

**SAINT FRANCIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PA SCIENCES**

**MASTER OF PA SCIENCE (MPAS) PROGRAM
GENERAL POLICY MANUAL**

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INTRODUCTION AND MISSION STATEMENT/VISION

Introduction

The Physician Assistant Program Student Policy Manual is intended to provide the student with guidelines regarding the Saint Francis University Physician Assistant Program. It is to be viewed as a supplement to the rules, regulations and guidelines that govern you as a student at Saint Francis University. We encourage every student to become familiar with guidelines listed in the University's Student Handbook and the Physician Assistant Policy Manuals. Any questions regarding policies contained within the Physician Assistant General Policy Manual should be directed to the Chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences. Although every effort has been made to make this manual as complete and up-to-date as possible, it should be recognized that circumstances will occur that the manual does not cover. Changes will also be necessary in the manual due to changes in the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences. Students will be notified of any changes, or additions, in writing and they will become effective immediately.

When a circumstance is not covered by the manual or the interpretation is ambiguous, the Chair of the Department will make the necessary decision or interpretation. The fact that written policies are not in the manual should not be interpreted as an absence of a policy or regulation. If students have questions regarding a situation they should discuss them with the Chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences.

The policies and guidelines in this Manual are not intended to supersede the policies of Saint Francis University. When an apparent conflict exists, the student is advised to contact the Department Chair for clarification.

Mission Statement

To educate individuals as physician assistants to provide competent, compassionate and comprehensive health care to people and communities in need, as expressed through the Franciscan tradition.

Our Vision

Our faculty, graduates, and students will:

- ◇ Be the leaders of the physician assistant profession
- ◇ Strive for excellence in all academic and professional endeavors
- ◇ Provide for the health care needs of all
- ◇ Have a love of lifelong learning
- ◇ Provide service to others, especially to the poor and needy
- ◇ Have a reverence for all life
- ◇ Have respect for the uniqueness of individual persons

STUDENT TECHNICAL STANDARDS

GENERAL AREA: SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

OBJECTIVE: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.15e

"The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students admission related information to include: any required technical standards for enrollment."

GENERAL AREA: INTRODUCTION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

Physician assistants are academically and clinically prepared to practice medicine with the direction and responsible supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. The physician-PA team relationship is fundamental to the PA profession and enhances the delivery of high quality health care. Within the physician-PA relationship, PAs make clinical decisions and provide a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive and health maintenance services. The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. PA practice is centered on patient care and may include educational, research and administrative activities.

Functions performed by physician assistants include, as a minimum, the following general categories of services:

- Evaluation
- Monitoring
- Therapeutic
- Patient Education
- Referral
- Professionalism

To provide the services listed above in a compassionate, competent and efficient manner, students in the PA Program will need to be capable of performing the following techniques on their own or with reasonable adaptations:

General Characteristics: The role of the physician assistant demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills and the capacity to respond to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner.

The student needs to:

- have 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
- have the mental capacity and physical abilities to assimilate large amounts of complex information and apply that information in an interpreted fashion to solve clinical problems and formulate therapeutic and diagnostic plans in an accurate and efficient manner
- remain calm and reasoned in a high stress environment and respond quickly and appropriately in emergencies

History Taking: Initially approach a patient of any age group in any setting to elicit an accurate, detailed history (appropriate to the situation) and record that data in an acceptable fashion.

The student needs to:

- be able to speak fluent English to relate to most patient situations
- have the ability to adjust his/her level of communication to the patient's level of understanding
- demonstrate interactive verbal and written communication skills

Physical Examination: Perform a comprehensive or focused physical examination of a patient of any age, gender or condition in any setting.

The student needs to possess:

- adequate auditory acuity to accurately use a stethoscope, tuning forks, etc.
- adequate visual acuity for inspection techniques and the use of an ophthalmoscope

- adequate depth perception for surgical/technical procedures, and the accurate use of an oto-ophthalmoscope and microscope
- keen tactile sensation for palpation techniques

Diagnostic Skills: Identify, perform, order, and/or interpret, at least to the point of recognizing deviations from the norm, common laboratory, radiologic, cardiographic, and other routine diagnostic procedures used to identify pathophysiologic processes.

The student needs to possess:

- accurate visual and auditory acuity for the interpretation of diagnostic procedures
- the ability to reason a patient's problem in an orderly fashion
- competency in the integration of didactic skills, as demonstrated by written and practical examinations
- ability to record diagnostic and other findings accurately, efficiently and clearly

Therapeutic Skills: Performing routine procedures such as injections, immunizations, suturing and wound care, managing simple conditions produced by infection or trauma, assisting in the management of more complex illness and injury, and taking initiative in performing evaluation and therapeutic procedures in response to life-threatening situations.

The student needs to demonstrate:

- flexibility, dexterity and strength of his/her extremities for use in surgical/technical procedures
- degree of coordination in motor skills is needed to respond to emergency situations quickly and appropriately

PROGRAM GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

GENERAL AREA: SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

OBJECTIVE: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.14b

"The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students general program information to include: the success of the program in achieving its goals."

Description of the Profession: The clinical role of physician assistants 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, systems-based practice, as well as an unwavering commitment to continual learning, professional growth and the physician-PA team, for the benefit of patients and the larger community being served. These competencies are demonstrated within the scope of practice, whether medical or surgical, for each individual physician assistant as that scope is defined by the supervising physician and appropriate to the practice setting. (Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession, Introduction)

In keeping with the expectations listed above, graduates will be able to perform the following services in a professional manner that is compassionate, competent and efficient:

Medical Knowledge:

Graduates will have medical knowledge including an understanding of anatomy and physiology, pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient evaluation and management, surgical principles, health promotion and disease prevention to be able to provide competent and comprehensive health care. Graduates will be able to demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care utilizing an investigatory and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations.

Clinical Competence:

Graduates will have the ability to provide effective patient care that includes assessment, evaluation and management to diverse populations across the life-span in an ethical, compassionate and inter-professionally collaborative manner. Graduates will possess the necessary technical skills as well as clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities to provide equitable and efficient patient-centered care.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills:

Graduates will possess interpersonal and communication skills including verbal, nonverbal and written that result in effective information exchange with patients, families, physicians and other health professionals.

Professionalism:

Graduates will be able to demonstrate appropriate academic and professional skills, attributes, attitudes and behaviors necessary to function as a physician assistant. Graduates will possess an understanding of health policies and delivery systems to promote their participation as health care leaders in identifying solutions to community and professional endeavors, including service to people and communities in need, as expressed through the Franciscan tradition.

Please refer to the Program's web site which discusses the success of the MPAS Program in achieving the goals outlined above.

PROGRAM GRADUATE FUNCTIONS AND TASKS

In keeping with the Program Goals and Learning Outcomes listed above, graduates will be able to perform the following functions and tasks in a professional manner that is compassionate, competent and efficient:

Evaluation: Elicit a detailed and accurate history; perform an appropriate physical examination; order, perform and interpret appropriate diagnostic studies; create a differential diagnosis; develop management plans and record and present data.

Monitoring: Implement patient management plans, complete medical documentation and participate in the provision of continuity of care.

Therapeutic: Perform therapeutic procedures and manage or assist in the management of medical and surgical conditions, which may include assisting surgeons in the conduct of procedures and taking initiative in performing evaluation and therapeutic procedures in response to life-threatening situations.

Patient Education: Counsel patients regarding issues of health care management to include preventive care, compliance with prescribed therapeutic regimens, normal growth and development, family planning, and emotional problems of daily living.

Referral: Identify the referral of patients, who would benefit, to other health care providers or agencies, such as rehabilitative, palliative and end-of-life care, as appropriate.

Professionalism: Demonstrate essential attributes of a physician assistant, including an attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients and commitment to the patient's welfare.

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

GENERAL AREA: SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

OBJECTIVE #1: PROGRAM PERSONNEL, STANDARDS A2.05e & f

“Principal faculty...must actively participate in the processes of: e) academic counseling of students and f) assuring the availability of remedial instruction.”

OBJECTIVE #2: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.10

“The program must have written policies that provide for timely access and/or referral of students to services addressing personal issues which may impact their progress in the PA program.”

Academic Accommodations

To request accommodation for medical or academic needs, please file your declaration with the Center for Academic Success (CAS), 814-472-3024. Students seeking accommodations based on documented disabilities will meet with a staff member in CAS, complete a Student Academic Accommodation Request form and then meet privately with each faculty member to make arrangements for the accommodations. Any request for special needs or special accommodations should be made at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you are aware of your needs. Although accommodations can be initiated at any time during the semester, please be aware that no evaluative measures completed in a course before proper instructor/coordinator notification of need for accommodations will be allowed to be repeated.

Student Advising Policy

Each student will be assigned to a faculty advisor within the Department. In keeping with the mission of the University, the goals for academic advising include: clarification of life and career goals, development of suitable educational plans, selection of appropriate courses and other educational experiences, interpretation of institutional requirements, increasing student awareness of educational resources available, evaluation of student progress toward established goals, development of decision-making skills and referral to and use of other institutional and community support services, where appropriate.

The advisor is also available to discuss your progress in meeting Program requirements. It is suggested that the student take advantage of this service at least once per semester to map their progress. Advisors will make students aware of opportunities to meet, usually around the mid-semester time frame. Students or advisors may schedule meetings at any time as needed to deal with situations in a timely fashion. The Program recognizes that the student is an adult learner and may choose not to participate in the advising service offered by the Department. The Department is required to document student progress; notations are kept in the student's file concerning performance. It may also be noted that students choose to not participate in the advising process.

A. Faculty Advisor

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor during each year of the Program. The purpose of the advisor is to:

1. Provide communication between the student and faculty.
2. Assist the student in meeting the educational objectives of the Program and University.
3. Identify additional faculty member(s) or University personnel that will be accessible if a student wishes to discuss a problem of a personal or professional nature.
4. Enable the student to identify materials to achieve the educational objectives of the Program.

Student input is critical for the success of this process. Each person in the Program, advisee and advisor, will have specific responsibilities.

B. Student Responsibilities

1. Honestly discuss areas of strengths and areas for improvement with the advisor.
2. Honestly complete the self-evaluation form.
3. Help plan a course of action to remediate deficiencies and capitalize on strengths.
4. Meet with advisor at least once per semester at a mutually arranged time.
5. Meet with advisor on an as needed basis when issues arise.
6. Make an honest effort to follow the plans devised from the session.

C. Advisor responsibilities

1. Honestly discuss areas of strengths and areas for improvement with the student.
2. Help plan a course of action to remediate deficiencies and capitalize on strengths.
3. Offer to meet with student at least once per semester at a mutually arranged time.
4. Meet with student on an as needed basis when issues arise.
5. Try to apprise students of their options in a given situation.
6. Collect database on student prior to advising session.
7. Make written records of meeting events for student file.
8. Initiate referrals for support; academic, clinical and/or emotional; that enable the student's academic success.
9. Notify appropriate others, as deemed necessary, to safe-guard the health and welfare of everyone involved.

D. Example of Output from Advising Sessions (Not Comprehensive)

- Referral to Center for Academic Success
- Referral to Counseling Center
- Referral to Health Care Provider
- Change Study Habits
- Behavior Modification
- Specific Remediation Program
- Meet with Program Tutor
- Meet with Student Tutor
- Begin Exercise Program/Other Stress Reduction Techniques
- Career Goal Reexamination

The advisor will NOT:

1. **SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS.** That is up to you. They will discuss your problem, help you clarify options and help you devise a plan of action.
2. **ACT AS YOUR MEDICAL PROVIDER.** It is inappropriate for any of the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences faculty to try and provide you health care. If you have a medical problem, see the University Student Health Service or the outside provider of your choice, as appropriate to your situation.
3. **ACT AS A COUNSELOR.** If you have problems that require counseling and need the help of a professional counselor, the University Counseling Center is available.

4. ACT AS A PARENT. It is your responsibility to see your advisor and schedule a mutually convenient time for mid-semester advising. The advisor will not "track down" any student who does not make an appointment after initial notification by the PA Program. It is also your responsibility to act on the plan devised during the session.

The advising session can be a powerful tool for you to use to get the most from your education and in your development as a health professional. The process must be an active one to be effective. Remember that someone from the Program or the University Counseling Center is available at any time during the day (8:00 AM to 4:00 PM) to either provide you with help or make arrangements to get you to help in an emergency. In an emergency situation, your advisor or another faculty member can address your concern immediately. For non-emergent problems, make an appointment with your advisor. Please be advised that you can leave a phone message at any time of the day or night at 814-472-3130. For any emergency outside of Program or University Counseling Center office hours, please contact University Police at 814-472-3360.

Student Rights

A. Basic Rights

Enrollment in the Physician Assistant Program provides the student with some basic rights.

1. The student has the right to competent, knowledgeable instructors who conduct themselves in a professional manner in their interactions with students in the work setting. Students who have an issue with any faculty member or course should follow the procedures as outlined under the Student Grievance Process in the Academic Policies section below.
2. Classrooms should be able to provide the proper educational environment for student learning. These classrooms or other appropriate facilities should also have available current instructional materials and modern equipment that meets the technical training needs of the physician assistant student, as outlined in the Standards.
3. 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. Such behavior will also be documented on the student's Professionalism rubric utilized during the didactic and clinical years of the Program. If a particular student persists in disruptive behavior, disciplinary action may have to be initiated.

B. Rights to Privacy

1. Students are provided privacy of records and these records are protected from access and release by the Federal Privacy Act of 1974.
2. Students are granted access to their own files after completion of a formal request form. Students may inspect and review files in the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences office during regular office hours. At no time will information be removed from a student's permanent file. Students will also NOT be allowed to photocopy or otherwise duplicate information found in their file. All evaluations and minutes of meetings such as the Performance Review Committee become part of the student's permanent record. Students who wish to challenge content of records may submit a written letter to be placed in the student file indicating the student's objection(s) to an entry in his record.
3. Release of student records by the Program (i.e. potential employers) is granted only upon completion of a Written Consent for Release of Information by the student.

4. Department faculty, Saint Francis University employees and others who have direct involvement with the educational process of the student are provided access to student file information as appropriate. Such persons may review student records without written consent of the student at the discretion of the Department Chair.

Standards of Professional Conduct for the Physician Assistant Student

GENERAL AREA: SECTION C: EVALUATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

OBJECTIVE: *STUDENT EVALUATION, STANDARD C3.02*

“The program must document student demonstration of defined professional behaviors”

Rationale:

As stated in the Introduction of the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education: "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 of the graduate PA.”

In addition, the Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession list professionalism as one of the core competencies that a PA should possess. Students need to exhibit respect, compassion and integrity in all interactions that occur within the academic and/or clinical setting. Students should have a commitment to excellence, on-going professional development and uphold ethical principles.

In as much as behavior has a strong practical relation to the substance of primary care, physician assistants should also have a functional understanding of personality development, child development, normative responses to stress, psychosomatic manifestations of illness and injury, sexuality, responses to death and dying, and behavioral patterns related to the maintenance or restoration of health. The development of counseling skills is encouraged because of their potential for helping patients cope with illness and injury, follow prescribed treatment regimens, and modify their attitudes and behavior to more healthful patterns.

During their educational experience, the students should receive a thorough orientation to the range of responsibilities and functions of physician assistants, the nature of their relationship to physicians and other health care providers and the significance of issues affecting their role. The student should be encouraged to develop basic intellectual and ethical principles essential for gaining and maintaining the trust of professional associates, the support of the community, and the confidences of the patient.

Professional Relationships

Pursuant to the above statements, it is expected that the physician assistant student will maintain an exemplary professional demeanor in his/her relationships with all University personnel, peers, other members of the medical team, patients and the public. The following minimum standards will be practiced while interacting with any of the above named groups.

A. PA Student/Peer

As a professional colleague, peers will be accorded due respect in interactions taking place in or outside the classroom/clinical setting.

Students are encouraged to utilize their classmates as a resource in surmounting the challenges of the Program. Sharing experiences with their classmates will allow one to realize the range of experiences and common challenges encountered with this type of training. Many physician assistant students have found that studying in small groups has been a valuable

adjunct to their normal study patterns. It is expected that upper-class physician assistant students will provide objective feedback to underclass students on the types and nature of their experiences in a particular phase of the Program. Whenever possible, upper-class students will tutor underclass students to assist them in developing their clinical and personal skills toward the goal of developing into an excellent physician assistant.

As a PA student, it is natural that you are excited to share developing medical knowledge with other students on campus. However, in your role as a student learner, it is NOT appropriate to provide medical advice to any University student. If a student approaches you about medical complaints or wants your opinion on a diagnosed or undiagnosed condition, please refer the student to the University's Student Health Center.

B. PA Student/Faculty and Staff

Full time and adjunct members of the faculty meet the qualifications set forth in the Standards and are qualified by experience and training to engage in the educational process. As mentors involved in the students' education, it is expected that students will accord respect and courtesy in their interactions with faculty. Departmental staff members provide valuable services to the students and as such, should also be treated with respect. Additionally, faculty and staff in other Departments and offices that provide student support services deserve to be treated in a professional manner.

Students enrolled in the didactic and clinical years of the Physician Assistant Program are considered adult graduate students by the Department. The policies and course syllabi form a specific relationship between the faculty and the learner. Given this understanding, the Department faculty feels it is inappropriate to discuss issues related to a learner's specific situation with others.

Students who have an issue with any faculty or staff member or course should follow the procedures as outlined under the Student Grievance Process in the Academic Policies section below.

C. PA Student/Members of the Medical Team

Each member of the medical team lends a particular expertise to the holistic care of the patient. It should be realized that the physician assistant does not supplant any other team member's role, but complements each role to provide more effective patient care. Thus, each member of the medical team possesses knowledge that the student may benefit from. Occasionally, other members of the medical team (many times from misunderstanding of the PA concept) will not greet the student with the acceptance or enthusiasm anticipated by him/her. Each student is not only an ambassador of the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences at Saint Francis University, but of the entire profession. It is important that the student not respond angrily to those individuals but rather be cordial and attempt to educate them to all of the positive aspects of the profession. One of the most effective ways to change these negative attitudes is to display excellent interpersonal and professional demeanor.

D. PA Student/Patient Contact

In initiating the clinical relationship, the student properly introduces him/herself and greets the patient by using an appropriate title. Whenever possible, the student will assume a position suitable to maintaining the same eye level as the patient.

During the entire contact, the physical and emotional comfort of the patient is of paramount importance to the student. By use of verbal and non-verbal clues, the student will transmit an attitude of concern, professionalism and pleasantness to the patient. All possible physical barriers will be removed between the patient and student during the course of the clinical contact.

The physician assistant student facilitates the interview by adjusting the language to the patient's level of understanding, using attentive postures, verbal and non-verbal language and gestures of understanding. The confidential nature of the information discussed during the interview is recognized by the student.

While performing any physical examination on a patient, the student is careful to explain each step to the patient. The student is constantly alert to verbal and non-verbal clues transmitted by the patient to signal physical or emotional discomfort. Patient's modesty will be maintained at all times, while not compromising exam technique.

As appropriate per setting and preceptor, findings and conclusions are shared by the student with the patient. The patient is encouraged to express any concerns or ask any questions regarding their health status. The student is careful to encourage the patient to take part in the maintenance of their own health and educate the patient as to the best method to accomplish this. The encounter is ended after the patient has a clear sense of what is going to be done and why. The patient is encouraged to contact their health provider at any time if they have questions.

Professionalism in the Didactic and Clinical Years

Since professionalism is an important component in the role of the practicing physician assistant, during the didactic year, students will be evaluated through the use of a "Professionalism" rubric. Each student will be expected to meet or exceed expectations necessary to demonstrate professionalism in the following areas:

- Integrity/Academic Honesty
- Respect
- Learning community
- Flexibility
- Attendance/Punctuality
- Attire/Appearance

Didactic year students will be evaluated by the faculty and staff throughout the didactic year. The rubric will be completed at mid-semester during the student advising session. Any behaviors not meeting expectations will be reviewed at those times with the student. Didactic-year preceptors will also evaluate student professionalism after each half-day clinical experience. A Performance Review Committee (PRC) meeting may be held to review any unacceptable student behavior.

Professionalism during the clinical year will be evaluated by the faculty and staff through use of the rubric once a semester. It will also be assessed as part of the preceptor evaluation of the student to reflect expected professional behaviors during each clinical rotation. Preceptor evaluations will occur at mid-rotation and at the conclusion of each rotation. In addition, professionalism will be evaluated during clinical year site visits.

Student Learner Characteristics

Students who successfully accomplish the learning outcomes of each of the PA courses, including clinical experiences, will share the following characteristics:

- Reporting to all classes, labs, critical thinking/simulation sessions, clinical experiences and scheduled events on time and appropriately prepared to participate in the scheduled activity.
- Completing research on topics utilizing appropriate instructional objectives, prior to lecture, lab, critical thinking/simulation sessions or clinical experiences.
- Completing all assignments on time and in a thorough manner.
- Utilizing current and evidence-based medicine resources to augment classroom and clinical learning experiences and accomplish learning outcomes.
- Actively participate in the learning process by asking questions to provide clarification of concepts (as needed), solving problems and providing answers to questions posed during scheduled activities.
- Anticipating that all Program sponsored learning experiences are subject to evaluation by written and/or practiced examinations.
- Reviewing performance on written examinations to identify areas of weakness.

- Accepting criticism in a constructive fashion.
- Maintaining a professional demeanor in interactions with University personnel, faculty, lecturers, student peers and clinical preceptors.

Performance Review Committee

The Performance Review Committee (PRC) typically convenes in order to discuss issues regarding a student's ability to meet Program standards. Maintenance of Program standards is important to not only protect the integrity of the Program, but more importantly, safeguard the welfare of patients. Generally, the PRC may be convened by the request of the Department Chair or other faculty to review a student's academic or professional performance, as it relates to their role as a student PA. Students may also be required to appear before the PRC for any University mandated leave of absence/ withdrawal even if only for one semester. Examples of outcomes of the PRC may include dismissal from the PA major, academic probation, deceleration or other alterations of the student's curriculum plan.

A student may also request an appearance before the Performance Review Committee for the following reasons:

- If he/she has concerns about their academic or professional performance. This process would then allow discussion to occur in relation to options the student may have to alter their current curriculum plan.
- To appeal his/her dismissal from the PA Program. The PRC will heavily weigh the existence of extenuating circumstances that occurred and adversely impacted the student's ability to meet progression standards. Students who have not met the progression standards to move into either the didactic or clinical years of the Program, if readmitted to the PA major, will be required to decelerate at least one year and meet the progression standards prior to progression into the next phase of the Program.
- For didactic year students: After dismissal anytime during a semester for consideration to be allowed to continue with the current semester courses as a non-PA major. This option would be in order to complete the credits needed to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences.

To request a review before the PRC, a student must submit to the Department Chair a written request outlining the reasons why a review is necessary. The PRC would then attempt to meet within five business days of receipt of the written appeal.

All PRC meetings are confidential in nature. The PRC consists of the Department faculty, a University faculty member and other appropriate members, as deemed necessary by the circumstances. The student will appear before the PRC to discuss the case. Additional attendees, including parents, lawyers or other persons, unless directly involved in the case will not be allowed to attend the PRC meeting.

All decisions rendered by the PRC will be final and binding. Students may choose to appeal the final PRC decision to the Dean of the School of Health Sciences utilizing the "Student Appeal to the Dean" form. This form will be provided to all students who have an adverse decision upheld by the PRC. This appeal must be made and received in the Dean's Office within five (5) business days of notification of the appeal being denied by the Department.

Any student requesting readmission to the PA Program following completion of the appeal process for dismissal from the major will be considered a new applicant and will need to complete the appropriate admission process.

State Authorization Information for Clinical Experiences

Many states require post-secondary educational institutions to be legally authorized to offer activities such as internships, clinical or fieldwork experiences in their state. Saint Francis University is in a continuous process to monitor regulations in states and territories in which it "operates."

Saint Francis University has been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to participate in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). As a SARA-approved institution, Saint Francis University is authorized to offer internship, clinical or fieldwork experiences that occur in other SARA states for students enrolled in the University's academic programs (with some limitation). Additional information regarding SARA can be found at [NC-SARA](#).

Students that wish to complete an activity such as an internship, clinical or fieldwork experience should consult one of the Program's Clinical Education Coordinators before initializing any contact with a business or agency outside of Pennsylvania. Experiential learning opportunities, such as internships, clinical or field experiences are permitted in SARA states provided that: 1) The University has already obtained all the necessary professional and licensure approvals necessary (if any) to conduct the learning opportunity in that state; and 2) Only 10 students in the same academic program from each institution are physically present simultaneously at a single field placement site, unless a higher number is approved by the University's SARA portal entity, the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Students should consult the [State Authorization Status List](#) for specific information regarding state authorization to find out which whether opportunities for internships, clinical or fieldwork experiences are permitted in your home state.

FRESHMAN-JUNIOR YEAR HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCE INFORMATION

FRESHMAN-JUNIOR HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES

CONFIDENTIALITY

Training on HIPAA is covered in PA 201: Introduction to Medicine I; however, note that students are NOT to discuss patient identification or information with others. Do NOT discuss who you saw when you shadowed; what conditions the patient was diagnosed with, etc. Do NOT discuss patient information in public places.

An appropriate response to a question by a friend or family member is: "I am not allowed to discuss any patient-related information."

OBTAINING HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCE SHADOWING HOURS

When inquiring about shadowing, remember that you are required to obtain hours, but the office or facility is NOT required to provide them for you. You must utilize offices or facilities that will accept you and they have a right to refuse. You are a guest in their setting and you must behave as such.

Allow plenty of time to arrange shadowing (do not expect that they arrange anything for you within several days).

Remember to diversify your shadowing (not all 100 hours in the same setting) and start to make connections now. These connections will be beneficial in the future regarding identifying potential preceptors for the Program to contact if you want to complete rotations near your home or eventually for a potential job upon graduation. You are not guaranteed housing or preferred locations in the clinical year so the connections can be very beneficial should you desire to complete rotations near your home. Current required rotations for the Program include family practice, general internal medicine, general pediatrics, women's health, surgery, emergency department and behavioral medicine.

BE ON TIME/EARLY FOR ALL CLINICAL EXPERIENCES

First impressions are very important. Do not cancel a health care shadowing experience that you have set up unless ill. Some sites complete significant paperwork for you to be there and you need to uphold all commitments. Please arrive 10-15 minutes early.

PARKING You need to park in the designated student area or in a remote area of the parking lot. Do not park in patient areas close to main entrances.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY Please refer to the PA Program dress code for clinical sites outlined below

DO NOT MEDDLE in other's business/participate in gossip

NO FOUL LANGUAGE OR HARASSMENT Physical, sexual, verbal or emotional
Do not ask staff or patients out on dates

TELEPHONE/E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

Speak/write clearly and identify yourself. Leave a call-back number or other contact information. Inquire politely about shadowing; do not expect or assume the site will assist.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Do NOT utilize cell phones (calls or texting) or other electronics in the clinical setting.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Do NOT post any patient information or patient experiences you've had on social media. Do not take or post pictures of medical findings. (Refer to the section on "Use of Social Media," page 23)

DRESS CODE FOR CLINICAL SITES

Students should maintain a professional appearance and dress appropriately whenever they are representing SFU and the PA profession in any off campus setting. This includes clinical sites, meetings and special events. Being neatly dressed and well-groomed exemplifies a professional appearance.

EACH STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO FOLLOW THE DRESS CODE AS OUTLINED BELOW:

- **CLOTHING:** CLOTHING SHOULD ALLOW FOR ADEQUATE MOVEMENT DURING PATIENT CARE AND SHOULD NOT BE TIGHT, SHORT, LOW CUT OR EXPOSE THE TRUNK WITH ANY MOVEMENT.
Men are to wear dress pants, shirts and ties. Women are to wear dresses, dress pants or skirts, with blouses, dress shirts or sweaters. Students are NOT to wear such items as jeans, leggings, sweatpants, shorts, cut-offs, sweat shirts, hoodies, T-shirts, tank tops, halter tops, off the shoulder or strapless tops or clothing with rips/tears. No hats.
A **SHORT** white lab coat will be worn at all times unless directed otherwise by the preceptor.
- **SHOES:** Wear closed toe dress shoes. No tennis shoes, clogs, sandals, flip flops or shoes with heels > 2".
- **JEWELRY:** Watches, wedding bands and/or engagement rings are permissible as appropriate.
No excessive bracelets or necklaces.
Earrings - no more than two earrings per ear, no dangling or oversized earrings. No ear lobe stretching (gauging).
No other visible body piercings are permitted.
- **NAILS:** Fingernails should be kept trimmed and without nail polish.

- **TATTOOS:** No visible tattoos (must be covered during work hours).
- **PERFUME / AFTER-SHAVE:** No excessive or heavy perfumes or after-shaves/colognes.
- **HAIR:** Must be a natural color. Hair should be clean and arranged so as not to interfere with patient care.
- **NAMETAG:**
Which identifies you as a SFU PA student is **mandatory** at all times, and must be worn on either your lab coat or clothes while at the clinical site. The ID must be worn at eye level with name and photo visible at all times.
- **NO GUM CHEWING OR USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE CLINICAL SETTING.**
- **PERSONAL USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA** (cell/smart phones, iPods, iPads) **IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE CLINICAL SETTING. MEDICAL USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA REQUIRES PRIOR PRECEPTOR APPROVAL.**
- * If the clinical site has established policies and practices regarding dress, the site's policies supersede those of SFU PA Department.

Clinical supervisors, preceptors, or PA Department faculty reserve the right to ask a student who is NOT appropriately dressed to leave the clinical site. This may result in the student being required to appear before the Performance Review Committee which could possibly interfere with completion of the Program and/or graduation.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Rationale

Those employed in the field of healthcare are entrusted with the safety, health, and welfare of patients and work in settings which require that sound ethical behavior and good judgement be exercised. Some majors within the School of Health Sciences will even have the ability to prescribe and / or have access to controlled substances within their chosen profession therefore requiring an absolute commitment to these principles.

The use of illicit drugs, non-prescribed drugs or impairment due to alcohol consumption can diminish the student's ability to learn in the classroom as well as their ability to provide adequate and appropriate care in the clinical setting. Therefore the use of illicit drugs, non-prescribed drugs and / or being under the influence of alcohol in the classroom or clinical setting will not be tolerated.

Clinical facilities that serve as educational and training sites for students require that every department verifies that each student has a negative drug and / or alcohol screen prior to scheduling students at their facility. Additionally, many licensing agencies require individuals to pass a drug screen as a condition of licensure and / or employment. Clinical rotations / field experiences / internships are a required element of all programs within the School of Health Sciences. It is thus in the interest of both the students and the School of Health Sciences to identify any barriers to a student completing the clinical education requirements to allow the student to graduate with a degree within the School of Health Sciences.

In keeping with the Safe Harbor policy found in the Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy in the University's Student Handbook, any currently enrolled School of Health Sciences student who brings their own use, addiction or dependency to University officials or academic department / program personnel at least **three days prior** to student notification of any

drug / alcohol testing or prior to any conduct sanctions and seeks assistance will not be immediately dismissed from the health science major. A written action plan between the academic department / program and student will be created. This plan may include, but not be limited to a mandated leave of absence to complete a certified drug treatment program, conditions of readmission / continuation in the health science major, and additional drug screenings performed at cost to the student. Failure to follow the action plan will nullify the Safe Harbor protection and lead to dismissal of the student from the health science major except for the B.S. in Health Care Studies major, which does not require clinical experiences.

SHS Drug and Alcohol Policy and Procedures

1. Any student within the School of Health Sciences who violates the Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy in the University’s Student Handbook for example, by possessing an illicit drug substance in University housing, will be required to submit to appropriate drug or alcohol testing.
 - a. Students who are involved with any violation of the University’s Illegal Drug Policy will be required to submit to drug testing as soon as possible, but no later than three days following the incident. The student will be responsible for the cost of testing in this incident.
 - b. Students exhibiting signs of excessive alcohol consumption will undergo a field sobriety test performed by the University Police Officers or other appropriate law enforcement personnel. Any student that does not pass the field sobriety test will be required to be transported via Emergency Medical Services (EMS) at the student’s expense for medical attention, including a blood alcohol content level.

2. Depending on their academic major, students may be required to submit to drug screens prior to admission to and / or progression into the professional portion of the academic major and / or prior to or during clinical experiences. Students should be prepared for drug or alcohol testing at any point in their education and must comply when a test is scheduled.

3. Drug screens will be scheduled by the academic department / program as needed and / or required by clinical sites or when use is suspected.
 - a. If the student is taking a prescribed substance, they are required to disclose the prescription information to the testing site personnel *prior to the testing*.
 - b. Students subsequently must provide written documentation from their licensed health care provider to the testing site that performed the screen within two business days that there is a medical necessity for the medication.
 - c. Failure to submit appropriate documentation to the testing site from a licensed health care provider for medical necessity for the medication will result in the test being considered a “positive” result.
 - d. Despite a medical necessity for taking this medication, the student may not be able to attend clinical experiences if this medication impairs the student’s ability to appropriately function and meet the physical and cognitive functioning required for the safety of the student and patients. A decision regarding the student’s ability to participate in clinical experiences will be made at the academic department / program level utilizing each department’s / program’s current student review processes.
 - e. Students are able to request a medical leave of absence if they believe that a medical condition and its subsequent treatment would prohibit them from appropriately functioning in their role as a student health care provider.

4. Drug testing may be performed through any of the following methods:
 - a. Urine drug testing
 - b. Hair follicle testing
 - c. Clinical facility policy, if applicable

5. Students will be notified about associated fees for required drug screens from their respective academic department / program. Students will be responsible for the cost of all screens, either individually or through an academic department / program designated budget line that includes student fees for that purpose.
6. If screening for alcohol use is warranted, screens will be performed by obtaining a blood alcohol content level. The student will be responsible for the cost of any testing related to suspected alcohol use or abuse.
7. The program director, program or any School of Health Sciences faculty and clinical preceptors / facility reserve the right to request a drug or alcohol screen when use is suspected.
 - a. If a student appears to be impaired, they will be removed from the clinical experience, class, or activity immediately.
 - b. Any faculty member or clinical preceptor / facility who suspects alcohol impairment or use of illicit or non-prescribed drugs may require that the student submit to an alcohol or drug screen. This testing could be scheduled on the same day as the suspected incident, especially if alcohol use is suspected. The student will be responsible for the cost of testing in this incident.
 - c. If an incident occurs on campus with suspected excessive alcohol consumption, the University Policy will be contacted to perform a field sobriety test. Any student that does not pass the field sobriety test will be required to be transported via EMS at the student's expense for medical attention, including a blood alcohol content level.
 - d. If the clinical preceptor / facility suspects any impairment due to drugs and / or alcohol, the academic department / program is to be notified immediately. The scent of alcohol on the breath while at a clinical site will also not be tolerated. Testing may occur according to the School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol policy or the clinical facility's policy, if appropriate.
8. Failure to complete a drug or alcohol screen which has been scheduled by University personnel and / or the student's department faculty or clinical preceptor / facility will be considered as a positive result.
9. Students within the School of Health Sciences will sign a Department / Academic Program Drug and Alcohol Policy Contract and Consent form with a waiver of liability releasing the results of any drug or alcohol testing information to the academic department / program and any clinical site that may require the reported results.
 - a. Failure to sign this form will result in automatic dismissal of the student from the School of Health Sciences major except for the B.S. in Health Care Studies major, which does not require clinical experiences.
 - b. Students who are licensed professional nurses will also be directed to the Volunteer Recovery Program (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs Professional Health Monitoring Programs) which offers the eligible professional an alternative to board disciplinary action from becoming a permanent part of their professional licensing record.
10. If the result of the drug or alcohol screen is positive as determined by the appropriate Medical Review Officer at the testing site, the Department Chair / Program Director or an appointed designee will be notified in writing of the results of the drug screen, typically within two business days. The results of any testing completed off campus will be sent to the University Student Health Center and then forwarded to the Department Chair / Program Director or an appointed designee as outlined.
11. Students who do not pass a drug or alcohol screen and / or fail to get a drug or alcohol screen when scheduled by University personnel and / or the student's department faculty or clinical preceptor / facility will be dismissed from their major within the School of Health Sciences and are prohibited from changing majors to any other School of Health Science major except for the B.S. in Health Care Studies major, which does not require clinical experiences. Students who are licensed professional nurses will also be directed to the Volunteer Recovery Program which offers

the eligible professional an alternative to board disciplinary action from becoming a permanent part of their professional licensing record.

12. Any student that has a positive drug or alcohol screen will be referred for evaluation and treatment to an appropriate chemical dependency program. The University Student Health Center will provide a referral list of programs in the regional area, if needed. The student is responsible for any costs associated with the counseling and treatment in the chemical dependency program.
13. In addition to University or School of Health Sciences sanctions, students are subject to all legal sanctions under federal, state and local law for any offenses involving under-age drinking, driving while under the influence/driving while intoxicated or with the sale, manufacture, distribution, possession or use of illicit/non-prescribed drugs.

SHS Drug and Alcohol Testing Process

1. Testing times for academic department / program screens will not be announced in advance.
2. The School of Health Sciences utilizes a strict chain-of-custody system to ensure minimal possibility of tampering with the specimen from the time of announcement of the testing through its collection to the time of testing in the laboratory. To that end, if the testing takes place at a site on the Saint Francis University campus, the student will be escorted to the testing area by department / program personnel and will remain at the testing area until the appropriate specimen is obtained.
3. Student Health Center Process
The following drug and alcohol testing process will be utilized for any testing completed through the DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness and the Student Health Center. The Student Health Center recognizes that the School of Health Sciences students are required to have drug screens performed as outlined by the academic department / program. There may also be times as outlined in the School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy that testing be completed for suspected drug and / or alcohol use. To that end, the following procedures and policies for testing completed by the Student Health Center will be in effect:

Student Health Center Scheduling of Testing

- a. The School of Health Sciences academic department / program will contact the Student Health Center at least two (2) weeks prior to schedule the timing of drug testing that includes testing the entire class cohort.
- b. The School of Health Sciences academic department / program will schedule drug screenings as a class, whenever possible. Individual testing for drugs and / or alcohol will be completed based on extenuating circumstances and / or when requested due to suspected use.
- c. The School of Health Sciences academic department / program will inform their students of the need and timing of any drug and / or alcohol testing.
- d. The School of Health Sciences academic department / program will provide a copy of this drug and alcohol testing process to student donors to include notification of the following:
 - 1) Student donors must present photo identification at the time of testing
 - 2) Student donors should be instructed by the academic department / program not to over-hydrate once the testing time is announced to avoid a “dilute” testing result. Student donors should be instructed not to drink more than 8 ounces of water every 30 minutes up to 5 times (40 oz.)
 - 3) Student donors will be required to provide a list of prescribed medications the student is taking as part of the intake process prior to drug testing
 - 4) Student donors will need to review and sign the Student Health Center Drug / Alcohol Screen Consent form the day of testing (See Appendix A)

- 5) If an observed urine drug screen is scheduled, the process includes the need to monitor the urine specimen collection. This process will include the presence of a Student Health Center designee that will serve as a monitor based on the gender of choice as chosen by the student donor on the day of testing to be present in the bathroom during specimen collection.

Student Health Center Procedures

- a. Urine sample collection
 - 1) Preparation for urine sample collection
 - a) Ensure supplies are present (test collection kit with cup, color chart, and specimen transport bag)
 - b) Place bluing agent in toilet
 - c) Affix tamper evident tape to soap dispenser and faucet
 - d) Remove garbage can and any other supplies from restroom
 - e) Shut off water valve to restroom
 - 2) Urine sample collection
 - a) Upon the student donor's arrival to the health center, they will be escorted to a waiting area inside the health center to complete pre-testing paper work
 - The student donor will provide a list of current medications to the medical staff as part of the consent form
 - The student donor will then sign the consent to be tested form
 - b) The student donor will remain in this area until their turn and when they feel they are able to give at least a 30 mL urine sample
 - c) The student donor will be escorted to the lab and asked to remove any outer clothing which would include hats, jackets, hoodies etc.
 - d) The student donor will be asked to empty all pockets and place articles on lab counter
 - e) The student donor will be required to present a photo identification card that may be either the student's University identification card and/or another photo identification card, such as a driver's license
 - f) The certified Student Health Center collector will put on gloves
 - g) The student donor will be asked to wash and dry their hands
 - h) The student donor will be asked to pick a test collection kit and examine it to see if it is securely sealed
 - i) Once the student donor agrees the test collection kit is sealed, it is given to the certified Student Health Center collector to be examined for proper seal and expiration date
 - j) The test collection kit will be opened and the bag and test container will be emptied onto the counter by the certified Student Health Center collector and the collection cup will be given to the student donor
 - k) The student donor will be escorted to the bathroom where a Student Health Center designee that will serve as a monitor based on the gender of choice as chosen by the student donor on the day of testing will enter the bathroom with the student donor. The monitor must have completed the Student Health Center's training process.
 - l) Once the sample is obtained, the student donor will hand it directly to the certified Student Health Center collector
 - m) The sample is kept in view of the student donor at all times
 - n) Should the student donor be unable to give at least a 30 mL urine sample, they will be considered to have a "shy bladder"
 - The student donor will then be escorted to a designated waiting area within the health center
 - The student donor will be offered 8 ounces of water every 30 minutes up to 5 times (40 oz.)
 - The student donor may be required to wait up to three hours with periodic attempts to provide an adequate 30 mL urine sample

- The certified Student Health Center collector will document in the remarks section of the custody form the time each attempt was made and whether any specimen was provided
 - If the student donor leaves before the end of the three hour period, it is considered a refusal to test and is subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy
 - When the student donor states they are able to potentially supply a urine sample, another specimen using a new collection kit will be attempted
 - If the volume is adequate (30 mL), the sample will be utilized to complete the testing process
 - If the volume remains insufficient (less than 30 mL), a note of “shy bladder” will be made in the “remarks” section of the custody and control form by the certified Student Health Center collector
 - If any student, including a student with a noted “shy bladder,” is not able to provide a urine sample on the scheduled day of testing, a hair follicle sample will automatically be obtained to complete the testing process
- o) The student donor is then escorted back to the lab to wash and dry their hands
 - p) The volume, temperature, odor and color are checked by the certified Student Health Center collector, which is documented on the designated section of the chain of custody form
 - q) The 30 mL sample is transferred to the test container and security seal is placed over the lid
 - The student donor initials and dates the seal
 - The remainder of the urine sample is discarded down the sink by the certified Student Health Center collector
 - r) The chain of custody form is completed by the Student Health Center designated monitor, the student donor and the certified Student Health Center collector
 - The Student Health Center designated monitor completes and signs the appropriate portion of the custody form
 - The student donor completes and signs their appropriate portion of the custody form
 - The certified Student Health Center collector ensures that all areas of the chain of custody form is completed appropriately and signs the designated portion of the custody form
 - A copy of the chain of custody form is given to the student donor
 - s) The student donor may leave the health center
 - t) The sample will be sent to an offsite certified testing facility
 - u) The results will be kept in the student donor’s confidential medical record at the Student Health Center and also released to the designated academic department / program personnel as outlined on the School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy Contract and Consent form
- b. Hair follicle sample collection
- 1) Preparation for hair follicle sample collection: ensure supplies are present (scissors, alcohol pads, hair clip, security seals, hair specimen collection envelope and specimen transportation bags)
 - 2) Hair follicle sample collection
 - a) Upon the student donor’s arrival to the health center, they will be escorted to a waiting area inside the health center to complete pre-testing paper work unless it is a student with a noted “shy bladder” who is already in the waiting area
 - The student donor will provide a list of current medications to the medical staff as part of the consent form
 - The student donor will then sign the consent to be tested form
 - b) The student donor will be required to present a photo identification card that may be either the student’s University identification card and/or another photo identification card, such as a driver’s license
 - c) The certified Student Health Center collector will put on gloves and clean the scissors and hair clip with an alcohol pad in front of the student donor

- d) The certified Student Health Center collector will prepare the foil for the specimen
 - Remove foil from specimen collection envelope
 - Fold the foil lengthwise
- e) If the student donor has hair in a ponytail or braid have the student donor undo it
- f) The certified Student Health Center collector will obtain the hair follicle sample by
 - Using a hair clip to separate and cleanly part the student donor's hair
 - Moving the top layer of hair out of the way
 - Sliding the scissors under a single row of hair one strand deep and ½ inch wide
 - Pulling the row over the certified Student Health Center collector's index finger and holding it with their thumb
 - Sliding the scissors down the student donor's hair to the scalp and cut the hair
 - Pinching the root ends together and keeping them aligned
 - Making an appropriate cut of hair to collect a specimen with the following characteristics:
 - The specimen is small – about 120 strands of hair
 - The correct amount of hair will measure about one centimeter wide when it is wrapped in foil
 - The hair specimen should resemble the thickness of a pencil
 - The specimen is collected from the crown of the head, where the hair is thickest
 - If the student donor has sparse hair, a few strands are taken from different spots, so it is cosmetically undetectable
 - If the student donor has short, curly hair: cut from different spots on the head, repeat until specimen is the size of a small cotton ball, or about two centimeters in diameter
 - If the student donor has hair that is shorter than 1 inch: body hair may be used with possible sites in order of preference:
 - Head
 - Nape
 - Beard/mustache
 - Underarms
 - Chest
 - Arms
 - Legs
 - Back
 - The hair sample will NOT combine body hair with head hair
- g) The certified Student Health Center collector will finalize the hair follicle specimen to be sent to an offsite certified testing facility
 - Place the hair specimen in the prepared foil
 - Press the sides of foil together while keeping the root ends of the hair sample aligned
 - Root ends should extend ¼ inch beyond the edge of the foil
 - Wrap ends around the foil, do not cut
 - Remove the security seal from the specimen collection envelope
 - Place the seal on the front of the envelope with the bar code facing up
 - Flip the envelope over and wrap the seal around the bottom with the area of initials and date visible
 - Seal the specimen collection envelope
 - Date and initial the security seal making sure the initials run over onto the envelope
 - Sign and date the area marked "Sample Collector"

- The student donor initials the security seal and the specimen collection envelope to certify the hair specimen in the envelope is theirs, that it was cut close to the scalp, and that they witnessed the certified Student Health Center collector seal their hair in the envelope
- h) The chain of custody form is completed by the student donor and the certified Student Health Center collector
 - The student donor will read, sign and date the Donor Certification on Copy-1
 - The student donor must provide date of birth, as well as day and evening contact information
 - The certified Student Health Center collector will make sure the student donor's signature matches the photo identification card and return it to the student donor
 - The certified Student Health Center collector will complete the Collector's Certification on Copy-1 with name and signature (printed and signed), time of collection, and name of delivery service and then will:
 - Fold Copy 1 of the form in half and place it in the large pouch of the specimen transportation bag collection and name of delivery service
 - Place the specimen collection envelope in the small pouch and remove the release liner folding over both openings and seal it
 - Give the student donor the Copy-5
 - Put the sealed specimen transportation bag in the mail for transport to the offsite certified testing facility

Student Health Center Post-Testing Process and Procedures

- a. The Department Chair / Program Director or an appointed designee will receive a written copy of each student's test results by the Student Health Center, typically within two days
- b. Any student with a positive test result will be subject to the School of Health Sciences disciplinary actions as outlined in The School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy and will also be required to complete the following process through the Student Health Center:
 - 1) All positive drug screen results will be reviewed by the Student Health Center's certified Medical Review Officer
 - 2) The student will then be brought into the Student Health Center to have a consultation with the Student Health Center's certified Medical Review Officer
 - 3) The Medical Review Officer will determine if the student will be required to meet with the on campus Drug and Alcohol Educator or be evaluated by an off campus chemical dependency agency. If the student is referred to an off campus chemical dependency agency, the following will be in effect:
 - The student will be provided a list of certified chemical dependency agencies in the region by the Student Health Center
 - All students referred to an off campus chemical dependency agency will follow the treatment plan provided by that facility
 - The Student Health Center must be informed in writing of the expected completion date of the program by the chemical dependency agency
 - The Student Health Center must be informed in writing when the student successfully completes the program, or if the student does not complete the program by the chemical dependency agency
 - The student is responsible for any costs associated with the counseling and treatment in the off campus chemical dependency program and any additional subsequent drug testing performed
 - Students who successfully complete the substance abuse program are required to submit to a minimum of two (2) follow-up random drug testing over a twelve (12) months period
 - A refusal to participate in a substance abuse treatment program and / or follow up drug testing will result in Student Health Center informing the Office of Student Development

- 4) The results of the drug or alcohol screen for each student will be sent to the Department Chair / Program Director or an appointed designee following each testing. A written copy of the results of the drug screen for each student will be sent to this individual by the Student Health Center, typically within two business days.

SHS Drug and Alcohol Testing Results

1. A negative or “clean” drug screen result is needed to participate in clinical experiences and remain within the School of Health Science majors except for the B.S. in Health Care Studies major, which does not require clinical experiences.
2. A “negative dilute” result on a urine drug screen means that the urine was not concentrated enough to determine accurate test results. This result and any result that is reported as “invalid” as determined by the testing site will need to be repeated. Since accurate test results were not initially able to be determined, repeat drug testing will automatically occur as outlined:
 - a. Once the academic department / program is made aware of the test results, an observed repeat urine drug screen will be performed within 24-72 hours. The student may be responsible for the cost of testing in this incident.
 - b. If the repeated urine drug screen is again reported as “negative dilute,” the student will be scheduled to have a drug screen performed through hair follicle analysis. The student may be responsible for the cost of testing in this incident.
3. A positive drug test, including a “positive dilute” result, which is not related to a legally prescribed drug therapy, will result in immediate dismissal from any health science major except for the B.S. in Health Care Studies major, which does not require clinical experiences.
4. A blood alcohol content that is 0.08% or greater that occurs during any scheduled class, lab or clinical rotation / field experience / internship is considered a positive alcohol testing result. If a clinical site has a more restrictive requirement of acceptable blood alcohol content level (less than 0.08%), students will be notified and the site’s policy will be followed. A positive blood alcohol content in either of these situations will also result in immediate dismissal from any health science major except for the B.S. in Health Care Studies major, which does not require clinical experiences.

SHS Appeals Process

All students have the right to appeal any dismissal due to a positive drug test to the School of Health Sciences Appeal Board. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the Dean of the School of Health Sciences’ office within five business days of student notification of dismissal from the School of Health Sciences major. All decisions rendered by the School of Health Science Appeal Board are final.

APPENDIX A

STUDENT HEALTH CENTER FORM DRUG / ALCOHOL SCREEN CONSENT FORM

I hereby consent to submit to a drug and / or alcohol test and to furnish an appropriate sample for analysis in order to meet the School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy.

I understand that refusing to provide or tampering with a collection specimen, or providing false information on a specimen’s chain of custody form, may constitute disciplinary action from my academic department / program according

to the policies outlined in the School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy. I understand that failure to pass the drug test will lead to my immediate dismissal from the School of Health Science majors.

I further authorize and give full permission to have the Student Health Center send the specimen or specimens collected to a certified laboratory for a screening test for the presence of any prohibited substances under the policy, and for the laboratory or other testing facility to release any and all documentation relating to such test to the Saint Francis University Student Health Center. As per the School of Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy, all tests results will also be released to the designated academic department / program personnel.

The following is a list of current medications, including prescribed and over-the counter (herbals, vitamins, etc.) drugs that I am currently taking:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

STUDENT DONOR:

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

WITNESS:

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Policy for Freshman-Junior Years

Students admitted as freshman PA majors must meet the Program Progression Standards for Freshman through Junior Years, including the technical standards, to remain in the major. While it is expected that all required course work will be completed in the three years prior to the didactic year, extenuating circumstances may exist causing a student to request an extension. A written request must be submitted to the Department Chair for approval. Approval of such requests will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Students who have not met the progression standards to move into the didactic year of the Program, if readmitted to the PA major, will be required to decelerate at least one year and meet the progression standards prior to progression into the didactic (4th) year.

Academic Honesty

The Department follows the University's policy on academic honesty guidelines as published in the Student Handbook which is available for review on the SFU website.

Honesty is a core requirement for the profession you have chosen. It is an ethical cornerstone that is required for interpersonal interactions, written and oral communication and all aspects of patient care. Academic honesty is an extension of this and is looked upon as a reflection of your ability to maintain high standards of honesty throughout your development as a physician assistant. Academic honesty is also an essential part of the Saint Francis University experience. Dishonesty in any aspect of the Program is viewed as being unethical and unprofessional as well as being viewed as incompatible with the University's moral tradition.

Types of Academic Dishonesty, including, but are NOT limited to (Also refer to additional examples listed in the University Student Handbook):

- 1. Collaborating with other students on assignments intended to be done individually and/or with other groups for group assignments, unless permitted by the instructor.**
- 2. Sharing completed and graded assignments with other students in your current courses and/or other PA students in courses that you are currently enrolled in or have completed.**
- 3. Memorizing and reproducing test items.**
- 4. Utilization of another individual or organization's material, without appropriately crediting the source through proper citation documentation, regardless of whether the material is copyrighted.**
- 5. Discussing written or practical examination components with a student who has not yet taken the examination.**
- 6. Cell Phones:**
 - ▶ Using a phone to take a picture of the exam pages or computer screen
 - ▶ Using a phone to store information from an examination

- ▶ Text-messaging or emailing examination content
- ▶ Internet searching to look up information online while taking an examination

7. **Any form of Cheat/Crib Sheets**
8. **Accessing programs, files or webs sites** during any examination.
9. **Hats** – to hide crib sheets and prevent instructors from seeing the student’s face while the student’s eyes are looking at another student’s examination.
10. **Having access to examination materials prior to the examination being administered.**
11. **Writing on body parts.**
12. **Copying answers from another student’s examination or allowing another student to copy from your examination.**

Class Attendance Policies

In keeping with the University’s policy on class attendance, students are expected to attend all classes, lab and small group sessions, clinical and required course experiences, as scheduled, as an academic obligation. A student’s grades are based on prompt completion of all assignments, presence for all examinations, reading of required references and participation in class discussions as well as the general quality of work. Instructors have no inherent obligation to provide make-up opportunities for an absence, unless in their judgment, the reason for the absence warrants such consideration or is a Program-approved and/or University-approved absence, as defined below. If a student is placed on financial hold by the University and is not able to register for courses or attend classes, including rotations, this may cause a delay in progression within the PA Program resulting in a potential delay in graduation.

Motivation, enthusiasm and commitment to the study of medicine are directly reflected in the discipline of prompt, regular attendance and preparation for classes. In addition, the Department has an important obligation to maintain a positive rapport with visiting physicians and other health care professionals. These relationships are vital to the ongoing success and development of the Program and the support of the clinical rotation experiences. Attendance at all classes, labs, seminars, small group discussions, clinical experiences and any other activities designated by the Department faculty is expected.

The following general rules of attendance for all courses offered by the PA Program will be enforced:

The Program expects each student to attend all classes and activities designated as part of the course requirements. Promptness and preparation for each day’s class develops professional attributes that will be necessary to future development as a health care provider. Students are expected to be present at the scheduled time ready to begin class participation. Faculty reserve the right to deny access to the classroom for any student that is late to class and to count it as an unexcused absence.

Students should be aware that scheduled University breaks begin and end the calendar day that is designated by the University. ***It is expected that students will be present for all activities as scheduled the day immediately before and after a break.*** Travel plans should be made accordingly.

Communication between the student and course instructor/coordinator is imperative in relation to absences from class for other than scheduled Program commitments. There are two different types of absences: Program-approved or University-approved absences and unexcused absences. Excessive absences of any type and/or for any reason may require the student to appear before the Program’s Performance Review Committee (PRC). The University also has a

system in place to identify undergraduate students that have been absent excessively from classes, which is outlined in the University's Student Handbook available on my.francis.edu. Students may be reported to the Center for Academic Success for excessive class absences. Any student who continues a pattern of chronic absenteeism may be dismissed from the University immediately and for the entire semester after the semester of dismissal (Fall and Spring semesters). Any student who is dismissed from the University for attendance issues, must notify the Chair of the PA Program in writing about their dismissal. The Program reserves the right to require the student to appear before the Program's Performance Review Committee. Any student who is dismissed from the University for attendance issues, may be required to decelerate, which will cause a delay in progression and graduation, or potential dismissal from the PA Program.

1. Program- approved or University-approved Absences

Planned Absences

While regular attendance is important at all scheduled Program classes and requirements, the Department is aware that at times a student may need to be absent. Any student requiring a planned absence must complete and submit for approval the Program's 'Notification of Absence' form available in the Department. If a student will be missing a scheduled examination, notification of a planned absence must be made at least two weeks prior to the exam; whenever possible. The Department will also assess the length of the planned absence on a case-by-case basis and make a determination if a leave of absence may be more appropriate.

If you need to miss class for military obligation, hospitalization or medical absence due to a documented disability, you must also notify the Director of the Center for Academic Success. For consideration of a University-approved absence, the student needs to present appropriate verification to the Center for Academic Success.

Examples of planned absences may include:

- Military obligation
- *Hospitalization, elective
- *Medical absence due to a documented disability, pre-planned
- Athletics participation
- Absence because of special religious holidays
- Attendance at a wedding, graduation, etc.
- Scheduled appointments (dental, medical, legal, etc.)

* An absence due to any medical condition of three days or longer must be documented in writing by the student's health care provider to include medical clearance to return to classes and clinical experiences, as applicable.

Excused Absences

Excused absences from class, including labs, small group sessions or examinations, may occur as long as a student who will be late and/or absent from class contacts the Department office each day of their tardiness or absence prior to the start of class at (814) 472-3130. Please leave a message in the event that no one is available to take the call personally. All recorded messages left are automatically "time and date" stamped. The message should indicate a reason for tardiness or absence and detail all scheduled activities for which the student will be late or absent so that faculty can be notified. The following will be adhered to for any excused absence:

- Any absence or tardiness impacts negatively on the student's training experience. The student remains fully responsible for mastering any missed material.
- A student who is late or misses an examination (either due to acute illness, tardiness, or Department scheduling) has the responsibility to meet with the course instructor/coordinator to complete the exam as soon

as they return. If missing an exam is due to Department scheduling of a morning clinical experience, the student must present for the exam no later than 1:30 PM upon their return that same day.

- Reasons for excused absence may include:
 - student medical conditions, such as acute illness, hospitalization or medical absence due to a documented disability
 - illness of an immediate family member (spouse, parent, child)
 - death of a family member (spouse, child, parent, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, daughter or son-in-law, sister or brother-in-law, or family member living in the same household); death of anyone other than those listed above (i.e. close friend) will be addressed on an individual basis
 - participation in an official student activity authorized in advance or scheduled by the Program
 - other activities beyond the student's control, if approved by the course instructor/coordinator
- An absence due to illness of three days or longer must be documented in writing by the student's health care provider to include medical clearance to return to classes and clinical experiences, as applicable.

2. Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is defined as any absence from **each hour of class** without prior approval from the course instructor/coordinator and/or lack of proper notification from the student in relation to the absence as noted above.

Unexcused Absences Involving Examinations

- If a student has an unexcused absence from any other class or scheduled activity on the day of an examination or graded evaluation, they will be penalized 10% of the total points (rounded to the appropriate whole point) for the missed examination or graded evaluation.
- If a student does not notify the PA Program office regarding being late for or missing an examination, they will be penalized 10% of the total points as outlined above.
- Students may request an appeal of this penalty if there are extenuating circumstances that occurred. The students must submit to the Program course instructor/coordinator a written request outlining the reasons why they are requesting a waiver from the penalty. Students should address any appeal letter for courses that are taught by adjunct faculty to the Academic Coordinator. Letters of appeal are due within three business days once the written examination or graded evaluation is released. All decisions rendered by the Program in relation to this appeal process are final and binding.

Three unexcused absences will **result in lowering of the course final grade by one letter grade (A to A-; A- to B+, etc)**. Further incidents of unexcused absences may result in additional lowering of the course final grade and/or the student appearing before the Performance Review Committee (PRC). Repeated incidents may be reflected in Department recommendations of the student/graduate.

Audio or Video Taping of Lectures

Any student who desires to audio or video tape a lecture must ask permission of the instructor that is presenting the material. It is the instructor's individual prerogative whether to allow any taping of the session that is being presented.

Student Grievance and Harassment Process

GENERAL AREA: SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

OBJECTIVE #1: OPERATIONS, STANDARDS A3.11 & A3.17d

“The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students policies and procedures for processing student grievances...”

OBJECTIVE #2: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.17g

“The program must define, publish and make readily available to students ... information to include: g) policies and procedures for processing allegations of harassment.”

Problem Resolution

Every organization maintains a protocol for the resolution of conflicts that may arise to assure smooth operation. Adherence to these guidelines is necessary for the prompt resolution of issues and to bring appropriate resources to bear in problem solving. The following steps should be taken in chronological order in dealing with any issue regarding a course or required experience.

1. Think about the issue, is this something you can solve by changing your approach or considering another option. Clearly define what the issue is.
2. Talk to the faculty member in charge of that experience or course instructor/coordinator, including Clinical Education Coordinators for clinical rotations, directly. Explain your situation and specifically request a solution or present options. The faculty member directly responsible is most able to address your concern; they are empowered with the most options. MOST of the problems should be able to be solved at this level.
3. Contact your advisor. Explain what you have done to that point and what the outcomes were. See if they have other suggestions.
4. In the rare instance where the above outlined does not result in an acceptable outcome, contact the Department Chair/MPAS Program Director. The Program Director may be able to suggest other options, however, remember that University policy dictates that the faculty member assigned to the course has final say over issues related to their course.
5. Following the final Departmental decision, any student may also choose to appeal to the Dean of the School of Health Sciences, utilizing the “Student Appeal to the Dean” form. This form will be provided to students who have an adverse decision upheld by the Program. This appeal must be made and received in the Dean’s Office within five (5) business days of notification of the final decision of the Department.

Appealing a Grade

The Department follows the University’s rules for appealing a grade. The steps necessary to appeal a grade can be found in the University catalog under the Academic Policy section on my.francis.edu.

Student Harassment Procedure

The Department follows the University’s rules for processing any complaints of student harassment. Please check the University’s Student Handbook for the policy on student harassment which is available for review on my.francis.edu

PERSONAL POLICIES

Transfer Credit Policy for Freshman-Junior Years

A student who enters Saint Francis University directly from high school may transfer credits from other institutions such as College in High School, Advanced Placement Tests, CLEP, PEP and Armed Forces Course Equivalencies as approved by the University. Such credits do not count toward the student's quality point average at Saint Francis University.

Once a student has matriculated as a freshman in the PA major, the student is not allowed to take any collateral/prerequisite courses required by the PA Program at another institution. All major and collateral/prerequisite courses must be taken through Saint Francis University. This also applies to any repeat of a major or collateral/prerequisite course. Any course that is not a major or collateral/prerequisite course may be taken at another institution; however, requires permission to do so from the appropriate Department prior to enrolling in the course. Please refer to the University policy in relation to "Transfer of Outside Courses into Saint Francis University" under the Academic Policy section as outlined in the University catalog found on my.francis.edu.

GENERAL AREA: SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education.

Withdrawal or Change of Major

OBJECTIVE: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.17e

"The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students ... : e) policies and procedures for withdrawal...."

Withdrawal from the University

Students contemplating voluntary withdrawal from the University should follow the steps as outlined in the University catalog under the Academic Policy section found on my.francis.edu. The official withdrawal process includes the completion of the official withdrawal form, clearing of all financial obligations and returning the laptop. Any student requesting readmission to the Program following voluntary withdrawal will be considered a new applicant and will need to complete the appropriate admission process to be considered for readmission.

Students, who are mandated by the University to withdraw for any length of time from the University, must notify the Department Chair in writing of the circumstances surrounding the involuntary withdrawal within three days of the departure from campus. The Program will review such cases and determine if a leave of absence from the Program or appearance before the Program's Performance Review Committee (refer to page 12) is warranted.

Change of Major

Students, who desire to change their major, should contact their academic advisor and complete the necessary paper work. The process and policy regarding change of major can be found in the University catalog under the Academic Policy section found on my.francis.edu.

Leave of Absence from the University/PA Program

A leave of absence from the Physician Assistant Program is not recommended; however, the Department does recognize that some personal circumstances may give students few options. These are considered by the Department Chair and faculty on an individual basis. Any requests for a leave of absence must be directed to the Department Chair in writing for approval. A leave may be granted for up to one year in length. Students should outline the circumstances for the leave and the duration of the leave to include such items as, first day of absence and expected date of return. If the leave of absence is required for medical reasons, a medical clearance from a health care provider will be required prior to the student's return. If the leave of absence is due to a military obligation, a copy of the military orders should be attached to the leave request.

If a student requests a leave of absence which is approved by the Department, all requirements for the leave of absence and return to the Program will be outlined in writing for the student. Students that are granted a leave of absence may be required to demonstrate competency on a Program exam upon their return and/or repeat course work. The student will be asked to sign their understanding of these requirements prior to the granting of the leave. Please understand that this does not excuse the student from completing the University leave of absence process or excuse a student from observing the University's policy on withdrawal from courses/withdrawal from the University.

It will be the student's responsibility to notify the Department Chair in writing of their intent- to- return date and to fulfill any other requirements as outlined in their original leave of absence agreement.

Any student who does not return on his/her expected date or does not notify the Department of their return in writing, will be considered withdrawn from the Program and forfeit their seat in the class. If an extension of the return date is needed, the student must submit in writing a request to the Department Chair. The Department faculty will review the request and decide whether to allow the extension. Students are recommended to consider all academic and personal factors that will be influenced by a leave of absence prior to making a request, including financial aid and the University's policy on withdrawal from courses/withdrawal from the University.

Refund of Tuition and Fees

OBJECTIVE: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.14g

"The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students ... : g) policies and procedures for refunds of tuition and fees."

All students who withdraw from a class or withdraw from the University are subject to payment refunds as outlined in the University catalog found on my.francis.edu. Please refer to the University catalog for specifics regarding the percentage of refund based on time of withdrawal.

Employment While in the Program

OBJECTIVE #1: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.14h

"The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students ... : h) policies about student employment while in enrolled in the program."

OBJECTIVE #2: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.04

"PA students must not be required to work for the program."

OBJECTIVE #3: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.06

“Students must not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical practice experiences.”

The Faculty does not advise outside employment while in the didactic and clinical phase of the MPAS Program. Faculty recognize 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 obligations. It is further expected that work obligations will not interfere with the student’s learning progress or responsibilities while in the Program. The Department also discourages the student from working at the same site where they are completing clinical rotations.

Physician assistant majors are not required to work for the PA Program. Although students may volunteer to work for the Department as a peer tutor, student workers will not substitute for faculty or administrative and technical support staff. During the supervised clinical practical experiences, students will not substitute for clinical or administrative staff. Any student on a clinical experience who is being required to primarily fulfill job duties of a certified physician assistant or administrative staff person must notify the appropriate Clinical Education Coordinator of the situation. Each report will be fully investigated by the Program and suitable action will be taken.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Resources

GENERAL AREA: SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

OBJECTIVE: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.10

“The program must have written policies that provide for timely access and/or referral of students to services addressing personal issues which may impact their progress in the PA program.”

The stresses of a demanding program such as the Physician Assistant Program may cause the student to suffer from symptoms of various psychosocial difficulties. The following are resources that may provide assistance:

Identification and Prevention:

1. Faculty Advisor conference per semester
2. Discussion and observation by community preceptors
3. Discussion and observation by Department faculty
4. Regular discussion in Departmental meetings

Treatment Methodology:

1. Individual counseling from the University Counseling Center
2. Student Health Center
3. Use of community resources, such as:
 UPMC Altoona Center for Behavioral Health. . . .814-889-2141
 UPMC Altoona Community Crisis Center. . . .814-889-2279 (800-540-4690)
 Cambria County Crisis Center814-535-8531 (877-268-9463)
 Or other area psychiatrists or psychologists of the student's choice.

Should the student be directed to seek psychiatric or psychological services or other counseling by the Department Chair, the student may be required to present documentation of attendance at said sessions and/or submit a letter of certification of fitness to return to duty as a physician assistant student.

Saint Francis University Counseling Center and Student Health Center are available free of charge to all full-time students. Students are responsible to provide payment for services rendered by agencies outside of Saint Francis University.

Causes for Disciplinary Action and Potential Dismissal from the Program

OBJECTIVE: OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.17e

"The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students ... : e) policies and procedures for ... dismissal."

All of the following offenses are serious violations of conduct and will engender swift disciplinary action or possible dismissal from the Program. This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

1. Cheating or plagiarism.
2. Forgery; altering or misuse of Department and/or medical documents or knowingly furnishing false information.
3. Misrepresentation of oneself as a graduate of the Program or in a capacity which exceeds the student's level of training.
4. Obstruction or disruption of the educational process or other University functions while on or off University property.
5. Physical or verbal abuse or the threat of physical violence against a University member or member's family.
6. Entry into an unauthorized area of University property or the property of a University member.
7. Theft or non-accidental damage to University property.
8. Possession of explosives, dangerous chemicals, or deadly weapons on University property without proper authorization.
9. Engaging in lewd, indecent, or obscene behavior on University property or at a University sponsored event or clinical site.
10. Use, possession, sale or provision to others of controlled or unlawful substances.
11. Soliciting or assisting another to do any act which could subject a student to discipline as cited in this section.
12. Any time a student has proven to be a danger to patients or has deficiencies in patient care.
13. Any student behaviors that do not reflect the philosophy of the Department and that are considered by the faculty to be actions unbecoming of a St. Francis University Physician Assistant student.
14. Any violation of the University's or Department's Policy on Academic Honesty.
15. University suspension of student by Office of Student Development.

Use of Social Media

Many forms of social media exist in society today. While there are distinct advantages to staying connected and informed, it is essential that the use of this media does not bring harm.

Harm to self – All students in the PA Program share the same goal, to become a respected member of the physician assistant profession. Posting inappropriate content in an open forum can negatively impact this goal. In recent years, it has become commonplace for employers to conduct a web search in an attempt to learn more about prospective employees. Inappropriate photos or comments posted for all to see can mean the difference between finding a good job and unemployment.

Harm to the Department – Saint Francis University MPAS Program has maintained an excellent relationship with the surrounding community for many years. There are many medical professionals in the surrounding area who go to great lengths to offer their expertise and skills, both by lecturing during the didactic year and/or by precepting didactic and clinical year students. The posting of defamatory comments about these individuals, their staffs or their facilities as well as any Program faculty and staff, could potentially cause great damage to the strong relationship that has been forged over the years. This, in turn, could deter their future involvement with the PA Program, as well as that of their colleagues. Should a student have a negative experience with any guest lecturer, clinical preceptor, Department faculty or staff member, it should be brought to the immediate attention of the Department Chair.

Harm to Patients – While it is human nature to want to share interesting experiences, a patient’s right to privacy must be protected at all times. In accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), patient information such as name or address must NOT be shared. It is, however, permissible to share a small amount of information which is not so specific as to identify the patient in question. For example, it would be inappropriate for a student to post and/or announce “I saw a 96 year-old patient at Windber Hospital yesterday and he has colon cancer.” However, if you remove identifying characteristics such as, “I saw a patient with colon cancer;” this could be an acceptable posting. If a student is uncertain about a particular scenario, please speak with their academic advisor.

These guidelines on social media are simply meant to clarify and not to supersede those of the University.

INFORMATION ABOUT PA PROFESSION

Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession

Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession resulted from a collaborative effort by the National Commission on Certification of Physicians Assistants (NCCPA), Accreditation Review Commission for Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA).

This document contains a set of basic competencies that all physician assistants are expected to acquire, develop and maintain throughout their chosen career. The professional competencies discuss the categories of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement and systems-based practice. This document should be read for further understanding of the life-long competencies expected from you for your chosen profession.

This document may be accessed at: <https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PA-Competencies-updated.pdf>

NCCPA Task Areas

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is the regulatory body for preparation and administration of the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) exam. The Task areas include knowledge and cognitive skills areas that are identified as important to PA practice. The didactic and clinical phase curriculum is designed to ensure exposure to each of these vital task areas which include:

- history taking and performing physical examinations
- using laboratory and diagnostic studies
- formulating most likely diagnosis
- health maintenance
- clinical intervention
- pharmaceutical therapeutics
- applying basic science concepts

For a more detailed description regarding the knowledge and cognitive skills for each of the above areas, please review the information at the following link:

<http://www.nccpa.net/ExamsContentBPTasks>

NCCPA Organ System Disease List

The NCCPA also maintains a list of organ systems that serve as a guide of diseases, disorders and medical assessments that provide a basis for examination preparation. The didactic and clinical phase curriculum is designed to ensure exposure across all organ systems to include the majority of the specific entities outlined in this detailed listing.

The following provides a link to the full document and should be read for further understanding of the depth and breadth of knowledge that will be expected from you during the didactic and clinical phase of the Program as well as for life-long learning as a graduate.

<http://www.nccpa.net/pance-content-blueprint>

Professional Agencies and Regulatory Bodies

A. American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)

The AAPA is the national professional organization of Physician Assistants. Its membership includes graduate and student physician assistants as well as affiliate membership for physicians and physician assistant educators. The Academy provides a wide range of services for its members from representation before federal & state governments & health related organizations, public education, pamphlets and brochures, insurance and financial programs, and employment assistance. Student membership is highly recommended and currently consists of a flat membership fee that provides membership until four months after graduation. Please see the AAPA Web site at www.aapa.org for a complete description of fees, services and benefits.

B. Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (PSPA)

The PSPA is a state constituent Chapter of the AAPA. Currently there are fifty-seven constituent chapters (fifty-states, District of Columbia, Guam and the federal services). The state Physician Assistant Society works in concert with the national American Academy of Physician Assistants to further issues concerning all Physician Assistants.

Student membership is available in the PSPA Society. As a student attending a Pennsylvania school, you are strongly encouraged to join the PSPA. Membership benefits include reduced student rate for the October state conference,

eligibility to become one of two student members on the PSPA board and eligibility for a scholarship offered in the final year of physician assistant training. Please see the PSPA Web site at www.pspa.net for further information.

C. National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)

All graduates of Physician Assistant Program's accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc (ARC-PA) are eligible to sit for the national boards offered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

The NCCPA offers the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) exam. PANCE is a 300-question, multiple-choice exam that is prerequisite for licensure in all states. This examination is being offered 50 weeks out of the year and is administered in a computer-generated format.

Please see the NCCPA Web site at www.nccpa.net for further information.

D. State Registration

The majority of states have state regulations governing Physician Assistants. The Graduate Services section of the Department's Web site contains information about and Web links in regards to state registration.

Most states require registration through the State Board of Medical Licensure prior to the start of employment. Students are encouraged to check with the specific State Board of Medicine for current requirements and an application.

Reviewed/Revised: May 2018