiate the indications, contraindications, and side effect profiles for the pharmacologic agents used in the treatment of various diseases and conditions
6. Recognize the importance of patient education and compliance as it relates to pharmacologic interventions
7. Collect and document essential and accurate patient medical history and perform an appropriate comprehensive or problem-focused physical examination based on the patient’s presentation
8. Formulate an appropriate differential diagnosis based on history and physical examination of pertinent positive and negative findings and diagnostic study results in the diagnosis and management of common medical and psychiatric conditions in infants, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly
9. Demonstrate competency in written, oral, and electronic forms of communication and the ability to effectively communicate with patients, patients’ families, physicians, and various other professional associates in outpatient, inpatient, operative, emergent and behavioral health settings for infants, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly
10. Use communication skills and collaborate with patients, their families/caregivers, and members of the health care team to provide competent, comprehensive, patient-centered care infant, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly
11. Interpret and recognize the significance of various laboratory and radiographic studies in relation to the disease process
12. Differentiate between normal and abnormal signs, symptoms, and diagnostic studies results

13. Demonstrate the ability to provide superior patient care, including presentation-based diagnosis and management of emergent, acute, and chronic medical and psychological disorders in infant, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly

14. Formulate a working differential diagnosis and create an assessment and plan that is evidence-based and appropriate, based on the patient's signs and symptoms

15. Develop and implement appropriate treatment plans for common disorders including medications, surgery, counseling, therapeutic procedures, rehabilitative therapies, and specific disease prevention, and evaluate the success of those treatments

16. Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to perform the skills necessary for prevention, health promotion/maintenance, patient evaluation, monitoring, diagnosis/differential diagnosis, therapeutics, counseling, rehabilitation, and appropriate referral of the patient

17. Screen for diseases, assess for risk factors of common diseases, and initiate and recommend health promotion and disease prevention measures

18. Identify when referral is indicated and work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member of an interprofessional, patient-centered health care team

19. Apply the scientific method and critically evaluate landmark research publications that lead to establishment guidelines for disease management and apply that information in the health care of the patient

20. Understand the principles of scientific inquiry and research design, so that they will be able to apply those principles to critically interpret medical literature and enhance their ability to provide quality health care

21. Keep abreast of the evolving practice of medicine through a dedication to life-long learning and enhancement of one's knowledge, skills, and attitudes as a PA by self-reflection, active management and professional development

22. Demonstrate an understanding of health care policy, health care and social service systems, coding/reimbursement, billing, and the role of the physician-PA team within those systems and how they apply in clinical practice

23. Conduct themselves in a professional courteous manner and with the highest ethical and legal standards expected of a health care professional and consistent with the role and responsibilities of a PA

24. The knowledge, appreciation, and application of legal and ethical concepts related to medical care

25. Evaluate the impact of the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic ramifications on the diagnosis and treatment of various medical conditions, as well as the ethical considerations within medical practice,
and demonstrate sensitivity regarding the emotional, cultural, and socioeconomic aspects of the patient, the patient's condition, and the patient's family.

26. Appraise the psychological, socioeconomic, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of the patient's experience of the health and disease and utilize the information in the development of appropriate plans of care.

27. Understand the commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices.

28. Effectively advocate for patients and the PA profession.

29. Demonstrate respect, compassion, and accountability to patients and society, and be responsive to the patient's values, culture, age, gender, and capabilities.

30. Create healthy living behaviors through patient education and counseling.

31. The attitudes and skills which demonstrate a commitment to personal growth and sensitivity to cultural and individual differences, respect for self and others throughout a diverse patient population.

32. Continually assess and demonstrate self-reflective practice and an awareness of one's own implicit bias and recognize its potential effect on the care of patients.

33. Demonstrate understanding of the important considerations in reproductive and sexual health, including the societal and clinical aspects of human sexuality, prenatal care, gynecologic care, men's health and associated preventative medicine.

34. Understand the importance of superior patient care in the pre-operative, intra-operative and post-operative settings, with consideration for patient safety and optimal outcomes.

35. Demonstrate the ability to provide appropriate behavioral and mental healthcare across the lifespan, through the appraisal of both the societal and clinical aspects of behavioral health and wellness.

**STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR THE PA STUDENT**

As health care practitioners, PAs are required to conform to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. PA students are also expected to adhere to the same high ethical and professional standards required of PAs.

The American Academy of PAs (AAPA) has identified four primary bioethical principles, i.e., autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence and justice, which form the foundation of the Statement of Values of The PA Profession. The Statement of Values provides a guideline for ethical conduct by PAs. The Guidelines for Ethical Conduct required of PAs can be found at the American Academy of PA's website: [https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf](https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf). In addition to the AAPA’s guidelines, The National Commission of Certification of PAs (NCCPA) recently adopted a code of conduct for certified PAs, and certifying PA students. NCCPA’s code of conduct “outlines the principles that all certified or certifying PAs are expected to uphold.” A complete discussion can be found at: [http://www.nccpa.net/Code-Of-Conduct?mID=114](http://www.nccpa.net/Code-Of-Conduct?mID=114).
The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the PA (ARC-PA), the accrediting body for PA programs, recognizes that “the role of the PA demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills and the capacity to react to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. An attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient’s welfare are essential attributes.”

In addition to understanding and complying with the principles and standards promulgated by the American Academy of PAs, The National Commission on Certification of PAs, and the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the PA, PA students are required to understand and comply with the policies, procedures and rules of the graduate PA program and the University (see the USciences Student Handbook: http://www.usciences.edu/studenthandbook/; and the policies, procedures, and rules of each clinical site to which the student is assigned. Furthermore, PA students are required to conduct themselves in a manner that complies with the following principles and standards.

**Respect**

PA students are expected to treat all patients, faculty, staff, clinical preceptors, health care workers, and fellow students with dignity and respect. For example:

- PA students must recognize and embrace their role as a member of a team and interact with others on the team in a cooperative and considerate manner.
- PA students train closely with other students, including the physical examinations of fellow students, and discussion groups that may reveal personal information. Students must maintain and exhibit respect for the privacy and confidentiality of fellow students.
- Students should offer criticism or suggestions in a thoughtful and reasoned manner that fosters respect and trust.
- When confronted with conduct by another member of the team that may be inappropriate, students are not to respond angrily; rather, they must remain calm and respectful and respond in accordance with the standards of professional conduct required of PA students.

**Flexibility**

Although every effort is made to provide training activities at times and places scheduled in advance, PA students often will be required to be flexible because of changes in the schedule. For example, instructors who are also practicing clinicians may not have a regular schedule and, accordingly, flexibility is required of the PA student. Lectures or clinical sessions may, at times, need to be rescheduled with short notice. In addition, clinical sites create the student schedules for the clinical year and such schedules may require PA students to work weekends and nights.

**Academic Integrity**

PA students are expected to comply with the University Student Conduct Policy which may be found in the USciences Student Handbook. In addition to violations described in the University Student Conduct Policy, additional violations include but are not limited the following:

- Students are not permitted to use notes or other materials during examinations unless authorized by the instructor in advance.
Students are required to do their own work and, without prior approval of the instructor, may not submit work created by others (including such things as papers purchased from commercial enterprises) as their own work.

Students are required to sit for examinations that are required to fulfill their own academic obligations; students may not have another student or person take an examination for them.

The same academic work may not be submitted more than once for credit or to fulfill the requirements of an academic exercise.

Obtaining a copy of an examination or graded assignment (e.g., case presentation, patient education project) used in a previous year or completed by another person is prohibited.

Prior to taking an examination or completing an assignment, students are not permitted to review prior examination questions or answers and/or graded assignments completed by another person.

A student may not knowingly allow another student to copy, or use, his or her work.

A student must give proper attribution when using the words or ideas of another person, whether in a written or oral academic exercise. This includes, among other things, proper citation of quoted and paraphrased material.

Knowingly presenting false information to program faculty and staff, supervisors, patients and clinical preceptors is prohibited.

Falsifying any information or document is prohibited.

Forging another’s name or signature is prohibited.

Misrepresenting oneself as a graduate of the PA program or a PA-C, physician, nurse practitioner, medical resident, etc., is prohibited.

Honesty and Trustworthiness

PA students shall be honest and truthful in all respects. Students shall not intentionally mislead others.

Student Role and Accountability

PA students have a unique role in health care delivery, and will be held accountable as follows:

- Students shall perform only those procedures authorized by the PA program, clinical site, supervisor and/or preceptor.
- PA students at clinical sites must always work under the supervision of a preceptor and are prohibited from assuming primary responsibility for a patient’s care. For example, students shall not treat or discharge a patient without prior consultation with and approval of a clinical preceptor or a licensed medical practitioner assigned to the student by the preceptor.
- Students must complete all assignments and duties effectively and to the best of their ability.
- Students are responsible for identifying and reporting unprofessional, unethical and/or illegal behavior by health care professionals and students, faculty, or staff of the PA program. If a PA student has a reasonable belief that such conduct has occurred, he or she should report it to the Program Director, preceptor, supervisor, or Director of Clinical Education, as may be appropriate under the circumstances.
- PA students are expected to accept and apply constructive feedback.
- PA students are required to exercise sound judgment.

Concern for the Patient
PA students must, by their words and behavior, demonstrate concern for the patient. Concern for the patient is manifested in many ways including, but not limited to, the following:

- PA students must treat patients and their families with dignity and respect
- At all times the physical and emotional comfort of the patient is of paramount importance
- Students must use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication to convey concern, pleasantness and professionalism to the patient
- The patient’s modesty must be considered at all times
- Students shall deliver health care services to patients without regard to their race, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability, medical condition, socioeconomic status, political beliefs, or any status protected by law
- Students may not accept gifts or gratuities from patients or their families
- Students may not give gifts, money, etc. to patients
- Sexual and romantic relationships with patients are prohibited and will not be tolerated
- Students may not communicate with patients or families (e-mail, phone, text, social media sites) outside of the supervised clinical setting

Professional Demeanor

PA students must dress in professional attire. Name tags or badges are required to be worn at all times. Good personal hygiene is always required. Sexual and/or romantic relationships with principal faculty, instructional faculty, program support staff, clinical preceptors while in the PA program will not be tolerated.

Maintaining Composure

PA students must maintain a professional and calm demeanor at all times, even in emergencies and other highly stressful situations.

Drugs and Alcohol

PA students must comply with the University’s Drug and Alcohol Policy and all other applicable policies and procedures concerning the use of drugs (except prescribed medications) and alcohol on campus or at clinical sites. Students are prohibited from appearing on campus or at any clinical site while under the influence of alcohol or any drug that may affect performance or judgment.

Timeliness and Lateness

Attendance and timeliness are important aspects of professional behavior. Students must report to all classes, labs, seminars, Call Back Days, clinical sites and other scheduled activities on time. Timely return from designated breaks is required. Students must return messages from program staff, faculty, clinical preceptors, and clinical sites as soon as possible, but always in less than 24 hours unless directed otherwise. Students must submit all required assignments and forms on or before the designated date and/or time they are due.
The professional conduct of PA students is evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the program. Violations of standards of conduct are subject to disciplinary actions administered by the University Conduct Committee and by the PA Program Student Progress Committee.

GUIDELINES FOR ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR THE PA PROFESSION (AAPA)

INTRODUCTION

The PA profession has revised its code of ethics several times since the profession began. Although the fundamental principles underlying the ethical care of patients have not changed, the societal frame work in which those principles are applied has. Economic pressures of the health care system, social influences of church and state, technological advances, and changing patient demographics continually transform the landscape in which PAs practice.

Previous codes of the profession were brief lists of tenets for PAs to live by in their professional lives. This document departs from that format by attempting to describe ways in which those tenets apply, as each situation is unique. Individual PAs must use their best judgment in a given situation while considering the preferences of the patient and the supervising physician, clinical information, ethical concepts, and legal obligations.

Four main bioethical principles broadly guided the development of these guidelines: autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice.

Autonomy, strictly speaking, means self-rule. Patients have the right to make autonomous decisions and choices, and PAs should respect these decisions and choices.

Beneficence means that PAs should act in the patient’s best interest. In certain cases, respecting the patient’s autonomy and acting in their best interests may be difficult to balance.

Nonmaleficence means to do no harm, to impose no unnecessary or unacceptable burden upon the patient.

Justice means that patients in similar circumstances should receive similar care. Justice also applies to norms for the fair distribution of resources, risks, and costs.

PAs are expected to behave both legally and morally. They should know and understand the laws governing their practice. Likewise, they should understand the ethical responsibilities of being a health care professional. Legal requirements and ethical expectations will not always be in agreement. Generally speaking, the law describes minimum standards of acceptable behavior, and ethical principles delineate the highest moral standards of behavior.

When faced with an ethical dilemma, PAs may find the guidance they need in this document. If not, they may wish to seek guidance elsewhere – possibly from a supervising physician, a hospital ethics committee, an ethicist, trusted colleagues, or other AAPA policies. PAs should seek legal counsel when they are concerned about the potential legal consequences of their decisions.
The following sections discuss ethical conduct of PAs in their professional interactions with patients, physicians, colleagues, other health professionals, and the public. The "Statement of Values" within this document defines the fundamental values that the PA profession strives to uphold. These values provide the foundation upon which the guidelines rest. The guidelines were written with the understanding that no document can encompass all actual and potential ethical responsibilities, and PAs should not regard them as comprehensive.

**STATEMENT OF VALUES OF THE PA PROFESSION**

- PAs hold as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings
- PAs uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice
- PAs recognize and promote the value of diversity
- PAs treat equally all persons who seek their care
- PAs hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine
- PAs assess their personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve their medical practice
- PAs actively seek to expand their knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine
- PAs work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients
- PAs use their knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community
- PAs respect their professional relationship with physicians
- PAs share and expand knowledge within the profession

**THE PA AND PATIENT**

**PA Role and Responsibilities**

PA practice flows out of a unique relationship that involves the PA, the physician, and the patient. The patient–PA relationship is based on mutual respect and an agreement to work together regarding medical care. In addition, PAs practice medicine with physician supervision; therefore, the care that a PA provides is an extension of the care of the supervising physician. The patient–PA relationship is also a patient–PA–physician relationship.

The principal value of the PA profession is to respect the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings. This concept is the foundation of the patient–PA relationship. PAs have an ethical obligation to see that each of their patients receives appropriate care. PAs should be sensitive to the beliefs and expectations of the patient. PAs should recognize that each patient is unique and has an ethical right to self-determination.

PAs are professionally and ethically committed to providing nondiscriminatory care to all patients. While PAs are not expected to ignore their own personal values, scientific or ethical standards, or the law, they should not allow their personal beliefs to restrict patient access to care. A PA has an ethical duty to offer each patient the full range of information on relevant options for their health care. If personal moral, religious, or ethical beliefs prevent a PA from offering the full range of treatments available, or care the patient desires, the PA has an ethical duty to refer a patient to another qualified provider. That referral
should not restrict a patient’s access to care. PAs are obligated to care for patients in emergency situations and to responsibly transfer patients if they cannot care for them.

PAs should always act in the best interests of their patients and as advocates when necessary. PAs should actively resist policies that restrict free exchange of medical information. For example, a PA should not withhold information about treatment options simply because the option is not covered by insurance. PAs should inform patients of financial incentives to limit care, use resources in a fair and efficient way, and avoid arrangements or financial incentives that conflict with the patient’s best interests.

The PA and Diversity

The PA should respect the culture, values, beliefs, and expectations of the patient.

Nondiscrimination

PAs should not discriminate against classes or categories of patients in the delivery of needed health care. Such classes and categories include gender, color, creed, race, religion, age, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, nature of illness, disability, socioeconomic status, physical stature, body size, gender identity, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Initiation and Discontinuation of Care

In the absence of a preexisting patient–PA relationship, the PA is under no ethical obligation to care for a person unless no other provider is available. A PA is morally bound to provide care in emergency situations and to arrange proper follow-up. PAs should keep in mind that contracts with health insurance plans might define a legal obligation to provide care to a certain patient.

A PA and supervising physician may discontinue their professional relationship with an established patient as long as proper procedures are followed. The PA and physician should provide the patient with adequate notice, offer to transfer records, and arrange for continuity of care if the patient has an ongoing medical condition. Discontinuation of the professional relationship should be undertaken only after a serious attempt has been made to clarify and understand the expectations and concerns of all involved parties.

If the patient decides to terminate the relationship, they are entitled to access appropriate information contained within their medical record.

Informed Consent

PAs have a duty to protect and foster an individual patient’s free and informed choices. The doctrine of informed consent means that a PA provides adequate information that is comprehensible to a competent patient or patient surrogate. At a minimum, this should include the nature of the medical condition, the objectives of the proposed treatment, treatment options, possible outcomes, and the risks involved. PAs should be committed to the concept of shared decision making, which involves assisting patients in making decisions that account for medical, situational, and personal factors.

In caring for adolescents, the PA should understand all of the laws and regulations in his or her
jurisdiction that are related to the ability of minors to consent to or refuse health care. Adolescents should be encouraged to involve their families in health care decision making. The PA should also understand consent laws pertaining to emancipated or mature minors. (See the section on Confidentiality.)

When the person giving consent is a patient’s surrogate, a family member, or other legally authorized representative, the PA should take reasonable care to assure that the decisions made are consistent with the patient’s best interests and personal preferences, if known. If the PA believes the surrogate’s choices do not reflect the patient’s wishes or best interests, the PA should work to resolve the conflict. This may require the use of additional resources, such as an ethics committee.

Confidentiality

PAs should maintain confidentiality. By maintaining confidentiality, PAs respect patient privacy and help to prevent discrimination based on medical conditions. If patients are confident that their privacy is protected, they are more likely to seek medical care and more likely to discuss their problems candidly.

In cases of adolescent patients, family support is important but should be balanced with the patient’s need for confidentiality and the PA’s obligation to respect their emerging autonomy. Adolescents may not be of age to make independent decisions about their health, but providers should respect that they soon will be. To the extent they can, PAs should allow these emerging adults to participate as fully as possible in decisions about their care. It is important that PAs be familiar with and understand the laws and regulations in their jurisdictions that relate to the confidentiality rights of adolescent patients. (See the section on Informed Consent.)

Any communication about a patient conducted in a manner that violates confidentiality is unethical. Written, electronic, and verbal information may be intercepted or overheard by a third party, therefore, the PA should always be aware of anyone who might be monitoring communication about a patient.

PAs should choose methods of storage and transmission of patient information that minimize the likelihood of data becoming available to unauthorized persons or organizations. Computerized record keeping and electronic data transmission present unique challenges that can make the maintenance of patient confidentiality difficult. PAs should advocate for policies and procedures that secure the confidentiality of patient information.

The Patient and the Medical Record

PAs have an obligation to keep information in the patient’s medical record confidential. Information should be released only with the written permission of the patient or the patient’s legally authorized representative. Specific exceptions to this general rule may exist (e.g., worker’s compensation, communicable disease, HIV, knife/gunshot wounds, abuse, and substance abuse). It is important that PAs be familiar with and understand the laws and regulations in his or her jurisdiction that relate to the release of information. For example, stringent legal restrictions on release of genetic test results and mental health records often exist.

Both ethically and legally, a patient has certain rights to know the information contained in his or her medical record. While the chart is legally the property of the practice or the institution, the information in the chart is the property of the patient. Most states have laws that provide patients access to their
medical records. The PA should know the laws and facilitate patient access to the information.

Disclosure

A PA should disclose to his or her supervising physician information about errors made in the course of caring for a patient. The supervising physician and PA should disclose the error to the patient if such information is significant to the patient’s interests and well-being. Errors do not always constitute improper, negligent, or unethical behavior, but failure to disclose them may.

Care of Family Members and Co-workers

Treating oneself, co-workers, close friends, family members, or students whom the PA supervises or teaches may be unethical or create conflicts of interest. For example, it might be ethically acceptable to treat one’s own child for a case of otitis media but it probably is not acceptable to treat one’s spouse for depression. PAs should be aware that their judgment might be less than objective in cases involving friends, family members, students, and colleagues and that providing “curbside” care might sway the individual from establishing an ongoing relationship with a provider. If it becomes necessary to treat a family member or close associate, a formal patient-provider relationship should be established, and the PA should consider transferring the patient’s care to another provider as soon as it is practical. If a close associate requests care, the PA may wish to assist by helping them find an appropriate provider.

There may be exceptions to this guideline, for example, when a PA runs an employee health center or works in occupational medicine. Even in those situations, the PA should be sure they do not provide informal treatment, but provide appropriate medical care in a formally established patient-provider relationship.

Genetic Testing

Evaluating the risk of disease and performing diagnostic genetic tests raise significant ethical concerns. PAs should be informed about the benefits and risks of genetic tests. Testing should be undertaken only after proper informed consent is obtained. If PAs order or conduct the tests, they should assure that appropriate pre- and post-test counseling is provided.

PAs should be sure that patients understand the potential consequences of undergoing genetic tests — from impact on patients themselves, possible implications for other family members, and potential use of the information by insurance companies or others who might have access to the information. Because of the potential for discrimination by insurers, employers, or others, PAs should be particularly aware of the need for confidentiality concerning genetic test results.

Reproductive Decision Making

Patients have a right to access the full range of reproductive health care services, including fertility treatments, contraception, sterilization, and abortion. PAs have an ethical obligation to provide balanced and unbiased clinical information about reproductive health care.

When the PA’s personal values conflict with providing full disclosure or providing certain services such as sterilization or abortion, the PA need not become involved in that aspect of the patient’s care. By referring the patient to a qualified provider who is willing to discuss and facilitate all treatment options,
the PA fulfills their ethical obligation to ensure the patient’s access to all legal options.

End-of-Life

Among the ethical principles that are fundamental to providing compassionate care at the end-of-life, the most essential is recognizing that dying is a personal experience and part of the life cycle.

PAs should provide patients with the opportunity to plan for end-of-life care. Advance directives, living wills, durable power of attorney, and organ donation should be discussed during routine patient visits.

PAs should assure terminally-ill patients that their dignity is a priority and that relief of physical and mental suffering is paramount. PAs should exhibit non-judgmental attitudes and should assure their terminally-ill patients that they will not be abandoned. To the extent possible, patient or surrogate preferences should be honored, using the most appropriate measures consistent with their choices, including alternative and non-traditional treatments. PAs should explain palliative and hospice care and facilitate patient access to those services. End-of-life care should include assessment and management of psychological, social, and spiritual or religious needs.

While respecting patients’ wishes for particular treatments when possible, PAs also must weigh their ethical responsibility, in consultation with supervising physicians, to withhold futile treatments and to help patients understand such medical decisions.

PAs should involve the physician in all near-death planning. The PA should only withdraw life support with the supervising physician’s agreement and in accordance with the policies of the health care institution.

THE PA AND INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONALISM

Conflict of Interest

PAs should place service to patients before personal material gain and should avoid undue influence on their clinical judgment. Trust can be undermined by even the appearance of improper influence. Examples of excessive or undue influence on clinical judgment can take several forms. These may include financial incentives, pharmaceutical or other industry gifts, and business arrangements involving referrals. PAs should disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest to their patients.

Acceptance of gifts, trips, hospitality, or other items is discouraged. Before accepting a gift or financial arrangement, PAs might consider the guidelines of the Royal College of Physicians, “Would I be willing to have this arrangement generally known?” or of the American College of Physicians, “What would the public or my patients think of this arrangement?”

Professional Identity

PAs should not misrepresent directly or indirectly, their skills, training, professional credentials, or identity. PAs should uphold the dignity of the PA profession and accept its ethical values.

Competency
PAs should commit themselves to providing competent medical care and extend to each patient the full measure of their professional ability as dedicated, empathetic health care providers. PAs should also strive to maintain and increase the quality of their health care knowledge, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence through individual study and continuing education.

Sexual Relationships

It is unethical for PAs to become sexually involved with patients. It also may be unethical for PAs to become sexually involved with former patients or key third parties. Key third parties are individuals who have influence over the patient. These might include spouses or partners, parents, guardians, or surrogates.

Such relationships are generally unethical because of the PA’s position of authority, and the inherent imbalance of knowledge, expertise, and status. Issues such as dependence, trust, transference, and inequalities of power may lead to increased vulnerability on the part of the current or former patients or key third parties.

Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

It is unethical for PAs to engage in or condone any form of gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is defined as any behavior, action, or policy that adversely affects an individual or group of individuals due to disparate treatment, disparate impact, or the creation of a hostile or intimidating work or learning environment.

It is unethical for PAs to engage in or condone any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment
- Accepting or rejecting such conduct affects or may be perceived to affect professional decisions concerning an individual
- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's training or professional position

THE PA AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS

Team Practice

PAs should be committed to working collegially with other members of the health care team to assure integrated, well-managed, and effective care of patients. PAs should strive to maintain a spirit of cooperation with other health care professionals, their organizations, and the general public.

Illegal and Unethical Conduct

PAs should not participate in or conceal any activity that will bring discredit or dishonor to the PA profession. They should report illegal or unethical conduct by health care professionals to the
Impairment

PAs have an ethical responsibility to protect patients and the public by identifying and assisting impaired colleagues. “Impaired” means being unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety because of physical or mental illness, loss of motor skills, or excessive use or abuse of drugs and alcohol.

PAs should be able to recognize impairment in physician supervisors, PAs, and other health care providers and should seek assistance from appropriate resources to encourage these individuals to obtain treatment.

Physician-PA Relationship

Supervision should include ongoing communication between the physician and the PA regarding patient care. The PA should consult the supervising physician whenever it will safeguard or advance the welfare of the patient. This includes seeking assistance in situations of conflict with a patient or another health care professional.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

When a patient asks about an alternative therapy, the PA has an ethical obligation to gain a basic understanding of the alternative therapy being considered, or being used, and how the treatment will affect the patient. If the treatment would harm the patient, the PA should work diligently to dissuade the patient from using it, advise other treatment, and perhaps consider transferring the patient to another provider.

THE PA AND THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Workplace Actions

PAs may face difficult personal decisions to withhold medical services when workplace actions (e.g., strikes, sick-outs, slowdowns, etc.) occur. The potential harm to patients should be carefully weighed against the potential improvements to working conditions and, ultimately, patient care that could result. In general, PAs should individually and collectively work to find alternatives to such actions in addressing workplace concerns.

PAs as Educators

All PAs have a responsibility to share knowledge and information with patients, other health professionals, students, and the public. The ethical duty to teach includes effective communication with patients so that they will have the information necessary to participate in their health care and wellness.

PAs and Research

The most important ethical principle in research is honesty. This includes assuring subjects’ informed consent, following treatment protocols, and accurately reporting findings. Fraud and dishonesty in
research should be reported so that the appropriate authorities can take action.

PAs involved in research must be aware of potential conflicts of interest. The patient's welfare takes precedence over the desired research outcome. Any conflict of interest should be disclosed.

In scientific writing, PAs should report information honestly and accurately. Sources of funding for the research must be included in the published reports.

Plagiarism is unethical. Incorporating the words of others, either verbatim or by paraphrasing, without appropriate attribution is unethical or may have legal consequences. When submitting a document for publication, any previous publication of any portion of the document must be fully disclosed.

**PAs as Expert Witnesses**

The PA expert witness should testify to what he or she believes to be the truth. The PA’s review of medical facts should be thorough, fair, and impartial.

The PA expert witness should be fairly compensated for time spent preparing, appearing, and testifying. The PA should not accept a contingency fee based on the outcome of a case in which testimony is given or derive personal, financial, or professional favor in addition to compensation.

**THE PA AND SOCIETY**

**Lawfulness**

PAs have the dual duty to respect the law and to work for positive change to laws that will enhance the health and well-being of the community.

**Executions**

PAs, as health care professionals, should not participate in executions because to do so would violate the ethical principle of beneficence.

**Access to Care / Resource Allocation**

PAs have a responsibility to use health care resources in an appropriate and efficient manner so that all patients have access to needed health care. Resource allocation should be based on societal needs and policies, not the circumstances of an individual patient–PA encounter. PAs participating in policy decisions about resource allocation should consider medical need, cost-effectiveness, efficacy, and equitable distribution of benefits and burdens in society.

**Community Well Being**

PAs should work for the health, well-being, and the best interest of both the patient and the community. Sometimes there is a dynamic moral tension between the well-being of the community in general and the individual patient. Conflict between an individual patient’s best interest and the common good is not always easily resolved. In general, PAs should be committed to upholding and enhancing community
values, be aware of the needs of the community, and use the knowledge and experience acquired as professionals to contribute to an improved community.

CONCLUSION

The American Academy of PAs recognizes its responsibility to aid the PA profession as it strives to provide high quality, accessible health care. PAs wrote these guidelines for themselves and other PAs. The ultimate goal is to honor patients and earn their trust while providing the best and most appropriate care possible. At the same time, PAs must understand their personal values and beliefs and recognize the ways in which those values and beliefs can impact the care they provide.


PROFESSIONAL AGENCIES AND REGULATORY BODIES

ACCREDITATION REVIEW COMMISSION ON EDUCATION FOR THE PA, INC. (ARC-PA)

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the PA (ARC-PA) is the recognized accrediting agency that protects the interests of the public and PA profession by defining the standards for PA education and evaluating PA educational programs within the territorial United States to ensure their compliance with those standards.

The ARC-PA encourages excellence in PA education through its accreditation process, by establishing and maintaining minimum standards of quality for educational programs. It awards accreditation to programs through a peer review process that includes documentation and periodic site visit evaluation to substantiate compliance with the Accreditation Standards for PA Education. The accreditation process is designed to encourage sound educational experimentation and innovation and to stimulate continuous self-study and improvement. http://www.arc-pa.org

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS (AAPA)

The AAPA is the national professional organization of PAs. Its membership includes graduate and student PAs as well as affiliate membership for physicians and PA educators. The Academy provides a wide range of services for its members from representation before federal and state governments and health related organizations, public education, pamphlets and brochures, insurance and financial programs, and employment assistance.

As an AAPA member, you also receive multiple publications, free record keeping and reporting of CME requirements, and are entitled to a membership discount for the annual spring conference. Student PA Societies are an integral part of the AAPA and make up a body referred to as the Student Academy of the American Academy of PAs (SAAAPA). The Student Academy meets yearly at the national spring conference to elect officers and representatives. The USciences PA Program encourages each of you to take an active interest in this process.
The national organization represents you and as such deserves your support during your student years and as a graduate. Therefore, the PA program requires your active student membership during your course of study. 

www.aapa.org

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS (PSPA)

The Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (PSPA) was established in 1976. As a growing nonprofit organization, the PSPA strives to be representative of all PAs within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The goals and objectives of the Society are to enhance quality medical care to the people of Pennsylvania through a process of continuing medical education, both to the membership and to the public; to provide loyal and honest service to the public and to the medical profession; to promote professionalism among its membership; and to promote understanding of the PA profession.

The PSPA is a constituent chapter of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The Society sends delegates to the AAPA House of Delegates, which meets annually to perform policy making activities under the Academy's bylaws. The elected Board of Directors of the Society includes the president, president-elect, secretary, treasurer, and six Board members. Two of the six Board members are student members.

There are standing committees in the Society that perform its many functions. Each committee has a Board approved chairperson and is comprised of interested members from the various regions in the state. The Society encourages members to become involved by volunteering some time and energy to one of these important committees. Our vision is to be the leading force for all PAs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by advocating for the PA profession, for excellence in health care, and for access to quality care for our patients.

The state organization represents you and as such deserves your support during your student years and as a graduate. Therefore, the PA program requires your active student membership during your course of study. 

www.pspa.net

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CERTIFICATION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS (NCCPA)

All graduates of PA programs accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the PA (ARC-PA) are eligible to sit for the national certifying exam (PANCE) offered by the NCCPA.

Registration applications are completed during the senior year of the PA program. Most states require graduates to take and successfully pass the national boards to continue employment. Please refer to the link below for exam scheduling requirements.

Once certified through the NCCPA, each graduate must obtain and report 100 hours of CME every two years. Recertification exams are also required every ten years in addition to the CME requirement.

www.nccpa.net

STATE LICENSURE

The majority of states have regulations governing PAs. Each student who is considering employment in a specific state should review the regulations so they are familiar with them.
Many states require licensure through the State Board of Medicine prior to the start of employment. Students are encouraged to check with the specific State Board of Medicine for current requirements and to receive an application.

**PENNSYLVANIA**

Board of Medicine, PO Box 2649, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649, (717) 783-1400  
https://www.dos.pa.gov/ProfessionalLicensing/BoardsCommissions/Medicine/Pages/default.aspx  
Board of Osteopathic Medicine, PO Box 2649, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649, (717)-783-4858  
https://www.dos.pa.gov/ProfessionalLicensing/BoardsCommissions/OsteopathicMedicine/Pages/default.aspx

**PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (JAAPA)</th>
<th>The Clinical Advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://journals.lww.com/jaapa">http://journals.lww.com/jaapa</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.clinicaladvisor.com">www.clinicaladvisor.com</a></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinician Reviews</th>
<th>News line for Physician Assistants</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 – 2022 PA Program</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**FALL 2020**

Orientation: Tuesday, 8/25/20 – Friday, 8/28/20  
First Day of Classes: Monday, 8/31/20  
Labor Day: Monday, 9/7/20 – No Classes  
Thanksgiving Break: Wednesday, 11/25 – Sunday, 11/29/20 – No Classes  
Winter Break: Saturday, 12/19/20 – Sunday 1/3/21

**SPRING 2021**

First Day of Class: Monday, 1/4/2021  
MLK Day of Service: Monday, 1/18/21  
Spring Recess: Saturday, 4/24/21 – Sunday, 5/2/21

**SUMMER 2021**

First Day of Class: Monday, 5/3/21  
Memorial Day: Monday, 5/31 – No Classes
Independence Day (Observed): Monday, 7/5/21 – No Classes
Orientation to Clinical Rotations, Thursday, 8/19/21 – Friday 8/20/21
Summer Break: Saturday, 8/21/21 – Sunday, 8/29/21

**FALL 2021**

First Day of Rotation 1: Tuesday, 8/30/21
Labor Day: Monday, 9/6/21 – No Classes
Call Back Days: Thursday, 9/30/21 – Friday, 10/1/21
First Day of Rotation 2: Monday, 10/4/21
Call Back Days: Thursday, 11/4/21 – Friday, 11/5/21
First Day of Rotation 3: Monday, 11/8/21
Thanksgiving Break: Thursday, 11/25/21 – Friday, 11/26/21
Call Back Days: Thursday, 12/9/21 – Friday, 12/10/21
Rotations 1-3 Wrap-up Week: Monday 12/13 – Friday 12/17
Winter Break: Saturday, 12/18/21 – Sunday, 1/2/22

**SPRING 2022**

First Day of Rotation 4: Monday, 1/3/22
Call Back Days: Thursday, 2/3/22 – Friday, 2/4/22
First Day of Rotation 5: Monday, 2/7/22
Call Back Days: Thursday, 3/10/22 – Friday, 3/11/22
First Day of Rotation 6: Monday, 3/14/22
Call Back Days: Thursday, 4/14/22 – Friday, 4/15/22
Spring Recess: Monday, 4/18/22 – Friday, 4/22/22

**SUMMER 2022**

First Day of Rotation 7: Monday, 4/25/22
Call Back Days: Thursday, 5/26/22 – Friday 5/27/22
Memorial Day: Monday, 5/30/22 – No Classes
Rotations 4-7 Wrap-up Week: Tuesday 5/31/22 – 6/3/22
Summative Written Evaluation: 6/2/22
First Day of Rotation 8: Monday, 6/6/22
Independence Day: Monday, 7/4/22 – No Classes
Call Back Days: Thursday, 7/7/22 – Friday, 7/8/22
First Day of Rotation 9: Monday, 7/11/22
Call Back Days: Thursday, 8/1/22 – Friday, 8/12/22
Program Wrap-up/Remediation/Summative/Capstone Week 1: Monday, 8/22/22 – Friday, 8/26/22
Program Wrap-up/Remediation/Summative/Capstone Week 2: Monday, 8/29/22 – Friday, 9/2/22
Graduation: September 9, 2022

**EXPENSES**

Please see the table below for approximate cost of attending the University of the Sciences PA Program for 2020 - 2022. Please note all costs subject to change at any time. Additionally, the program is not...
responsible for any changes in the tuition or financial aid of students who must repeat a course or semester, nor is it responsible for changes made while a student is on leave of absence. *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuition and Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Health Insurance*</td>
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<td>AAPA/PSPA Membership Fees</td>
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<td>Stethoscope</td>
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<td>Laptop Computers*</td>
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*These are approximate costs

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<td>PACKRAT</td>
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<td>Clinical Clerkship Fee</td>
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<td>Transportation to Clerkships</td>
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## COURSE OF STUDY

### Fall 2020

<table>
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<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Anatomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Physiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/Physical I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacology I</td>
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<td>PA History</td>
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<td>Genetics for PAs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial Medicine</td>
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### Spring 2021

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<td>Pathophysiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Medicine I</td>
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<td>Pharmacology II</td>
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<td>Diagnostics I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to Research/EBM</td>
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**Total:** 17

### Summer 2021

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<th>Course</th>
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<td>Clinical Medicine II</td>
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<td>Diagnostics II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Methods, Design and Implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
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<td>Surgery</td>
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<td>Women’s Health</td>
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**Total:** 17

### Fall 2021

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<td>5 week Family Medicine Rotation I</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 week Family Medicine Rotation II</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 week Internal Medicine Rotation</td>
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### Spring 2022

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<th>Course</th>
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<td>5 week Women’s Health Rotation</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 week Behavioral/Mental Health Rotation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 week Surgery Rotation</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Practice Issues II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issues in Geriatrics I</td>
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<td>Professional Practice Issues III</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capstone</td>
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**Total:** 17

### Summer 2022

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<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<td>5 week Emergency Medicine Rotation</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 week Elective Rotation</td>
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<td>5 week Pediatrics Rotation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issues in Geriatrics II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Practice Issues III</td>
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**Total:** 19

**Total Curriculum:** 103
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Year 1 - FALL

PHA 501 - Human Anatomy:
This is a one-semester course with focus on the study of functional and applied human anatomy. Each topic will utilize lecture and lab experiences which include prosected human cadaver specimens. When appropriate, clinical and surgical correlations are made from diagnostic and operative points of view. Instruction is primarily in lecture and laboratory format. Textbooks, atlases, computer software programs, and other visual aids are available for study. Applied learning based on clinically relevant cases will be emphasized. The objectives are met in Human Anatomy by employing a variety of didactic approaches. Faculty presentations in lectures will immediately be correlated with cadaver laboratory experiences. Sessions often will end with a brief anatomically orientated problem-solving session or case study. Sessions will not only provide specific information regarding both acute and chronic conditions across the life span, but also serve as models for how data should be organized, interpreted, and integrated.
4 credits
(Co-requisites: PHA 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507)

PHA 502 - Human Physiology:
This course will provide students with a detailed overview of the fundamental aspects of human physiology, including the normal function of the human body and its major organ systems for patients across the life span. Understanding the normal physiologic processes will serve as a foundation for understanding altered health states and their therapeutic interventions.
3 credits
(Co-requisites: PHA 501, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507)

PHA 503 – History and Physical I:
This is the first of two sequential courses designed to provide students with the fundamental grounding and cognitive knowledge to prepare them for their clinical role in patient-centered care. The course will serve as an introduction to physical examination techniques, patient counseling, documentation, and communication skills used to conduct age-appropriate, culturally sensitive histories. The course will progress to acquiring the skills, knowledge, and sensitivity needed to communicate and intervene effectively in diverse patient encounters. This is a combined lecture and lab course using teaching methods to include small group demonstrations and practice sessions. This course will instruct the students on the normal history and physical exam and prepare them for the problem-focused techniques they will learn in later clinical medicine courses. Students will also be involved in active learning with simulation lab experiences. At the completion of this course, students will have obtained the necessary skills to elicit a comprehensive or directed history, perform a complete or directed physical exam, and develop a comprehensive oral and written description of the entire patient encounter.
3 credits
(Co-requisites: PHA 501, 502, 504, 505, 506, 507)
PHA 504 - Pharmacology I:
This is the first of two courses designed to provide a solid foundation in pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, and the physiology associated with drug action and interaction. Drugs will be discussed by class with attention given to specific drugs, indications, contraindications, dosage, mechanism of action, side effects, similarities, and differences. Emphasis will be placed on the more common drugs in treatment of common diseases including ophthalmologic diseases, disorders of the ears, nose and throat, dermatologic disorders, infectious diseases to include antibiotics and antivirals, and respiratory, cardiovascular, hematologic, and oncologic diseases. Additionally, students will learn about prescribing medications across the life span, including dosing and dose considerations for pediatrics, geriatrics, and patients with chronic disease. Learning to prescribe will include instruction on reducing error, mandatory reporting, prescription databases and facilitating adherence to a treatment plan. Lastly, students will learn the impact of pharmacology on preventive medicine with instruction on travel medicine and safety, and the legal, political, social and preventive implications of vaccinations.
3 credits
(Co-requisites: PHA 501, 502, 503, 505, 506, 507)

PHA 505 - PA History:
This course will give the new PA student the history, roots and models of the Physician Assistant profession in medicine and look at the expected future role of the PA in medicine both in the United States and globally. Students will then explore the physician-PA relationship and the role of the PA within the medical team today. Professionalism, successful student behaviors, and stress management will also be addressed. Students will also be introduced to the state and national professional organizations and the resources they offer and learn about the certification and continuing medical education process. Students will also receive instruction on intellectual honesty and professionalism. Public health, epidemiology, associated disparities and the importance of preventive medicine are all addressed in this course.
1 credit
(Co-requisites: PHA 501, 502, 503, 504, 506, 507)

PHA 506 - Genetics:
This one-credit course will provide PA students with a review of the structure & function of the human genome, genes, chromosomes, DNA, inheritance patterns, and genes associated with human disease. Genetics of common complex disorders and pharmacogenetics will also be covered. Additionally, student will explore social, legal and ethical considerations of genetics. Fundamentals of Biochemistry are also explored.
1 credit
(Co-requisites: PHA 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 507)

PHA 507 - Psychosocial Medicine:
This 2-credit course will examine the factors that influence a patient’s development and identify factors that aid in integrating psychosocial and behavioral perspectives into the practice of medicine. PA students will explore aspects of their own personalities and biases and evaluate how these aspects may affect interaction with their patients. Students will develop sensitivity for working with culturally diverse patient populations and outline health care disparities among minority groups. Students will also learn the psychosocial factors of illness and aging and the importance of end-of-life care. Students will learn to elicit medical information with sensitivity, accuracy and in challenging
situations. Students will also examine human sexuality, gender identity and associated medical issues. Students will also learn risk factors for sexual assault and domestic violence.

2 credits
(Co-requisites: PHA 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506)

Year 1 – SPRING

PHA 521 - Pathophysiology:
This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the pathophysiology of the various organ systems of the human body. An understanding of the pathophysiology of disease and disease states is necessary to apply basic science knowledge to a clinical situation. This course will concentrate on the basic pathophysiologic understanding of disease and its clinical manifestations and will not emphasize areas of diagnosis or treatment.

3 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)

PHA 522 – History and Physical II and Clinical Skills:
This is the second of two sequential courses and is designed to move the student from the normal history and physical exam to a problem-focused history and physical exam in concert with abnormal findings and pathologies found in various organ systems. In addition, students will learn advanced skills required in clinical practice. This course incorporates knowledge from the History and Physical I course, and concurrent first semester courses, including Clinical Medicine I and Diagnostics I. Building on this, the goals of this course are to have students gain the necessary skills to develop a problem-oriented, clinical approach to the evaluation, diagnosis and management of common clinical conditions. Students will also be involved in active learning with simulation lab experiences. Students will review the indications, contraindications, procedural steps, potential complications and post-procedural care of the outlined clinical skills. Students will actively participate in skills sessions to learn the clinical skills.

3 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 521, 523, 524, 525, 526)

PHA 523 - Clinical Medicine I:
This 4-credit course is the first of two designed to educate the student with diseases encountered in primary care medicine. The course will cover the etiology, epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical findings, diagnostic studies and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment/management plans for each disease. The topics covered include: Infectious Disease, Pulmonary, Cardiovascular, Hematological, Dermatological, and EENT diseases and disorders. Additionally, students will be expected to integrate knowledge from prior courses within each unit. Instruction includes clinical applications and considerations relating to geriatric patients. The course will be lecture format, along with a supervised clinical long-term care experience that links the didactic phase with clinical phase. Knowledge from prior course work will be applied in the form of clinical reasoning conferences (CRC). During these sessions, small groups will work through a common patient presentation by creating a differential diagnosis and utilizing teamwork to evaluate each case. Students will also be involved in active learning with simulation lab experiences. Patient education and patient counseling are integrated with smoking cessation, infectious disease safety, cardiovascular risk-factors, and through the discussion of both prevention/screening and management plans of each applicable disease.
PHA 524 - Pharmacology II:
This is the second of two courses designed to provide a solid foundation in pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, and the physiology associated with drug action and interaction. Drugs will be discussed by class with attention given to specific drugs, indications, contraindications, dosage, mechanism of action, side effects, similarities, and differences. Each unit will provide instruction on effective communication with patients with regards to patient education and patient safety. Emphasis will be placed on the more common drugs in treatment of common diseases including gastrointestinal, genitourinary, endocrine, neurological, musculoskeletal, psychiatric, and behavioral. Students will learn about current issues with opiates and associated management issues of opiates. This will include instruction on the history of the opioid epidemic, underlying addiction pathophysiology, alternative pain management methods for acute and chronic pain, interprofessional management of patients with substance abuse disorder, Medication Assisted Therapy, and barriers to care including socioeconomic factors and regulation of controlled substances.

PHA 525 - Diagnostics I:
This 2-credit course is the first of two courses providing students with insight into the use of laboratory and radiographic studies that aid clinicians in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of both acute and chronic diseases across the life span. Diagnostic studies utilized in urgent and emergent clinical scenarios are discussed, and students will learn the appropriate preventive medicine settings that diagnostic testing might assist in. Students will be instructed in the selection, indication, and interpretation of laboratory tests and radiographic studies. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of provider-patient communication when discussing the risks and benefits of diagnostic testing, as well as discussing the medical decision making and the results with the patient. Students will also be provided the corresponding patient safety information, when applicable.

PHA 526 - Introduction to Research/Evidence Based Medicine:
This course is the first of two required courses in the Physician Assistant research sequence. The course provides an introduction to the research process and its relationship to evidence-based practice. Students will obtain a basic understanding of theory-based research, methodological and ethical considerations in the design of research, and ways of evaluating evidence for practice. Additionally, students will be introduced to concepts of epidemiology.

Year 1 - SUMMER
**PHA 541 – Clinical Medicine II:**
This 4-credit course is the second of two designed to educate the student with diseases encountered in primary care medicine and other settings. The course will cover the etiology, epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical findings, diagnostic studies and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment/management plans for each disease. The topics covered include: Gastrointestinal, Genitourinary, Endocrine, Neurological, Musculoskeletal, and Psychiatric/Behavioral diseases and disorders. Additionally, students will be expected to integrate knowledge from prior courses within each unit. Knowledge from prior course work will be applied in the form of clinical reasoning conferences (CRC). During these sessions, small groups will work through a common patient presentation by creating a differential diagnosis and utilizing teamwork to evaluate each case. Students will also be involved in active learning with simulation lab experiences. Patient education and patient counseling are integrated with discussions related to nutrition and health, diabetes prevention and management, colon cancer, alcohol abuse, injury prevention, rehabilitation, mental health awareness, and through the discussion of both prevention/screening and management plans of each applicable disease.

4 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 542 - Diagnostics II:**
This 2-credit course is the second of two courses designed to provide the student with knowledge of laboratory testing as an adjunct to the proper diagnosis, treatment and management of both acute and chronic disease processes across the life span. Diagnostic studies utilized in urgent and emergent clinical scenarios are discussed, and students will learn the appropriate preventive medicine settings that diagnostic testing might assist with. The course will use slides, specimens, and clinical case studies to encourage critical thinking with corresponding proper decision making. Students will be instructed in the indication, selection, and interpretation of laboratory tests and diagnostic radiology. Students will learn the importance of communicating with patients with regard to medical decision making and discussing results. Students will also be provided the corresponding patient safety information, when applicable.

2 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 541, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 543 - Research Methods, Design & Implementation:**
Building on the first research course and using experiences from clinical skills courses, students are required to design and implement a research project. Students will frame a research question, write a research proposal and prepare to implement a project. This activity will provide students with the ability to translate clinical problems into research protocols by incorporating published research and class learning with clinical cases.

3 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 541, 542, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 544 - Pediatrics:**
This course introduces students to the fundamentals of pediatric medicine to include newborns, infants, children and adolescents. Topics include normal growth and development, preventive care and anticipatory guidance, immunizations, common pediatric illnesses, other diseases limited to the pediatric population and special considerations for this population.

2 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 545 - Emergency Medicine:**
This course focuses on the specialty of emergency medicine including an understanding of pre-hospital care (EMS), the relationship between the ER and inpatient services and the ER as a primary care setting. Emphasis is placed on the skills required to work in the ER. BLS & ACLS accreditation will be required for successful completion of this course. Social and community aspects of emergency medicine is also reviewed, as well as considerations for pediatric and geriatric patients. Students will learn important communication skills between pre-hospital care, with attending physicians, ER staff, consultants and admitting teams. Focus will be placed on the appropriate gathering of relevant, focused information in order to appropriately screen for and manage urgent and emergent cases. Students will learn comprehensive encounter management from initial triage, intradepartmental management, referrals, admission and discharge. Students will participate in clinical reasoning conferences of potentially life-threatening scenarios in order to work through a differential diagnosis in a team-based manner. Students will also be involved in active learning with simulation lab experiences.
2 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 546, 547)

**PHA 546 - Surgery:**
This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the surgical specialty for patients across the life span. The management of acute surgical problems, critical illness, solid organ malignancies, and elective surgery procedures will be discussed as well as pre-op & post-op care of surgical patients. Laboratory sessions will teach technical skills such as universal precautions, sterile technique, suturing, and minor surgical procedures. Students will also be involved in active learning with simulation lab experiences.
2 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 547 - Women’s Health:**
This 2-credit course provides an introduction to women’s health issues across the life span including diagnosis, management, and treatment of commonly encountered medical issues in both gynecology and reproductive & obstetric health. Students will also be involved in active learning with simulation lab experiences.
2 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526)
(Co-Requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546)

**Year 2 - FALL**

**PHA 651 – Family Medicine Rotations I**
This course is the 1st in a series of two 5-week rotations in an outpatient setting at a family medicine office. The goal of this rotation is to educate the PA student in the diagnosis, management and treatment of both acute and chronic illness for the patient in the primary care setting. Experience is provided at the level of a primary care PA and will include becoming familiar with the primary care
provider’s role in overall patient health, prevention of disease and screenings, wellness, and coordination of care within the health care system.

5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 652 – Family Medicine Rotations II**
This course is the 2nd in a series of two 5-week in an outpatient setting at a family medicine office. The goal of this rotation is to educate the PA student in the diagnosis, management and treatment of both acute and chronic illness for the patient in the primary care setting. Experience is provided at the level of a primary care PA and will include becoming familiar with the primary care provider’s role in overall patient health, prevention of disease and screenings, wellness, and coordination of care within the health care system.

5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 653 - Internal Medicine Rotation:**
This five-week rotation provides the PA student with the practical experience necessary to interpret and integrate information obtained through the comprehensive history and physical examination; to formulate diagnoses; to develop effective treatment plans; and to provide patient management throughout the hospital course. In addition, the students will learn the indications, limitations and methodology of in-patient diagnostic procedures and therapeutic regimes common to internal medicine. Students are expected to see both adults and geriatric adults in this rotation.

5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 601 - Professional Practice Issues I:**
The first of a series of three professional practice courses will introduce the PA student to the health care system, the involved documentation and the importance of leadership in the medical field. This course will teach students about electronic medical records, including tips and tribulations of electronic health records and the importance of patient safety and privacy as it pertains to electronic medical record keeping. Students will also learn billing, coding and reimbursement. Students will be introduced the US Health care System and Health Policy. This course contains instruction on the importance of leadership in medicine and PA advocacy and the important considerations of patient disposition, including patient education, safety, and suggestions of preventive medicine.

1 credit
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**Year 2 – SPRING**

**PHA 655 - Women’s Health Rotation:**
This five-week rotation provides the PA student with practical clinical experience in evaluation and management of normal and abnormal conditions in women’s health. In addition, students will learn to provide pre-natal and postpartum care, gynecologic care family planning, health education and counseling.

5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)
PHA 656 - Behavioral/Mental Health Rotation:
This five-week rotation provides the PA student with experience in a behavioral health facility (inpatient and/or outpatient). The student will also be provided with practical clinical experience in identification, evaluation, management and referral of patients presenting with common and/or emergent psychiatric conditions. Students learn to recognize and treat acute and chronic health disorders, affective and cognitive disorders.
5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

PHA 657 - Surgery Rotation:
This five-week rotation provides the PA student with practical clinical experience in data gathering, evaluation and management of general surgical problems encountered in the hospital. Students participate in the management of surgical patients during the pre-operative phase, assist during surgery and provide post-operative care, including post-operative screening for complications.
5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

PHA 602 - Issues in Geriatrics I:
The Issues in Geriatrics I course is the first of two sequential courses, and will provide the student with a broad overview of the principles of geriatric medicine from the perspective of the primary care practitioner. Major geriatric syndromes commonly encountered in clinical practice will be introduced, providing the student with practical knowledge regarding the care of geriatric patients. Students will review the physiologic changes of aging and the considerations of a geriatric patient encounter. Additionally, the student will learn how to screen for elder abuse and quality of life concerns.
1 credit
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

PHA 603 - Professional Practice Issues II:
This is the second of three courses and will address the legal aspect of medical care. These courses will review HIPAA, HITECH, EMTALA, informed consent, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act. Students will also explore governance & guidelines for licensure/credentialing. Malpractice, including common causes and risk mitigation, will be discussed. The concepts of end-of-life care and communication with the patient and family are reviewed in the context of a patient’s Power of Attorney, advance directives, and patient rights and responsibilities. Health policy and the political process that directly relates to these laws is also covered, as are the barriers that are potentially generated from this process.
1 credit
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

Year 2 – SUMMER

PHA 658 - Emergency Medicine Rotation
This five-week rotation provides the Physician Assistant student with practical clinical experience by working in an Emergency Department setting. This enables the student to develop focused and systematic approach to the diagnosis and treatment of common medical and surgical emergencies. This rotation also teaches the student about the indications, limitations and methodology of emergency room diagnostic procedures and therapeutic regimens. In addition, this rotation provides students with the opportunity to formulate organized and complete emergency room records, problem lists and...
management plans. Recognizing the acuity level with appropriate triaging of presenting patients and utilization of socioeconomic and patient safety considerations when determining patient disposition of admission or discharge is paramount for the student to meet the goals of this course.

5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 654 - Pediatrics Rotation:**
This five-week rotation provides the PA student with clinical experience in diagnosis, evaluation and management of pediatric patients. Emphasis is placed on the recognition of normal as well as abnormal findings, diagnosis and management of common acute and chronic childhood illnesses, assessment of developmental milestones, immunizations and well-child care from birth through adolescence. Students should also focus on communication with parents, particularly with anticipatory guidance and communicating the management plan.

5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 660 - Elective Rotation:**
This five-week rotation provides the PA student with practical clinical experience by working in a medical setting of their choice. This enables the student to develop focused and systematic approach to the diagnosis and treatment of common medical issues in that specialty. In addition, this rotation provides students with the opportunity to formulate organized and complete medical records, problem lists and management plans. Each student will present an interesting case that they were involved in evaluating and managing and will complete a research project during their elective rotation.

5 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 605 - Issues in Geriatrics II:**
The Issues in Geriatrics II course is the second of two sequential courses and will provide the student with a broad overview of the principles of geriatric medicine from the perspective of the primary care practitioner. Major geriatric syndromes commonly encountered in clinical practice will be introduced, providing the student with practical knowledge regarding the care of geriatric patients. This course has been designed to promote interprofessional education and practice. PA students will be expected to work with students from other health-related disciplines, including but not limited to physical therapy, occupational therapy, health and wellness, and pharmacology. Students will review the concerns of polypharmacy and dose adjustment and other geriatric safety concerns and living environments.

1 credit
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

**PHA 606 - Professional Practice Issues III:**
This is the third of three courses and will address the ethical considerations of a PA who practices with the knowledge, appreciation and application of ethical concepts that allow for sensitivity regarding the emotional, cultural, spiritual and socioeconomic aspects of patient care. The student will explore their own implicit bias and analyze how this could prevent quality care for all patients of varying backgrounds. Preparation for becoming a PA who is a competent, caring provider includes studying disparities in health care, the professional aspects of impaired providers, potential boundary issues of a care provider, and the PAs role in quality assurance. The course ends with a professional skills unit, in which the PA student will be actively involved in professional development through PANCE registration, preparing a professional Curriculum Vitae, interpersonal skills for interviewing, and introduction to the employment
contract.

1 credit
(Pre-requisites: PHA 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547)

PHC 604 - Capstone:
This 2-credit course encompasses three integrative elements. The first element outlines study skills that aid the student in preparing for the PANCE Exam. The second element consists of a comprehensive written exam, OSCE, and demonstration of clinical skills. The third integrative element will provide the student with the opportunity to share their research projects with colleagues, faculty, and the University at large.

2 credits
(Pre-requisites: PHA 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661)

CLASSROOMS

All didactic courses are taught at the University of the Sciences classrooms and/or virtually. Clinical rotation location varies by assignment.

LIBRARIES & TEXTS

The J.W. England Library is located on the USciences campus, Woodland Avenue at South 43rd Street, Philadelphia, PA. The library holds many supplemental texts and periodicals, and library provides students with access to a wide spectrum of electronic information resources, online information retrieval systems, and the Internet. Copiers and printers are available on the premises. The service desk can provide information detailing library hours and circulation policies. For more information, visit: www.usciences.edu/library.

Orientation to the J.W. England Library will take place throughout the PA program curriculum. These orientations will not only encompass the physical holdings of the library, but will also include an overview of the electronic and online search capabilities. Various courses in the curriculum will require students to find references outside of required and supplemental texts.

Required texts will be available through the online USciences Book Store, electronically, and housed in program offices located on the USciences campus. Students may have access to those texts during normal office hours. Other supplemental texts will also be available in the program office. Please inquire of the program faculty to ensure the location(s) of a specific text as well as borrowing rules.

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDS

The program has a number of models, audio-visual aids, and computer software programs available to students. Holdings include breast exam models, prostate exam models, male and female Foley catheter models, IV and suture arms, anatomy, dermatology, medicine and pharmacology software, EKG software, and history and physical exam video access, in addition to a fully equipped simulation lab.
Program Policies
STUDENT RIGHTS

Basic Rights

Enrollment in the PA program provides the student with some basic rights.

The student has the right to competent, knowledgeable instructors who conduct themselves in a professional manner in their interactions with students in the scholastic setting. If a student is experiencing difficulty with an instructor, and cannot resolve it directly with the instructor, the student should contact the Program Director.

Classrooms should be able to provide the proper educational environment for student learning. Classrooms and other facilities should also have available current instructional materials and modern equipment that meets the technical training needs of the PA student.

Instructors must maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to, and compatible with, the learning environment. Students who disrupt that environment will be asked to leave the classroom or clinical area. If a student persists in disruptive behavior, disciplinary action may be initiated.

Rights to Privacy

Student records are protected from unauthorized access and release by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Students will be granted access to their own permanent student file after completion of a Student Request for File Access form, located at the end of this handbook. Students may inspect and review files in the PA program office during regular office hours. At no time may information be removed from a student’s permanent file. Students will not be allowed to photocopy or otherwise duplicate information found in their file. All evaluations and minutes of meetings regarding a student, such as Student Progress Committee meetings, become part of the student’s official program record, which is maintained by the Department of Physician Assistant Studies as required by ARC-PA. Students who wish to challenge the content of records may do so in one of two ways:

1. A letter may be placed in the student record indicating the student’s objections to a given entry.

2. A student may request a review regarding an entry with the Student Progress Committee.

Release of student records by the program to outside parties is granted only upon submission of a written Consent for Release of Confidential Information by the student.

Program faculty and the USciences PA Program employees, preceptors, and administrative staff who have direct involvement with the education of the student are provided access and may review student records without written consent of the student at the discretion of the Program Director.

ADVISING POLICY

Each student will be assigned to a faculty advisor. Advisors will conduct mandatory, once-per-semester
advising meetings via video conference or in person. At this time, progress in meeting the PA program objectives, both academic and behavioral, will be discussed. These sessions are an opportunity to assess strengths, identify areas for improvement, and to develop plans to capitalize on strengths and improve weaker areas.

The advising process is highly beneficial to the success of the student. Advisor meetings will also occur on an as-needed basis, which can be at the request of the student or the advisor. Other mandatory meetings may include disciplinary meetings, remediation meetings, and research project planning.

Prior to each once-per-semester advising meeting, the faculty advisor will collect data concerning the student’s performance. The student will be asked to complete the **Advising Self-Assessment Form** prior to the meeting. During the session, the faculty advisor will complete a **Professionalism Evaluation Form** and a **Student Advising Form**.

*The Professionalism Evaluation does not generate a grade that impacts a course or overall GPA, however, this evaluation will be longitudinally monitored in AEFIS, and could potentially limit a student’s progress towards achieving **proficiency** for the professionalism-related performance indicators. **Proficiency of all performance indicators is required for graduation.**

The following AEFIS Performance Indicators will be evaluated at the once-per-semester advising meeting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1a</td>
<td>Attendance &amp; Punctuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1c</td>
<td>Respect for Peers/Attentive Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1d</td>
<td>Respect for Topic &amp; Subject of Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1f</td>
<td>Maintains Professional Appearance and Hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1g</td>
<td>Professional Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1h</td>
<td>Respects Programmatic Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1i</td>
<td>Adheres to Institutional Policies &amp; Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1k</td>
<td>Conference (Classroom) Professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2c</td>
<td>Maintains Academic Integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2d</td>
<td>Following Directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBL18a</td>
<td>Accepting Constructive Criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBL18c</td>
<td>Taking Responsibility for One’s Own Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBL18d</td>
<td>Self-Assessment &amp; Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB19a</td>
<td>Ability to Work in a Team</td>
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**Advisor Responsibilities**

- Meet with the student at least once per semester in both the didactic and clinical phases of the program:
  - Invite the student in semester week 5 to schedule the once-per-semester advising meeting
- Assess student using **Professionalism Evaluation Form** and discuss this with the student
- Review the **Advising Self-Assessment Form** with the student
- Review progress towards completion of the program-level Student Learning Outcomes in AEFIS
- Discuss strengths and areas for improvement

- Meet with students who have failed any assessment and assist with tracking of any remediation required of the student by the Course Director, including documenting remediation on the **Remediation Form**
- Meet with students who are identified as “at-risk” after achieving below an 80% on an assessment
- Create and guide program-level remediation for the following: achieving proficiency of AEFIS performance indicators, post-PACKRAT review, Summative Examination remediation, Capstone Graduate Project
- Refer students to appropriate services, including but not limited to, the Student Health and Counseling Center, the Center for Academic Excellence, etc., as needed
- Advise student for the Capstone Research Project
- Suggest improvements in time management and study skills, as needed
- Meet with the student more often if problems arise, e.g. academic or professional difficulties
- Know the student’s grades, skills, and professional conduct
- Record once-per-semester meetings with **Student Advising Form** and file on SharePoint in student’s file
- Record all other meetings with the **Advising Note** and file on SharePoint in student’s file
- Follow-up with the student regarding progress of any proposed plans
- Report student progression to the Student Progress Committee at each semester’s end

**Student Responsibilities**

- Reply to invitation to the once-per-semester advising meeting before the end of week 5 with a proposed date and time of their advising meeting. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule the meeting. Meetings should be held before the end of week 6
- Discuss areas of strengths and areas for improvement with the faculty advisor
- Complete the **Advising Self-Assessment Form** prior to the start of the meeting
- Help plan a course of action to remediate deficiencies and capitalize on strengths
- Meet with faculty advisor on an as-needed basis when problems arise
- Make an honest effort to follow the plans devised from the session
- Follow up with the advisor if a specific action is required

A faculty advisor is in place to assist in facilitating problem-solving for the student and it is not to be expected that the advisor unilaterally solves problems for the student. Advising will provide direction to the student. Advisors are not to act as medical providers or counselors for the student. It is not permitted for any of the principal faculty, the program director, or the medical director to participate as health care providers for any student in the PA program. If a student has a medical problem, they should be seen in the USciences Student Health Center (SHAC) or see the outside provider of their choice. If a student has problems that require counseling, they need the help of a professional counselor and should visit the USciences Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) to mental health services.
ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students in the PA program must report to all scheduled program functions on time, dressed appropriately, with any necessary equipment, and prepared to participate fully. This applies to all classes, clinical labs, seminars, critical thinking sessions, small group activities/discussions, clinical experiences, exams, and any other activity required by the PA program. Students who are absent from any scheduled activities as mentioned above will be held responsible for the material they have missed. Any unexcused absence in excess of one day will be brought before the Student Progress Committee.

A student who is late for a class, arrives on time but is not dressed appropriately for the activity, does not have the equipment required to participate in the class, or otherwise is not prepared to participate, may be denied access to the class, lab, or other activity, and this will be counted as an unexcused absence. For all virtual synchronous and asynchronous events held remotely throughout the program, attendance will be filed in the course record using an exported attendance report. These reports provide who was present, the number of minutes the student was present, their order of arrival, and statistics related to viewership of asynchronous recorded lectures. The student must use their first and last name for their display name in the Zoom box for all synchronous virtual learning sessions, and have their camera on at all times, as attendance will be noted for all events.

Unexcused absences will impact professionalism evaluations and can lead to professional probation. Failing to submit the Absence Form will end in revocation of the make-up opportunity. Failing to submit the Absence Form for an unexcused absence is an additional professionalism area of concern and can lead to professional probation as well. A student is required to meet the requirements for all coursework regardless of the reason for absence. For example, a student in the clinical year cannot miss more than 2 days of any rotation and still be eligible to pass the rotation, even if the absences are excused. One (1) unexcused absence during a clinical rotation may result in course failure due to failing a professionalism performance indicator on the Preceptor Evaluation Form.

Missed Assessments

Students who miss an assessment due to an excused absence are eligible to take the examination as soon as possible. Students are not eligible to make up the assessment if the scheduling of the excused absence was under the control of the student. For example, if a student schedules a non-urgent appointment during a testing time. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and complete the Absence Form whenever absent, whether the student believes it is excused or unexcused. This form must be submitted as soon as possible upon learning of the absence. It must be filled out for each missed course, and must be emailed to Ms. Flowers and the Course Director(s).

An excused absence is granted only for one of the following reasons, or at the discretion of the program chair (acceptable written documentation should be provided):

- A personal illness requiring medical attention. This requires a signed medical note from a health care provider
- Illness of an immediate family member. This requires a signed medical note from a health care provider
- Death in the immediate family. This requires a signed medical note or obituary notice
Religious observance. (Any plan to observe a religious holiday must be disclosed during orientation)

The date and time of the make-up will be determined by the Course Director. The content and format of the make-up examination or assignment may differ from that of the original examination or assignment, and will be determined by the Course Director. If the student is not present for the scheduled make-up, they will receive a grade of zero for that examination or assignment. A second make-up opportunity will not be provided, and the student will be referred to the Student Progress Committee for review.

CLASSROOM & CAMPUS ETIQUETTE POLICY

In-person learning

- No talking once class starts
- No food in class
- No popping gum or other disruptive noise
- Phones must be used appropriately (Please see the *Electronic Devices and Social Media Policy* for more details)
- Emergencies
- Silent mode
- Interactive classroom use
- Laptops/tablets are for taking notes or other classroom-related use only
- These rules parallel professionalism and personal integrity. Professionalism is a competency that is measured throughout courses and during advising meetings. *As such, all PA students are expected to maintain the highest standard of professional behavior possible and to comply with the ethical standards and codes developed by the American Academy of PAs (included in the Student Handbook) and those listed in the University Student Handbook.*

- Dress Code
  
  **Classroom:**
  - Business casual
  - Students can wear sneakers and open-toed shoes
  
  **Clinical Skills Simulation Lab:**
  - Patient encounters- clinical year attire
  - Skills learning sessions- classroom attire or scrubs
  - Closed-toed shoes

**Virtual Learning Policy**

- Student must be on-camera for all learning activities
- Student must have mic muted unless talking
- All questions will be monitored in the chat box
- Students should remain seated and not walk around and cause distracting movement within their display screen
• Student should not have external programs running and should be prepared to actively engage in polling, breakout groups, links, self-assessment, quizzes, and in-class assignments without delay
• Student should be dressed as if they were in public
• Adequate lighting for appropriate interaction with classmates and instructors is mandatory

Identification

Students should clearly display their current USciences ID card while on campus. During clinical experiences students must clearly display their official name tag and program patch. Students will introduce themselves as PA students and legibly sign all documentation with their full signature followed by ‘PA-S’.

At no time should a student, either by virtue of his/her skills or knowledge attained while progressing through the program, misrepresent him or herself as being other than a PA student. While in the program, students may not use previously earned titles (i.e. RN, MD, DC, PhD, etc.) Failure to identify oneself appropriately or misrepresenting oneself will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Classroom Areas

Students of a professional PA program represent both the University and the profession. In this role, students will encounter a variety of patients and practitioners who come from diverse cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. In order to efficiently establish professional and trusting relationships and to decrease the potential for offense or discomfort to patients, a standard of professional grooming, hygiene, and clinical attire is required. A health care provider’s dress and appearance are essential in establishing a relationship of trust and confidence with patients. In some cases, this requires that individual personal attire preferences be secondary to the need for effective patient interaction. As a student and soon-to-be medical professional, patients’ needs come first, even at the expense of individual expression.

Every student must prominently display the student’s official University of the Sciences’ ID card at all times while on campus and display their official name tag while in attendance at all affiliated training locations. During the didactic year of PA education, clinical attire is expected during patient interviews, clinical laboratories, interprofessional activities, and when visiting facilities for further educational opportunities. Any student not dressed appropriately for clinical encounters will not be allowed to participate in clinical experiences, and will lose grade points appropriately.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The use of technology during lecture and lab is meant to enhance the learning environment. Any technology that is disruptive or promotes dishonesty is prohibited. Students may use laptops and tablets for note taking and other academic reasons during lecture and/or lab at the discretion of the professor.

The use of cellular phones for non-academic purposes such as texting, gaming, social media, and internet surfing are NOT permitted. All students must place communication devices on “silent” mode or turn their device off. Any student who does not comply will be asked to exit the lecture and/or lab and will not be permitted back until the next scheduled lecture/lab. Cell phones may be used for polling purposes during lectures.
All students will be required to maintain their OneCampus account while in the PA Studies Program. Emails from the University and the PA Studies Program will be sent to the USciences email addresses only. Personal email addresses - Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc. will be limited to students for personal use. **Students are required to check University email and D2L notifications at least once per day.**

Students should activate appropriate security settings with a password on their laptops, desktops, cell phones, tablets, and other devices to safeguard personal information and program information. If devices become lost or stolen, students should alert the program.

Taking pictures and/or recording of audio or video, including unauthorized recording of any educational activity is prohibited.

**Clinical Site Electronic Use**

During the Clinical Year, students are to use good judgement when using electronic devices at all clinical sites. Cell phones should not be used unless directed by a preceptor for academic or clinical reasons.

**Social Media**

The USciences PA Program recognizes that social media has many far-reaching benefits both socially as well as in the health care setting. With that being said, it is imperative that our students follow and abide by patient confidentiality guidelines and be HIPAA compliant in all of their social media activities. The PA student must follow these rules while enrolled in USciences PA Program:

- Students are not permitted to post material on social media that has information about a patient encounter, even if identifying information is omitted
- Students are not permitted to post material on social media that contains pictures of a medical facility where they are assigned
- Students are not permitted to post any derogatory or disparaging material on social media that involves another student, faculty, staff, University representatives, Institution/Practice representatives, health-care employees, patients, or preceptors
- Students are not allowed to follow or friend members of the PA program faculty or staff on social media during their time in the program
- Students are not allowed to share questions or answers to assignments, exams/quizzes via social media
- Students should monitor their own personal social media sites to ensure they are professional. Personal social media site should also have the privacy settings activated to safeguard personal information
- Appropriate professional boundaries should be utilized and students should be judicious when using social media
- Classroom and clinical commitments should be respected and students should not engage on social media in-class, during remote learning, or clinical time

Violation of this policy can impact the course grade (where applicable) and the ability of a student to achieve proficiency for professionalism. It will require a meeting with the Program Director who will refer the issue to the Student Progress Committee. In addition to University and program disciplinary action, violations may trigger legal ramifications.
Electronic Signatures

All signature documents related to faculty, staff, students, adjuncts, and guest lecturers will be completed with virtual/ESignatures. Submission of a document from an individual’s listed email address with an ESignature form attached will be legally binding. By returning a document with an ESignature on the signature line, the student acknowledges and agrees that the electronic signature, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate their agreement with and acceptance of this writing, and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of the Sciences policy regarding Academic Integrity is located in the Student Handbook:

“According to the USciences Student Handbook, Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: falsification of laboratory data, bringing unauthorized material to an examination seat, copying another student’s work on an examination, misrepresenting someone else’s work as one’s own (including borrowing or purchasing term papers), and plagiarism. Any questions or concerns regarding a student’s academic integrity will be reviewed using the Student Conduct Policy (p. 40–63).

At USciences, as in all institutions of higher learning, ideas are highly valued, and so is the individual who expresses those ideas. In both a legal and moral sense, words and ideas are the property of their authors. Plagiarism is the theft of that property. When you plagiarize, you are presenting someone else’s words and/or ideas as if they are your own. This situation applies to all printed material as well as works and ideas found through electronic sources.

Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. In either case, the penalty for plagiarism can be severe, including failure in the course and/or expulsion from the institution. While the various disciplines differ in the specific formats that they use to cite sources, they share a commitment to academic integrity and to the requirement that students use source material correctly. If you have questions about avoiding plagiarism in an assignment for a specific course, ask your professor. You can get assistance with correct documentation at the Writing Center.”

For more detailed information, please refer to the most current USciences Student Handbook.

Behavioral Standards

During all phases of training, students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Appropriate behavior includes attributes such as:

- Ability to work effectively with peers and other members of the health care team
- Personal, academic and professional honesty and integrity
- Concern for privacy of the patient (all students are required to complete the HIPAA online training program and adhere to all of the standards while performing any aspect of PA training)
  - Students will complete online HIPAA training during both the Didactic and Clinical orientations
While in the clinical phase of the program, students may not assume the responsibilities or take the place of qualified staff. However, demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to undertake certain defined activities with appropriate supervision and direction. If a student feels he/she is being placed in a position of responsibility outside the role of a PA student, he/she must contact the Director of Clinical Education immediately.

All of the following offenses are serious violations of conduct for a PA student and may result in swift disciplinary action, as well as referral to the University’s Student Conduct Process (please see the USciences handbook for further information, and/or possible dismissal from the program). This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

- Cheating or plagiarism
  - Using crib notes and/or online resources during an exam
  - Copying from another student’s exam
  - Obtaining a copy of the exam prior to taking the exam
  - Obtaining a copy of the previous year’s exam
  - Submitting the same product as an assignment in two classes
  - Substituting another student to take exams, or substituting for another student in an exam
  - Purchasing take-home exams from others
  - Purchasing a research paper, project or other program assignments
  - Drawing formulas, sentences, graphs and other information on desks, walls, etc.
  - Copying from texts or online resources
  - Submitting another person’s work as one’s own
- Lying to program faculty/staff or clinical preceptors
- Forgery, altering or misuse of program and/or medical documents, or knowingly furnishing false information
- Misrepresentation of oneself as a graduate of the program, or in a capacity other than that of a PA student
- Obstruction or disruption of the program’s educational process, or other University of the Sciences functions, while on or off the University or clinical site property
- Physical or verbal abuse or the threat of physical violence against anyone
- Entry into an unauthorized area of the program, University, or clinical site
- Theft, malicious, or non-accidental damage to program, University, or clinical site property
- Possession of explosives, dangerous chemicals, or deadly weapons on University, hospital or clinical site property
- Engaging in lewd, indecent, or obscene behavior on University, hospital or clinical site property
- Use, possession, sale or distribution to others of controlled or unlawful substances on University, hospital or clinical site property
- Soliciting or assisting another person to perform any act which could subject the student to discipline, as cited in this section
- Proven deficiencies in patient care or being a danger to patients

Students who have been charged or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony must notify the program...
immediately. It is the responsibility of the program to provide this documentation to each site that the student is assigned. Some sites may refuse to take a student who has been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, which may delay the clinical phase in order to find a site that will accept the student. It is also the responsibility of the student to determine individual licensing/credentialing concerns that might occur post-graduation.

Please see the Examination Integrity Policy for more information related to academic integrity.

INTEGRITY POLICY FOR EXAMINATIONS AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

In-Person Exams

- Students are required to place all personal belongings in a designated area in the examination room prior to beginning the examination, including but not limited to backpacks, purses, hats, caps, hoodies, cell phones, watches, and any other wearable technology

- Water bottles cannot have labels

- Students will fill rows of seats for the exams as directed upon entry into the classroom

- On day of exam, the student must have an electronic device that is compatible with ExamSoft and the lockdown browser

- The student will be in the room 10 minutes prior to the start of the exam with the exam already downloaded, and all devices charged and ready to go

- Students who arrive late will not be permitted to have additional time in which to complete the examination

- Students will receive one piece of scrap-paper from proctor. Students will write their full name on this paper and submit upon leaving the room

- Unless authorized by the Course Director prior to the examination, students are not permitted to talk for any reason during an examination

- Students are not permitted to approach the proctor with questions during the examination

- Unless authorized by the Course Director prior to the examination, students are not permitted to use electronic devices during an examination

- No food is permitted in the examination room

- Students must include their names, ID number, and other required information on all examination materials, if applicable

- Students are not permitted to leave the examination at any time, with the exception of an emergency or illness as determined by the proctor, in which case an escort may be required, and additional time will
not be permitted

- Students who complete the examination early may leave the examination room
- Students are required to vacate the immediate testing area and refrain from discussing exam material until after the conclusion of the exam
- Students may take a 5-minute break during 2-hour or longer exams in which the components are submitted separately (For example, and End of Rotation Exam is 2 hours long and is divided into two sections. After submission of the first section, the student may leave the room before starting section 2)
- Students are not permitted to write, photograph, record, or replicate examination material in any form
- Students are not permitted to access or review prior examination questions provided by others
- Students are prohibited from removing examinations and answer sheets from the examination room

(This prohibition against possession and copying of examinations and answer sheets applies to current and previous examinations, and students who violate this will be subject to disciplinary action)

- All examination failures in both the didactic and clinical years require meeting with student’s advisor. This is the only scenario in which an examination review is conducted

(During didactic courses, the examination can be reviewed in the presence of the advisor, for clinical rotations, students can access their strengths and weakness report only)

Virtually Proctored Exams

Remote Learning and Test Taking on ExamSoft:

When attending virtual sessions, including examinations, students must keep their microphones on mute to avoid distracting background noise. All students must display their full first and last name for security and attendance purposes.

Students will take assessments on ExamSoft software. When taking exams, students must adhere to the University of the Sciences and the PA program’s academic honesty standards. Any acts of dishonest conduct will result in a failing grade. Zoom will be used during exams on students’ cell phones to ensure exam integrity. In addition to Zoom on camera phones, ExamSoft will contain advanced security software that the student must utilize. A Zoom room will be monitored by at least 1 faculty proctor. The ExamSoft software creates a video recording, audio recording, and record of screen activity of your exam session which gets sent to your proctor. A comprehensive report of student activity is generated and sent to the proctor. ExamID will use a two-step authentication to ensure the identity of the test taker. More information on the ExamSoft Exam Monitoring can be found here. It is imperative for your future success that the student maintain exam integrity.

Proof of cheating is not required for disciplinary action to occur. Automatic failure and disciplinary action, including immediate referral to the Student Progress Committee, will occur secondary to any
deviation from the policy listed below, with or without proof of dishonest behavior.

**Test Environment must maintain an in-class environment as follows:**

- Must recreate an in-person examination environment
- Must be seated on a chair at a clean desk or table
- Must maintain room lighting bright enough as to not hinder identification of the student or visibility of student actions. (The source of light should not be behind the test taker)
- No other computer monitors, screens or tablets should be on during the exam with the exception of the secondary device for Zoom
- Once the examination begins, the secondary device CANNOT be approached  
  *(This device must be at least 2 feet away from the test-taker, must be parallel with the edge of the table, and must be angled to show a side profile of the student’s face, shoulder, arms, hands, primary device, and table top)*
  *(The student is only allowed to approach the secondary device to contact the proctor in case of an emergency or technical problem, via Zoom chat)*
- In the unlikely event that the student’s computer malfunctions during an exam, which prevents the completion of the exam, the student will be expected to present to campus to take an alternative version of the exam
- No watches of any kind are allowed to be worn during the testing period
- No food or drink containers are allowed in the testing area
- All devices must be silenced
- No writing should be visible on the desk or walls
- Under no circumstances should students exit the remote proctoring area or software during the exam  
  *(Do not leave the room during the testing period at any time, do not take the computer into another room to finish testing, and do not leave the view of the cameras at any time)*
- No test items should be copied, saved or shared during or following the exam
- Screenshots of test information are prohibited
- Dress as if in a public setting
- No use of headsets, ear plugs, earbuds, or similar audio devices are permitted
- The student’s face and ears must be visible at all times  
  *(Clothing that obstructs the view of the face and ears — such as hoods, hats, headbands, etc. — are not permitted)*
- Student must keep their gaze centered on the screen  
  *(Frequently glancing away from the screen is considered cheating)*
**Students are responsible for:**

- Compliance with the above-mentioned environmental policies
- Fully charged devices
  
  *(A primary device for exam taking and secondary device for Zoom, both in compliance with the technology requirements listed below)*
- Self-testing the functionality of the remote proctored system a minimum of one week prior to all remote proctored examinations
  
  *(Students are responsible for checking the remote virtual site requirements of all remote proctoring services before test day)*
- Preparation of the exam environment as discussed above
- Restarting of their computer before logging into the proctored test environment
- Closing all other programs/windows/applications prior to logging into the proctored test environment and must remain closed until the exam is completed
- Compliance with random security checks may be conducted at any point during the exam

**PA Program Technology Requirements:**

The laptop that you purchase for use during the PA program must meet the minimum requirements for the following:

**ToITech Anatomy Software:**

http://www.toltech.net/customer-support/anatomy-software/

**ExamSoft/Examplify programming, including the additional requirements for ExamID and ExamMonitor:**

Device specific information can be found here:


Camera phone with video and Zoom application capabilities

**Open-Note Assessments**

Throughout the program, students will be expected to compete synchronous and asynchronous assessments, sometimes with the assistance of resource materials. All academic work submitted is expected to be the result of the student’s sole effort. When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Self-plagiarism is
also considered plagiarism, as reproduction of previously submitted assignments and work to replace new submissions is considered plagiarism. Submitted writing must follow AMA citations to avoid incidental plagiarism, which is still considered plagiarism. Students may be expected to submit written work through Turnitin plagiarism software, and when applicable, will be prompted to do so through the assignment submission section of D2L.

**EVALUATION OF STUDENTS**

Students are evaluated by various methods to ensure that they meet the student learning objectives and PA Competencies by the end of the program. The following instruments and processes are used in this effort:

- Didactic Tests
- Comprehensive Physical Exams
- Objective Structured Clinical Evaluations (OSCE)
- Interactive Case Studies
- Observation by Faculty - in class, small groups, clinical experiences, and clinical rotations
- Performance of Clinical Procedures
- Clinical Experiences
- Faculty Advisory Reviews
- Evaluation of Medical Documentation
- Oral Patient Presentations
- Summative Examination
- Capstone Project
- Formative Assessments
- Summative Assessments
- Self-Assessments
- Professionalism Evaluations

**Examinations**

Students will be tested on the content of the course as described in the course syllabus. The purpose of the examination is to allow the student to demonstrate competency of the instructional objectives listed in each syllabus. The basis of an examination includes information presented in synchronous sessions, asynchronous sessions, and required readings/provided ancillary materials. Not all material is reviewed during synchronous or asynchronous sessions. Students are responsible for all assigned material. The formats of examinations are varied and may include multiple choice, short answers, essays, oral presentations, practicals, simulated patient encounters, and/or a combination of formats. A proctor or faculty member will administer each examination, give the instructions for taking the examination, and keep track of the time permitted for taking the examination.

**Assignments**

All assignments must be submitted on or before the due date and time, unless otherwise authorized by the Course Director. Please see the individual syllabus for more information regarding penalization for late submissions.
GRADING POLICY

All assessments, course grades, and GPAs are recorded to the hundredths decimal point (2 decimal points) Example: 69.77656 will be recorded as a 69.78 and a 3.456 GPA will be recorded as a 3.46. There is no rounding of grades involving whole numbers (ones, tens, and hundreds digits). Therefore, students will need to achieve a whole number grade which equals or surpasses the benchmark listed. For example, a 69.987, recorded as a 69.99 is a final grade of an “F”.

The Course Director will make all final decisions regarding student grades. Failure to comply with all aspects of the course goals, learning objectives, and other attributes described in the course syllabus may adversely affect the student’s grade.

A 90 and above  F 0-69.99  
B+ 87 -89.99  I Incomplete  
B  80 -76.99  
C+ 77-79.99  
C  70-76.99  

Academic Standards

Students are required to maintain a semester/cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) or higher to continue and/or graduate from the PA program.

Benchmarks

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<th>Rubrics</th>
<th>% Possible Grade Range for Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 (Expert)</td>
<td>97-100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Advanced Proficient)</td>
<td>90-96.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Proficient)</td>
<td>80-89.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Below Average)</td>
<td>70-79.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Needs Improvement)</td>
<td>0-69.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCALE FOR PRECEPTOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubrics</th>
<th>% Grade for Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 (Expert)</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Advanced Proficient)</td>
<td>95.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Proficient)</td>
<td>85.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Below Average)</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Needs Improvement)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SCALE FOR STUDENT ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Grade for Course</th>
<th>Letter Grade for Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 and above</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.00-89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.00-86.99</td>
<td>B</td>
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</table>
PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Professional behavior and attitudes are an essential and required part of interaction with patients, peers, supervisors, other health professionals, and the general public. All PA students are expected to maintain the highest standard of professional behavior possible and to comply with the ethical standards and codes developed by the American Academy of PAs (included in this handbook) and the University Student Handbook.

The PA program faculty will work with students to assist them in developing the appropriate skills and attitudes needed to maximize their professional performance. To this end, each student is required to meet with his/her faculty advisor on a periodic (a minimum of once a semester) basis to discuss this aspect of his/her professional development and may be required to meet with the Program Director as well. Inappropriate and/or unsatisfactory professional behavior may result in alteration of a student’s grade, referral to the Student Progress Committee and/or the University’s Student Conduct Process, or dismissal from the Program.

The types of professional behavior that a PA student is expected to demonstrate include but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Treats others with respect, dignity, and compassion
2. Maintains professional appearance and hygiene
3. Avoids all forms of academic/intellectual dishonesty and unethical behavior
4. Recognizes responsibility for identifying and reporting unprofessional behavior
5. Is on time for all scheduled classes, labs, and clinical activities including timely return from breaks
6. Uses appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication
7. Listens attentively during class and in communication with faculty, staff, clinical preceptors, and peers
8. Limiting the use of personal technology (laptops, tablets, phones, etc.) in class to the lecture material being presented
9. Submits assignments on time and in professional format
10. Accepts, applies, and offers constructive criticism
11. Recognizes and respects negotiated decisions
12. Maintains patient confidentiality, privacy
13. Understands and respects cultural norms
14. Assumes responsibility for choices made in all situations, especially those involving legal or ethical issues
15. Adheres to policies and procedures at institutions participating in student education
16. Takes personal responsibility for own learning; understands limits of knowledge and when to ask questions

he professional behaviors listed above will be reviewed periodically in advising sessions utilizing the Professional Performance Evaluation Form. At the end of the 2nd year of the PA program, your faculty advisor will complete a summative evaluation of professional performance. Any unsatisfactory ratings that have not been remedied may result in an appearance before the Student Progress Committee and/or the University’s Student Conduct Process. Outcomes of the committees might include a delay in graduation that in turn may delay a student’s ability to sit for the PANCE exam.

PA students are not required to procure their own clinical sites; however, the PA program will allow students to assist the PA program in identifying new clinical site(s) where the PA student is interested in participating in a rotation. These potential sites must undergo the same approval process as program-identified sites and be approved appropriate for use.

Participation

Every student is expected to complete all requirements of the course including actively engaging in group activities, question and answer sessions. Required readings are expected to be completed prior to lectures in order to facilitate learning.

REMEDIATION POLICY FOR ASSESSMENTS

Students who fail to demonstrate the requisite knowledge or skills on any assessment or AEFIS performance indicator will be required to remediate those deficiencies. Remediation is a process intended to correct a student’s academic deficiencies and may include such activities as assignments, examinations, and other assessments. A student who requires remediation will be contacted by the Course Director who will work closely with the student and their faculty advisor to develop a strategy to successfully remediate the failed item. Failure is defined by a grade below 70.00% (C), a “Fail” from a pass/fail evaluation, or failure to achieve “Proficiency” (3/5) on a performance indicator by the start of the final semester of the program.

Remediation of all Non-Examination Assessments within a Didactic Course:

A student who fails an assessment (grade below a 70.00%) must comply with the following:

1. Student will be contacted by the Course Director to discuss MANDATORY remediation
2. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
3. Student will demonstrate competency through reassessment
4. Student will remediate until demonstrating competency by achieving a passing grade on reassessment
5. Original grade will stand for course grade calculations

Remediation of Written Examinations in Didactic Courses:

A student who fails a written examination (grade below a 70.00%) must comply with the following:

1. Student will be contacted by the Course Director to discuss MANDATORY remediation
2. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
3. Student will demonstrate competency through reassessment by taking another version of the examination
4. Student will remediate until demonstrating competency by achieving a passing grade on reassessment
5. Original grade will stand for course grade calculations

Remediation of End of Rotation Examinations:

A student who fails an End of Rotation examination (grade below a 70.00%) will be given one attempt to remediate deficiencies, and must comply with the following:

1. Student will be contacted by the Course Director to discuss MANDATORY remediation
2. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
3. Student will demonstrate competency through reassessment by taking another version of the End of Rotation examination
4. If student successfully completes remediation, student can progress forward and will receive original grade
5. Failure of the remediation examination (score of <70.00%), results in automatic failed course and student must repeat entire rotation

Remediation of all Non-Examination Assessments within a Clinical Rotation Course:

A student who fails an assessment (grade below a 70.00%) will must comply with the following:

1. Student will be contacted by Course Director to discuss MANDATORY remediation
2. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
3. Student will demonstrate competency through reassessment
4. Student will remediate until demonstrating competency by achieving a passing grade on reassessment
5. Original grade will stand for course grade calculations

If a rotation needs to be repeated, student will be required to repeat the rotation the following clinical year, which will delay graduation.

Preceptor evaluations cannot be remediated. Proficiency (passing) is demonstrated by a 3/5 average mark on the preceptor evaluation, which is the equivalent of an 80. Students who fail the preceptor evaluation fail the course automatically and must repeat the course in its entirety. Students will also receive an automatic failure if any performance indicators related to professionalism are <3/5. In either
case, the student will be placed on probation and will be required to repeat the course in its entirety.

**REMEDICATION POLICY FOR COURSES**

**Failure of a Course during the Didactic Year**

In the event that a student fails a didactic course (grade of <70%), the student will be placed on academic probation and referred to the Student Progress Committee. If it is the Committee’s determination that the student has not met the course requirements, the following actions will take place:

1. Implementation of a remediation plan, which includes an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
2. The student will be required to take a comprehensive remediation examination in order to demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skills required to successfully complete the course

- This remediation must be completed, as determined by the Course Director, who will also design the format and content
- A student will be allowed one attempt of the designated course comprehensive exam
- If a student fails the designated comprehensive exam for the failed course, they will be required to repeat the course and will result in program deceleration
- At the time of a second course failure (Didactic or Clinical), the student will be dismissed from the program
- The student will receive a final grade of a “C” if the course is successfully remediated

**Failure of a Course during the Clinical Year**

In the event that a student fails a rotation (grade of <70%, preceptor evaluation <80%, failure to remediate all assignments, lack of proficiency of any professional standard, or a failed EOR and subsequent failed EOR remediation), the student will be placed on academic probation and referred to the Student Progress Committee. If it is the Committee’s determination that the student has not met the rotation requirements, the following actions will take place:

1. Implementation of a remediation plan which includes an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
2. The student will be required to repeat the rotation
   - This will delay graduation and sitting for the PANCE. Remediation of a failed rotation course will incur additional tuition/fees
3. The student will receive a final grade of a “C” if the course is successfully remediated
Note: Repeating a rotation may cause delay in graduation. In many states, this will have a negative impact on the student’s ability to obtain/accept employment. Depending on the state, it may also be required to be documented on the student’s records when applying for licensure.

A student can only be on probation one time during the course of the program, so a second failed course is grounds for dismissal from the program. This includes failure of a clinical rotation for any of the above stated reasons.

Achieving below a 70 on a course grade places the student on Academic Probation. A student can only be placed on probation one time during the course of the program. Therefore, a student is only afforded the opportunity to remediate one course throughout the duration of the program.

See below for a graphic depiction of this policy that may assist in understanding the important aspects.

**Didactic Course Remediation (Assessments)**

**Other Assessments**

Any grade below a 70% (C) on an assignment must be remediated

Student will be contacted by Course Director to discuss **MANDATORY** remediation

1. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
2. Student will demonstrate competencies through reassessment

Student will remediate until demonstrating competency by achieving a passing grade on reassessment, and will receive original grade

**Exams**

Any grade below a 70% (C) on practical, skills and OSCEs must be remediated

Student will be contacted by Course Director to discuss **MANDATORY** remediation

1. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
2. Student will demonstrate competencies through reassessment by taking another version of the exam

Any grade below a 70% (C) on a written examination must be remediated
**Clinical Rotation Remediation**

**Other Assessments**

- Any grade below a 70% (C) on an assignment must be remediated.
  - Student will be contacted by Course Director to discuss **MANDATORY** remediation.
  - 1. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
  - 2. Student will demonstrate competencies through reassessment.
  - Student will remediate until demonstrating competency by achieving a passing grade on reassessment, and will receive original grade.

**Exams**

- Any grade below a 70% (C) on an End of Rotation exam must be remediated. One attempt only.
  - Student will be contacted by Course Director to discuss **MANDATORY** remediation.
  - 1. Student will complete an assignment to satisfy knowledge deficiencies
  - 2. Student will demonstrate competencies through reassessment by taking one other version of the exam.
  - If student successfully completes remediation, student can progress forward and will receive original grade.
  - Failure of the remediation exam (score of <70%), automatic failed course grade and student must repeat entire rotation.

Preceptor evaluations cannot be remediated.

- Proficiency (passing) is demonstrated by a 3/5 average mark on the preceptor evaluation, which is the equivalent of an 80. Students who fail the preceptor evaluation fail the course automatically and must repeat the course in its entirety.

If a rotation needs to be repeated, student will be required to repeat the rotation the following clinical year, which will delay graduation.
PROBATION POLICY

Academic Probation

Any student whose overall average (GPA) falls below a 3.00 and/or receives one course grade below a 70% (C) will be notified that they will be placed on academic probation. The student will be required to appear before the Student Progress Committee within fifteen (15) business days of notification. The Student Progress Committee, with assistance from the Course Director and the student’s faculty advisor, will review the student’s case and create a contract with the student setting forth the terms of probation. This contract will need to be signed by the student and kept on file within the PA program. The contract will include remediation terms to allow the student to demonstrate competency in all required areas.

All didactic phase courses must be satisfactorily completed before the student is allowed to progress into the clinical phase.

- Students who fail to meet the terms of the contract of probation within the designated time frame will be dismissed from the program

- Students who do not achieve a grade of “C” or better in any repeat or remediation of a PHA course will be dismissed from the program

Students may only be placed on probation once during the entirety of the program. If it is required that a student be placed on probation for a second time in either the didactic or clinical phase of the PA program, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Behavioral or Professional Probation

PA program faculty and staff who believe that a student has behaved in an unacceptable manner shall report such conduct to the Program Director. When students are referred for behavioral problems, the Program Director will investigate and act accordingly in the best interest of the University of the Sciences PA Program. The Program Director will determine if the PA student is required to appear before the Student Progress Committee.

Students who fail to adhere to required Behavioral Standards and Performance Standards, or whose behavior is, in the opinion of the Program Director, disruptive or inappropriate for a medical professional, will be required to appear before the Student Progress Committee and/or the University Student Conduct Committee Process to obtain recommendations from one or both of those bodies.

Students placed on probation for behavioral or professional reasons that fail to meet the terms of the contract of probation within the designated time frame, will be dismissed from the program. If it is required that a student be placed on any form of probation after an initial probation in either the didactic or clinical phase of the program, he/she will be dismissed from the program.

Contract of Program Probation

This contract will set forth the terms and conditions of program probation. These terms may include,
but are not limited to, specific academic and behavioral requirements, remedial sessions, as well as any other items deemed necessary by the Student Progress Committee and/or the University Student Conduct to ensure program and University standards are met, as well ensuring the welfare of faculty, peers and, most importantly, patients. Terms may also include a psychological and/or medical evaluation and clearance to continue in the PA program. The student will be required to meet with their assigned faculty advisor/designee as deemed necessary. All contracts will be placed in the students file.

**Removal from Program Probation**

A student placed on program probation due to a cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 must acquire a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater by the end of the following semester and fulfill terms of the probation contract. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the program.

A student placed on program probation due to a PHA course grade of less than 70% (C) must complete the course requirements (which may require remediation or repeating the course) according to the terms of the contract and achieve a passing grade of 70% (C) or better. The highest grade the student can achieve will be 70% (C) after satisfying the conditions of their probation.

All students placed on program probation for academic and/or behavioral problems must fulfill ALL requirements of the contract of program probation within the designated time frame or face dismissal.

A student can only be on probation one time during the course of the program, so a second failed course is grounds for dismissal from the program. This includes failure of a clinical rotation for any of the above stated reasons.

See below for a graphic depiction of this policy that may assist in understanding the important aspects.
Clinical Year Probation

Instances that lead to Probation

1. Academic Probation
2. Referral to Student Progress Committee for terms of probation

Program Cumulative Overall GPA falls below a 3.0 at the end of a semester

Professionalism Probation

1. Course grade <70%
2. Failing mark on preceptor evaluation involving professionalism
3. Failing the EOR remediation attempt (EOR twice)
4. <70 on preceptor evaluation

Refer witnessed behavior to Program Director, Program Director investigates, if agrees refer to Student Progress Committee for probation determination & terms

Failure of a clinical rotation

1st time

1) Student put on Academic Probation
2) Meet with Director of Clinical Education
3) Student must repeat the rotation including all course requirements

Above 3.0 at end of next semester and fulfilled terms of probation- off probation

2nd

Did not raise GPA to 3.0 OR failed to meet other terms of probation- dismissed

The student will be dismissed from the program.
HEALTH CLEARANCE POLICY

The Student Health and Counseling Center is located in Whitecar Hall, Suite 1200 (215-596-8980). The Student Health Center is open weekdays during the academic year to provide assessment and treatment of minor illnesses and injuries.

All PA students are required to carry health insurance coverage through the University-sponsored plan or through an alternative plan (comparative in nature) while participating in the PA program. Additional needle-stick coverage will also be required. A copy of verification of health insurance coverage is to be submitted to the PA Office.

In order to ensure the safety of students, staff, clinical agency personnel, and patients, and to comply with clinical agency contract mandates, no student will be permitted to participate in PA courses, assignments or clinical rotations unless they have been medically cleared.

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS TO ASCERTAIN THAT THE APPROPRIATE HEALTH CLEARANCE IS OBTAINED.

Students must provide a Student Health Checklist prior to the start of the program and on a yearly basis thereafter (including an annual physical).

The following Immunizations or positive titers are required as recommended by the CDC’s guideline for health care professionals:

- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Varicella
- Hepatitis B
- Pertussis
- Polio
- Meningitis (as per University requirement) Tdap (Adacel or Boostrix are acceptable)
- Influenza (required on a yearly basis)
- Pneumonia (optional)
- Two Step PPD (documentation of two negative PPDs in a 21-day period)

Students without completed forms will not be permitted to participate in courses, assignments or clinical rotations. This delay may disrupt the student’s curriculum timeline and force them to sit out of the program’s didactic curriculum until the following year, or delay the completion of their clinical rotations.

If a health condition arises during the course of study that would in any way alter the student’s ability to perform in the didactic or clinical setting, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the PA Program Director immediately.

Refer to the University of the Sciences Student Handbook for policies on:
POLICIES FOR CURRICULAR SEQUENCE CHANGE & DISMISSAL

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

To request a short-term leave of absence, the student should first contact their college dean. The student may be asked to provide documentation to verify the circumstances. Upon approval of a short-term leave of absence, the college dean will notify the applicable chair, Program Director, course instructors, academic advisor, and the Division of Student Affairs. Upon return to the academic program, the student is responsible for working with the instructors to complete the course requirements as specified in the course syllabus.

The PA program’s Leave of Absence Policy is consistent with the policy as outlined in the University Student Handbook.

Approved leaves of absence will result in deceleration. Please see the Deceleration Policy for more details.

DECELERATION POLICY

Deceleration is the loss of a PA student from their entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the PA program. The University of the Sciences PA Program curriculum is designed to be delivered and completed on a full-time basis, and allows for deceleration.

Deceleration may occur for the following reasons:

- Deceleration for academic deficiency. In this instance, the student has achieved less than a 70 as a course grade and was not successful in fulfilling the terms of probation and/or the remediation process. In this instance, the student will join the following cohort if they wish to do so. All courses will need to be repeated within the sequencing of this cohort.
- Deceleration secondary to a University-approved leave of absence request. Depending on the terms of the request, a student may be able to take a leave of absence and join the following cohort at the beginning of the semester that the student exited during the year prior. If this occurs, it is suggested that the student audit all coursework that precedes this point within the next academic calendar year. At the time of official re-entry, the student must successfully complete a comprehensive examination which demonstrates competency in all preceding coursework to be eligible to restart. If required, the student will be provided one attempt to remediate an initial failure of the comprehensive examination to demonstrate competency.
Under no other circumstances will a student be allowed to decelerate.

**WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Students must advance sequentially within their cohort; therefore, individual course withdrawal is not allowed without automatically decelerating. Please see the Deceleration Policy for details regarding deceleration. All other course withdrawals effectively end matriculation in the program.

**POLICY ON DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Failure to meet conditions for removal from academic or behavioral/professional program probation or being placed on program probation more than once while enrolled in the program will result in dismissal from the PA program. Please see the previous sections for a more in-depth discussion. Dismissal is effective upon the receipt of the letter of notification from the Program Director. If a student is dismissed, their registration for courses will be voided and tuition for such courses shall be refunded, as per University policy.

The Program Director or designee will, as soon as possible, notify a student in writing, usually by email, as deemed appropriate by the Program Director, that they have been dismissed from the PA program. Extenuating circumstances related to program policies and the University Student Conduct Policy can result in immediate dismissal of a student under the discretion of the Program Director.

Students who have been dismissed and wish to be reinstated must petition the Student Progress Committee for readmission into the PA program. The petition must be in writing and delivered to the Program Director who will forward the request to the Student Progress Committee. The program must receive the petition within five (5) business days of the date of the dismissal notification.

A student may, at the sole discretion of the Program Director, be permitted to attend class pending a decision from the Student Progress Committee.

In order to be reinstated the student must establish, to the satisfaction of the Student Progress Committee, that his/her unsatisfactory performance: 1) is due to extraordinary and non-recurring circumstances AND 2) is not representative of the student’s academic ability and/or usual professional conduct.

The Program Director or designee will notify the student in writing of both successful and unsuccessful petitions. Additionally, a successful outcome may include specific conditions of program probation. Any conditions of program probation are final and may not be appealed to the Student Progress Committee.

A student who is reinstated but fails to satisfy the conditions of program probation will automatically be dismissed from the PA program without further review or appeal within the PA program.

**THE STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE**

The Student Progress Committee is a designated group of faculty, staff, and program designees whose intent is to maximize a student’s learning opportunities, as well as maintain PA program standards.
Maintenance of PA program standards is necessary to protect the integrity of the PA program, but also, more importantly, to safeguard the welfare of patients. Examples of outcomes of the Student Progress Committee are program probation, deceleration (alteration of the student’s curriculum plan) or dismissal.

The purpose of the Student Progress Committee is to ensure that each student is graduated from the University of the Sciences PA Program with adequate skills, knowledge, judgment, and appropriate behavioral attributes to assume the responsibilities of a PA. To perform its duties, the Student Progress Committee may request the cooperation, advice and judgment of faculty, students, administration, and/or the University Student Conduct Process.

The Student Progress Committee is convened by the chair (appointed faculty) of the committee to review a student’s academic, professional, or behavioral performance as it relates to their role as a PA student. Students may be invited to appear before the Student Progress Committee in order to discuss specific circumstances. The PA student will be invited to appear before the committee if they are placed on academic or behavioral probation. The Student Progress Committee may also invite a student to appear to discuss specific circumstances not directly related to probation.

Individual students may also request a review by the Student Progress Committee. To request this review, a student must submit a written request to the Program Director outlining the reasons a review is warranted. The Student Progress Committee will then attempt to meet within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the written request.

The Student Progress Committee will be chaired by either the Director of Academic Education or the Director of Clinical Education dependent upon which phase the student is currently in. Additional members may consist of the following: Program Director (non-voting member), Associate Program Director, Medical Director, Director of Academic Education, Director of Clinical Education, other faculty and staff members, a non-PA student advocate, and University representative. The membership of the Student Progress Committee may vary according to the availability and applicability to certain specific circumstances.

Faculty advisors, attorneys, representatives, friends, classmates and family members of the student are not permitted to participate in this process.

The Student Progress Committee, exclusive of the Program Director, will deliberate after reviewing any and all evidence presented. The Student Progress Committee will then make a formal recommendation to the Program Director which may include a contract of probation or dismissal.

It is the student’s responsibility to attend any meetings, workshops, tutoring, etc., associated with the development and implementation of this plan. The contract includes utilizing resources in the Division of Student Affairs such as: Academic Advising, Tutoring, Counseling, Career Counseling, the Writing Center, etc.

The Program Director, in consultation with the Student Progress Committee, may modify the conditions of probation or dismissal as deemed appropriate to the circumstances. Upon receipt, the Program Director shall decide to accept or veto the Committee’s recommendation. The Program Director’s decision is final. The PA student has the right to file a formal grievance by contacting the Dean of Students. Please refer to the Student Grievance Policy below for details.
STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Prior to initiating the grievance process, the student should make every reasonable effort to resolve the complaint informally by discussing the situation with the person most directly involved. If an informal discussion between the student and the respondent does not resolve the issue, the student may initiate a grievance. This should be done within 45 days of the incident. To begin the process, the student should contact the Office of Student Conduct and Grievances. During this initial meeting, the Director of Student Conduct and Grievances or designee will outline the informal and formal grievance processes. After the initial meeting, the student should prepare a letter detailing the incident, and the letter must be delivered to the Office of Student Conduct and Grievances no more than 10 business days after the aforementioned initial meeting. More information regarding this policy can be found in the University’s Student Handbook.

STUDENT APPEALS POLICY

Student Conduct Appeals

Either party may request an appeal of a decision rendered by the Student Conduct Board by submitting a written request to the Director of Student Conduct and Grievances, subject to the procedures outlined below.

All appeals must be filed in writing to the Director of Student Conduct and Grievances within five business days of the notice of the hearing outcome, barring exigent circumstances. Any exceptions are made at the discretion of the Director of Student Conduct and Grievances and, when appropriate, the Title IX Coordinator. Please see the University Student Handbook for more details.

Grievance Hearing Appeals

A student or respondent may appeal any outcome from a grievance hearing within 10 business days after the written outcome is delivered to both parties. Please see the University Student Handbook for more details.

Course Grade Appeals

Disputes regarding course grades should be resolved, if possible, within the PA program. Students should seek assistance first from the Course Director and then, if not successful, the Program Director. For further information, please see the Student Grievance Policy found within the University of the Sciences Student Handbook and the subsequent Appeals Policy.

Further details regarding student and faculty grievances, and allegations of harassment, can be found in the University Student Handbook.
PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites for Clinical Rotations

Students must fulfill the following criteria prior to engaging in clinical rotations:

1. Successful completion of all didactic course work
2. Successful completion of clinical skills labs and demonstrated proficiency in the following procedures:
   - Nasogastric Tube
   - PEG Tube placement
   - Foley Catheter
   - Thumb Spica Splint
   - Volar Splint
   - Ulnar Gutter Splint
   - Finger Splint
   - Sugar-Tong Splint
   - Posterior Lower extremity
   - Upper Extremity Cast
   - Lower Extremity Cast
   - Suturing: simple interrupted, subcutaneous, running, mattress
   - Staple placement and removal
   - Suture removal
   - Injections: subcutaneous, intradermal, intramuscular
   - Joint injection
   - IV-line placement
   - ABG
   - Surgical scrubbing, gowning, and gloving
   - Sterile Technique
   - Ankle Brachial Index
   - Performing an EKG

3. Maintain a valid personal health insurance policy. Failure to maintain health insurance throughout the clinical year will result in removal from rotations until valid proof of insurance coverage is submitted
4. Successful completion of a criminal background check (and any other background checks required or requested by a particular clinical site or Institution), and drug testing if required
5. Completion of all required immunizations and testing (MMR, varicella, DTaP, record of hepatitis B vaccine and/or serum titer levels, PPD with or without chest x-ray, if indicated). Maintain yearly TB testing while on rotation. Students are responsible for maintaining their personal immunization record, and it is recommended that they carry a copy of this record to the assigned clinical site on the first day of each rotation. Failure to demonstrate an up-to-date immunization status upon request will result in removal from the rotation until valid proof of
current immunization status is presented. Immunizations are based on the Center for Disease Control guidelines for health professionals.

Maintain a functional mobile phone number and University of the Sciences email. As well, it is the students’ responsibility to make sure the PA program always has the most updated contact information to reach them throughout the entire clinical year.

**Requirements for Progression within the Didactic Phase.**

1. PHA courses must be passed with a minimum grade of 70% (C)
2. Remediation of any grade below a 70% (C) on a written, practical, or combination examination will be required. The contents will be determined by the Course Director(s)
3. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for progression within the program. See section regarding program probation
4. Demonstration of required skills necessary for clinical practice as determined by the program
5. Receiving a satisfactory rating review from Student Progress Committee by meeting all the academic and behavioral requirements at the conclusion of each semester
6. Compliance with policies of the University of the Sciences and the PA program
7. Compliance with the Behavioral Standards and Professional Performance Standards contained in this section, and Standards of Conduct for the PA student located in the General Information section of this Handbook
8. Satisfactory completion of BLS/ACLS

**Requirements for Progression within the Clinical Phase.**

In addition to the requirements for promotion within the didactic phase, a PA program student must complete the following requirements in order to complete the PA program:

1. Satisfactory remediation for a grade below 70% (C) on any examination
2. Preceptor evaluations must be passed (graded) with a minimum grade of 80%
3. Each PHA course/rotation must be passed with a minimum grade of 70% (C)
4. Demonstration of required skills necessary for clinical practice as determined by the program
5. Receiving a satisfactory review from Student Progress Committee by meeting all the academic and behavioral requirements at the conclusion of each semester
6. Compliance with policies of the University of the Sciences and the PA program
7. Compliance with the Behavioral Standards and Professional Performance Standards contained in this section, and Standards of Conduct for the PA student located in the General Information section of this Handbook

**Requirements for Graduation**

The PA program and the University will review all student records prior to graduation. Any outstanding financial balance must be reconciled with the University prior to graduation. Students must fulfill all PA department and University requirements before being awarded a diploma and to be eligible for the PANCE examination. Specific requirements include:

1. Satisfactory completion of all University of the Sciences PA courses
2. Satisfactory completion of all courses in the curriculum with a grade of 70% (C) or better
3. Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00
4. Satisfactory completion of all assignments
5. Satisfactory completion of a comprehensive summative written examination
6. Satisfactory completion of a comprehensive Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE)
7. Completion of the PA Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) examination, twice
8. Compliance with behavioral and professional performance standards
9. Successful completion of comprehensive clinical skills evaluation
10. Successful completion of Capstone Project
11. Achieve proficiency in all AEFIS performance indicators

**NCCPA Examination: PANCE (PA National Certification Examination)**

Only those students who graduate in good standing from a program approved by the Accreditation Review Committee for PAs (ARC-PA) may sit for the PANCE exam. Advanced registration is required and can be completed 3 months prior to graduation. Registration is completed online at [www.nccpa.net](http://www.nccpa.net). Once the completed application is received from a candidate, and confirmation of graduation is received from the PA program, a scheduling permit is created by the NCCPA and emailed directly to the candidate. The available testing dates for each candidate will begin seven days after the expected program completion date and end 180 days later. Please contact NCCPA at [www.nccpa.net](http://www.nccpa.net) for more detailed information.

Graduation from the USciences PA Program does not ensure that one can practice as a PA. Graduates must successfully pass the PANCE examination and meet state registration requirements in order to become licensed to practice as a PA.

**EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM**

The PA program is a dynamic entity. The program faculty are constantly engaged in activities that provide evaluation data on the program’s performance. Student input is a vital part of the evaluation process. Feedback from student evaluations can identify strengths and areas for improvement for the program, and may guide necessary changes in the curricula or clinical components. During the program, students are continuously evaluating many aspects of the program, including but not limited to: courses, lecturers, rotations, and textbooks.

*Methods of program evaluation that employ student’s input may include:*

- Didactic Course Evaluation
- Instructor Evaluations
- Program Director Forum*
- Admission Process Evaluation
- Student Self-Assessment
- Class Meetings with Faculty Representative

*Provide a scheduled forum for the director to present any program news to the class, and for the class as a whole, to address the director.*
Additional methods of program evaluation include but are not limited to:

- Assessment of student performance on NCCPA exam
- Assessment of student performance on PACKRAT exam
- Assessment of data collected in graduate/employer surveys
- Student input (student representatives/Program Director forum)
- Faculty advising sessions
- Discussion and observation by clinical preceptors
- Discussion and observation by program faculty
- Discussion of student concerns in weekly program meetings

*All program students are obligated to participate in ALL ongoing program evaluation efforts in a professional and appropriate manner.

III/Impaired Student

The stresses of a demanding program may cause the student to experience symptoms of physical and/or mental difficulties. The following mechanisms have been established to deal with the impaired student:

Mental Health and Wellness Statement

The University of the Sciences is committed to the mental health and wellbeing of its students. Diminished mental health due to academic stress or other personal issues such as relationships, family worries, loss, or personal crisis can cause barriers to learning. Symptoms may include significant anxiety, mood changes, excessive worry, alcohol/drug abuse, or problems with eating and/or sleeping. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, contact USciences Health and Counseling (SHAC) during business hours located on the first floor of Whitecar Hall or call 215-596-8536. SHAC is cost-free, confidential, and does not require appointments for counseling emergencies. Additional emotional support is available 24/7 and can be obtained by contacting the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-8255 or by texting “Go” to the Crisis Text Line 741-741. Please remember—getting help for yourself or your loved ones is smart and courageous. For more information, go to www.usciences.edu/dss

PROVIDER POLICY

At no point in time may principal faculty, the Program Director, or the medical director participate as health care providers for students in the program, except in an emergency situation. If a student has a medical problem, they should be seen in the USciences Student Health Center or see the outside provider of their choice. If a student has problems that require counseling, and need the help of a professional counselor, they should visit the USciences Counseling to mental health services (SHAC).

Counseling & Medical Services

University of the Sciences Student Health and Counseling Center (SHAC) operates Monday – Friday for medical services (215.596.8980) and counseling services (215.596.8536). For more information regarding the University’s health and counseling services, please see the University of the Sciences
Members of the program faculty will work closely with the Office of the Dean of Students to support students who may be experiencing a psychological or physical emergency.

**POLICY ON UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS & SAFETY**

**Education**

All students must be present for all training related to universal precautions and student safety prior to engaging in any related activities. Please see below for procedures and care after exposure, and information regarding financial responsibility of such events.

**Universal Precautions**

Students are responsible for following OSHA Guidelines for universal precautions at clinical rotation sites, including the use of protective gloves, eyewear, and clothing, the proper use and disposal of sharps, regular hand-washing/hand sanitation, and other precautionary measures. These guidelines will be presented in the PA Professional Issues didactic modules and pre-clinical training activities prior to starting clinical rotations.

Any documented allergies to latex products should be reported to the preceptor and the Director of Clinical Education. Each student is responsible to supply any latex-free products they may need, if they are not otherwise available at a given clinical site.

**Universal Precautions Guidelines:**

1. Avoid direct contact with: blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, and lesions
2. Avoid injuries from all “sharps”
3. Avoid direct contact with items, objects, and surfaces contaminated with blood, body fluids, secretions, and excretions
4. Dispose of all “sharps” promptly in special puncture-resistant containers
5. Dispose of all contaminated articles and materials in a safe manner, as prescribed by law

**In Practice, using Universal Precautions also requires:**

1. Wash hands frequently and thoroughly, especially if they become contaminated with blood, body fluids, secretions, and excretions
2. Depending on job duties and risk of exposure, use appropriate barriers, which may include: gloves, gowns, aprons, caps, shoe covers, leggings, masks, goggles, and face shields
3. Bag all specimens before transport to the laboratory

These barriers are to be used to protect:

- Skin, especially non-intact skin (where there are cuts, chapping, abrasions, or any other break in
the skin)
- Mucous membranes, especially eyes, nose and mouth

**NOTE:** These items of protective apparel, including gloves, are to be removed after each use and PROPERLY disposed of. Gloves, etc. are NOT to be worn from one patient or activity to another

**COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and Procedures for Activities in Lab Spaces**

For the protection of students, faculty, and staff, the following guidelines are required for safe participation in learning activities taking place in the Physician Assistant lab spaces on campus:

- Students must be prepared with required personal protective equipment (PPE) to include face mask, face shield/goggles). Students will not be permitted to participate in any on-campus activity without the required PPE.
- On arrival, students should form a line at the designated entrance to the IPEX building, while maintaining appropriate social distancing of 6 feet between each student. Students should plan on lining up no sooner than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled time. It is required that if students arrive in advance of this time frame, they should remain in their vehicle until their designated time. **If any student is found not following the protocol at any time, the student will be asked to leave and will not be able to make up the session. Graded components will result in automatic failures according to the absentee policy. No warnings will be given before students will be asked to leave the premises.**
- Students are to don their PPE prior to exiting their vehicle.
- A faculty member will be conducting temperature checks utilizing an infrared thermometer prior to students entering the building.
- Once temperature check is complete, students should proceed to designated lab/learning space in a staggered fashion, continuing to maintain social distancing of 6 feet. If students need to use the elevator, there should be no more than 2 students in elevator at a time, and they should stand in designated areas to maintain social distancing.
- Exam rooms/lab spaces will have been cleaned prior to the first students participating in sessions, with the cleaning documented on a checklist for each room.
- Student pairs should remain in their designated exam rooms, and are not to enter other exam rooms or other lab spaces unless instructed by faculty.
- Students will be responsible for cleaning their lab space on completion of their activity, utilizing the supplies provided and following the procedure on the posted checklist.
- Once cleaning of lab space has been completed, and student signs off on the sheet posted outside of each exam room, students will exit the IPEX via the directed route, in a staggered fashion, to maintain social distancing of 6 feet.
- Students are not to remove their PPE until they are near their vehicle.
- Students are not to congregate in the IPEX, outside the building or in the parking lot after lab activities.
- The student will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before entering the exam room and before exiting the exam room. (See CDC Guidelines for Handwashing below)
CDC Guidelines for Handwashing

https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

Washing your hands is easy, and it’s one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals.

Follow these five steps every time,

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them

Cleaning Checklist for Lab Spaces

- Utilizing the supplied sanitizing wipes, the following surfaces should be thoroughly wiped down and allowed to dry after each student learning activity or exam:
  - Exam table surface
  - Desk surface
  - Faucet handles
  - Blood pressure cuff, otoscope, ophthalmoscope
  - Stethoscope and other personal equipment
  - Light switch
  - Door handles

- Lab spaces will be cleaned prior to the start of a scheduled lab session/practical exam session
- Lab spaces will be cleaned after each lab session/practical exam
- Each surface requires a new wipe
- Wipes are to be disposed of in room trash receptacles immediately after use
- Sign off sheet posted outside of each exam room is to be completed after each cleaning indicating date, time an initials

Student Incident Reporting
1. Ultimately, the student is responsible for initiating care after exposure to possible bloodborne pathogens. Students may consult their private physician or the “Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Department” for guidance and assistance.

2. Students involved in a chemical/hazardous substance exposure should not go to Student Health (SHAC) as they are not equipped to handle these incidents and it could delay needed medical care.

3. While there is no guarantee or requirements for such, many of the clinical sites utilized by the University of the Sciences Physician Assistant Program can and will arrange for immediate medical care of students in the event of accidental injury or illness (costs incurred may be charged to the student’s personal health insurance policy). However, they are not obligated to take responsibility for subsequent costs involved in follow-up care, treatment, counseling, hospitalization, preventive care, etc.

4. If exposed (i.e. needle-stick injuries, splashing of body fluids on exposed mucous membranes, inhalation exposure, etc.), students should take the following steps:
   a. Using gloves, remove and dispose of all contaminated personal protective equipment (PPE). Wash the exposed area thoroughly with soap and running water. Use non-abrasive, antibacterial soap, if possible. If blood is splashed in the eyes or mucous membranes, flush the affected area with running water for at least 15 minutes.
   b. Many clinical facilities will initiate some aspect of post-exposure procedure(s) with a student. There is no mandatory requirement for them to do so, and any costs incurred following such a plan is the student’s responsibility. Students should ascertain costs (if any) in advance of accepting such services.
   c. Students may also contact their personal primary care provider or seek immediate care at an Emergency Room.

5. The Director of Clinical Education must also be notified within 24 hours via e-mail of any exposure/possible exposure (i.e. needle-stick injuries, splashing of body fluids on exposed mucous membranes, inhalation exposure, etc.).

6. All costs for treatment and follow-up are the student’s sole responsibility. All students are required to purchase needle stick insurance through the University.

7. In the event of an accident/injury, students must fill out the following forms:
   a. University of the Sciences “Environmental Health and Radiation Safety (EHRS)” Department, via this online Incident Report Form:
b. USciences PA Program Incident Reporting Form found in the appendix of this document, and by clicking here:

Incident Report

8. The PA program may recommend reporting the incident to the University’s Risk Management Department:

https://www.usciences.edu/administrative-offices/risk-management.html

Bloodborne Pathogens Training

In any situation involving possible exposure to blood or potentially infectious materials, students should always practice Universal Precautions and try to minimize exposure by wearing protective barrier devices (i.e. gloves, splash goggles, gowns, pocket mouth-to-mouth resuscitation masks, etc.). For more information on University of Science’s Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan, visit:


All students will need to complete online video training on Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure prior to starting clinical rotations, which can be accessed at the following site:

https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/bloodborne-pathogens-training-online/05447631.html

Students are required for pay for this training which is included in their mandatory student fees.

Public Safety

1. Students are required to review the University of the Sciences Public Safety Website which can be found here:


2. If a student encounters any issues with safety, they may contact the following:

a. Emergency Dispatch: 215-596-7000 or 911
b. Non-Emergent Dispatch: 215-895-1117
c. Walking Escort: 215-895-1117

3. The University has contracted with the University of Pennsylvania to provide bus and shuttle services to and from various location on and off campus.
SUBMITTED WORK

All submitted documents must be saved with the following template: Last Name, First Name, Assignment

UNIVERSITY ELS

Desire2Learn (D2L) is the primary learning management system at the University of the Sciences. D2L is a single, highly customizable, and integrated system with tools for hosting online courses, sorting and managing course material, collaborating on documents and projects, conducting live synchronous online classes and accessing the success of students and courses.

POLICY ON DISTINGUISHING IDENTIFICATION

It is mandatory for students to display that they are a physician assistant student during all clinical encounters and clinical rotations. Students may not misrepresent their title at any time. Students must verbally introduce themselves as a PA student. Students must sign all medical documentation denoting their status as a student, with “PA-S.”

PROFESSIONAL MENTORS

The PA program recognizes the importance of professional role-modeling. To this end the program recommends and fosters relationships between its students and PAs working in the community. This relationship may take various forms, from a one-time professional advisement session to shadowing or participation in an elective rotation. The program conducts scheduled social events during which students may meet and network with a larger group of PAs. The PA program requires students to become a student member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants, https://www.aapa.org/student-central/student-member-resources/ and the Pennsylvania Society of PAs, http://pspa.net/membership/membership-levels/. Students and faculty also attend professional PSPA and AAPA conferences, providing students with networking opportunities with other
PAs and health care practitioners.

**STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM**

The Mentor Program is a student-run organization that utilizes upperclassmen to establish a relationship with incoming PA students. The goal of this program is to orient new students to the rigors and demands of PA education. This mentor relationship may help acclimate new students to appropriate study methods, helpful resources, information pertaining to professional organizations such as AAPA and PSPA, as well as information regarding rotations.

**MALPRACTICE LIABILITY INSURANCE**

The University has assumed the cost of providing PA students with blanket malpractice liability insurance coverage throughout the duration of their participation in the program. This coverage does not extend outside of the scope of didactic or clinical requirements.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Throughout the professional phase of the PA program, students are required to attend various clinical conferences and participate in clinical experiences in community medical settings. Students are required to provide their own transportation to hospital and clinical sites. Transportation to various hospitals, clinical experiences and other events is the student’s responsibility. Clinical phase students will be responsible for transportation to all clinical rotation sites and to the program on Call Back Days.

**INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

University of the Sciences recognizes that a diverse campus community is essential to enriching intellectual exchanges and enhancing cultural understanding and, as such, values equality of opportunity, mutual respect and diversity. The University, therefore, is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to all members of the University community who have documented disabilities.

For more information regarding the University’s Disability Support Services Policy, please see the University of the Sciences Student Handbook, usciences.edu/student handbook/.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

The University of the Sciences has policies regarding sexual harassment and established grievance policies are documented in the Student Handbook. Any student who believes he or she has been, or is being, sexually harassed should report this incident to the program faculty immediately and fill out an incident reporting form:

*Incident Report*

The faculty will then direct the student through the appropriate channels. No student will be placed in a
clinical experience that jeopardizes his or her educational or personal welfare.

For more information regarding the University’s Discrimination and Harassment Policy, please see pg. 36 the University of the Sciences Student Handbook, usciences.edu/student handbook. https://www.usciences.edu/student-life/student-handbook/student_handbook.pdf

EMPLOYMENT POLICY

The USciences PA Program faculty does not advise outside employment for students while participating in the PA program. Faculty recognizes that employment may be an issue that some students will face. Given this recognition, realize that program obligations will not be altered due to a student’s work obligation. It is further expected that work obligations will not interfere with the student’s learning progress or responsibilities while in the program. Working often interferes with learning opportunities during rotation activities. The schedule of clinical experiences and clerkship hours to be observed are set by the program or preceptor and are not negotiable. The PA program also does not allow the student to substitute for clinical or administrative staff during any of their supervised clinical practical experiences. Additionally, the PA student is not allowed to work at the same site where they are completing clinical experiences or clerkships.

Students who are involved in or commence volunteer or paid work during the course of their PA training cannot use their affiliation with the PA program in any aspect of that job. Work outside the PA program undertaken by the student, independent of the program, is not covered by the liability offered for clinical work associated with the educational experience, and students may not represent themselves as University of the Sciences PA students.

The PA program will not employ students at any time. Students are not permitted to serve as either didactic or clinical year instructional faculty or administrative staff. If a student has specific knowledge, experiences, or skills that are beneficial to the classroom or laboratory, they are encouraged to share them with the class under the supervision of the Course Director or principal faculty member. Known prospective students will not be permitted to work for the program.

CLINICAL SITE PROCUREMENT POLICY

Under no circumstances will a student be required to obtain their own clinical rotation sites. The program will be responsible for this.

TUITION REFUND POLICY

FORMS
Advising Self-Assessment Form

Name:  

Date:  

Didactic Year  
☐ Fall  ☐ Spring  ☐ Summer  

Clinical Year  
☐ Fall  ☐ Spring  ☐ Summer  

Please check the appropriate letter 5 – 1 in accordance with your answer.  

5 = Always 4 = Mostly 3 = Sometimes 2 = Almost never 1 = Never  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I complete assigned readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I complete all assignments on time</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I complete self-initiated readings on topics I am interested in</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I complete self-initiated readings on topics I am weak in</td>
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<td>5. I am punctual</td>
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<td>6. I am prepared for my assigned classes/rotations</td>
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<td>7. I take advantage of opportunities for responsibility that are</td>
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<td>appropriate to my level of training (i.e. volunteer experiences)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. My basic science knowledge is appropriate for my level of training</td>
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<td>9. My appearance represents a positive image for the PA profession</td>
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<td>10. I feel that I am prepared to enter into the professional phase of</td>
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<tr>
<td>the PA program</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I understand program expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I am able to keep up with program expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I am comfortable with my overall level of ability as it relates</td>
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<tr>
<td>to my role as a PA student</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

My present stress level is:  

☐ Low  ☐ Medium  ☐ High  

Please Check One
List at least Three Strengths

1. Click here to enter text.

2. Click here to enter text.

3. Click here to enter text.

List at least Three Areas for Improvement

1. Click here to enter text.

2. Click here to enter text.

3. Click here to enter text.

My Concerns Are:

Click here to enter text.

My Professional Goals Are:

Click here to enter text.

Faculty Advisor Comments/Concerns/Recommendations:

Click here to enter text.

I, _________________________(student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

____________________________________  ______________________________________
Student Signature  Date  Faculty Advisor Signature  Date

Upon completion please place a PDF version of this form in the student’s electronic file.
# University of the Sciences PA Program
## Student Health Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
<td>____________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Medical History and Physical Examination** Date Performed: ________________________

  *Note: This exam must occur within one month of commencement of classes or clinical rotations.*

## Immunizations:

- **Meningitis** Date Administered: ________________________
- **Tdap (Adacel or Boostrix are acceptable)** Date Administered: ________________________
- **MMR**
  - Date #1 Administered: ________________________  Date #2 Administered: ________________________
  - Serologic evidence of immunity date: ________________________
- **Varicella**
  - Date #1 Administered: ________________________  Date #2 Administered: ________________________
  - Serologic evidence of immunity date: ________________________
- **Hepatitis B**
  - 1st Dose: ____________  2nd Dose: ____________  3rd Dose: ____________
  - Serologic evidence of immunity date: ________________________
- **Influenza** Date Administered: ________________________

  *Students on clinical rotations are required yearly immunization*

- **Polio** Date Administered: ________________________

## Two Step PPD

  (#1 Must be read in 48-72 hours; #2 must be 7-21 days after #1)

- #1 Date administered: ____________  Date read: ____________  Results: ____________
- #2 Date administered: ____________  Date read: ____________  Results: ____________

  *Chest x-ray is required if PPD is positive- Date ____________  Results ____________

I certify the above information is accurate and the above student is medically fit for medical education and training as a PA including patient care responsibilities and is able to meet the technical standards of the PA program.

Provider Signature _______________________________________________________________________
Print Name ___________________________________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________________________________
Telephone ____________________________________________________________________________

---

Where healthcare and science converge.

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Professional Performance Evaluation Form

Student Name: Click here to enter text. Date: Click here to enter a date.

Year:  Didactic  Clinical  Term:  Spring  Summer  Fall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AEFIS Performance Indicator</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1a. Attendance &amp; Punctuality</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1c. Respect for Peers/Attentive Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1d. Respect for Topic &amp; Subject of Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1f. Maintains Professional Appearance and Hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1g. Professional Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1h. Respects Programmatic Decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1i. Adheres to Institutional Policies &amp; Procedures</td>
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<td>P1k. Conference (Classroom) Professionalism</td>
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<td>P2c. Maintains Academic Integrity</td>
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<td>P2.d Following Directions</td>
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<td>PBL18a. Accepting Constructive Criticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBL18c. Taking Responsibility for One’s Own Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBL18d. Self-Assessment &amp; Awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB19a. Ability to Work in a Team</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*denotes proficiency (5- expert, 4 above-average, 3 proficient, 2 below-average, 1 needs improvement)

Faculty Advisor/Student Comments/Concerns/Recommendations for areas lacking proficiency:
Click here to enter text.

I, _________________________ (student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

Please sign below acknowledging the above meeting and that the results of the session have been communicated.

____________________________________  __________________________________
Student Signature  Date  Faculty Advisor Signature  Date

Upon completion, complete AEFIS & place a PDF version of this form in the student’s electronic file
Student Absence Form

**Student Instructions:** It is your responsibility to obtain and complete this form whenever absent, whether you believe it is excused or unexcused. This form must be submitted as soon as possible upon learning of your absence. This form must be filled out for each missed course, and must be emailed to Ms. Flowers and the Course Director(s).

**Student Name:** Click here to enter text. **Date Submitted:** Click here to enter a date.

Date(s) of Absence: Click here to enter a date.

Class/Lab/Activity/Assignment/Rotation missed: Click here to enter text.

Reason for Absence: Click here to enter text.

How will the missed material be made up? Click here to enter text.

I, _________________________ (student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

Please sign acknowledging the accuracy of the contents of this note.

____________________________________
Student Signature Date

For Course Director Use Only:

Form submitted ASAP: ☐ Yes ☐ No Date received: __________

Excused absence? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Course material missed due to absence: Click here to enter text.

May the student remediate the missed work? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Plan for remediation (if applicable): Click here to enter text.

____________________________________
Course Director Signature Date

**Student Instructions:** Submit completed form to Course Director or Co-Director for review and inclusion in the student’s record.

**Faculty Instructions:** Upon completion please place a PDF version of this form in the student’s electronic file.
Student Request for File Access

I, ________________________________, hereby request to inspect the contents of my Physician Assistant Program student file in the immediate presence of the USciences Physician Assistant Program core faculty member.

______________________________  __________________________________________
Date                                     Signature

Official Use Only:

Appointment for Review:   ____________________
                          Date

File Inspected:

I, ____________________________ (student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

______________________________
Student Signature            Date

______________________________
Program Director Signature   Date
Incident Report

Name: Click here to enter text.                      Date: Click here to enter text.

Location: Click here to enter text.                  Preceptor Name: Click here to enter text.

Report filed at site? Click here to enter text.

If yes, who filed report: Click here to enter text.

Describe incident in detail. Give times, names of other personnel present, etc. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

Click here to enter text.

I, ________________________ (student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

Please sign acknowledging the accuracy of the contents of this note.

____________________________________
Student Signature                      Date

Please send a copy to your Faculty Advisor, Director of Clinical Education, and the Program Director
Academic Honesty Statement for Assessment

I acknowledge and understand that academic honesty and integrity are firm foundations of the Physician Assistant Program and University of the Sciences. Therefore, by accessing this examination via computer, or completing a written examination, I declare that the answers contained within this exam are mine and mine alone. I further affirm that I did not rely on or utilize any other person, written resources, or electronic media during this examination. I understand and accept that if I violate the academic honesty and integrity policy as written in the student handbook and syllabi, the program will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the PA program.

In-Person Exams:

- Students are required to place all personal belongings in a designated area in the examination room prior to beginning the examination, including but not limited to backpacks, purses, hats, caps, hoodies, cell phones, watches, and any other wearable technology

- Water bottles cannot have labels

- Students will fill rows of seats for the exams as directed upon entry into the classroom

- On day of exam, the student must have an electronic device that is compatible with ExamSoft and the lockdown browser

- The student will be in the room 10 minutes prior to then start of the exam with the exam already downloaded, and all devices charged and ready to go

- Students who arrive late will not be permitted to have additional time in which to complete the examination

- Students will receive one piece of scrap-paper from proctor. Students will write their full name on this paper and submit upon leaving the room

- Unless authorized by the Course Director prior to the examination, students are not permitted to talk for any reason during an examination

- Students are not permitted to approach the proctor with questions during the examination

- Unless authorized by the Course Director prior to the examination, students are not permitted to use electronic devices during an examination

- No food is permitted in the examination room

- Students must include their names, ID number, and other required information on all examination materials, if applicable

- Students are not permitted to leave the examination at any time, with the exception of emergency or
illness as determined by the proctor, in which case an escort may be required, and additional time will not be permitted

- Students who complete the examination early may leave the examination room
- Students are required to vacate the immediate testing area and refrain from discussing exam material until after the conclusion of the exam
- Students may take a 5-minute break during 2-hour or longer exams in which the components are submitted separately. (For example, and End of Rotation Exam is 2 hours long and is divided into two sections. After submission of the first section, the student may leave the room before starting section two)
- Students are not permitted to write, photograph, record, or replicate examination material in any form
- Students are not permitted to access or review prior examination questions provided by others
- Students are prohibited from removing examinations and answer sheets from the examination room

(This prohibition against possession and copying of examinations and answer sheets applies to current and previous examinations, and students who violate this will be subject to disciplinary action)

- All examination failures in both the didactic and clinical years require meeting with student’s advisor. This is the only scenario in which an examination review is conducted

(During didactic courses, the examination can be reviewed in the presence of the advisor, for clinical rotations, students can access their strengths and weakness report only)

Virtually Proctored Exams:

Remote Learning and Test Taking on ExamSoft

When attending virtual sessions, including examinations students must keep their microphones on mute to avoid distracting background noise. All students must display their full first and last name for security and attendance purposes.

Students will take assessments on ExamSoft software. When taking exams, students must adhere to the University of the Sciences and the PA program’s academic honesty standards. Any acts of dishonest conduct will result in a failing grade. Zoom will be used during exams on students’ cell phones to ensure exam integrity. In addition to Zoom on camera phones, ExamSoft will contain advanced security software that the student must utilize. A Zoom room will be monitored by at least 1 faculty proctor. The ExamSoft software creates a video recording, audio recording, and record of screen activity of your exam session which gets sent to your proctor. A comprehensive report of student activity is generated and sent to the proctor. ExamID will utilize two-step authentication to ensure the identity of the test taker as well. More information on the ExamSoft Exam Monitoring can be found here. It is imperative for your future success that we maintain exam integrity. Proof of cheating is not required for disciplinary action to occur. Automatic failure and disciplinary action, including immediate referral to
the Student Progress Committee, will occur secondary to any deviation from the policy listed below, with or without proof of dishonest behavior.

*Test Environment must maintain an in-class environment and must include:*

- Must recreate an in-person examination environment
- Must be seated on a chair at a clean desk or table
- Must maintain room lighting bright enough as to not hinder identification of the student or visibility of student actions (The source of light should not be behind the test taker)
- No other computer monitors, screens or tablets should be on during the exam with the exception of the secondary device for Zoom
- Once the examination begins, the secondary device CANNOT be approached
  
  *(This device must be at least 2 feet away from the test-taker, must be parallel with the edge of the table, and must be angled to show a side profile of the student’s face, shoulder, arms, hands, primary device, and table top)*
  
  *(The student is only allowed to approach the secondary device to contact the proctor in case of an emergency or technical problem, via Zoom chat)*

- In the unlikely event that the student’s computer malfunctions during an exam, which prevents the completion of the exam, the student will be expected to present to campus to take an alternative version of the exam
- No watches of any kind are allowed to be worn during the testing period
- No food or drink containers are allowed in the testing area
- All devices must be silenced
- No writing should be visible on the desk or walls
- Under no circumstances should students exit the remote proctoring area or software during the exam
  
  *(Do not leave the room during the testing period at any time, do not take the computer into another room to finish testing, and do not leave the view of the cameras at any time)*

- No test items should be copied, saved or shared during or following the exam
- Screenshots of test information are prohibited
- Dress as if in a public setting
- No use of headsets, ear plugs, earbuds, or similar audio devices are permitted
- The student’s face and ears must be visible at all times
  
  *(Clothing that obstructs the view of the face and ears—such as hoods, hats, headbands, etc.—are not permitted)*

- Student must keep their gaze centered on the screen
(Frequently glancing away from the screen is considered cheating)

Students are responsible for:

- Compliance with the above-mentioned environmental policies
- Fully charged devices
  
  (A primary device for exam taking and secondary device for Zoom, both in compliance with the technology requirements listed below)
- Self-testing the functionality of the remote proctored system a minimum of one week prior to all remote proctored examinations
  
  (Students are responsible for checking the remote virtual site requirements of all remote proctoring services before test day)
- Preparation of the exam environment as discussed above
- Restarting of their computer before logging into the proctored test environment
- Closing all other programs/windows/applications prior to logging into the proctored test environment and must remain closed until the exam is completed
- Compliance with random security checks may be conducted at any point during the exam

Open-Note Assessments:

- Throughout the program, students will be expected to complete synchronous and asynchronous assessments, sometimes with the assistance of resource materials. All academic work submitted is expected to be the result of the student’s sole efforts. When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Self-plagiarism is also considered plagiarism, as reproduction of previously submitted assignments and work to replace new submissions is considered plagiarism. Submitted writing must follow AMA citations to avoid incidental plagiarism, which is still considered plagiarism. Students may be expected to submit written work through Turnitin plagiarism software, and when applicable, will be prompted to do so through the assignment submission section of D2L.

I acknowledge and understand that academic honesty and integrity are firm foundations of the Physician Assistant program and the University of the Sciences. I affirm that the answers that I put down on this answer sheet are my own, and that I did not seek help or guidance from any other person during the exam. This includes but is not limited to current students, former students, doctors, PAs, scientists, and relatives.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the following regarding in-person and virtual proctoring of examinations and other assessments:
I, ________________________ (student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above-mentioned policies regarding in-person and virtual proctoring of examinations and other assessments; including potential dismissal for failing to comply with these policies.

____________________________________
Student Signature Date

Upon completion please place a PDF version of this form in the student’s electronic file.
CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Student Name:  Click here to enter text. Date:  Click here to enter a date.

The University of the Sciences Physician Assistant program is required by affiliated health care institutions that provide clinical educational rotations at their institutions, to provide certain personal student information. The release of information is required in order to permit students to receive clinical training at each institution in compliance with state and federal law. By signing this form, you are giving the program and its faculty and staff, permission to provide specific personal information to affiliated institutions as necessary to participate in your clinical rotations. This information includes:

- FBI background check
- Child abuse background check
- Photo identification
- Name, date of birth, social security number
- Copy of your immunization record
- TB test results and/or chest x-ray results
- Drug screening results
- Criminal background check
- As-needed information towards educational progress

Release of Information

I, __________________________ (student name) hereby to waive my rights, regarding the release of the above listed information, provided under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC 1232g, et seq..). By signing this form, I authorize the University of the Sciences Physician Assistant Program, and its faculty and staff, permission to provide the above identified personal information to affiliated clinical institutions.

I, __________________________ (student name), authorize the PA program staff to release my medical health form checklist to the clinical sites I will be rotating through during the Didactic and Clinical Phase. I understand that information will be sent only to those facilities requiring documentation of my medical status.

I, __________________________ (student name), acknowledged and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

____________________________________
Student Signature                      Date

Upon completion please place a PDF version of this form in the student’s electronic file.
PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT & CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the USciences PA Program Student Handbook. I have read the enclosed policies and procedures concerning the PA program. I understand my obligation to fulfill all requirements of the program in the outlined time frame. I fully understand the information, have had an opportunity to have any questions answered, and hereby agree to abide by the information concerning PA program policies and procedures contained within this document. Additionally, I agree to abide by the University rules and regulations as set forth in the University Student Handbook.

1. I have received a copy of the Student Handbook. I understand that the policies, rules, and information described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of the USciences Physician Assistant Program at any time.

2. I understand that my matriculation is terminable by myself at any time, regardless of the length of my matriculation. My matriculation may also be terminable secondary to infraction/violation of any PA program policy, guideline, or procedure, in accordance with the established policy for such matters.

3. I understand that, should the contents of the Student Handbook be changed in any way for any reason, the USciences Physician Assistant Program will provide me with the current version and may require an additional signature from me to indicate that I am aware of and understand such changes.

4. I understand that, for the duration of my time as a student at USciences, any medical costs incurred incidental or coincidental to my enrollment in the USciences Physician Assistant Program are my own responsibility. USciences is not responsible for covering any costs for medical treatment required or provided during the didactic year. I further understand that I must maintain a valid health insurance policy throughout the entire didactic and clinical year, and be able to provide proof of such insurance upon request. Failure to comply with this policy may result in suspension until compliance can be documented, which may result in delays of course completion, graduation, and eligibility to sit for the PANCE.

5. I further understand that my signature below indicates that:
   a. I have received a copy of the Student Handbook
   b. I have read and understand the above statements
   c. I have read and understand the material in its entirety contained within the Student Handbook
   d. I agree to abide by the rules, guidelines, and policies contained therein

Progression and continuance in University of the Sciences PA Program is not only based upon scholastic achievement, but also based on the professional performance and the ability to meet the requirements of the program. My signature represents that I understand the following:

1. Students are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher to continue, and/or graduate from the PA program.

2. Students must obtain a minimum grade of 70% (C) in all PHA courses.
3. Students must meet all professional and behavioral criteria as set forth in the student handbook.

4. Students must meet, maintain, and acknowledge adherence to the technical standards as set forth in this handbook.

5. Students will have one opportunity to remediate a failed course

6. Student can only be placed on probation one time throughout the program. The second instance results in dismissal from the program.

7. Compliance issues with the mandatory attendance policy can lead to dismissal of the program on professionalism grounds.

8. Remediation of all assessments and performance indicators is required to demonstrate competency and to be eligible to graduate.

All didactic phase PHA courses must be satisfactorily completed before the student is allowed to progress into the clinical phase and start clinical rotations.

I, ______________________ (student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

____________________________________  __________________________________
Student Signature                     Date                                    Faculty Witness Signature    Date

Upon completion please place a PDF version of this form in the student’s electronic file.
Technical Standards Student Attestation Form

I, _____________________________ (student name), hereby attest that I am able to meet all of the technical standards as outlined in the Physician Assistant Student Handbook. I understand that if I am unable to fulfill these technical standards at any time after admission (with or without reasonable accommodation), I will not be allowed to progress in the USciences Physician Assistant Program.

I, _____________________________ (student name), acknowledge and agree that my electronic signature below, whether digital or encrypted, is intended to authenticate and indicate my agreement with and acceptance of this writing and have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures, for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

____________________________________
Student Signature                     Date

Upon completion please place a PDF version of this form in the student’s electronic file.