UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES DEGREE PROGRAM

STUDENT HANDBOOK
CLASS OF 2028

Disclaimer

This Student Handbook will be your primary source of information for the Program. The Program expects you to refer to it before asking or emailing a question, and it reserves the right to modify this handbook during enrollment.

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UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM
Student Handbook – Class of 2028

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This handbook contains policies and requirements governing academic performance and student conduct for students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program (Program) within the School of Health Sciences (School) at the University of the Pacific (University or Pacific). It is the responsibility of all students to be knowledgeable about Program, School, and University policies. Students are advised to refer to University resources for additional information and materials. These policies apply to all aspects of the student's academic progress and personal conduct for the duration of their enrollment. Some policies are unique to the Program and are designed to promote standards for academic competence, professional discipline, and personal responsibility. The Program reserves the right to set policies and requirements that are more stringent than University policy. They represent the parameters of achievement and behavior that the faculty expect of all students.

The Program and the University reserve the right to make changes, at any time, to this handbook or admission requirements, graduation, tuition, fees, and any rules or regulations. The University maintains the right to refuse to enroll or matriculate a student deemed by the faculty to be academically incompetent or otherwise unfit or unsuited.

Continuation of Program enrollment implies the student's agreement to comply with all provisions listed in this handbook and any future amendments, without requiring an additional attestation page.

Non-discrimination Policy

It is University policy to admit qualified students irrespective of race, age, gender, color, creed, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. Students must possess the academic credentials and professional attributes deemed essential by the respective program admissions committee to be considered for admission to any program.

ACCREDITATION

University of the Pacific

The University of the Pacific is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). WASC reaffirmed Institutional Accreditation in 2019.

Physician Assistant Program

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) has granted **Accreditation-Continued** status to the **University of the Pacific Physician Assistant Program** sponsored by the **University of the**

Pacific. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA *Standards*.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the *Standards*. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be **March 2031**. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation *Standards* and ARC-PA policy.

The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-university-of-the-pacific/.

SECTION 2 MISSION, GOALS, AND COMPETENCIES

Mission Statement

The mission of the Physician Assistant Program at the University of the Pacific is to provide students with an exceptional learning-centered educational experience that will produce highly qualified, compassionate healthcare professionals committed to life-long learning and leadership in their careers and communities.

Goals

The Program's goals are to graduate PAs who have a thorough education, training, and experience in:

1. Apply medical knowledge and clinical skills in patient-centered practice.
2. Apply systems-based practice principles to patient care
3. Model professionalism and leadership
4. Model commitment to life-long learning

Competencies

Location and Evaluation of the Program's Competencies
Didactic and clinical courses address all or some of the following six domains. Enriched pedagogical tools and clinical experiences provide fundamental and patient-specific instruction.   Competency assessment is conducted through multiple-choice examinations, individual and group projects, practical examinations, standardized patient encounters, clinical encounters, and preceptor evaluations. Final competency is assessed through the program's summative assessments.

Domain 1: Medical Knowledge Competencies
1.1 Apply principles of evidence-based medicine
1.2 Distinguish pathophysiology or patient-specific factors for common medical and surgical conditions
1.3 Differentiate the clinical presentation and management of common medical and surgical conditions across healthcare settings and care levels
1.4 Indicate disease prevention and health promotion principles

Domain 2: Patient Care Competencies
2.1 Provide patient-centered care as part of a healthcare team
2.2 Obtain an accurate patient history and physical examination
2.3 Discriminate appropriate differential diagnoses
2.4 Compare diagnostic and therapeutic interventions in a patient-centered approach
2.5 Perform procedures appropriate to the scope of practice
2.6 Implement health promotion and disease prevention interventions

Domain 3: Practice-Based Learning and Improvement Competencies

3.1 Demonstrate appropriate self-reflection and critical curiosity.

3.2 Locate, appraise, and recognize how to integrate evidence from scientific studies into clinical practice

3.3 Recognize and address personal biases

3.4 Analyze and propose solutions for practice-based factors to improve patient care

3.5 Recognize and address gaps in medical knowledge

Domain 4: Interpersonal and Communication Skills Competencies

4.1 Create and sustain an ethically sound therapeutic relationship with patients

4.2 Adapt communication style to the context of the interaction

4.3 Work effectively within a healthcare team

4.4 Demonstrate emotional stability, respect, and compassion during interactions and in communication

4.5 Effectively relay accurate and adequate clinical information (verbal and written)

4.6 Provide patient education in accordance with health literacy levels

Domain 5: Professionalism Competencies

5.1 Demonstrate effective leadership skills

5.2 Demonstrate professional interactions with physicians and other healthcare providers

5.3 Demonstrate commitment to ethical behavior

5.4 Demonstrate sensitivity to patients' culture, age, gender, abilities, and autonomy

5.5 Recognize healthy behaviors to achieve work-life balance to avoid provider burnout

5.6 Recognize legal and regulatory requirements for PA practice

5.7 Demonstrate personal, professional, and intellectual integrity

Domain 6: Systems-based Practice Competencies

6.1 Function effectively within different healthcare settings

6.2 Recognize cost-conscious healthcare practices

6.3 Recognize components of systems-based analysis to improve patient care

References/Resources:

1. Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession. Originally adopted 2005; revised 2012. https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PA-Competencies-updated.pdf.
2. Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant. Notes to Programs. Spring 2019. http://www.arc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Standards-5th-Ed-Sept-2019-fnl.pdf.
3. Core Competencies for New Physician Assistant Graduates. Physician Assistant Education Association. https://paealearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Core-Competencies-for-New-PA-Graduates_FINAL_061918.pdf Accessed January 2020.

SECTION 3   PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS

PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS

To complete the PA program, the student must be able to achieve and maintain certain technical standards of knowledge and skill. The technical standards in this document apply to satisfactory performance in all academic and clinical coursework, as well as the fulfillment of non-academic essential functions of the curriculum involving physical, cognitive, and behavior factors that are essential to a professional clinical practitioner.

More specifically, a student in the Physician Assistant Program must have adequate abilities and skills in the following five areas: 1) Observation, 2) Communication, 3) Sensory and Motor Function, 4) Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities, and 5) Behavioral and Social Attributes.

1. **Observation:** The student must be able to observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to chemical, biological, anatomic and physiologic sciences, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms. A student must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and other sensory modalities. A student must be able to integrate all information visually and through the other senses.

2. **Communication:** A student must be able to communicate effectively, sensitively, and rapidly in English with patients and members of the healthcare team. A student must be able to elicit information from patients, perceive nonverbal communications, and describe changes in mood, activity, and posture. Communication includes not only speech but writing, reading, interpreting tables, figures, graphs, and computer literacy.

3. **Sensory and Motor Function:** The student must have sufficient sensory and motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. The student will be required to coordinate both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of hearing, touch, and vision. More specifically, the student must be able to exercise such fine motor skills as to adequately perform laboratory tests, including but not limited to wet mount, urinalysis, and gram stain. The student must exercise such a level of dexterity, sensation, and visual acuity to accurately complete such processes as administering intravenous medication, making fine measurements of angles and size, measuring blood pressure, respiration and pulse, performing physical examinations, and performing therapeutic procedures such as

suturing and casting. The student must be able to hear sufficiently to accurately differentiate percussive notes and auscultatory findings, including but not limited to, heart, lung, and abdominal sounds, as well as discern normal and abnormal findings using instruments such as tuning forks, stethoscopes, sphygmomanometers, and Doppler devices.

A student must be able to transport himself or herself in a manner that provides a timely response in both general and emergency care situations. Moving patients and engaging in some procedures such as CPR will require a necessary level of strength.

4. **Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** A student must have the intellect necessary to quickly analyze and resolve problems. These intellectual abilities include numerical recognition, measurement, calculations, reasoning, analysis judgment, and synthesis. The student must be able to identify significant findings from the patient's history, the physical examination and laboratory data, provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses, and choose appropriate medications and therapy. The ability to incorporate new information from many sources in formulating diagnoses and plans is essential. Good judgment in patient assessment, diagnostic, and therapeutic planning is primary. When appropriate, students must be able to identify and communicate the limits of their knowledge to others.

5. **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** A student must possess the emotional health required for full use of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients. The development of mature, sensitive, effective, and professional relationships with patients and members of the healthcare team is essential. Students must be able to tolerate taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that are desired in a health professional and assessed during the admissions and education processes.

The University of the Pacific will provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities otherwise qualified to complete the essential functions of the curriculum. However, such essential functions must be completed by the student in a reasonably independent fashion. The safety and welfare of a patient shall never be put in jeopardy as a result of an effort to reasonably accommodate a disability.

SECTION 4   DISABILITY SERVICES

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. The rights of disabled students are protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The university's policy is to ensure that no qualified student with a disability is excluded from participation in or subjected to discrimination in any University program, activity, or event.

If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations, please visit pacific.edu/disabilities to contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) for information on how to request accommodations while at Pacific. Requests are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Students who have not previously registered for accommodations can request services by visiting pacific.edu/disabilities and selecting New Students Apply Here. Once registered, students will be asked to provide documentation of their disability and meet with the accommodation specialists to determine reasonable accommodations.

Approvals are valid for one trimester. Students must request accommodations each trimester. Students previously approved for services with SSD can request accommodation(s) letters each trimester by selecting the "**Returning Students Login Here**" link located on **pacific.edu/disabilities.**

The Sacramento Campus - Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the White House, Second Floor. Phone: 916-222-3245. Email: dnuss@pacific.edu. Online: pacific.edu/disabilities.

To ensure the timeliness of services, obtain the accommodation letter(s) from the Office of SSD at the start of the trimester or earlier. Accommodations are **not** retroactive. After the instructor receives the accommodation letter, please schedule a meeting with the instructor during office hours or some other mutually convenient time to arrange the accommodation(s).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. **Students are required to initiate an accommodation request.**
2. **Students are responsible for satisfying all SSD requirements.**
3. **Students are responsible for ensuring the SSD communicates approved accommodations with the program.**
4. **Students are responsible for requesting accommodation renewal for each trimester. Accommodations are not transferable across trimesters.**

Degree Awarded

The Program awards the following degree: Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS).

Licensure Eligibility

Upon completing the 27-month program, graduates are eligible to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) administered by the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA, www.nccpa.net). After passing the PANCE, graduates become certified Physician Assistants (PA-C) and are eligible for licensure to practice as determined by a state's licensing board.

Maximum Hours/Time-Frame Allowed

All students are expected to complete degree requirements after attempting not more than 150% of the number of credit hours of coursework required for the degree program, rounded down to the nearest credit. If it is determined at any time within a student's course of study that he/she will be unable to graduate within the 150% time-frame, the student will become immediately ineligible for financial aid. Please, direct questions regarding this policy to the Registrar and/or the Financial Aid Office. Any disciplinary action resulting in content or course remediation may, in turn, delay a student's completion of the Program and may result in additional tuition and/or fees.

Advanced Placement

Advanced placement cannot be granted in the Program.

Credit by Examination

There is no credit by examination for courses taken at other institutions. All students must take all courses in the program and complete the clinical year of rotations in its entirety.

Transfer of Credit and Credit for Experiential Learning

Transfer of credit is not allowed. No credit will be granted for work-related experiences.

Transfer Students from other PA Programs

The Program does not accept transfer students.

Part-Time Status

The Program does not allow a part-time option for incoming or continuing students. The Program has an integrated lock-step curriculum requiring that all courses each trimester be taken together to facilitate knowledge acquisition and application. Students may not request a part-time curriculum.

Deceleration

Completion of the Program curriculum on a decelerated timeline is only permitted as a recommendation by the Student Progress Committee (SPC). Students may not request a decelerated curriculum, and this SPC decision **cannot** be appealed. Deceleration occurs when a currently enrolled student joins the subsequent cohort. The SPC determines when a student must join a subsequent cohort and, if any coursework must be repeated, what coursework must be repeated. The academic standing of a decelerated student is evaluated on an individual basis.

Repeat Coursework

The Program's integrated curriculum is lock-step. Enrollees complete the curriculum as a cohort. Courses are offered only once per calendar year. The opportunity to repeat coursework is not available unless the Student Progress Committee (SPC) has outlined it as a component of a remediation plan. The SPC determines whether and what coursework must be repeated. At the SPC's discretion, a student may be required to repeat any coursework regardless of the grade received during the initial class attempt. The student's overall GPA will include all course attempts. The student acknowledges that additional tuition and fees may be incurred for repeat coursework and that such coursework may not be eligible for financial aid. The academic standing of a student repeating coursework is evaluated on an individual basis.

Course Registration

Students will be notified when the registration portal for the upcoming trimester becomes available. Students are required to register within **two (2) weeks** of this announcement to ensure adequate time to facilitate financial clearance before the start of the next trimester.

Financial Responsibilities

Students are financially responsible for **all** costs incurred during enrollment, regardless of whether they complete the program. In addition to tuition and fees (programmatic and university), students are responsible for additional expenses, including, but not limited to, living expenses, transportation, books, clearances (infectious disease, toxicology screens, infectious disease exposure assessment and treatment, and background checks), and related costs.

Students must pay or enroll in a payment plan for all required tuition and fees before the start of the trimester. Failure to register and resolve financial responsibilities before the start of the trimester may result in immediate dismissal. If a student is not financially cleared by the Add/Drop date each trimester, the student is automatically unenrolled by the University. If a student withdraws from the university, the student may receive a tuition refund based on when the withdrawal occurs. The University updates the refund schedule annually. It is available on the student accounts webpage. Tuition Refund Schedule

Scholarship Eligibility

Many scholarships require completion of the FAFSA for eligibility. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the FAFSA to ensure eligibility for scholarships. Scholarship opportunities are listed on the University's website. The program website provides a robust list of scholarships.

Holidays

The University of the Pacific observes most federal holidays. For observed holidays, refer to the University calendar. Students on clinical rotations do not follow the University holiday schedule; rather, they follow the clinical site's holiday schedule.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Just as HIPAA binds clinicians from sharing patient information, university personnel are bound by FERPA. FERPA is a federal law that protects a student's right to educational privacy. This policy protects a student's educational records and educational experience. The Program cannot discuss any student's educational experience. As you will experience with families, we understand that this can be frustrating for students when there are perceived inequities in policy application or preferential treatment, when a student leaves the program, or when concerns arise for a classmate's well-being. If you have these perceptions or concerns, you may contact the Department Chair/Program Director at any time.

Student Identification

PACIFIC STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

Student identification is required at all times when on campus. Students will be given a student identification card called the PacificCard. The card provides access for building entry, residential facility entry (if applicable), allows you to check out books from the library, and gain entrance to Pacific sporting events. Additionally, this card can serve as PacificCash, a debit card system, and is attached to your student account. PacificCash allows students to access PacificPrint copy machines, campus laundry facilities, meal plan purchases, etc.

PA PROGRAM STUDENT IDENTIFICATION ON CLINICAL ROTATIONS

The student's University ID badge must be worn at all times while on clinical rotations. Additionally, students must wear a short clinical white coat with the Program patch while at all clinical sites unless instructed not to do so by the clinical site or the Program. Students must always identify themselves as a "Physician Assistant student" to patients and clinical site staff, and never present themselves as physicians, residents, medical students, licensed physician assistants, or utilize previously earned titles (i.e., RN, MD, DO, Ph.D., etc.) for identification purposes.

Students are financially responsible for the replacement of any identification items.

Medical Records

The University of the Pacific Student Health Center collects and retains health records required for enrollment (e.g., immunization and/or blood test documentation, medical history and physical examination forms, and tuberculosis clearance and screening forms) in a secure electronic environment.

The Program utilizes an external agency (Exxat) to verify and store health records and clearance documents required for enrollment in the Program and clinical rotation placement. Students are advised to retain a copy of all documents for their records since various institutions may require them as they progress through their professional careers.

Student Health Admission Requirements

Students must fulfill the requirements listed below before and during the Program in compliance with the Program's health and communicable disease clearance policy.

- Health History and Physical Examination - annual
- Hepatitis B – completion of vaccination series and verification of immunity (quantitative titer required)
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) – verification of immunity (quantitative titer preferred)
- Tdap Vaccine (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis) – within 3 years
- Varicella (Chickenpox) – verification of immunity (quantitative titer preferred)
- Influenza Vaccine – annual
- Tuberculosis (or PPD) Test/Screening – Quantiferon Gold test or Chest X-ray.
    - Documentation of Latent TB treatment, if applicable
- COVID-19 Vaccine – completion of initial vaccination series and current booster
- Meningococcal vaccine – if <22 years old and living in on-campus housing

Recommended

- HPV vaccination series
- Hepatitis A vaccination series
- Submission of all vaccination records – if available (many facilities where you will train require both proofs of vaccination and titers)

Forms are found at http://www.pacific.edu/immunizationcompliance

All health screening information may be made available, as required, to the Program, clinical preceptors, and clinical rotation sites.

Students whose immunizations and titers are not up to date may be removed from classes or clinical rotation(s) until the deficiency is corrected.

Some clinical training sites require students with positive latent Tb test results to be treated. As a result, students who have not been treated may be ineligible to attend specific clinical rotations, potentially delaying completion of the Program.

Students must report any change in their health not noted on their annual physical examination to the Program and Pacific Student Health Services immediately. Students must meet the Program's Technical Standards throughout enrollment. Failure to meet the Program's Technical Standards may result in dismissal from the Program. Failure to notify the Program and University of a change to one's health that may affect patient care or ability to meet Program Technical Standards is a violation of the Professional Code of Conduct and Program policy and thus may result in dismissal from the Program.

Per ARC-PA accreditation standards, the PA Program principal faculty, program director, and medical director must not participate in the medical care of PA students enrolled within the Program, unless in the case of an emergency.

Infectious Diseases and Environmental Hazards

Students enrolled in the Program may be exposed to various infectious diseases and environmental hazards. Students are required to complete the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training before matriculation. This training will address environmental hazards, infectious diseases, and universal precautions. These topics are reviewed in the didactic curriculum. Clinical rotation sites may require students to complete additional, facility-specific training procedures. It is the student's responsibility to remain compliant. Students who are not compliant will be removed from classes or clinical rotation(s) until the deficiency is corrected. No exceptions.

Allergen Exposure

Students may also be exposed to allergens during training. Students with known chemical or latex allergies must inform the Program. While the Program will attempt to reduce exposure to potential allergens, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their exposure and take the necessary steps for self-protection.

Infectious Disease Impact on Student Learning

The presence of an infectious disease may affect a student's ability to complete the required curriculum within the originally designated period. Students may be removed from learning activities, depending on the nature of the disease. Clinical rotation sites establish certain clearance policies; therefore, failure to provide documentation may affect clinical rotation placements.

Infectious Disease Prevention and Protocol

The University's Student Blood, Body Fluid, and Tuberculosis Exposure Policy, as well as the MPAS Blood/Body Fluid Exposure Protocol, will be reviewed with students early in their didactic training and again before clinical rotations. This protocol, along with the necessary documents, will also be available to students through the CANVAS learning system. This policy outlines student responsibilities for prevention, post-exposure protocols, and the financial and learning activity implications.

Financial Responsibility for Post-Exposure Medical Care

Students are expected to submit claims to their medical health insurance. If an exposure occurs, the Program and the University are not responsible for the healthcare costs incurred.

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES
Textbooks

Students may spend approximately $1,000 to $1,500 on required textbooks. The Program is contracted with AccessMedicine, an online database for McGraw-Hill Publishing. Students will have access to most required textbooks through this online resource. Students are expected to have purchased the required textbooks not available online by the beginning of class for each term. The Program recommends that students purchase all required textbooks, as the online text versions vary slightly. Course syllabi and the Program Textbook List also include recommended books that students are not required to purchase, but may wish to have as reference materials.

Students may purchase books through any source. When purchasing textbooks, use the ISBN to ensure you get the correct edition.

Laptop/Tablet Requirements

Students are required to have a laptop computer and a mobile device. Laptop computers provide students access to primary and supportive information to prepare for and supplement the learning process. Pacific utilizes the CANVAS web-based learning management system. Assignments, course material, assessments, and other tools are available for each class through CANVAS. Occasionally, educational activities are completed via Zoom video conferencing. Additionally, the Program utilizes computer-based examinations and survey tools. The campus offers a wireless environment that enables access to information resources via the internet and to proprietary Pacific sites, such as the online library and other University resources. By making these a Program requirement, the cost is accounted for by Financial Aid.

Most laptops made within the last four (4) years with at least 2GB of memory are acceptable and should work well. However, please check that your laptop hardware and software meet each requirement.

Hardware Requirements

PC Requirements
- Processor Manufacturer: Intel or AMD
- Wireless Network Interface Card: 802.11b/g
- RAM: 8GB
- Hard Drive: No minimum size but must have 5GB of available space
- Webcam: At least 720p resolution (Built-in or USB)

- Microphone: Built-in, USB, or microphone jack
- **Suggested** – Headphones (for use during online sessions)

MAC Requirements
- Processor Manufacturer: Intel
- Wireless Network Interface Card: 802.11b/g
- RAM: 8GB
- Hard Drive: No minimum size but must have 5GB of available space
- Webcam: At least 720p resolution (Built-in or USB)
- Microphone: Built-in, USB, or microphone jack
- **Suggested** – Headphones (for use during online sessions)

Software Requirements

Acceptable operating systems

- Microsoft – 64-bit Windows 11 with all current updates (English version)
- Apple – macOS Ventura, Sonoma, or Sequoia

Other Required Software

- Adobe Reader DC (current version)
- An antivirus suite is required (e.g., MacAfee, Norton Antivirus or Symantec)
- Microsoft Office 365 (student version is free while enrolled)

Mobile Processors and Operating Systems – not compatible

Devices that use Mobile Processors (e.g. ARM or Qualcomm Snapdragon) or Mobile Operating Systems are not compatible with University requirements. These include but are not limited to the below devices:

- Chromebooks (Android OS)
- iPads (Apple IOS)
- Microsoft Surface (Windows 10 Mobile)

The Program recommends that students purchase an external source to back up their data. Tablets are also acceptable, provided they meet the requirements.

The Program recommends that students purchase extended warranties or service contracts if hardware fails. Neither the Program nor the University of the Pacific IT supports hardware or software issues.

Medical Equipment

The required medical equipment will range from $600 to $1200, depending on the exact equipment models and/or styles chosen. More expense does not necessarily mean a better product; a student may get more than is needed.

- Otoscope/Ophthalmoscope set w/bulb insufflator
- Stethoscope
- Sphygmomanometer
- Reflex hammer
- Tuning fork 256 MHz
- Tuning fork 512 MHz
- Monofilament
- Measuring tape
- Visual acuity card
- Bandage scissors
- Short student white lab coats (2)

Medical equipment program requirements; therefore, are accounted for by Financial Aid.

Background Screening

The Program requires students to undergo background screenings before matriculation and periodically throughout enrollment. Students have a fiduciary responsibility for the costs associated with the background screening. Background screening will be completed on all students at matriculation and before placement on clinical rotations. Recent violations that have not been adjudicated and positive findings on a background check may result in dismissal from the Program. Applicants are required to be truthful when completing their application in the CASPA system, regardless of time and disposition. Discrepancies noted on the pre-matriculation background screening will be investigated and may result in denial of matriculation or dismissal from the Program. Some clinical rotation sites require additional background screening immediately before the start of the rotation; therefore, students may be required to complete multiple background screenings throughout enrollment.

Criminal Background Screening Procedures

- Upon request of the Program, each student must sign a Release and Authorization Form.
- A non-University entity specializing in lawful background screening will conduct the screening.
- Each student's background may be checked by name, social security number, and license number (if applicable), for up to the prior seven (7) years, and in the state, local, and federal databases for each of their reported addresses showing any activity for that social security number. The screening will include healthcare provider databases. The screening will include criminal records, including arrests and convictions for all offenses of any type, and a review of the registries of reports

of child and dependent adult abuse. The screening may include records that have been reported as expunged and judgments that have been deferred.

- Findings from the background screening may be provided to the student for comment if determined by the Program at its discretion.
- The program's authorized personnel will review and maintain the background screening findings in accordance with FERPA laws and regulations.
- A copy of the student's criminal background screening will be provided to any clinical rotation site that is participating in the academic training of that physician assistant student upon written request from the practice site and/or if determined by the Program in its discretion. The clinical site is responsible for determining whether the student may participate in clinical education activities in the facility, department, or setting.

Toxicology Screening

The Program requires students to undergo toxicology screenings prior to matriculation and periodically throughout enrollment. Students are the fiduciary responsible for the costs associated with toxicology screening. Toxicology screening will be completed on all students prior to matriculation, randomly throughout enrollment, and before placement on clinical rotations. Toxicology screening may be via urine or serum. Some clinical rotation sites require additional toxicology screens immediately prior to the start of the rotation; therefore, students may be required to complete multiple screens throughout enrollment. Matriculation into the program is contingent on student acknowledgement and consent to toxicology screening policies and procedures. Abnormalities noted on the pre-matriculation toxicology screening will be investigated and may result in denial of matriculation. Students with abnormal findings on these screening tests may be referred to the Student Progress Committee (SPC) for review, which may result in disciplinary action.

Students shall not appear at the University or clinical sites under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If a student is suspected to be under the influence while on campus, at a clinical site, or at any other education-related function or location, the student may be required to complete a urine toxicology screen immediately. Students with abnormal findings on these screening tests may be referred to the Student Progress Committee (SPC) for review, which may result in disciplinary action.

Toxicology Screening Procedures

- Upon request of the Program, each student must sign a Release and Authorization Form.
- A non-university entity specializing in toxicology processing will conduct the screening.
- Each student's toxicology screening shall include a 10-drug panel. Urine toxicology screens will include urine creatinine.

- Findings from the toxicology screenings may be provided to the student for comment if determined by the Program at its discretion.
- The toxicology screening findings will be reviewed by authorized program personnel, following FERPA laws and regulations.
- A copy of the student's toxicology results will be provided to any clinical rotation site that is participating in the academic training of that physician assistant student, upon written request from the practice site and/or if determined by the Program in its discretion. The practice site determines whether the student may participate in that setting.

CURRICULUM – CLASS OF 2028		
Trimester I (Spring 2026)	**January 5 – April 16, 2026**	**Units**
MPAS 200	Anatomy and Physiology	4
MPAS 201	Clinical Medicine I – Intro to Pathophysiology	4
MPAS 211	Pharmacology and Therapeutics I	3
MPAS 221	Behavioral and Health Sciences	2
MPAS 231	Professional Practice and the Health System I	1
MPAS 241	Clinical Skills I	4
	Total	**18**
Trimester II (Summer 2026)	**April 27 – August 7, 2026**	**Units**
MPAS 202A	Clinical Medicine II	4
MPAS 202B	Clinical Medicine III	4
MPAS 212	Pharmacology and Therapeutics II	3
MPAS 207	Population-based Care	2
MPAS 232	Professional Practice and the Health System II	1
MPAS 242	Clinical Skills II	4
	Total	**18**
Trimester III (Fall 2026)	**August 24 – December 18, 2026**	**Units**
MPAS 203A	Clinical Medicine IV	4
MPAS 203B	Clinical Medicine V	4
MPAS 213	Pharmacology and Therapeutics III	3
MPAS 223	Mental and Behavioral Health	2
MPAS 233	Professional Practice and the Health System III	1
MPAS 243	Clinical Skills III	4
	Total	**18**
Trimester IV (Spring 2027)	**January 4 – April 23, 2027**	**Units**
MPAS 205	Preparation for Clinical Practice	4
MPAS 206	Professional Aspects of Healthcare	4
MPAS 219A	Advanced Clinical Skills I	2
MPAS 215, 216, 225, 235, 245, 255, 265, 275, 285, 286, and 287 OR 288	Rotation 1	4
	Total	**14**
Trimester V (Summer 2027)	**April 26 – August 6, 2027**	**Units**
MPAS 219B	Advanced Clinical Skills II	1
MPAS 215, 216, 225, 235, 245, 255, 265, 275, 285, 286, and 287 OR 288	Rotation 2, 3, and 4	4 each (12)
	Totals	**13**
Trimester VI (Fall 2027)	**August 23 – December 17, 2027**	**Units**
MPAS 219C	Advanced Clinical Skills III	1
MPAS 215, 216, 225, 235, 245, 255, 265, 275, 285, 286, and 287 OR 288	Rotations 5, 6, 7, and 8	4 each (16)
	Total	**17**
Trimester VII (Spring 2028)	**January 3 – April 14, 2028**	**Units**
MPAS 215, 216, 225, 235, 245, 255, 265, 275, 285, 286, and 287 OR 288	Rotation 9, 10, and 11	4 each (12)
MPAS 218	Periodic and Summative Evaluations/Capstone	4
	Total	**16**

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SECTION 6   STUDENT SAFETY AND HARASSMENT

CRIME AWARENESS AND ON/OFF-CAMPUS SECURITY

Pacific makes every effort to ensure student safety on and off campus on clinical rotations. The University and Program recommend that all students be aware of their surroundings and utilize common sense security techniques (i.e., keeping one hand free, locking your car, and concealing valuables from view in your car.) The University and Program also recommend that students utilize any available safety systems at clinical rotation sites, such as "security escorts to your car." If, at any time, a student does not feel safe in a clinical rotation site, the student is to notify the program immediately. *Students are expected to notify the program immediately if a crime occurs.*

FOR EMERGENCIES, CALL 911 OR 9-911 FROM CAMPUS PHONES

Important Phone Numbers

Campus Public Safety Department (on duty 24 hours/day)...............916.739.7200

Sacramento Fire Department (non-emergency)................................916.808.1300

Sacramento City Police Department (non-emergency)...................... 916.264.5471

Call 916.217.0896 for 24-hour access to Public Safety when campus phone lines are down or during a campus power outage.

Emergency Management

The Campus Public Safety Department is responsible for publishing the Disaster Operations Control Plan, which is the emergency operations plan for the Sacramento Campus. In the event of a non-life-threatening emergency/incident, campus community members should contact Public Safety. For life-threatening emergencies, contact Public Safety and 911. The Dean or the Dean's designee is responsible for coordinating this plan during emergency operations through the Director of Public Safety. This plan is available in hard copy in the Director of Public Safety's office.

For questions concerning safety and security issues, please refer to the Sacramento Campus, Department of Public Safety website: Sacramento Campus Public Safety

For the Annual Security and Fire Safety (Clery) Report, please see the Sacramento Campus, Department of Public Safety website: Sacramento Campus Public Safety

Public Safety Department
2981 32nd St.
Sacramento, CA 95817

HARASSMENT

The University of the Pacific is committed to providing a learning environment free of unlawful harassment. The University abides by federal and state laws that prohibit workplace harassment, including the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, Government Code Section 12940, et. seq., and Title VII of the Civil Rights of 1964, as amended.

The University prohibits sexual harassment, environmental harassment and harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law or ordinance or regulation. All such harassment is unlawful. This policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of Pacific and prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee of the University, including supervisors, coworkers, and preceptors. It also prohibits unlawful harassment based on the perception that anyone has any of those characteristics, or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics.

- Harassment is any behavior by a person(s) that is offensive, aggravating, or otherwise unwelcome to another person.

- Environmental harassment is any severe or pervasive action that results in a hostile or offensive working environment for the recipient (e.g., discrimination, unprofessional relationships, abuse of authority, and intimidating behavior). Environmental harassment is also known as hostile environment harassment.

- Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The conduct need not be motivated by sexual interest, but need only be of a sexual nature to be considered sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is one form of unlawful harassment.

  https://www.pacific.edu/campus-life/safety-and-conduct/sexual-assault-/-title-ix-resources-and-support.html

REPORTING

Students experiencing harassment or mistreatment are strongly encouraged to report the incident to the Program immediately. All reports will be submitted to the University for a protocol-based investigation. Students may also submit a report through the University reporting system outlined in the *Pacific's Title IX Policies and Procedures* link below. Students experiencing harassment may be removed from the environment during the investigation period. During this investigation, students and witnesses may be contacted for further information.

TITLE IX – RESPONSIBLE PARTY – TITLE IX COORDINATOR

The University of the Pacific seeks to promote an environment that is free of Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Retaliation (Misconduct). Misconduct includes sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and gender-based harassment, terms that are defined in the university's policy. The University seeks to educate students, faculty, and staff about the issue of misconduct and to provide a clear path to resolution and correction of prohibited misconduct. The University reserves the right to respond with whatever measures it deems appropriate to prevent misconduct and preserve the safety and well-being of the University community. The University of the Pacific prohibits misconduct in any form. The University is committed to compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Campus SaVE Act, and state and federal sex discrimination laws. Title IX states,

> *"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

This policy applies to all University of the Pacific community members, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, consultants, vendors, and others engaged in business with the University. Every community member is responsible for complying with all University policies and procedures. The University's prohibition of misconduct includes conduct occurring on-campus or off-campus, including online and electronic communication or other conduct, when the University determines it has a substantial interest. University policies and procedures apply to conduct that takes place once a person becomes a student or employee of the University, including periods during academic breaks and between trimesters/academic terms. This policy applies to and protects visitors to the University. Visitors may file a complaint for alleged violation(s) of University policies and procedures committed by members of the University community. University community members may be held accountable for the conduct of their guests.

To report an incident, students may email the Title IX coordinator at titleix@pacific.edu.

University of the Pacific's full Title IX Policy, with appendices, is available at:

Pacific's Title IX Policy and Procedures

SECTION 7 UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENT CONDUCT

School of Health Sciences Student Code of Conduct

Professionalism is equally important to academic progress. School of Health Sciences (SHS) students are expected to demonstrate the legal, moral, and ethical standards required of a healthcare professional and display behavior consistent with these qualities.

Professionalism and professional ethics signify certain scholastic, interpersonal, and behavioral expectations. SHS students must always exhibit professional behavior consistent with the School and department/program expectations. Department/program-specific expectations and requirements are described in the policies and procedures for each academic program. SHS students must consult their program handbooks for program-specific information that applies to them. SHS expects students always to display a respectful and professional demeanor.

The SHS requires its students to follow the Student Conduct/ Tiger Lore Handbook (Tiger Lore), designed to supplement the University's catalog and other related publications. Students are required to read Tiger Lore and keep it available as a reference. It is subject to change at any time as deemed appropriate by the University at its sole discretion. Any such changes may be implemented without prior notice and obligation and, unless specified otherwise, are effective when made.

This Student Conduct Code, which is incumbent upon all SHS students, applies to:

A. Academic performance
  i. All SHS students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward the academic degree to which they were admitted. Refer to the Academic Standing section of the SHS Student Policies and Procedures for the school and university's academic standing criteria.
  ii. Departments/programs within the SHS may have additional specific academic standing or disciplinary action criteria. Students should also refer to their individual department/program's policies for academic standing expectations.
  iii. **Honor Code/Academic Integrity**
  The Honor Code at the University of the Pacific calls upon each student to exhibit a high degree of maturity, responsibility, and personal integrity. All students are required to sign an honor pledge appropriate to the objectives and relationships of the University. Students are expected to:
      - act honestly in all matters;
      - actively encourage academic integrity;
      - discourage any form of cheating or dishonesty by others; and
      - inform the instructor and appropriate University administrator if she or he has a reasonable and good faith belief and substantial

evidence that a violation of the Honor Code has occurred. [Pacific Honor Code](#)

B. Behavior expectations

   i. Cooperate with the orderly conduct of classes.

   ii. Treat others with respect.

      a. Students are expected to treat all patients/clients, university faculty and staff, clinical preceptors/supervisors, healthcare team members, and fellow students with dignity and respect. Students must respect university, SHS, and department/program policies and procedures. Students shall not display disruptive or obstructive behavior in the classroom, at institution (university, SHS, or department/ program) functions, or clinical sites. Students are expected to be able to follow directions and express concerns professionally and respectfully. Conflicts are to be resolved in a diplomatic manner.

      b. Students must be sensitive to and tolerant of diversity in the faculty, staff, students, and patient/client populations.

   iii. Avoid actions that reflect poorly on the school or the professions.

   iv. Demonstrate professionalism in all communications and interactions.

   v. Adhere to all department/program professionalism code of conduct standards.

   vi. Maintain professional confidentiality. Students must respect and keep confidential all private/privileged patient/client, peer, and institutional information, such as patient/client conditions, medical and pharmaceutical records, fee systems, economic information, professional policies, research results, and information from committees on which a student is a member.

   vii. Abide by program or clinical /experiential site dress and hygiene requirements. Attire and personal grooming should not distract from nor compromise the professional integrity of the school or the professions.

   viii. Adhere to the University Honor Code and all university student-related policies outlined in the Tiger Lore Student Handbook. [Student Conduct/ Tiger Lore Handbook.](#) Specific actions that are violations of the Code include theft; vandalism, or inappropriate access to personal property, including offices, desks, computers, or other University property or student property; acts of physical violence or aggression against students, faculty, or staff; inappropriate behavior resulting from mental health disturbances; impairment due to drugs or alcohol; and involvement with drug diversion and illicit drug use.

   ix. Drug Use Policy and Expectations

      a. Evidence of substance abuse or impairment by a student is a reason for immediate sanctions and possible termination from the program due to the unique nature of the health professions. Substances of potential abuse include drugs, chemicals, alcohol, and dietary supplements. Students may be subject to drug screening as a part of the academic program or because of

suspicions or accusations regarding drug abuse. Students refusing to submit to drug testing as requested by the department/program, SHS, or clinical rotation site may be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal or the inability to progress in their academic program until the issue is resolved.

C. Technical Standards
    i. Individual departments/programs have published technical standards relating to performance expectations for their clinical discipline. SHS requires that students work with their departments/programs and the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (if applicable) to meet the published technical standards of their program.

D. The Honor System and Expectations
    i. Established at Pacific in 1958, the Honor Code is intended to maintain and preserve the high standards of personal character and integrity that are vital in academic pursuits. The honor code is described in detail in Tiger Lore. The success of the Honor Code is made possible only by the acceptance and cooperation of every student, staff, and faculty member to maintain its principles and traditions.

Examples of violations of the Honor Code include the following:
        I. Give to or receive from another student information during an examination or other assessment.
        II. Use unauthorized sources for answers during an examination or other assessment, such as a programmable calculator, computer, cellular phone, other electronic devices, cheat sheets, or other methods.
        III. Obtain unauthorized test answers before an exam or other assessment.
        IV. Alter answers on any test, quiz, or other assessment instrument after submitting it to the instructor.
        V. Plagiarize. Plagiarism is defined as the intentional or unintentional use of another's work without recognition of the original author.

Violations of the Honor Code must be reported to the course instructor of record, department/program administration, or an SHS administrator (e.g., Assistant/ Associate Dean of Student Affairs). All students are entitled to due process as outlined in the SHS *Student Affairs Review Process*.

UNIVESITY POLICIES, LOCAL/STATE/FEDERAL LAWS

Rather than publish in this handbook a complete and detailed code of the laws, rules, and regulations that students are required to follow, the University and Program declare the intention to uphold all federal, state and municipal laws applicable and expects all students to abide by the Student Code of Conduct and University policies. At the time of admission, each student agrees to follow such standards. Accordingly, any conduct not consistent with responsible and/or lawful behavior may be considered cause for the University to take appropriate administrative, disciplinary, or legal action.

Additionally, the University acknowledges and actively upholds the adult status of each student with all the rights pertaining thereto and, in accordance with that status, considers each student responsible for his/her actions.

University General Guidelines

The Office of Communications reserves the right to review and approve profile photos and graphic and identity elements of any University-affiliated site.

Profile Photo:	The "P" graphic is reserved for social media accounts administered by the Office of Communications.
Pacific seal:	The seal should not be used as an identity element on social media sites.
Naming:	Refer to the university as "University of the Pacific" or "Pacific." "UOP" is not an authorized variation on the university's name.
Hashtags	Use the general hashtag #UOPacific where appropriate.

Groups that are not officially connected to the University, including student organizations not recognized by the Office of Student Life, may not use Pacific logos or wordmarks on their social media sites. Members of the Pacific community are expected to act with honesty, integrity, and respect for the rights, privileges, privacy, and property of others when using social media.

Registered Student Organizations

Social media accounts representing registered student organizations should be included in the University's social media directory.

User names and passwords should be available to an advisor or other college administrative staff member, or an advisor or administrative staff member should be made an administrator on social media accounts of recognized student organizations.

Recognized student organizations are important ambassadors of the University and are expected to represent Pacific responsibly in all their activities and communications, including social media.

Personal Accounts

Each of us is responsible for what we post on our personal accounts and others' accounts. Our reputations are best served when we make ethical and career-conscious choices about social media use. We should be cognizant that if we identify ourselves as members of the Pacific community on our accounts, our posts and images reflect on the institution.

Program Social Media Policy and Guidelines

Social media are internet-based tools designed to create a highly accessible information highway. They are powerful and far-reaching means of communication that, as a physician assistant student at the University of the Pacific, can significantly impact your

professional reputation and status. Examples include, but are not limited to, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Threads, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, SnapChat, TikTok, Discord, Reddit, and GroupMe.

Students are liable for anything they post to social media sites, and the same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines must be maintained as if they were interacting in person. The following guidelines have been developed to outline appropriate standards of conduct for direct personal communications, social media posts, and online communication, for your future and the reputation of our program:

1. Take responsibility and use good judgment. Incomplete, inaccurate, threatening, harassing posts or use of profanity on postings are strictly prohibited, including but not limited to written posts and emoji symbols.

2. Using social media sites as a venue for venting is inappropriate and unprofessional. Written or photographic posts directed toward institutional or clinical faculty/staff and environmental surroundings are strictly prohibited. (For example, a student posts on Facebook about his frustration with a course instructor (or preceptor) after he is given feedback. The instructor is not identified by name but is identified by title (my course instructor or my preceptor), with negative or derogatory comments. Another example is posting photographs of facilities or any component within a facility with or without comments.)

3. Negative or derogatory posts that may affect the Program's ability to operate are strictly prohibited.

4. Think before posting something, as the internet and email archives can permanently affect your reputation.

5. Anonymous posts will be thoroughly researched to identify the corresponding IP address.

6. Social networking during class, program activities, and clinical hours is strictly prohibited

7. HIPAA laws apply to all social networking, so it is the utmost priority to protect patient privacy by not sharing information or photographs. Example: A student posts heartfelt concern on her Facebook page for a patient she is caring for. The patient is not identified by name, MR number, or date of birth. However, the type of treatment, prognosis, and the time of treatment are provided, and/or personal characteristics of the patient are described making the patient identifiable.

8. Protect your privacy by using privacy settings to prevent outsiders from seeing your personal information, as you may be held liable for postings from other individuals as well

9. If you state a connection to the University or the PA program, you must identify yourself, your role in the program, and use a disclaimer stating that your views are that of your own and do not reflect the views of the University or the PA program

10. All laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material must be followed

11. Consult the Department Chair/Program Director if you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of social networking use.

Failure to follow the above-stated guidelines may be considered a breach of appropriate professional behavior and subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal from the Program.

The Program reserves the right to review social media before admission to the Program and throughout enrollment.

SECTION 9   PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This section contains policies and requirements that govern academic performance and professional conduct for enrolled University of the Pacific Physician Assistant students. These policies are unique to the Program and are designed to promote standards for academic competence, professional behavior and integrity, conduct, and personal responsibility necessary for practice as a physician assistant. They represent the parameters of achievement and behavior that the Program faculty expects of its students as future health practitioners serving the public and consumers. It is the responsibility of all students to be knowledgeable about Program policies. The policies will apply to all aspects of the student's academic progress and conduct while the student is enrolled in the Program. **Continuation of Program enrollment implies the student's agreement to comply with all provisions listed in this handbook and any future amendments, without requiring an additional attestation page.**

The Program is responsible for safeguarding the patient and the public by educating competent physician assistant students. As such, the Program maintains the right to refuse to matriculate or graduate a student, and to remove a student from a clinical experience or rotation who the faculty deems academically, clinically, or professionally incompetent, or otherwise unfit or unsuited for continued enrollment in the Program. Additionally, students must undergo criminal background and toxicology screening before and during enrollment. Positive findings may result in program dismissal or rescinding of an acceptance offer.

The Program-specific policies are in addition to and may be more stringent than the University of the Pacific policies. Please read this section carefully and thoroughly. Students are expected to refer to these policies as needed.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance

The Program requires students to be available to attend class and instructional activities from **8:00 AM – 6:00 PM Monday through Friday, <u>regardless of the posted class schedule.</u>** Due to the nature of the Program, courses, lectures, and exams may need to be moved on short notice. Students are expected to check the Program calendar frequently. Interprofessional education and practice are vital for professional development. Occasionally, community-related activities are required and may occur on the weekend. Should this be required, a notification will be provided in advance.

<u>Students may be required to attend disciplinary meetings, complete remediation, or retesting of academic content during the inter-trimester breaks.</u>

The Program's curriculum is designed to provide the medical education and professionalism training required to be a competent physician assistant (PA). Reliability and punctuality are expectations of professionals in the workplace. Attendance at all classes is considered an aspect of professional responsibility and individual dependability. The Program is fast-paced and builds upon previous instruction. In addition, class discussions and other interactions aid in the development of the PA role. Important information may only be presented once; therefore, the Program requires students to attend all lectures (in-person or remote-synchronous), laboratory activities, clinics, and other scheduled functions. Attendance includes arriving on time and remaining until the class, clinic, or another function has ended. Since attendance is required of all students, formal attendance will be taken.

Tardiness

Punctuality and attendance are markers of professional behaviors and attitudes. Tardiness, early departures, and absence from classes are not conducive to optimal learning for any student in the Program. It is your responsibility and an expectation of professional behavior to arrive on time, be prepared for class on time (with your belongings stowed before class begins), and remain for the entire class period.

Arriving on time demonstrates respect for instructors and peers. Tardiness in the didactic phase of training has been linked to tardiness and other unprofessional behaviors in the clinical phase of training and as a licensed clinician. Therefore, repeated tardiness is considered a professionalism issue. Repetitive tardiness or early departure may result in a referral to the SPC for disciplinary action.

Note: Most state licensing boards require applicants to disclose **all disciplinary actions taken during their** enrollment. Additionally, most state licensure boards request academic and professional probation information on the official Program Completion Verification paperwork. The Program must document when a student has been on Academic and/or Professional Probation and, in most cases, the reasons for probation. Discrepancies between the application and the program's certification may result in licensure denial. Additionally, credentialing agencies often request this information, which could influence an individual's ability to obtain employment clearance. This requirement may last throughout your career.

Late students are fully responsible for the material covered during the time missed.

The Program tracks tardiness across all courses. Two episodes of tardiness shall result in a meeting with the student's faculty advisor. Three episodes of tardiness shall result in an unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences may result in a referral to the Student Progress Committee.

Absences

While it is the Program's policy that students attend all classes, labs, and other Program-related functions, the Program understands that a student may have exceptional

circumstances that might prevent them from attending classes or Program activities. Students are not permitted to take "vacations" during instructional times while enrolled in the program. Students are responsible for all material and examinations missed during their time away.

Assignments due during an approved absence must be submitted before departure unless other arrangements have been agreed upon with the course coordinator. Refer to [Examination Protocol](#) for information regarding missed examinations. Given the nature of interprofessional educational (IPE) activities, attendance is required. If a student misses an IPE event, a score of zero (0) will be assigned for the engagement and post-assessment portions of the event.

Students in the clinical year must attend all rotations and adhere to their assigned schedule. Absences during the clinical year are addressed separately in the Clinical Education Handbook.

Planned Absences

Planned absence requests (> 24 hours in advance) are submitted to the student's faculty advisor. Before submitting the Time Away Planned Absence Request Form, the student must contact the IOR and lecturer(s) for all missed class periods during the absence to determine course activity and/or grade implications. Although an absence may be approved as excused, grade reductions (including a grade of zero (0)) may occur if a required attendance activity (i.e. exam, practical exam, checklist, TBL learning activity, IPE event, or OSCE) is scheduled during the absence. The student must acknowledge and accept course-level implications on the Request form. Absences related to Religious observances shall be addressed on an individual basis. The faculty advisor shall determine if an absence is approved as excused or unexcused.

Unplanned Absences

Illness and family emergencies (i.e., not routine activities that can be scheduled to accommodate a PA student's education and career) are generally the only acceptable reasons for unplanned absences.

Program Notification of Unplanned Absences

Student must immediately notify their faculty advisor of an unplanned absence and the reason (< 24-hour notice {family emergency, the student got sick during the night}). Absence notification should include the instructors teaching any classes missed. If the faculty advisor is unavailable, students must contact the Program via email at PAprogram@pacific.edu or by phone at 916.739.7365. Sending messages through classmates is not an acceptable form of notification.

Excused/Unexcused Absences

The Program monitors student absences. Two unexcused absences may result in a referral to the Student Progress Committee. Students with excessive absences, excused or

unexcused, may be referred to the Student Progress Committee for disciplinary action. The volume constituting "excessive absences" is determined on an individual basis by the faculty advisor and program administration.

Dress Code

Students must maintain a neat and clean appearance, befitting students attending a professional school. Clothing with caricatures, messages, symbols, etc., that can be construed based on societal norms as vulgar, offensive, or contributing to creating a hostile learning environment is considered unacceptable attire. Such attire demonstrates inappropriate professional judgment that is subject to review and action by the Program.

While casual attire is acceptable during didactic training, professional attire may be required for certain situations. Students are required to purchase specific program clothing (polo shirts and clinical skills course attire [Program t-shirt]) to wear during specific program-related events and labs.

Hair should be neatly groomed, and students must be conscious of personal hygiene. Fragrances (perfume/cologne or aftershave) should not be worn. Nails should be short and clean. No acrylic/artificial nails.

Dress Code for Lab Activities

Students are required to purchase specific program clothing for lab activities [Program t-shirt and black shorts/pants]. As lab sessions teach technical and procedural skills necessary for clinical practice, students must dress appropriately for the environment. Long hair must be tied back to prevent obscuring vision. Closed-toed shoes are required unless specifically instructed otherwise by the instructor of record. Name tags must be worn and visible on the left side of the chest. Attire for activities involving standardized patients or the public follows Clinical Activities standards outlined below.

Dress Code for Clinical Activities

On clinical rotations, students must maintain a professional appearance. Expectations include clean, pressed, conservative attire and good personal hygiene, including short and clean nails. No acrylic/artificial nails. Hair must be tied back to avoid obscuring vision when bending over. Jewelry, or body piercings (e.g., loop earrings, septum or lip piercings) that pose a safety risk are prohibited. Male students should wear collared shirts with ties. Female students should wear slacks/skirts with dress shirts or dresses. High-heeled shoes are limited to 2 inches. Closed-toed shoes are required.

Any clothing, hair color, fragrances, jewelry, or body piercings that may cause concern with affiliated faculty, hospitals, or patients should be avoided. Students may be asked to adjust their appearance to comply with the dress code at rotational sites. Specialty rotations or specific training sites may designate other prescribed clothing, such as scrubs and/or tennis shoes.

Short student white coats with university-issued identification badges are required.

Participation in Clinical Activities

Students are not allowed to participate in clinical activities, including observation, as a representative of the University of the Pacific, University of the Pacific Physician Assistant Program, or as a physician assistant student at a clinical site during enrollment unless the Program authorizes and arranges the experience. Participation in unauthorized clinical experiences while enrolled is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the Program. <u>Students are NOT required to provide, arrange, or solicit clinical sites or preceptors.</u>

STUDENT ACCESS TO PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Program offers several mechanisms for students to communicate any concerns. Students complete course evaluations to provide constructive feedback regarding the curriculum in individual courses. Students can discuss concerns with the Department Chair/Program Director during *Dialogue with the Director* meetings, which are scheduled approximately once per trimester. These meetings may also be used to share information on previous survey results with students. In addition to formal evaluation and feedback methods, the Program believes in an "open door" policy so students can discuss any concerns with the Program as desired. Additionally, the SHS Dean holds an annual meeting with students, providing an opportunity for students to comment on program, school, and university concerns.

The Program strongly encourages students to discuss all concerns, including but not limited to curriculum, program personnel, safety, peer-related concerns, and possible Code of Conduct violation(s), with the Department Chair/Program Director before contacting university personnel to ensure a swifter response. Student anonymity will be maintained except where disclosure is required by university policy. Students retain the option to report concerns directly to SHS or the university at all times.

STUDENT SUPPORT
Program Level

Student advising is an essential component of the educational process. Regular meetings with advisors keep communication channels open and enable mentoring relationships to develop. Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor. The Program has an open-door policy increasing student access to faculty for academic, psychological, and/or psychosocial issues. If appropriate, Program faculty may refer students to the School's Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, who can assist with external pressures influencing academic performance.

Students are required to meet with their faculty advisor at least once each trimester to review and address academic, psychological, psychosocial, and professionalism issues. Scheduling this meeting is the student's responsibility. When possible, time will be scheduled to accommodate routine advisor meetings. Students can request non-routine advising appointments at any time under the program's open-door policy. Additionally,

faculty may request additional meetings with a student for academic, psychological, psychosocial, or professional issues. Advising is critical when a student encounters academic or clinical difficulty. Therefore, students are required to meet with a faculty advisor or course instructor if they fail an exam or a course.

University Student Support Services

The University provides local and centralized student services covering all three campuses. Students have on-site access to the registrar's office, financial aid office, student health, and counseling and psychological services. Graduate student academic support is housed on the Stockton campus, but it connects with all students through technology. Program faculty may initiate student service referrals. Students may also self-refer to University student support services for academic, psychological, and/or psychosocial issues. Student Life- Student Services

STUDENT HEALTH

Student health services are available on the Sacramento and Stockton campuses. Telemedicine appointments are also available. Services and clinical hours are available on the university's website. https://www.pacific.edu/student-life/health-and-wellness/services

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

{209-946-2315, ext. 2}

Psychological support of enrolled students is paramount to the Program and University. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize the University's counseling services on the Sacramento and Stockton campuses. Online and after-hours resources are also available. The University counseling services are adept at helping students with both personal and academic psychological issues, including testing anxiety and stress management. Students are advised to contact the counseling office early in the educational experience for support and guidance. The Program may also initiate or recommend student referrals for observed academic, psychological, and/or psychosocial issues.

https://www.pacific.edu/campus-life/student-services/counseling-and-psychological-services.html

Crisis Intervention/Psychological Emergencies: During school hours, Call the number above and ask for an emergency appointment or call 911. After hours, call 209-946-2315, extension 2, option 4. This will transfer you to a psychologist for an immediate consultation or call 911.

Additional information on University student support services can be found on the university website.

CLASSROOM POLICIES
Expectations of Students

Students are responsible for their learning and behavior, the parameters of which include, but are not limited to:

- Abide by the Honor Code at the University of the Pacific
- Follow Program policies as outlined in this handbook
- Preparedness. Laptop computer. Smartphone with Cellular or Wi-Fi abilities
- Punctuality and attendance
- Lecture/Lab attendance and engagement in active learning
- Participation in group discussions, group/team projects, and presentations
- Timely completion of course assignments
- Participation in interactive educational activities, including procedures on each other

Distance Learning Expectations
- Students must be in a private space and plan for uninterrupted time
- Students should do their best to be in an area with a strong internet signal
- Students must use a laptop to participate in class. Cellphone use is reserved for emergencies
- Students are expected to be actively participating for the duration of the educational session
- No pausing live feed, taking unscheduled breaks, or leaving the educational session early
- Keep your microphone muted until called upon
- Keep the camera on unless prior approval is received The mechanism for asking questions is at the discretion of the lecturer

Use of Wireless Devices in the Classroom and Skills Lab

Laptops, tablets/iPads, and smartphones may be used in the classroom for educational purposes only at the discretion of the course coordinator. Using these and other electronic equipment in a manner inconsistent with classroom topics is unacceptable. Instructors will notify students if electronic equipment is required for an in-class activity.

Disruptions in class are considered a professionalism issue and will be addressed individually by the course coordinator or referred to the SPC for disciplinary action. Electronics may be confiscated. The following activities are examples of disruptions:

- Texting
- Cell phone use
- Web surfing
- Checking email
- Playing games
- Online shopping
- AI Note-taking application use

Recording of Lectures

PROGRAM INITIATED RECORDING
The Program does not routinely record in-person synchronous content delivery. However, an individual instructor may record a lecture or discussion for student knowledge reinforcement or grading purposes. These recordings will be available via CANVAS.

REMOTE CURRICULUM DELIVERY
All live remote class presentations and discussions during this course may be recorded. As a student in this Program, please note that your participation in live class discussions may also be recorded. By participating in a live class discussion, you consent to this recording. Access to these recordings will be limited to faculty and students enrolled in the class, and will assist enrolled students who cannot attend the live session. Lecture recordings will be available via the CANVAS learning management system.

PERSONAL RECORDING
Audio recording is prohibited in any format and by any means, including through note-taking applications (e.g., One Note with CoPilot) unless in association with a university-approved accommodation.

VIDEO RECORDING
Students may not video record any educational session.

PHOTOS OR OTHER IMAGE CAPTURES OF CURRICULUM CONTENT
Students may **not** take photos or use image-capturing technology of any curriculum content (e.g., lectures, review sessions, TBLs, etc.), educational materials, or assessments at **any time.**

Remote Attendance Policy

When an accommodation for remote learning is approved for infectious disease quarantine requirements or through SSD, students will be expected to participate in didactic course sessions through the following:
- Synchronous class participation through Zoom or by phone
- Asynchronous participation by viewing class recordings, PowerPoint slides, or videos, if available.

Intellectual Property

Program faculty may provide students with copies of instructional lecture material as a courtesy, but it is not mandatory. Instructional materials are for individual student use only and are the intellectual property of the instructor and the University. Distribution or alteration of original lecture content without prior approval of the lecturer constitutes academic dishonesty. **Students are prohibited from uploading instructional materials to large language model (LLMs) programs or other such websites.**

Retention of Student Work for Research

Student work and survey results may be retained to assess student achievement of learning objectives, course or program outcomes, and for faculty scholarly activities.

Exiting the Classroom during Lecture

Students are expected to remain in the classroom throughout content delivery, including classroom activities. Exiting and entering the classroom during content delivery is disruptive. If a student knows of a specific situation that may require them to exit the classroom momentarily (e.g., waiting for an emergent phone call), the student must inform the lecturer before class starts and sit near a back exit to significantly reduce class disruption. Recurrent violations of this policy, unless associated with an approved university accommodation, shall result in referral to the SPC and possible disciplinary action.

Clinical Skills Lab Policy

Clinical skills instruction is a fundamental component of PA education. This educational environment simulates the clinical practice environment. Therefore, students are expected to wear appropriate attire and demonstrate professional behaviors as if they were in a clinical environment. Students must abide by the Dress Code for Lab Activities outlined above. Name tags must be worn and visible on the left side of the chest.

Electronics (e.g., phones, iPads, computers) are to be used for educational purposes only. Electronics used for non-educational purposes may be confiscated. All personal items (e.g., Backpacks, lunch boxes, and water bottles) must be stowed in the student's locker before entering the lab. Students must wait in the designated area outside the classroom until instructed to enter the lab.

COMMUNICATION POLICIES
Communication with the Program and the University

Students must retain a means of viable phone communication with the Program. Voicemail systems must remain active and able to receive messages. Outgoing messages must include your name in a professional tone. Unprofessional ringtones, wait-time tones, or ringback tones violate the professional code of conduct and may result in disciplinary action if not changed.

Students are assigned a University (u.pacific.edu) email address. PA Program and University personnel will only respond to correspondence from the student's official University email address. Forwarding your University email to another email account is discouraged. These accounts can lack the security, capability, or sufficient space to download important attachments.

The following is additional information for email communication:

- Students must check their University email account at least every 48 hours

- Students are expected to respond to Program emails within 48 hours or the first business day following a holiday
- Email responses and forwarded emails should include the original message, when appropriate
- Students are responsible for maintaining access to their email account if the student moves during their time in the educational program
- Signature line requirements:

> Joe Smith, PA-S
> University of the Pacific
> PA Program/Class of 2028
> 123.456.7890

Change of Address, E-mail Address, or Phone Number

Students are required to inform the Program and the Registrar of any changes to their mailing address, e-mail address, or phone numbers within one business day of the change.

To make changes for official University records, go to your MyPacific home page and under the "Academic" tab access "registrar forms for students". You will complete and submit, to the registrar, the "Name Change/Personal Data Change" form.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Employment

The Program strongly discourages outside employment. The Program's curriculum is rigorous and requires the student's presence in all classes and rotations. Many hours are committed to classroom work, and additional hours are dedicated to self-study. If a student feels that it is necessary to work while in the Program, the student should inform his/her faculty advisor of this. Program expectations, assignments, schedules, deadlines, and responsibilities will not be altered to adjust or accommodate working students. Employment is expected not to interfere with a student's learning experience.

Students may work within the institution while participating in the Federal Work-Study Program as long as such work does not interfere with their academic pursuits.

<u>Students must not be employed by or required to perform clerical and administrative work for the Program. Students must also not be substituted for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical experiences. Furthermore, no student will substitute or function as instructional faculty or the primary instructor for any curriculum component</u>.

Student Service Work

To avoid practices that might conflict with the professional and educational objectives of the Program and to avoid practices in which students are substituted for regular staff, the following shall be in effect concerning service work:

1. Students may not be hired as employees for any private or public practice, clinic, or institution to perform medical services during any time they are part of the PA Program under the sponsorship of that specific practice, clinic, or institution. An example would be if a student worked at a clinic on the weekends and a student there during the week.
2. Students may not take the responsibility or place of qualified staff.
3. Students may not receive payments, stipends, or other remuneration for medical services performed as part of the PA Program.

Volunteer Activities

Community service is an important component of the physician assistant philosophy. Volunteer work shall not interfere with a student's academic responsibilities or be conducted at the same time, a scheduled classroom or clinical instruction unless prior Program approval has been granted. Students are still required to adhere to all curricular requirements. Students who wish to volunteer in health-related extracurricular activities (i.e., health tent at a race) must not represent themselves as a physician assistant student or as a representative of the University of the Pacific Physician Assistant Program.

Student Activities Related to the PA Profession

Leadership development is an essential component of the educational process. It may require that students attend relevant off-campus activities during class/clinical time. Off-campus activities must be in accordance with students' professional development. It is the responsibility of the student or approved student organization to coordinate the event and receive approval from the Program. Students requesting permission to attend an off-campus conference or program must be in good academic standing. Students must obtain Program approval from their Faculty Advisor to attend any off-campus events. Students attending off-campus events are responsible for making up any missed classes/laboratories or other course assignments. Assignments that are due during the approved absence must be submitted before departure unless other arrangements have been agreed upon with the course coordinator.

Please refer to the examination policy for information regarding missed examinations. Attendance at these events is the student's fiduciary responsibility.

COURSE GRADING

At the end of each course, a grade for each student will be submitted to the Registrar. The Program uses the following grading system. <u>The Program does not round grades nor utilize a (+/-) system</u>.

Grading Scale

A = 90.00 – 100
B = 80.00 – 89.99
C = 70.00 – 79.99
D = 65.00 – 69.99
F = < 65.00
W = Withdrawal = Authorized withdrawal from courses after the prescribed period.
I = Incomplete = Inability to complete assigned coursework within the term.

Didactic Course Requirements

- An overall course grade of 70% or higher

Failure to meet any of the above requirements will result in failure of the course, referral to the Student Progress Committee, and may result in placement on academic probation (see the section on Probation). If a student is already on academic probation, the course failure will meet the criteria for dismissal (see the section on Criteria for Dismissal).

A student meeting the criteria for course failure before the end of the term must continue to attend all classes and complete all assignments and exams to be eligible for future remediation of the course.

Clinical (Rotation) Course Requirements

Please refer to the Clinical Education Handbook for further information.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE/WITHDRAWAL

Voluntary Leave of Absence

Students experiencing significant medical, life-changing, or catastrophic events can request an LOA. A voluntary leave of absence (LOA) is a form of temporary program withdrawal. The Program advises all students considering an LOA to speak with the Department Chair/Program Director or their faculty advisor. LOA should be utilized as a last resort and not viewed as a primary course of action for students facing emergent or

life-changing events. A student must be in good academic standing to be eligible for an LOA.

Student requesting a medical LOA may be required to provide written confirmation from the medical or mental health provider that the LOA is necessary due to the student's health. Documentation must be provided to the Program and the University within 14 days of the request for Medical Leave. The University may request a review of the medical or mental health documentation by a University healthcare professional or other appropriately trained professional identified by the University. Any such request will proceed with student permission and in alignment with HIPAA regulations. This consultation may include a conversation between the treating provider and the designated University healthcare professional or representative.

Students requesting an LOA must take an LOA from all didactic courses; part-time enrollment is unavailable. Outside of circumstances addressed by Title IX regulations, leave of absence is strongly discouraged during the didactic year. The Program's curriculum is cohort-based; therefore, courses are only offered once per year. The Program reserves the right to implement criteria for reinstatement to the Program and may require a student to restart the Program, regardless of prior course performance. Students required to retake courses may be ineligible for financial aid. During the clinical year, students may take an LOA for an individual rotation. An LOA from a clinical rotation will impact enrolled units and tuition. The student must complete any missed rotations, resulting in additional tuition and fees.

Students must submit the LOA request in writing to the Program BEFORE initiating the withdrawal process with the University. The Student Progress Committee (SPC) will review LOA requests before acceptance. Generally, a student should submit an LOA request to the Program, receive a determination and, if approved by the SPC, submit official withdrawal paperwork to the Office of the Registrar before the beginning of a trimester. If this is not possible, the Program requires students to submit an LOA request, except those resulting from a medical emergency, at least two weeks before the first final exam for the trimester.

The University does not have a formal LOA process. Students are either enrolled or not enrolled. If a student requests an LOA and the Program approves it, the student must then initiate the withdrawal process in the Office of the Registrar. The date of notification to the Office of the Registrar determines the "withdrawal date" used by Financial Aid for return in the Return of Title IV Aid calculation and the "effective date" used by Student Accounts for tuition refunds. Student Accounts - Refund Schedule

Additional policies govern requests made during the trimester, and the timing of such will affect housing, financial aid, tuition charged, health insurance, and progress toward the degree. Courses the student was registered for after the last day to drop appear on that student's transcript with the notation "W" but do not count in the units earned or in the calculation of the grade point average.

An official withdrawal from the University is the termination of rights and privileges offered to currently enrolled students.

Returning from a Leave of Absence

The Student Progress Committee (SPC) will review each student's continued ability to meet the Program's Technical Standards. The Program reserves the right to request an evaluation and written verification from a medical provider regarding the student's ability to meet the Program Technical Standards. The SPC will also evaluate the student's preparedness to resume participation in the Program's curriculum. The SPC may recommend or require a student restart the program. Additional tuition and/or fees may be applied upon returning from an LOA.

Students returning from a Medical LOA will be required to provide the Program and University with a written "Statement of Readiness to Return" from the healthcare providing treatment before submitting a Petition to Return.

Withdrawal from Program

Students who intend to withdraw from the Program permanently must meet with the Department Chair/Program Director before initiating the process with the Office of the Registrar. To initiate the withdrawal process prior to the published add/drop date for the trimester, a student only needs to email sacregstrar@pacific.edu stating the desire to withdraw from the PA program. The email's date corresponds to the withdrawal date used by Financial Aid for Return in the Title IV Aid return calculation and the effective date used by Student Accounts for tuition refunds. An official withdrawal from the University terminates the rights and privileges granted to currently enrolled students; therefore, students who withdraw may not use any University facilities. Students must immediately vacate University housing. If a student desires to withdraw after the published Add/Drop date but before the end of a term, they must also submit an SHS Late Add/Drop form [SHS Add/Drop Form](). This form requires the Department Chair/Program Director's signature and must be approved by the SHS Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Students who permanently withdraw from the Program and later desire to return must complete the same application and interview process as other applicants during a subsequent admissions cycle.

Suspension from the University

Suspension is an involuntary temporary separation from the University for a specified period, with or without conditions that must be satisfied before the reinstatement of student status is permitted. This enrollment standing may be implemented by the University or the Program dependent on policy violations. The record of suspension shall appear on the student's academic transcript. The student cannot participate in any University activities and will be barred from entering the campus unless otherwise notified in writing. Suspended time does not count against any time limit requirements for degree completion. Suspension may be converted to dismissal if reinstatement

requirements have not been satisfied. The SPC will evaluate the student's preparedness to resume the Program's curriculum, including the ability to meet the Program Technical Standards. The SPC may deny reentry or recommend a student restart the program.

SECTION 11   STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

METHODS OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT/EVALUATIONS

Evaluation of Student Performance

The modalities listed below evaluate student performance in the PA Program.
- Written examinations and quizzes (subject-specific and comprehensive)
- Class/Lab/Seminar assignments, papers, and oral presentations
- Class/Lab/Seminar attendance and/or participation
- Case presentations/activities (individual and team-based)
- Team-based learning activities
- Multiple modality assignments (individual and team-based)
- Discussion boards
- Professionalism assessments
- Practical examinations
- Objective Structured Clinical Evaluations (OSCEs)
- Simulation
- Clinical year assignments
- Patient encounter tracking software assignments
- Academic faculty observation
- Clinical Preceptor (or designee) observations/evaluations

ASSIGNMENT GRADING FOR ALL COURSES
Refer to the learning management system (LMS) [CANVAS] for assignment rubrics.

Late Assignment Grading Policy

Late assignment policy: 10% grade reduction per day for a maximum of 3 days; additional grade reductions based on the rubric may occur. Submissions will NOT be accepted, resulting in a Zero for the assignment, more than 3 days late without prior approval from the Instructor of Record.

ASSESSMENT GRADING DURING DIDACTIC TRIMESTERS
Failure of any five (5) exams or major assessments (written and/or practical) within a single course or across multiple courses within the same trimester will result in a referral to the Student Progress Committee. It may result in placement on Academic Probation.

Written Examinations

A score of 70% or greater is required to pass each evaluative assessment. If a student fails an assessment, the following will apply:
- Completion of a retake exam during the Retesting Period
  - A score of 70% or greater is required to pass the retake exam.

- If a score of 70% or greater is achieved on the retake exam, the recorded score is 70%.
- Students are required to meet with the course instructor of record (IOR) and/or student's faculty advisor.
- Failure to obtain a minimum score of 70% on the retake exam shall result in:
  - Failure of the exam
  - The recorded score is the higher of the two scores
  - A "Program Warning"
  - Students must complete a remediation plan to demonstrate competency of the material. The remediation assessment method may vary from the initial assessment format. Failure to pass the remediation plan shall result in referral to the SPC for disciplinary review.

Practical Examinations

A score of 70% or greater is required to pass each evaluative assessment. If a student fails an assessment, the following will apply:

- Completion of a retake practical
  - A score of 70% or greater is required to pass the retake exam
  - If a score of 70% or greater is achieved on the retake exam, the recorded score is 70%.
  - Students are required to meet with the IOR and/or student's faculty advisor.
- Failure to obtain a minimum score of 70% on the retake practical:
  - Failure of the exam
  - The recorded score is the higher of the two scores
  - A "Program Warning"
  - Students must complete a remediation plan to demonstrate competency of the material. The remediation assessment method may vary from the initial assessment format. Failure to pass the remediation plan shall result in referral to the SPC for disciplinary review.

Objective Structured Clinical Evaluations (OSCEs)

A score of 70% or greater is required to pass each didactic year OSCE. The opportunity to retake an OSCE is not always offered. If a student fails an OSCE, and a retake is offered, the following will apply:
- Completion of a retake practical
  - A score of 70% or greater is required to pass the retake exam
  - If a score of 70% or greater is achieved on the retake exam, the recorded score is 70%.
  - Students are required to meet with the IOR and/or student's faculty advisor.
- Failure to obtain a minimum score of 70% on the retake OSCE:

- o Failure of the exam
- o The recorded score is the higher of the two scores
- o A "Program Warning"
- o Students must complete a remediation plan to demonstrate competency of the material. The remediation assessment method may vary from the initial assessment format. Failure to pass the remediation plan shall result in referral to the SPC for disciplinary review.

Didactic Year Comprehensive Exams

At the completion of the didactic year, all students will be required to complete a comprehensive written exam and OSCE. These exams will cover material from all didactic courses. Students must pass the Didactic Comprehensive Examinations before starting clinical rotations. A score of 70% or greater is required to pass the Comprehensive Exams. If a student fails, the following will apply:
- • Completion of a retake exam during the Retesting Period
  - o A score of 70% or greater is required to pass the retake exam
  - o If a score of 70% or greater is achieved on the retake exam, the recorded score is 70%.
- • Failure to obtain a minimum score of 70% on the retake exam:
  - o Failure of the assessment
  - o The recorded score is the higher of the two scores
  - o A "Program Warning"
  - o Inability to progress to clinical rotations
  - o Remediation required
  - o Students must complete a remediation plan to demonstrate competency of the material. The remediation assessment method may vary from the initial assessment format. Failure to pass the remediation plan shall result in referral to the SPC for disciplinary review.

Failure of a Retake Didactic Comprehensive Exam (written or OSCE) shall result in a delayed start to the clinical curriculum, which will delay a student's completion of the Program and will result in additional tuition and/or fees.

ASSESSMENT GRADING DURING CLINICAL TRIMESTERS

Please refer to the Clinical Education Handbook for further rotation and clinical year course grading information.

PROGRAM COMPLETION SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

All students must complete summative assessments during the four (4) months before Program completion. Students must pass the summative assessments before program completion. Summative assessments include a written examination, OSCE, capstone project, technical skills testing, and a team-based learning activity. A score of 80% or

greater is required to pass the Summative Assessments. If a student fails, the following will apply:
- Completion of a retake assessment during the Retesting Period
    - A score of 80% or greater is required to pass the retake assessment
    - If a score of 80% or greater is achieved on the retake assessment, the recorded score is 80%.
- Failure to obtain a minimum score of 80% on the retake:
    - Failure of the assessment
    - The recorded score is the higher of the two scores
    - Inability to certify program completion

Failure of a Retake Summative Comprehensive Assessment(s) shall result in a referral to the Student Progress Committee. This may, in turn, delay a student's completion of the Program and may result in additional tuition and/or fees.

SECTION 12   EXAM PROTOCOL AND EXAM INTEGRITY

WRITTEN EXAMINATION PROTOCOL

The following are the procedures regarding the administration of an examination. Both the student and proctor are responsible for adhering to the examination protocol. Exams may be given outside of the regularly scheduled class time. Check your schedule for dates and times.

Students are responsible for the course's instructional objectives, whether or not they are covered in lectures. Exam questions may be from the text, lectures, and/or handouts. All questions will be based on the general course and specific lecture objectives.

Attendance
- WRITTEN EXAMINATION
  - Attendance and on-time arrival are required for all scheduled examinations unless the student has obtained prior approval. Students arriving <15 minutes late must take the exam as scheduled **within the time remaining** for the scheduled exam period. Students arriving ≥15 minutes late will not be allowed to take the exam. (Refer to Missed Exam policy).
- PRACTICAL/OSCE EXAMINATION
  - Attendance and **early** arrival are required for all scheduled practical exams (checklists) and OSCEs. Students must arrive **at least 15 minutes before** their assigned start time.

Exam Download
- Students receive an email notification when exams are available for download. Students must download an exam **by 6 A.M. on the day of the exam**. The Program recommends downloading the exam the night before to minimize technological difficulties.
- Students who have difficulties downloading the exam **must email the exam proctor and arrive at least 30 minutes before the exam** to problem-solve.
- Delayed initiation of an exam due to the student's failure to download the exam as instructed may result in reduced time for exam completion.

Exam Environment – In Person
- **Students must stow all belongings before the scheduled exam start time.** Failure to comply with this or any other reasonable proctor request will result in the student's immediate removal from the examination. It may result in a zero (0) for the exam and an SPC referral for disciplinary action.
  - All electronic devices, including tablets, phones/smartphones, and smartwatches, must be turned off, stowed, and kept away from the student testing area. <u>This rule applies to the entire testing period, including any breaks.</u>

- o Textbooks, notes, study aids, coats, and personal possessions must be placed at a site away from the student testing area
- o Hats/caps may not be worn during any examination except for wearing a headpiece for religious reasons. Any student wearing a hat will be asked to remove it.
- o Food and drinks are prohibited during exams and must be stowed with other belongings. An exception may be made at the discretion of the exam proctor in extreme circumstances.

Exam Administration – In Person

- Students receive the password to access an examination at the scheduled start time.
- Students must have the examination software open and ready to receive the password before the scheduled start time to avoid exam administration delays. Failure to do so may result in reduced time to complete the examination.
- Students are required to follow the instructions of the testing proctor at all times.
- No talking is allowed once an examination starts.
- <u>The Program reserves the right to assign seating</u>.
- Earplugs may be used and will be provided. Earphones/earbuds are prohibited
- Scratch paper is allowed for written examinations only and must be returned to the proctor after the exam. Placement of the student's name on the scratch paper is required. Should other writing materials be required, all materials must be returned to the exam proctor at exam completion. No outside writing materials are permitted.
- If a restroom break is desired, students must inform the proctor and temporarily turn in the exam before leaving the room. Students will be required to sign out/in of the exam environment. Only one student at a time will be allowed to exit the room. Exam time continues to run while a student is out of the room.
- In consideration of other classmates, students must quietly leave the classroom upon completion of the exam. Students may not return until the exam is complete for all students
- Students must upload the computer-based exam(s) before exiting the room.

Exam Administration – Remote

- Students are responsible for selecting a reduced-distraction environment.
- Students must ensure the computer camera is uncovered.
- Noise reduction devices (headphones, earplugs) are prohibited.
- Students must stow all belongings **before** the scheduled exam start time.
- Students receive the password to access an examination at the scheduled start time.
- Students must have the examination software open and ready to receive the password before the scheduled start time to avoid exam administration delays. Failure to do so may result in reduced time to complete the examination.
- Examination software will lock a student's computer, preventing access to information stored on the hard drive and the running of any additional programs in the background. Keystroke and program analysis are monitored and reviewed

during the audit process.
- Students are required to follow the instructions of the testing administrator.

Clinical Year Exam Administration – Remote
- Refer to the Clinical Education Handbook

Violations of the Exam protocol shall result in a referral to the Student Progress Committee.

Exam Question Inquiry

Students may use the examination software to provide comments and feedback about specific questions on a written examination. The Program will review submitted comments before finalizing exam grades.

Examination Grading

The Program retains sole authority for finalizing grades. Before finalizing grades, the Program shall review exam statistics. The Program reserves the right to make grade modifications until grades are finalized. The timing for finalizing grades varies on exam type.

- Written examinations and practical exams: 2 business days
- Standardized patient encounters or OSCEs: 5 business days

Consistent with NCCPA policies, students **will not** receive a preliminary score upon exam submission. Additionally, students will not receive grade distribution notifications in the university learning management system (LMS) [CANVAS].

Time Provided for Written Exams

Consistent with the timing used by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE), the Program utilizes a one (1) minute per question time allotment. Timing for exams containing medication calculations, prescription writing, and short answer-type questions is determined at the discretion of the course coordinators.

Testing Schedule

Testing occurs on an ongoing basis throughout the trimester. Students should expect multiple assessments within a single day and/or week. The Program is cognizant of student workload and monitors the assessment schedule.

Missed Exams

Should a student miss a written examination, regardless of the reason, the missed examination must be taken within three (3) business days of returning to classes or at the course instructor's discretion. Missed exams shall be completed during the time reserved

for retesting. The student is responsible for contacting the Testing Specialist to schedule the examination. The maximum score recorded for any make-up exam is 70%, regardless of the actual exam score. The missed exam does not constitute an exam failure. The student retains two opportunities to pass the exam. Should a student miss a Practical Exam or OSCE, the program reserves the right to excuse the student and reallocate the weighting of that Practical Exam/OSCE to other Practical Exams/OSCEs within the same course, or a grade of zero (0) may be recorded.

Retesting Failed Exams

Should a student fail a written examination, the student must complete a retest on the material. The standard Retest Period is within three (3) business days after scores are released. Specific times are reserved in the program schedule for retesting. The Retest Period may be extended at the Program's discretion. Exams occurring during the retest period may utilize a format different from the original exam. Students may not postpone or request a testing or retesting schedule modification to accommodate other previously scheduled examinations. Students are responsible for contacting the Testing Specialist to confirm the Retest schedule. Passed retake exams shall be awarded the minimum passing score. Failed retake exams count as a failed exam and may result in disciplinary action.

- Monday or Tuesday Exams shall be retested on Friday
- Thursday or Friday Exams shall be retested the following Wednesday

In-Class Quizzes

The Program utilizes in-class quizzes for formative and summative assessment of student preparation for class or curriculum content review. Therefore, there are **no make-up quizzes**. Students who arrive <5 minutes late will be required to take the quiz within the time remaining. Students arriving ≥5 minutes late to class cannot complete the quiz, and a zero (0) will be recorded. Quizzes are not eligible for testing accommodations.

iRAT/tRAT TBL Activities

The Program utilizes in-class formative and summative Individual Readiness Assessment/Team Readiness Assessment Tests as team-based learning activities to deliver and review the curriculum, assist students in identifying knowledge gaps before module assessments, and conduct knowledge assessments.

Therefore, there are **no make-up iRAT/tRAT TBLs**. Students who miss an iRAT/tRAT TBL will receive a zero (0), even if an absence is approved.

Students who arrive <10 minutes late will be required to take the iRAT quiz within the time remaining. Students arriving ≥10 minutes late to class cannot complete the iRAT quiz, and a zero (0) will be recorded for that portion; however, they will be permitted to complete the tRAT portion with their peers. iRAT/tRAT TBLs are not eligible for testing accommodations.

Exam Review

Failed Exam: Students **must** meet with the instructor of record (IOR) or Advisor after an exam failure. Before the meeting, the student must complete a self-reflection on their exam performance and preparation, which will be discussed at the meeting. This meeting may occur after the retake. Exam review meetings focus on trends in knowledge deficiencies and test-taking strategies. Students may not look at the exam. Specific questions will not be discussed.

Passed Exam: Students may request a meeting with a faculty advisor. Meetings are not guaranteed and are based on instructor availability. If granted, the student must complete a self-reflection on exam preparation. Exam review meetings focus on trends in knowledge deficiencies and test-taking strategies. Students may not look at exams. Specific questions will not be discussed.

Unsupervised review of any examination is prohibited. A general review of challenging examination material is at the discretion of the course instructor of record.

The Program reserves the right to modify the Examination Policy at any time.

EXAMINATION INTEGRITY POLICY

Exam integrity is vital to the assessment of the academic knowledge of students. Therefore, academic and professional standards must be maintained at all times to ensure fairness and validity of exams. The practice of medicine requires the highest standards of personal and social responsibility. These standards should be fostered during your professional training as well as throughout practice. Exams are given with these principles in mind.

Students accept responsibility for these high standards by neither receiving nor providing unauthorized assistance during exams, by not using unauthorized materials during an examination, nor by condoning these actions by others. Further, students will not copy the exam material, as this violates the honor code. Pacific Student Conduct

The Program is in alignment with the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination ("PANCE") and Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) policies regarding examination integrity. All examinations, examination components, including examination grading sheets or station content for practical/OSCE exams, will remain confidential and in possession of the Program.

Students shall not engage in cheating or other dishonest behavior that violates exam security (including but not limited to unauthorized reproducing, distributing, displaying, discussing, sharing, or otherwise misusing test questions or any part of test questions, or any question concept) before, during, or after an exam (written, practical, checklist, or OSCE). Although it is common for students to want to discuss the exam (written or practical), content they felt was hard or that they might have missed, do not do so. This is

in violation of the NCCPA Principles. To do so may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Program.

Violation of exam integrity may be defined as any method noted in the NCCPA or PAEA Policies or by any other form of cheating, such as but not limited to obtaining a copy of or reconstruction from memory any portion of a current or prior exam(s); question/checklist/OSCE content or concepts (this includes recalling concepts of examination questions and generation of "practice" questions/exams using the recalled information); getting help from another student during the exam; describing exam content, passages, or graphics from the exam; identifying terms or concepts contained in the exam; sharing answers; referring others to information seen during the exam; reconstructing a list of topics on the test; and discussing exam questions, answers, passages, graphics, or topics.

Students agree to honor the legal rights of the Program, University, NCCPA, and PAEA and the integrity of the student testing process. Students will not discuss or disclose any student assessment content orally, in writing, on the internet, or through any other medium. Students agree not to copy, reproduce, adapt, disclose, or transmit exams, exam content, or exam concepts, whole or in part, or assist anyone else in doing the same, for any reason. Students further agree not to reconstruct exam content from memory, photographic image, dictation, or any other means to share that information with any other individual or entity.

NCCPA Policy Regarding Exam Integrity

The content of the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination ("PANCE") and each of its items is proprietary and strictly confidential, and the unauthorized retention, possession, copying, distribution, disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any examination question, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral or other forms of communication, including but not limited to e-mailing, copying or printing of electronic files, and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during, or after an examination, is strictly prohibited. In addition to constituting irregular behavior subject to disciplinary action such as revocation of certification, revocation of eligibility for future certification, and disciplinary fines, such activities violate the NCCPA proprietary rights, including copyrights, and may subject violators to legal action resulting in monetary damages.

[NCCPA Examination Policies and Procedures](#)

SECTION 13   GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Student Academic Grievance Policy and Procedures

The following describes the grievance procedures available to all SHS students. These procedures address issues that arise from, relate to, or directly impact a student's academic activities or performance, such as assignments and evaluation of academic work when a student is attempting to fulfill the requirements of a particular course or degree. These procedures allow students and the SHS an opportunity to resolve grievances promptly and equitably.

Definition of a Grievance

A grievance is a <u>written complaint</u> concerning a decision or action made by university faculty or staff that directly and adversely affects the student as an individual in their academic capacity. Grievances must be based on objectively demonstrable evidence regarding an instructor's academic practices. For example, a basis for a grade grievance may exist if the student's evaluation differed from that of other students in the course and can be documented, or if a grade is assigned in a manner other than the prescribed method in the course syllabus or assignment instructions. <u>The grievance process is not a vehicle for a regrading.</u> The grievance process is limited and provides relief only when it is demonstrated that the grade is based on an improper decision or action, such as a math error in adding points or grading motivated by discriminatory intent.

A grievance is not a means to challenge a department/program, SHS, or University policy or disciplinary action taken by a department/program, the SHS, or the University.

Issues relating to violations of the SHS Student Code of Conduct, as well as the University's Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct, are separate from this Grievance Process. <u>A grade grievance will not be considered until student misconduct allegations have been resolved</u>.

NOTE: If a student believes that behavior violates the University's policy against sexual and other unlawful harassment has occurred, the student should notify the Title IX Coordinator (titleix@pacific.edu) as soon as possible. Additionally, there are grievance procedures to resolve alleged acts of discrimination outlined in the University's policy statement on prohibited discrimination. ([Title IX-Sexual Misconduct Procedures and Support](#)). Pacific's Title IX Coordinator or the SHS Assistant/Associate Dean of Student Affairs should be contacted if a student has concerns related to a violation of this policy.

Right to Participate in Grievances Without Retaliation

No student, student representative, or other member of the University community who assists or participates in these procedures shall be subject to adverse action by the

university based on their good faith activity during filing or participating in the grievance process.

Confidentiality Maintenance

All matters relating to a grievance are considered confidential. All parties, including faculty, staff, and students, are required to maintain confidentiality and limit their communications regarding the grievance to those who are actively involved in the process. Failure to maintain confidentiality violates the SHS Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action by the department/program or the SHS.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

The grievance process begins at the department/program level with the student and the course instructor. If they cannot reach an agreement, the student shall contact the Department Chair/Program Director. If the outcome of the department/program-level grievance process is unsatisfactory, a student may submit a grievance to the SHS.

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM LEVEL GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Step 1:
The student has **five (5) calendar days** (until 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time) from the date the assessment component grade is entered in the approved university LMS system (e.g., CANVAS) to submit a written grievance via E-mail to the course instructor. This is the initial step in the process, even if the Department Chair/Program Director is the course instructor. Failure to submit a written grievance before the deadline results in losing the right to submit a grievance.

Requirements for the Written Grievance to the Course Instructor:
- The specific action(s) that led to the grievance
- Objectively demonstrated evidence supporting the grievance

The course instructor shall respond to the grievance in writing within seven (7) calendar days. A meeting between the course instructor and the student may or may not occur. If a meeting is called, the student can request that their faculty advisor or the Assistant/Associate Dean of Student Affairs be present.

If the course instructor is unavailable to meet with the student, the student shall proceed to the next step.

Step 2:
The student has **five (5) calendar days** (until 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time) from the date of the course instructor's written response to submit a written grievance via E-mail to the Department Chair/Program Director. If the Department Chair/Program Director cannot be reached by E-mail E-mail within the given time frame, the student shall contact the designee or acting Department Chair/Program Director. Should the grievance be with the Department Chair/Program Director, the student will submit a school-level grievance if

the issue was not resolved in Step 1. Failure to submit a written grievance before the deadline results in losing the right to submit a grievance.

Requirements for the Written Grievance to the Department Chair/Program Director:

- The specific action(s) that led to the grievance
- The person(s) perceived to be responsible for such action(s)
- Objectively demonstrated evidence supporting the grievance
- The harm to the grievant
- The efforts taken to resolve the matter to date
- Additional information the student believes is relevant to the grievance

The Department Chair/Program Director or designee will recommend a solution to the grievance in writing within seven (7) calendar days. A meeting between the Department Chair/Program Director or designee and the student may or may not occur. If a meeting is called, the student can request that their faculty advisor or the Assistant/Associate Dean of Student Affairs be present.

If the outcome of the department/program-level grievance process is unsatisfactory, the student may submit a grievance to the SHS.

SCHOOL-LEVEL GRIEVANCE PROCESS

The student has **five (5) calendar days** (until 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time) from the date of the Department Chair/Program Director's written response to submit a written grievance via E-mail to the SHS Dean. Failure to submit a written grievance before the deadline results in losing the right to submit a grievance.

Requirements for Grievance to Department Chair/Program Director
- The specific action(s) that led to the grievance
- The person(s) perceived to be responsible for such action(s)
- Objectively demonstrated evidence supporting the grievance
- The harm to the grievant
- The efforts taken to resolve the matter to date
- Additional information the student believes is relevant to the grievance

The SHS Student Affairs Review Committee (SARC) will review the grievance while considering the following before making a recommendation for resolution to the SHS Dean:
- Failure to use proper facts and criteria
- Due process or procedural errors

The SHS Dean will review and consider the SARC's recommendation and issue a final determination regarding the outcome of the grievance.

The SHS Dean's grievance decision is final and binding.

SECTION 14   PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Professional Code of Conduct

Success in the PA profession requires certain professional behavioral attributes in addition to content knowledge. Therefore, these professional behavioral attributes, including empathy, respect, discipline, honesty, integrity, the ability to work effectively with others in a team environment, the ability to take and give constructive feedback, the ability to follow directions, and the ability to address a crisis or emergency in a composed manner, are considered to be a part of academic performance.

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education, 6th edition states, "The role of the PA demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills, and the capacity to respond to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. Essential attributes of the graduate PA include 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." Adherence to these attributes requires that physician assistants and physician assistant students exhibit a high level of maturity and self-control, even in highly stressful or challenging circumstances.

In keeping with these principles, physician assistant students must conduct themselves in a manner that is nothing less than professional and consistent with appropriate patient care, and they must adhere to the Professional Code of Conduct. Students will be evaluated not only on their academic and clinical skills but also on their interpersonal skills, reliability, and professional and behavioral conduct.

Respect

Students are expected to treat all patients, Program faculty, University staff, clinical preceptors, healthcare workers, and fellow students with dignity and respect. Students are expected to be respectful of the University and Program policies and procedures. Students shall not display disruptive or obstructive behavior in the classroom, clinical sites, or Program or University functions. Students are expected to follow directions and to express concerns professionally and respectfully. Conflicts are to be resolved diplomatically and rationally, using appropriate communication skills and the Program procedures outlined in this handbook.

Students must be sensitive to and tolerant of diversity in the student and patient population. PA education requires a close working environment with other students, including conducting physical examinations of fellow students and participating in discussion groups that may reveal personal information. These situations must be approached with respect for students' privacy, confidentiality, and feelings.

Students should offer constructive feedback in a thoughtful and reasoned manner that fosters respect and trust. Displays of anger, including demeaning, offensive, argumentative, threatening language/behavior, or language that is insensitive to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, will not be tolerated. Students must also appropriately respond to lawful requests from their instructors, preceptors, and clinical sites.

Communication

Effective verbal, non-verbal, written, and Email communication is required for quality PA practice. Students are expected to develop a rapport with classmates, colleagues, patients, and other healthcare providers. Students shall maintain effective communication in times of stress and/or when faced with complexity, uncertainty, or ambiguity. In alignment with respect, students must maintain professional communication with the University, Program, and clinical staff at all times, including times of stress.

Any form of communication that impedes the University's or Program's ability to do business, impacts the reputation of the University or Program, or results in the loss of an experiential facility, is deemed an egregious violation of the Professional Code of Conduct and is ground for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

Attendance

Students must report to all classes, labs, seminars, in-class weeks, and clinical sites at the scheduled time and remain for the entire session. Further details regarding attendance requirements are noted in the Attendance section.

Timeliness

Timeliness is an important aspect of professional behavior. Repetitive tardiness, delay in paperwork/assignment submission in any portion of the Program may result in disciplinary action. Students must submit all required assignments by their designated due date. Refer to the Student Assessment and Grading section for grade reductions for late assignments. Additional information regarding tardiness is noted in the Attendance section.

Attire

Attire is a component of professionalism. Refer to the Dress Code section for further information.

Identification

Refer to the PA Student Identification requirements.

Reliability/Accountability

Students are expected to accept responsibility for their actions, including mistakes and conflicts, and face the consequences. Students are expected to fulfill the obligations they have undertaken and manage time appropriately and effectively.

Flexibility

PA education involves instruction from practicing clinicians with unpredictable schedules and various teaching styles. At times, lecture sessions or clinical rotations may need to be adjusted with short notice. The Program believes that the advantage of using practicing clinicians outweighs this inconvenience and requires students to be flexible and tolerant of change. Student schedules during the academic and clinical years may include night and weekend hours. Students are expected to maintain a positive attitude and appropriate communication skills when changes occur.

Self-guided Learning

Life-long learning is a fundamental component of the PA profession. Students must demonstrate enthusiasm toward learning through participation and assignment completion. Students must take the initiative and demonstrate commitment to acquiring and maintaining knowledge and clinical skills throughout the educational process. Self-assessment and constructive feedback are essential components of the learning process. Students are expected to accept constructive feedback without defensiveness or excuses and to incorporate it to change behavior.

Artificial Intelligence Use

AI-Assisted Note-Taking Programs

The use of AI-assisted note-taking programs (e.g. Coconut, Otter, Fireflies, NoteGPT, and Tactiq) that automatically record and/or transcribe the lecture is **strictly prohibited** unless associated with a university-approved accommodation. As PAs, we are required to process and transcribe auditory information quickly. Acquisition of this skill begins during program enrollment.

AI-Assisted Research

The use of AI to assist with identifying research materials is permitted but may not substitute the identification and analysis of peer-reviewed scientific literature. Students are responsible for verifying data accuracy or information obtained through AI sources. AI-sourced information must be properly cited in AMA format as with any other source. Students must not share any output from AI sources. Sharing such information violates this Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action.

AI-Assisted Curriculum Completion

The use of AI product generators (e.g., ChatGPT), except those used solely for grammar modification (e.g., Grammarly), is **strictly prohibited**. Using any such product to complete any component of the program's curriculum is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

Team Work

The PA profession is based on the principle of collaboration with physicians. The healthcare team concept has expanded to include a multidisciplinary approach. Learning to work effectively in a group and collaborative environment is key to the PA role. Students are assigned to multiple educational groups throughout the curriculum. Some groups will remain the same for the length of the program. Others will be course or trimester-specific. Additionally, students will participate in multiple interprofessional educational activities throughout enrollment. Students are expected to contribute, collaborate, and cooperate effectively in team and small group-based learning environments. Students are expected to provide classmates with specific, objective, and relevant constructive feedback. Students are expected to share information or materials and actively assist classmates/peers.

Program Evaluation

Just as self-assessment is an important component of professional development, student evaluation of the Program is an important component of curriculum development and improvement. Students will be required to complete a course, instructor, and preceptor evaluations. Evaluations will be completed electronically and will not be anonymous. The Program reserves the right to withhold final grades, block registration, or deduct professionalism points from the current or subsequent trimester's course for non-compliance.

Students are expected to provide respectful, professional, constructive feedback regarding the curriculum and curriculum delivery. Constructive feedback requires objective evaluation and suggestions for improvement while considering the cohort and curriculum as a whole. Personal preferences, such as lecture slide structure, are inappropriate and do not constitute constructive feedback. Student evaluations or *Dialogue with the Director* comments containing non-constructive feedback, an abusive tone, personalized attacks, or other comments deemed unprofessional are a violation of this Code of Conduct and may result in SPC referral and disciplinary action.

Integrity

PA students are expected to display the highest ethical standards commensurate with work as a healthcare professional. Students are expected to follow all policies in the Professional Code of Conduct outlined in this handbook, the University Catalog, Pacific Student Code of Conduct, SHS Code of Conduct, and the Clinical Education handbook, including those pertaining to academic honesty. Additional professional expectations are outlined in the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession published by the American Academy of Physician Assistants: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for PAs

Infractions such as forgery, plagiarism, stealing/copying tests, cheating, and falsification of medical records will not be tolerated. Honesty in all communications is vital as a health professional.

Knowingly providing false information to a University employee, Program faculty member, clinical preceptor, or clinical rotation representative is deemed an egregious violation of the Professional Code of Conduct and is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

Confidentiality

In accordance with the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession and in compliance with HIPAA Standards, students must respect and maintain the confidentiality of patients. Students are not permitted to discuss any patients by name or any other identifiable means outside the clinical encounter. For academic presentations and encounter documentation assignments, all identifiable information must be removed as per HIPAA requirements. The confidentiality of fellow students must also be respected and maintained.

Health and Safety

Any student whose actions directly or indirectly jeopardize the health and safety of patients, faculty, clinical site staff, or fellow students may be immediately removed from the clinical site and/or face disciplinary action. Removal from a clinical rotation may delay the student's program completion.

Non-discrimination

Students shall deliver healthcare services to patients regardless of race, religion, gender, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability, disease status, legal involvement, or political beliefs.

Impairment

Students shall not appear at the University or clinical sites under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If a student is suspected to be under the influence while on campus, at a clinical site, or at any other education-related function or location, the student will be immediately required to complete a urine toxicology screen. Students with abnormal findings on these screening tests may be referred to the Student Progress Committee (SPC) for review, which may result in disciplinary action.

Weapons

Students are not permitted to carry any firearms or other weapons on campus or to clinical sites.

Student Role on Clinical Rotations

Students must be aware of their limitations as students and the limitations and regulations of PA practice. Students at clinical sites must always work under the supervision of a preceptor. They may not function in the place of an employee or assume primary responsibility for a patient's care. The licensed provider retains all legal responsibility and medical duty for all patient care. Students cannot treat and/or

discharge a patient from care without consultation with the clinical preceptor. Students should seek advice when appropriate and should not evaluate or treat patients without supervision from and direct access to a supervising clinical preceptor at all times. A licensed provider must confirm unusual or abnormal physical findings. Students shall perform only those procedures authorized by the preceptor. Students must adhere to all regulations of the Program and the clinical sites. The student is to contact the Program immediately with any questions or concerns about the student's role at a site.

CONSEQUENCES FOR CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS

Failure to adhere to the Professional Standards and Professional Code of Conduct will result in the following consequences for unprofessional behavior:
1.   The first incident of unprofessional behavior:
        Warning - The Program will provide the student with a verbal and/or written warning to change the behavior, depending on the severity of the offense. This notification may be delivered as a cohort-based announcement via CANVAS. The incident will be documented in the student's file.
2.   The second incident of unprofessional behavior:
        Program Warning - The SPC will issue a written Program Warning to the student.
3.   The third incident or any egregious violation of unprofessional behavior:
        The student will be referred to the SPC Committee for a disciplinary review.

The Clinical Education Handbook outlines additional guidelines for conduct specific to the clinical training experiences. It will be distributed to students before the clinical phase of their education.

SECTION 15 ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS

Academic Progress

Students must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress to continue in the Program. Any failure to make academic progress, up to and including a course failure, may result in referral to the Student Progress Committee (SPC). Students must complete and pass all didactic courses before progressing to the clinical phase of the Program. Additional academic progress policies for the clinical year are outlined in the Clinical Education Handbook, which is provided prior to the start of rotations.

Professional Progress

Professionalism is as important as academic progress and is equally important. Students are expected to demonstrate the legal, moral, and ethical standards required of healthcare professionals and to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with these standards.

Professionalism and professional ethics encompass specific academic, interpersonal, and behavioral expectations. The characteristics in this context include knowledge, competence, demeanor, attitude, appearance, mannerisms, integrity, and morals displayed by students to faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, patients, and colleagues in healthcare and other educational settings, as well as to the public. The Program expects nothing short of respect and a professional demeanor.

Failure to achieve minimum competency in coursework, including clinical assignments, and to make satisfactory progress in professional development, behaviors, and attitudes may result in probation or dismissal.

STUDENT PROGRESS REVIEW PROCESS

SHS student performance reviews (academic, conduct, or professional) shall begin with an evaluation by the department-level review committee. The appeal process consists of two stages: a first-level appeal to the Department Chair/Program Director and a second-level appeal to the School.

STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE (SPC)

The SPC is charged with monitoring the academic and professional progress of PA students, promoting students who have successfully completed a trimester, and reviewing the cases of students who meet the disciplinary criteria. Additionally, the SPC monitors remediation and student support plans.

The committee is comprised of PA program faculty, excluding the Department Chair/Program Director and a faculty member, familiar with the PA scope of practice, from another SHS program or from Pacific's other health professional schools. Certain circumstances, as required by the University's Student Conduct and Community Standards Office, may also require the inclusion of University faculty members from programs unfamiliar with PA practice.

A performance review entails a complete review of a student's academic and professional performance throughout enrollment and an evaluation of a student's ability to satisfy the program's technical standards. The SPC may review student records and discuss them with appropriate faculty members and/or preceptors to determine an appropriate course of action for students experiencing academic and/or professional conduct difficulties in the program.

The SPC makes disciplinary decisions that may affect your academic standing. The SPC can assign disciplinary action classification, such as, but not limited to, program warning, probation, or dismissal. Disciplinary decisions are made on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances. Dismissal decisions must include a vote from the medical director or the external faculty member. Other University departments may review dismissals for violations of the University Code of Conduct. The chair of the SPC will issue a decision letter to the student regarding the student's status in the Program.

The SPC may request the student's appearance during an SPC meeting. If a student's enrollment status may change, such as deceleration or dismissal, the student will be invited to attend the SPC meeting. **Students may be required to attend SPC meetings during an inter-trimester break.**

Since the Program offers courses only once a year, if the SPC recommends that a student repeat an entire course or term, the student must take a leave of absence from the Program and the institution until the course(s) are offered again. A place will be held for the student to return to the Program at the beginning of the trimester, which must be repeated. An assessment may be required to ensure retention of prior knowledge before returning to the program.

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SPC COMMUNICATIONS
Students must acknowledge SPC correspondence via Email within 48 hours.

SHS STUDENT AFFAIRS REVIEW COMMITTEE (SARC)
A SHS Student Affairs Review Committee (SARC) is formed for each case referred to the SHS Dean. The SHS Dean will form the SHS SARC, which includes an SHS Assistant/Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Faculty Affairs, or Student Affairs, and two SHS faculty members. Assistant/Associate Dean(s), faculty associated with the department/program, or any other individuals involved in the case under review are excused from this review committee. When the SHS Dean deems it appropriate, the

Assistant/Associate Dean of Student Affairs may be designated to serve on the review committee as an ex officio student advocate if they have already been working closely with the student.

The SHS SARC reviews the following:

- Secondary appeals for dismissal/disqualification disciplinary action decisions
- School-level grade grievances

STUDENT PROGRESS SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS

Student Support Plan

A Student Support Plan (SSP) is a mechanism through which the Program provides a student with additional academic or professional support. An SSP is not the same as a remediation. An SSP is implemented when the SPC determines that a student would benefit from additional oversight or resources to support student success. While remediation addresses proven knowledge or skill deficits, an SSP is forward-facing to prevent the satisfaction of additional Program disciplinary criteria. An SSP may be implemented when a student's academic standing is Program Warning or Probation.

In addition to the programmatic SSP, the Program recommends that students utilize all available resources within the University's Student Academic Support Services, Student Health Services, and Psychological Support Services.

Plan Creation:
- The SPC will generate an SSP focused on student-specific factors disrupting current learning.
- The SSP is designed to support a student's learning without overloading them with additional educational requirements or excessive assessments.
- The SPC will develop the initial plan requirements
  - Timeline for initial meeting and meeting frequency
  - Type of academic or professionalism support (e.g., tutoring, notetaking, organization, time management, etc.)
- The SPC decision letter will
  - Clearly outline the Program's intention to implement an SSP.
  - Outline the initial required actions and expected/required performance.
  - Provide a timeline for re-evaluation.

Plan Implementation:
- The SPC chair(s) will work with the assigned faculty member to implement the imposed SSP.
- The SPC-imposed SSP and assigned faculty member may be amended by the Department Chair/Program Director only if needed to facilitate the support process.

Plan Modification:
- The assigned faculty member may modify components of the SSP based on the student's
    - self-assessment
    - progress or subsequent performance
- The assigned faculty member must notify the SPC Chair(s) of the SSP modifications.

Plan Monitoring:
- Student Support Plans are monitored by an assigned faculty member and/or the SPC chair(s).
- Meetings with the student
    - Initial meeting
        - Review and document the SPC assigned Student Support Plan
        - Review the student's self-assessment of weaknesses that resulted in their current academic or professional status and support they feel would be beneficial.
            - This self-assessment may precede the initial meeting.
    - Subsequent meetings
        - Review student performance
        - Review student compliance with and outcomes of recommended/ implemented tools
        - Provide guidance, instruction, assessment, and other components outlined in the Student Support plan.
        - Review student academic/professional progress since SSP initiation

Plan and Progress Documentation:
- Summaries of the meetings will be documented and retained by the program
- The Student Support Plan Form
    - Will be completed for every meeting. If a student misses a scheduled meeting, the faculty member will complete the form, documenting the absence, and sign it.
    - Will summarize the student's progress and compliance with the plan.
    - The student and supervising faculty shall sign the form.

Student Support Plan Completion Reevaluation:
- At the completion of the SSP period, the student's academic record will be referred back to the SPC for re-evaluation. This review may include a meeting with the student.
- The SPC may close the formal SSP and refer the student to their academic advisor.
- The SPC may continue the SSP for the subsequent trimester.

- Student compliance with an SSP is considered a professional responsibility. Failure to comply with the SSP will not result in disciplinary action, but may be considered if the student meets additional criteria for disciplinary action while on an SSP due to their lack of active participation.

Remediation

Remediation is the opportunity to correct unsatisfactory academic performance and/or professional conduct in the Program. The offer of remediation is not automatic or guaranteed. Remediation is to be regarded as a privilege that a student must earn through demonstrated dedication to learning and active participation in the educational program, including, but not limited to, overall academic/clinical performance, regular attendance, individual initiative, and resource utilization. A remediation plan may be implemented when a student's academic standing is Program Warning or Probation.

Determination of Remediation Plans:

- The SPC determines and develops all remediation plans and will assign a specific period for completion.
- Remediation plans/decisions cannot be appealed.

The SPC may recommend a remediation plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Content-specific remediation with reassessment
- A remediation assessment of the entire course content (cumulative exam)
- Complete additional assignments
- Requiring corrective action for unprofessional behavior and/or misconduct.
  - This may include, but is not limited to,
    - direct apologies, letters of apology, professionalism assignments, additional clinical rotation(s), ongoing monitoring, and reports of professional behavior corrections by faculty, preceptors, etc.
- Deceleration options
  - Cohort retaining
    - Delay the start of the clinical curriculum
  - Cohort change
    - Repeating the course(s) failed the next time the course(s) is offered, which includes deceleration to the subsequent cohort
    - Repeating an entire academic term, with or without previously passed courses, which includes deceleration to the subsequent cohort
    - Restarting the program with the next student cohort, waiving any waiting period and admissions process
    - Reenrollment only through the regular admissions process
    - Auditing previous courses or laboratory classes. If a student is

advised to audit a class, he/she is expected to follow the attendance policy for registered students, unless otherwise specified. Students may be required to sit for all course exams or may choose to do so. If a student takes exams, he/she must meet the same criteria as registered students to pass the remediation (e.g., a score of ≥70% on exams)

The SPC reserves the right to require a student to demonstrate continued competency in previously learned material by passing re-entry competency requirements for students with a remediation plan that includes extended time away from studies.

Any remediation plans that include deceleration or delays in curriculum completion will result in delayed program completion and additional tuition and fees.

In addition to the programmatic remediation plan, the Program recommends that students utilize all available resources within the University's Student Academic Support Services, Student Health Services, and Psychological Support Services.

Plan Creation:
- The SPC will generate a balanced remediation plan focused on deficit resolution without the disruption to current learning.
- The SPC decision letter will
    o clearly outline all components of the remediation (required actions and expected/required performance).
    o Provide a timeline for completion and re-evaluation

Plan Implementation:
- The SPC chair(s) will work with the assigned faculty member to implement the imposed remediation plan.
- The SPC-imposed remediation plan and the assigned faculty member may be amended by the Department Chair/Program Director only if needed to facilitate the remediation process.

Plan Monitoring:
- Remediation plans are monitored by the assigned faculty member and/or the SPC chair(s).
- Meetings with the student
    o Initial meeting
        ▪ Review the SPC assigned remediation plan
        ▪ Develop a contract/plan that outlines and defines
            - the remediation program
            - successful completion criteria
            - responsibilities of the student

- A student's self-assessment of weaknesses and deficiencies that resulted in their current academic or professional status.
  - This self-assessment may precede the initial meeting.
- Subsequent meetings
  - Review remediation progression
  - Review student compliance
  - Provide remediation guidance, instruction, assessment, and other components outlined in the remediation plan

Plan and Progress Documentation:
- Summaries of the meetings will be documented and retained by the program.
- The Remediation Monitoring Form
  - Will be completed for every meeting. If a student misses a scheduled meeting, the faculty member will complete the form, documenting the absence, and sign it.
  - Will summarize the student's progress and compliance with remediation requirements.
  - Shall be signed by the student and supervising faculty.
- Documentation of the remediation requirements, implementation process, and outcome will be placed in the student's file.

Post-Remediation Completion Reevaluation:
- At the completion of the remediation period, the student's academic record will be referred back to the SPC for re-evaluation. This review may include a meeting with the student.
- **Failure to meet the requirements of a remediation plan in the stipulated period shall result in a referral to the SPC and will meet the criteria for dismissal.**

ACADEMIC STANDING

All students must make satisfactory progress toward curriculum completion within the PA program. Students must meet the Program's and the University of the Pacific's minimum standards and requirements to remain in good academic standing. The University and Program have minimum academic progress criteria for grade point average. The Program has additional criteria that define academic progress. Failure to meet any defined criteria may result in disciplinary action and a change in a student's academic standing.

Academic Standing Categories

PROGRAM WARNING

Program Warning is a level of academic standing internal to the Program. It is instituted when a student fails to demonstrate knowledge acquisition or appropriate professionalism. It serves as a warning that improvement is needed. A Program Warning will be automatically assigned when the criteria are met, but the SPC may also assign this standing rather than a higher disciplinary action level.

The following are the criteria for which a student **will** receive a program warning:

- Failure of any 3 (initial) assessments within the same trimester
- Failure of the initial assessment and its retake assessment
- Failure of the same curriculum content (module) assessments across courses (i.e., cardiology modules)
- Professional Code of Conduct policy violation
- Verbal or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptor, or designees indicating that a student is not progressing academically and/or not demonstrating proficiency to the level expected for the level of/timing within clinical education

The Clinical Year Handbook lists additional Program Warning criteria specific to the clinical year, which begins with the first rotation placement.

RESOLUTION OF PROGRAM WARNINGS
Students are required to meet with their advisor or designated faculty member. Students will complete an individualized knowledge/skill development plan to support the successful acquisition of requisite knowledge and/or the improvement of professional behaviors. Additional program support will be provided as deemed necessary by the faculty advisor or designated faculty member. Failure of the initial exam and its retake requires remediation to ensure knowledge acquisition.

PROBATION

Probation results from unsatisfactory academic performance or unprofessional conduct and may lead to dismissal from the Program. Probation is a warning that deficiencies exist. During probation, the student's academic/clinical progress, as well as their professional conduct, will be closely monitored. Failure to demonstrate improvement in areas of deficiency may result in a student being placed in the dismissal category. **Decisions regarding Probation, including Deceleration, cannot be appealed.**

It is important to remember that examinations alone cannot adequately evaluate some aspects of knowledge integration and clinical judgment. Observations by academic and/or clinical faculty are crucial for evaluating these critical skills. A pattern of documented evaluator concerns about performance may indicate unsatisfactory progress when the record is viewed as a whole, even though passing grades have been assigned. In such instances, the successful completion of a remediation plan is required to continue in the program.

Note: Most state licensing boards require applicants to disclose all disciplinary actions taken during their enrollment. Additionally, most state licensure boards request academic and professional probation information on the official Program Completion Verification paperwork. The Program must document when a student has been on Academic and/or Professional Probation and, in most cases, the reasons for probation. <u>Discrepancies between the application and the program's certification may result in licensure denial.</u> Additionally, credentialing agencies often request this information, which could influence an individual's ability to obtain employment clearance. This requirement may last throughout your career.

Criteria for Probation

University Criteria for Probation
The following criteria will result in a student being placed on Academic Probation:
- Overall GPA < 2.75 for one trimester

Program Criteria for Probation
The following criteria will result in a student being placed on probation:
- Trimester GPA < 2.75 for one trimester
- Failure of a course

The following criteria may result in a student being placed on probation:

- Failure of any 5 (initial and/or retake) assessments within a trimester
- Meeting 2 or more Academic or Professionalism criteria for Program Warning within the same trimester (different categories of PW criteria cannot be combined to qualify for Probation)
- Violation of the Program policies and procedures found in the Student Handbook and/or the Clinical Education Handbook

- Violation of the School of Health Sciences' Code of Conduct policies
- Violation of University policies and procedures outlined in the Tiger Lore Student Handbook
- Third violation of the Professional Code of Conduct policies found in this handbook
- Professional misconduct, behavior, or attitude, potentially causing the loss of a clinical rotation site
- Disparaging comments regarding the Program, its faculty/staff, and/or the University
- Verbal or written reports (including evaluations) from academic faculty, clinical preceptor, or designees indicating that
  - a student is not progressing academically, clinically, or professionally to the extent that may jeopardize patient safety
  - a student is not adhering to site regulations, site schedule, ethical standards of conduct, and/or limitations of the student role
- Failing to progress academically, clinically, or professionally as demonstrated by repetitive failure to demonstrate competency across multiple evaluation modalities (e.g., written examinations, OSCEs, practical exams, preceptor evaluations, and written assignments)
- Failure to maintain the ability to meet the Program's Technical Standards
- Failure to follow or comply with requirements set forth by the SPC, Department Chair/Program Director, or SHS Dean.

The Clinical Year Handbook lists additional Probation criteria specific to the clinical year, which begins with the first rotation placement.

Terms of Probation
Notification:
- The SPC will notify the student in writing.
- The letter will include the reason for the probation
- Remediation or Student Support Plan requirements
- A copy will be placed in the student's academic file.
- When the terms of remediation and probation have been satisfied, the necessary documentation will be placed in the student's file.

Duration of Probation:
- A student will remain on Probation until the terms of probation have been satisfied, as stated in the probation letter. Probation related to programmatic criteria may continue throughout the remainder of the didactic year, clinical year, or until graduation if deemed appropriate.
- A Overall and trimester GPA of ≥ 2.75 at the end of the following academic term is required of a student placed on probation.

- A student on probation may not progress to Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs)/(rotations).

Extracurricular Restrictions:
- A student's primary responsibility is to gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become a competent and professional PA. A student on Academic Probation may not serve as an officer of any official Program, SHS, or University club/organization (including holding a Class Officer position), as it may detract from the time needed to be academically and professionally successful. If a student currently serving as an officer/representative is placed on Probation, the other class leaders or the entire class will select a substitute officer/representative to fill the position until the student is removed from probation.

DISMISSAL

The Program, after due consideration and process, reserves the right to dismiss/disqualify any student at any time before graduation if circumstances of a legal, moral, behavioral, ethical, patient safety, health, or academic nature justify such action.

Dismissal decisions are made individually after considering the student's complete academic and professional performance during enrollment, their ability to meet the program's technical standards, pertinent circumstances, and extenuating circumstances related to the individual student's performance. Therefore, a combination of Academic and Professional criteria can be used to determine eligibility for dismissal. Dismissal decisions must include a vote from the medical director or the external faculty member. Other University departments may review dismissals for violations of the University Code of Conduct.

Criteria for Dismissal
University Criteria for Dismissal

The following criteria **will** result in a student being dismissed:
- Overall GPA < 2.75 after being on Academic Probation in the prior academic term
- Overall GPA < 2.75 for any two trimesters

Program Criteria for Dismissal
The following criteria **may** result in a student being dismissed:
- Trimester GPA < 2.75 for any two trimesters
- Failure of 2 or more courses
- Failure of a course after deceleration
- Failure of a repeated or remediated course
- Meeting Program Probation criteria for 2 or more trimesters
- Failure by a student on probation to comply with, or satisfactorily complete, a remediation plan within the defined period

- Failure of any 9 (initial and/or retake) exams or major assessments within a trimester
- Meeting 2 or more different criteria for Program Probation within the same trimester, if previously placed on probation
- One egregious or ≥4 Professional Code of Conduct Policy violation(s)
- Two or more occurrences of failure to follow Program policies and procedures as defined in this Handbook, as well as those defined in the Clinical Education Handbook
- Violation of University of the Pacific's or School of Health Sciences Code of Conduct policies or any University policies and procedures outlined in the Tiger Lore Student Handbook,
    - while currently on Academic Probation or
    - any egregious violations that are determined to be a qualification for the Criteria for Dismissal
- Egregious violation of the Professional Code of Conduct that impedes the University's or Program's ability to do business, impacts the reputation of the University or Program, causes the loss of a clinical rotation site, or disparaging comments/social media posts about the Program, its faculty/staff, and/or University
- Verbal, written reports from academic faculty, clinical preceptors, or designees indicating that a student who is already on Probation is not
    - adhering to site regulations, site schedules, ethical standards of conduct, and/or limitations of the student role
    - progressing academically, clinically, or professionally to the extent that may jeopardize patient safety
- Consistently failing to progress academically, clinically, or professionally as demonstrated by repetitive failure to demonstrate competency across multiple evaluation modalities (e.g., written examinations, OSCEs, practical exams, preceptor evaluations, and written assignments)
- Failure to maintain the ability to meet the Program's Technical Standards
- Failure to comply with requirements set forth by the SPC, the Department Chair/Program Director, or the SHS Dean.

The Clinical Year Handbook lists additional Dismissal criteria specific to the clinical year, which begins with the first rotation placement.

Notification of Program Dismissal
The SPC shall notify the student in writing via University email. The student must acknowledge receipt of the letter, via email, **within 24 hours**. The student has **48 hours** from the time the letter is sent to notify the Program of the student's acceptance of the dismissal or the plan to appeal. Failure to meet either deadline shall result in immediate dismissal. If a student accepts the dismissal, the dismissal is effective

immediately. If a student intends to appeal the decision, the student shall remain enrolled until a final decision is determined.

APPEAL PROCESS FOR PROGRAM DISMISSAL
Students may only appeal Dismissal disciplinary action decisions.

Enrollment Status during the Appeal Process
While the appeal is pending, the student's enrollment status will remain unchanged. The student must follow the Program, School, and University policies for enrolled students.

The Program reserves the right to remove the student from clinical rotations until the appeals process is completed if there is a concern for patient safety due to deficits in clinical competency or unprofessional behavior. Removal from a clinical rotation will delay the student's program completion if the appeal is granted. Delayed Program completion may result in additional tuition and/or fees.

Confidentiality Maintenance
All matters relating to an appeal are considered confidential. All parties, including faculty, staff, and students, must maintain confidentiality and limit their communications about the disciplinary process to those actively involved. Failure to maintain confidentiality violates the SHS Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action by the department/program or SHS.

<u>First-Level Appeal to Department Chair/Program Director</u>
The student has **five (5) calendar days (until 5 PM Pacific Time)** from the date on the dismissal letter to submit a formal written appeal to the Department Chair/Program Director. The written appeal must be received via email or hard copy by the Department Chair/Program Director within this period. The narrative should fully explain the situation and substantiate the reason(s) for advocating a reversal of the dismissal. Failure to submit an appeal by the deadline will result in the student losing the right to appeal and immediate dismissal.

The Department Chair/Program Director will perform an independent review of the student record with or without individual interviews.

The Department Chair/Program Director may grant an appeal based on one of the following:
4. The bias of one or more of the members of the department/program review committee
5. New information not available to the committee at the time of its initial decision, as determined through a secondary review.
6. Procedural error

The Department Chair/Program Director may choose any of the following options when an appeal is being considered:
1. Concur with the SPC's decision

2. Amend the decision with or without referral to the SPC for approval
3. Repeal the SPC decision

Amended decisions by the Department Chair/Program Director are not eligible for secondary appeal.

Secondary Appeal to Dean of the School of Health Sciences

If the Department Chair/Program Director, during the primary appeals process, upholds the SPC decision for dismissal, the student has the right to submit an appeal to the SHS Dean. The student has 48 hours to notify the SPC chair of the intention to submit a secondary appeal. The student has **five (5) calendar days (until 5 PM Pacific Time)** from the date of the Department Chair/Program Director's decision letter to submit a petition to appeal to the SHS Dean. Upon receiving the appeal, the SHS Dean will convene an SHS Student Affairs Review Committee (SARC). Failure to submit an appeal within this period results in the loss of the right to appeal, resulting in immediate dismissal.

The Program reserves the right to remove the student from clinical rotations during the appeal process if there is concern for patient safety due to deficits in clinical competency.

Criteria for Secondary Appeals

The following are grounds for an appeal to the SHS Dean:

1. A departmental review process procedural error
2. Substantiated bias against the student

The SHS Dean may choose one of the following options when a secondary appeal is being considered:

1. Concur with the SARC recommendation
2. Amend the SARC recommendation
3. Disagree/overrule the SARC recommendation

The possible appeal outcomes include:
1. Grant the student's appeal
2. Uphold the department/program review committee and department chair/Department Chair/Program Director's decisions

The appeal decision of the SHS Dean shall be final and binding.

SECTION 17   GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student will be recommended for the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Degree provided they have fulfilled the following:

1. Completion of all prescribed academic requirements with an Overall grade point average of 2.75 or higher in the PA Program with no incomplete or unsatisfactory grades.
2. Successful completion of summative assessments.
3. Demonstration of no deficiencies in ethical, professional, or personal conduct, which would make it inappropriate to award the degrees, and receipt of a final overall satisfactory rating on the Professional Evaluation.
4. Compliance with all legal and financial requirements of the University of the Pacific.
5. Completion of the academic requirements within the required 150% of the time frame following matriculation.

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University of the Pacific
Master of Physician Assistant Studies
Degree Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK
SIGNATURE SHEET
Class of 2028

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I have read, understand, and agree to follow the policies and procedures set forth by the University of the Pacific and the University of the Pacific Physician Assistant Program as outlined in the Tiger Lore student handbook and this handbook. As a student, I am responsible for referring to this Handbook for specific policies and procedures governing my status as a Physician Assistant student, including but not limited to Program requirements, goals, outcomes, and graduation requirements. University policies included in this handbook are provided for general information and reference. Students must refer to the specific University department for the most current information.

My signature below signifies that I understand the following policies/procedures and know how to access this information and processes:
- Program grading and program completion requirements
- Academic and Professional Standards, including student ID requirements
- Disciplinary action criteria and process, including remediation and appeals
- Student grievance procedures
- Student safety, harassment, misconduct reporting
- Withdrawal and tuition/fees refunds
- Health clearance requirements

Additionally, my signature below signifies that I understand:
- I cannot work for the Program in any capacity, including functioning as faculty.
- I am not required to locate my own rotation sites.
- Faculty are prohibited from providing medical care except in an emergency.
- How to access University student support services.

Every attempt is made to provide a comprehensive handbook that offers an accurate overview of the Program's policies and curriculum. However, circumstances and events may necessitate modifying the handbook during enrollment. I understand that amendments may be made to the policy and procedures noted within. Any amendments shall supersede those sections of the original handbook. These policy updates will be provided in writing via the university's learning management system. With my continued enrollment in the Program, I agree to comply with all provisions listed in this handbook and any future amendments, with or without further signature attestation.

_____   _____   _____
Student Signature   University ID Number   Date