

University of Tampa



The University Of

T A M P A®

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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Introduction and Handbook Purpose

Welcome to the University of Tampa Physician Assistant Program. This handbook is intended to serve as the official guide to the policies, procedures, expectations, and resources that govern your experience as a student within the PA Program. It has been developed in alignment with the **ARC-PA 6th Edition Standards** and institutional policies as outlined in the [University Catalog](#).

The policies within this handbook apply to all enrolled PA students and are designed to support your academic success, professional development, and progression toward becoming a competent, ethical, and compassionate healthcare provider. While this handbook outlines PA Program-specific expectations, students are also responsible for understanding and complying with all policies of the University of Tampa and the College of Natural and Health Sciences.

This document is reviewed and updated annually. The PA Program reserves the right to make modifications at any time in response to changes in accreditation standards, university policy, or program needs. The most current version of this handbook will be maintained on the program's internal student portal and will serve as the official version of record.

All students are required to sign a formal acknowledgment indicating that they have read, understood, and agreed to comply with the policies contained within this handbook. This acknowledgment is a condition of enrollment and is retained in the student's academic file.

We look forward to supporting you on your path to becoming a highly competent and patient-centered physician assistant.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Contact information

University of Tampa Physician Assistant Program
401 W. Kennedy Blvd
Tampa, FL 33606-1490

Faculty and Staff

*Department of Physician Assistant Medicine (A1.02, **A1.07**; **A2.01** **A2.02**, **A2.03**, A2.11, A2.12, A2.18)*

Chair/Program Director: Mike Roscoe, PhD, PA-C (**A2.02**, A2.04, A2.06, A2.07, A2.08, A2.10)

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Medical Director: Kimberly Mularoni MD, FAAP (A2.02; A2.04, **A2.11**, A2.12)

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Mission Statements

University of Tampa Mission Statement

The University of Tampa is a private, independent university that prepares students to reason with clarity, learn by thinking and by doing, and lead with purpose in a rapidly evolving, interconnected world. Through rigorous undergraduate and graduate education shaped by close faculty mentorship and personalized instruction, the University cultivates intellectual curiosity, leadership, well-being and lifelong learning. Located in downtown Tampa's vibrant setting, UTampa advances teaching, scholarship and research, and fosters community partnerships that prepare graduates for meaningful careers and responsible citizenship in a global community.

Department of Physician Assistant Medicine Mission, Vision, Values (A2.05a)

Mission

The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program prepares practice-ready PAs through rigorous, competency-based education that develops clinical reasoning, professionalism, evidence-based practice, and patient-centered team care.

Vision

The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program is committed to developing exceptional PAs who lead with clinical excellence, integrity, compassion, and dedication to improving the health of the communities they serve.

Values

Core Values: ASCEND

ASCEND: The values that guide our program and prepare students to become practice-ready PAs.

A: Accountability

We own our learning, actions, decisions, and outcomes.

Accountability reflects our responsibility for preparation, performance, communication, and professional behavior. It includes dependability, follow-through, honesty about limitations, and responding appropriately when mistakes occur.

S: Scholarship

We use evidence, curiosity, and disciplined study to guide clinical decision-making.

Scholarship reflects the academic and intellectual foundation of our program and PA practice. It includes evidence-based practice, scientific reasoning, clinical curiosity, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

C: Compassion

We care for patients and one another with respect, empathy, and professionalism.

Compassion reflects the human side of healthcare and our responsibility to treat patients, families, colleagues, learners, faculty, staff, preceptors, and healthcare teams with dignity and respect.

E: Excellence

We pursue high standards in knowledge, clinical reasoning, technical skill, education, and patient care.

Excellence reflects our commitment to continuous improvement and high-quality performance. It includes academic preparation, effective teaching and learning, clinical competence, procedural skill, and safe patient care.

N: Navigate

We adapt, problem-solve, and apply sound judgment in changing situations.

Navigate reflects our ability to manage uncertainty, respond to new information, prioritize competing needs, and make thoughtful decisions in dynamic educational and clinical environments.

D: Dependability

We are prepared, reliable, responsive, and worthy of trust.

Dependability reflects the trust placed in our program and its members by patients, learners, colleagues, healthcare teams, clinical partners, and the community. It includes punctuality, preparation, communication, consistency, and professional reliability.

Program Learning Outcomes and Program Competencies (A2.05, A3.11g, B1.01b, B1.03e, B3.05 B4.03)

Competencies and Program Learning Outcomes

The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program uses a competency-based educational framework to prepare graduates for entry-level PA practice. The program defines five competency domains that describe the knowledge, clinical skills, reasoning abilities, communication skills, and professional behaviors expected of graduates.

The program's competencies also serve as Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Each competency domain includes defined sub-competencies that are assessed throughout the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum.

Faculty evaluate student development using a milestone framework that describes progressive levels of performance from entry into the program through graduation. Longitudinal competency assessment begins during the didactic phase through the **Assessment of Student Competence and Educational Development (ASCEND)** course series and continues throughout the clinical phase. Milestones support feedback, academic support, remediation when needed, and decisions regarding readiness for supervised clinical practice experiences and graduation.

Milestone Levels

- **Level 1: Novice**
Expected performance of a student early in the program.
- **Level 2: Advanced Beginner**
Expected performance of a student who is ready to enter supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs).
- **Level 3: Competent**
Expected performance of a graduate who is prepared for entry-level PA practice. Level 3 is the expected level at graduation.
- **Level 4: Proficient**
An aspirational benchmark representing continued professional development during approximately the first 0 to 5 years of PA practice. Level 4 is not a graduation requirement.

Program Competencies and PLOs

Competency/PLO 1: Clinical and Technical Skills (CTS)

Graduates will demonstrate the clinical and technical skills necessary to provide safe, effective, patient-centered care.

Clinical Skills

1. **History and Physical Examination**
Obtain histories and perform focused and comprehensive physical examinations appropriate to the patient presentation.
2. **Clinical Data Interpretation and Synthesis**
Recognize, interpret, and synthesize clinical findings, patient information, and diagnostic study results to inform patient assessment.
3. **Patient Communication for Understanding and Shared Decision-Making**
Communicate effectively with patients to support understanding, shared decision-making, and patient-centered care.
4. **Patient Safety, Infection Prevention, and Risk Reduction**
Apply patient safety, infection prevention, and risk-reduction practices during clinical and procedural care.

Technical Skills

5. **Program-Defined Diagnostic Tests, Procedures, and Interventions**
Perform program-defined diagnostic tests, procedures, and interventions safely and effectively.
6. **Technical Proficiency and Psychomotor Skill**
Demonstrate technical proficiency and psychomotor skill in program-defined routine clinical and procedural tasks.
7. **Aseptic, Sterile, and Safety Practices**
Prepare for, perform, or assist with procedures using appropriate aseptic, sterile, and safety practices.

Competency/PLO 2: Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities (CRPS)

Graduates will apply clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities to assess patients, make informed clinical decisions, and develop appropriate management plans across patient populations and settings.

1. **Prioritized Differential Diagnosis and Problem Representation**
Formulate prioritized differential diagnoses and accurate problem representations.
2. **Diagnostic and Therapeutic Intervention Selection**
Select and justify diagnostic and therapeutic interventions.
3. **Management Plans Across Care Types**
Develop management plans for acute, chronic, emergent, and preventive care, including appropriate follow-up and monitoring, within PA scope and under appropriate supervision.
4. **Outcome Evaluation and Plan Revision**
Evaluate outcomes and revise care plans appropriately.

Competency/PLO 3: Interpersonal and Communication Skills (COM)

Graduates will communicate effectively with patients, families, and members of the healthcare team to support patient-centered care and shared decision-making.

1. **Verbal and Nonverbal Communication with Patients**
Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication with patients.
2. **Written Documentation**
Create accurate, timely, and professional written documentation.
3. **Shared Decision-Making with Patients and Families**
Engage patients and families in shared decision-making.
4. **Difficult or Emotionally Sensitive Conversations**
Navigate difficult or emotionally sensitive conversations with professionalism and empathy.

Competency/PLO 4: Medical Knowledge (MK)

Graduates will apply foundational and clinical medical knowledge, evidence, and ongoing learning to support safe and effective patient care.

1. **Foundational Biomedical Knowledge**
Demonstrate foundational knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, and pharmacology.
2. **Normal and Abnormal Clinical Findings**
Distinguish normal from abnormal clinical findings.
3. **Evidence-Based Medicine and Literature Appraisal**
Apply evidence-based medicine and appraise medical literature critically.
4. **Learning Needs and Ongoing Improvement**
Identify learning needs through self-assessment and develop a plan for ongoing learning and improvement.

Competency/PLO 5: Professional Behaviors (PB)

Graduates will consistently demonstrate professional, ethical, accountable, and patient-centered behaviors in educational and clinical environments.

1. **Integrity, Accountability, Empathy, and Respect**
Demonstrate integrity, accountability, empathy, and respect in professional interactions.
2. **Ethical and Legal Standards**
Uphold ethical and legal standards in clinical care.
3. **Privacy, Confidentiality, and Autonomy**
Protect patient privacy, confidentiality, and autonomy.
4. **Self-Assessment, Quality Improvement, and Risk Management**
Apply self-assessment, quality improvement, and risk-management principles to improve patient care.

Students must demonstrate the program-defined **Level 3: Competent** graduation expectations in accordance with program progression and summative evaluation policies.

How Competency Progression Is Assessed

Students are assessed longitudinally throughout the didactic and clinical phases using multiple assessment methods. Competency data are reviewed in relation to the program's milestone expectations to provide feedback, identify areas requiring additional development, and determine readiness for progression and graduation.

Didactic Phase: ASCEND

Competency development during the didactic phase is supported through the **Assessment of Student Competence and Educational Development (ASCEND)** course series:

- **PAM 697: ASCEND I**
- **PAM 698: ASCEND II**
- **PAM 699: ASCEND III**

ASCEND provides a longitudinal framework for assessing student development across the program's competency domains. Through integrated assessments and faculty review of performance data, ASCEND allows students and faculty to monitor progression, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and provide support or remediation when needed.

By completion of the didactic phase, students are expected to demonstrate **Level 2: Advanced Beginner** performance appropriate for entry into supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs).

Clinical Phase: PA Competencies Assessment

Longitudinal competency assessment continues throughout the clinical phase through the **PA Competencies Assessment** course series:

- **PAM 710: PA Competencies Assessment I**
- **PAM 711: PA Competencies Assessment II**
- **PAM 712: PA Competencies Assessment III**

During the clinical phase, evidence from supervised clinical practice experiences and other program assessments is used to evaluate continued development across the competency domains. Students are expected to demonstrate progressive movement toward the program's graduation standard throughout this phase.

Summative Evaluation

The program completes a comprehensive summative evaluation in **PAM 800** near the end of the curriculum. Multiple assessment modalities are used to verify that each student demonstrates the program-defined competencies required for entry-level PA practice.

Summative assessment includes measures of:

- medical knowledge;
- clinical reasoning and patient management;

- history-taking, physical examination, and patient communication;
- technical and procedural skills;
- evidence-based medicine and medical literature appraisal; and
- professionalism, ethical reasoning, communication, patient safety, and risk management.

Students must demonstrate the program-defined **Level 3: Competent** graduation expectations in accordance with program progression and summative evaluation policies.

See the PA Program Competency Milestones (PDF) addendum for the complete milestone framework.

Goals (A2.05a, A3.11b, B1.01a)

1. **Prepare graduates for day-one readiness in clinical practice and success on the PANCE**
Graduates are supported through a structured, competency-based curriculum and formative assessments to promote first-time PANCE pass rates that meet or exceed the national average.
2. **Develop competent, compassionate, patient-centered providers who demonstrate excellence in clinical reasoning, communication, and professional practice.**
Students demonstrate readiness for entry-level practice through progressive competency achievement and successful completion of summative evaluations.
3. **Promote interprofessional collaboration and communication as essential to high-quality, team-based care.**
Students engage in interprofessional learning and demonstrate collaborative practice skills with peers and clinical colleagues.
4. **Cultivate professionalism, leadership, service, and community engagement among students and faculty.**
Students and faculty participate in service, leadership and professional development that promote ethical practice and social responsibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE (A1)

Accreditation

The University of Tampa (UTampa) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). UT is also externally accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA). The ARC-PA has granted **Accreditation-Continued** status to **The University of Tampa Department of Physician Assistant Medicine Program**, sponsored by **The University of Tampa**. 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 2034**. 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 <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-university-of-tampa>.

Institutional Responsibilities and Student Rights (A1.02)

In accordance with ARC-PA Standard A1.02, the University of Tampa is committed to maintaining an educational environment that is safe, inclusive, and supportive of student success. The University assumes key responsibilities to support the Physician Assistant (PA) Program and its students. These include ensuring safety, protecting student rights, and providing clear access to institutional policies. This section summarizes these responsibilities and outlines how students may access applicable resources.

Student Safety and Security

Policy: The University and the PA Program will take reasonable steps to ensure the personal safety and security of students, faculty, and staff at all instructional sites, including classroom and clinical settings.

Procedure: Students will be oriented to site-specific safety procedures, including emergency protocols and security measures, at each instructional and clinical site. Any safety concerns should be reported to the PA Program Director or the Director of Clinical Education (DCE).

Harassment, Discrimination, and Mistreatment

Policy: The University maintains and enforces policies that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and mistreatment of students.

Procedure: Students and staff who experience harassment or discrimination, including sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or protected class bias, should report using either the University's Title IX grievance process or the Student Code of Conduct procedures. Both Title IX and non-Title IX matters are handled through UT's Office of Student Conduct

Resources:

- University of Tampa Policy Links
 - Title IX Policy and Reporting Procedures
 - <https://www.ut.edu/about-utampa/university-services/human-resources/title-ix->
 - Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards
 - <https://www.ut.edu/campus-life/student-services/office-of-student-conduct>
 - Student Code of Conduct (University Policies)
 - <https://www.ut.edu/campus-life/student-services/office-of-student-conduct/student-code-of-conduct-university-policies>

Refunds of Tuition and Fees

Policy: Students who withdraw from the University or are granted a leave of absence may be eligible for tuition or fee refunds in accordance with University policy.

Procedure: Tuition and fee refund eligibility is governed by the UT Refund Policy located under 'Dropping Courses, Withdrawals and Refunds' in the University Catalog. Questions should be directed to the Office of Student Accounts.

Resource:

- University of Tampa Policy Links
 - Refunds of Tuition and Fees (**UTampa Catalog**)

Additional Institutional Commitments

The University of Tampa is also responsible for:

- Maintaining compliance with all ARC-PA accreditation standards and policies
- Supporting the PA Program in curriculum design, self-assessment, and leadership
- Defining and applying policies related to faculty/staff grievances and harassment
- Providing documentation of security and safety measures at all PA Program instructional sites

Students are encouraged to review the full University policies in the UT Academic Catalog or consult their faculty advisor with any questions.

Academic Support and Student Services (A1.04)

Policy: The University of Tampa provides Physician Assistant Medicine students access to academic support and student services consistent with the services available to other comparable graduate students. Available resources include academic advising, accessibility services, library resources, technology support, medical services, counseling and behavioral health services, and other institutional resources that support student success and well-being.

Eligibility, insurance coverage, fees, appointment requirements, and the scope of available services are established by the University and may vary by service and student insurance status.

Procedure:

1. **Orientation**
PA students receive information regarding available academic and student support services during program orientation.
2. **Access**
Students may access institutional support services through the processes established by the University. Program faculty and staff may assist students in identifying and navigating appropriate services but do not provide medical treatment, counseling, or therapy.
3. **Program-Specific Support**
The PA Program provides additional student support through faculty advising, academic monitoring, success coaching, and formal remediation when appropriate.

4. Annual Review

The Program Director or designee periodically reviews PA student access to institutional services and communicates identified concerns to the appropriate university office.

5. Feedback and Concerns

Students may report concerns regarding access to support services to their faculty advisor, the Associate Program Director, or the Program Director. Formal complaints may be addressed through the Student Grievance procedures described elsewhere in this Handbook.

Student Health Center and Counseling Services

The Dickey Health Center provides medical and counseling services to eligible University of Tampa students. The Health Center is located behind Austin Hall and operates in partnership with Tampa General Hospital.

Medical Services

Full-time graduate students, defined by the University as students registered for eight or more credit hours, are eligible to use Student Medical Services. Part-time students may be eligible to receive services on a fee-for-service basis.

Available medical services may include:

- evaluation and treatment of acute illnesses and injuries;
- immunizations;
- gynecologic, sexual, and reproductive health services;
- physical examinations;
- allergy injections;
- selected laboratory testing; and
- other health services offered by the University.

Medical services are provided by appointment. Students should contact the Student Health Center before presenting for care. Coverage and out-of-pocket costs depend on the student's health insurance plan and the services provided.

Counseling and Behavioral Health Services

Counseling Services provides confidential support for personal, emotional, behavioral health, and academic-functioning concerns. Available services may include:

- individual counseling;
- group counseling;
- psychiatric evaluation and medication management;
- crisis support during clinic hours;
- alcohol and other drug counseling;
- brief solution-oriented case management;
- specialized counseling resources; and
- access to a 24-hour emergency student support line.

Graduate students enrolled in the University-sponsored student health insurance plan may have eligible medical and counseling services billed through that plan. Graduate students who do not carry the

University-sponsored plan may still request counseling services on a fee-for-service basis, subject to current University eligibility requirements and service availability.

Students should contact the Dickey Health Center at 813-253-6250 to confirm eligibility, coverage, fees, current hours, and appointment availability. Because hours, fees, and service arrangements may change, students are responsible for consulting the current University website or student portal for the most current information.

Emergencies and Urgent Concerns

Students experiencing a medical or behavioral health emergency should call **911** or contact Campus Safety. Students should not delay emergency care while attempting to obtain a routine Health Center appointment.

Instructional and reference materials (A1.09)

Policy: The UT PA Program ensures all students and faculty have equivalent access to necessary educational and clinical reference tools to support evidence-based practice as required by Standard A1.09.

Procedure

- Access is provided through the UT Library to essential databases such as:
 - PubMed, Medline, CINAHL, Cochrane, UpToDate, ClinicalKey, AccessMedicine, among others.
- Required instructional platforms include Canvas, Yuja (lecture capture), secure testing systems (e.g., ExamSoft), and clinical tracking software (Exxat).
- Orientation sessions introduce students to each platform; library orientation is integrated into the first semester.
- Technical support and troubleshooting are available via the UT Library helpdesk and PA Program staff.

Instructional Software and Learning Systems

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program provides access to digital instructional systems required for successful completion of the curriculum, course content delivery, assessment, and clinical education tracking.

Procedure: Required instructional platforms include, but are not limited to:

- **Canvas** (Course Management System)
- **Learning Space** (Simulation software)
- **Clinical Management Software** (Exxat)
- **ExamSoft** (Secure testing platform)

Students receive login credentials and instructional guidance for each platform during orientation and the first week of coursework. Faculty ensure course materials are consistently delivered using these systems. Additional support is available through program staff or UT IT Services.

Library and Supplemental Resources

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program ensures all students and faculty have access to library services and supplemental instructional materials necessary to support teaching, learning, and evidence-based medical practice.

Procedure: UTampa PA students and faculty have full access to the UT Library's physical and digital collections, including interlibrary loan services. Key databases accessible to PA students include:

- **ClinicalKey**
- **AccessMedicine**
- **Up-To-Date**
- **PubMed**
- **Medline (EBSCO and/or Ovid)**
- Additional databases listed at: <https://utampa.edu/library>

Library orientation is integrated into orientation week, and students may request librarian consultations for help with database searching, citation management, and research support.

A3. Operations

Application of Program Policies (A3.01)

Policy: Program policies published in the University of Tampa PA Student Handbook apply to all students, principal faculty, staff, and the program director, regardless of geographic location. These policies are consistently applied throughout the program's operations, including at any distant campuses or affiliated clinical sites.

Where applicable, a signed clinical affiliation agreement or memorandum of understanding may specify that certain institutional or program policies will be superseded by those of the clinical site. Any such exceptions will be clearly defined in the agreement and communicated to students.

Procedure: Clinical affiliation agreements are reviewed and approved by the program's clinical education team and institutional representatives to ensure clarity on the application or supersession of policies. Students are notified of any clinical site-specific policies.

Student Work for Program (A3.02)

Policy: PA students enrolled in the University of Tampa PA Program are not required to work for the program in any capacity, including but not limited to administrative, instructional, clinical, or technical support roles. Participation in voluntary student activities (e.g., class officers, student committees, or peer tutoring) does not constitute program-required work and is not a condition of enrollment or academic standing.

Procedure: This policy is communicated to students during orientation, documented in the PA Student Handbook, and reinforced during clinical year orientation. Any reports of students being asked or

expected to perform work for the program will be reviewed by the Program Director and addressed in accordance with institutional grievance or student support procedures.

Student Substitution for Program Roles (A3.03)

Policy: PA students enrolled in the University of Tampa PA Program are not permitted to substitute for or function as:

- Instructional faculty
- Clinical staff
- Administrative staff

This policy applies regardless of a student's prior clinical experience, licensure, or work history. Students may engage in learning experiences and simulations that resemble faculty or staff roles (e.g., peer teaching, simulated clinical tasks) only under direct supervision and when clearly part of a formal instructional plan.

Procedure: This policy is reviewed with students during program orientation and included in the PA Student Handbook. Faculty and staff are also oriented to this policy to ensure that student boundaries are respected. Any concerns or violations are referred to the Program Director for review and corrective action in accordance with program and university policy.

Student Identification and Role Clarification in Academic and Clinical Settings (A3.04)

Policy: (Academic and Institutional Settings): All University of Tampa PA students are required to always wear a clearly visible name badge while engaged in program-related activities. This includes classroom instruction, on-campus events, interprofessional education (IPE), community engagement, in all clinical environments, and university-sponsored events.

Policy: (Clinical Settings): In all clinical environments, UTampa PA students must be clearly identified as physician assistant students to distinguish them from licensed providers and other health profession learners. A name badge that clearly displays their status as a PA student is required during all patient care activities.

Procedure: (Name Badges and Use)

- The UTampa PA Program will issue an institutional ID during orientation.
- Badges must be worn above the waist and in a position that is readily visible to patients, staff, and faculty.
- Lost or damaged badges must be replaced by the student at the student's expense. (subject to university policy).

Procedure: (Patient Communication)

During any clinical encounter, PA students must:

- Verbally introduce themselves to each patient as a physician assistant student, and
- Request the patient's permission to participate in care prior to initiating any treatment or assessment.
- Students must comply with any additional site-specific badge or ID requirements

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in a professionalism violation and will be addressed by the Program Director or the Director of Clinical Education

Infectious and Environmental Hazard Exposure (A3.05a-c)

Policy: (General Expectations): All University of Tampa PA students are required to complete training and follow established safety protocols to minimize the risk of exposure to infectious and environmental hazards. These include:

- Proper immunization in accordance with CDC guidelines and site-specific guidelines.
- Adherence to universal precautions
- Compliance with UTampa PA Program and clinical site safety policies

Students may not begin clinical or laboratory activities that place them at occupational risk until these requirements are met.

The program's exposure protocol is reviewed annually by the Director of Clinical Education.

Methods of Prevention

Immunization Requirements

Policy: Prior to matriculation and annually thereafter, PA students must submit proof of required immunizations in accordance with CDC recommendations for healthcare personnel.

Procedure:

- Initial records are submitted to the PA Program.
- Updates are required annually, or as otherwise designated by clinical affiliation agreements.
- Additional testing may be required prior to the clinical phase.
- Students participating in international rotations must comply with CDC travel immunization guidelines specific to the destination.

Procedures for Exposure Response

Accidental Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens or Hazards

Policy: If a student experiences a needle stick, mucosal splash, or other exposure to potentially infectious material, they must follow institutional and clinical site protocols immediately.

Procedure: Off-Campus (Clinical Site)

1. Immediately cleanse the affected area (wash skin with soap and water; irrigate eyes or mucous membranes with water or saline).
2. Notify the clinical preceptor and follow the site's exposure protocol.
3. If the site lacks a protocol, the student should be directed to the nearest Emergency Department for baseline testing within 30 minutes of the exposure.
4. Submit an Exposure Incident Form to the PA Program within 48 hours. ([Form 1 - Accident/Incident Investigation Report](#))
5. The student is responsible for any testing or treatment costs.

Procedure: On-Campus

1. Cleanse the affected area immediately as above.
2. Notify the supervising faculty member or lab instructor without delay.
3. Faculty will assist in arranging emergency evaluation and documentation.
4. Submit an Exposure Incident Form to the PA Program within 48 hours.
5. Students may use UT Health Services for non-urgent follow-up.

Financial Responsibility

Policy: Students are financially responsible for all costs related to post-exposure evaluation, testing, prophylaxis, and treatment unless otherwise covered by the clinical site, or personal insurance.

Faculty Provision of Healthcare to Students (A3.06)

Policy: Principal faculty, the Program Director, and the Medical Director of the University of Tampa PA Program must not serve as healthcare providers for currently enrolled PA students **except in emergency situations**.

This policy is intended to preserve the integrity of the student-faculty relationship and to avoid conflicts of interest in academic and professional assessments.

Procedure

- This policy is reviewed with all faculty and students during orientation and is published in the PA Student and Faculty Handbooks.
- In the event of an emergency, faculty may render immediate care until emergency medical services (EMS) or alternate providers assume responsibility.
- If a student inadvertently seeks non-emergency care from a restricted faculty member (e.g., during a clinical event or informal consultation), the faculty member must redirect the student to appropriate university or external healthcare services.
- Any non-compliance or concerns should be reported to the Program Director.

Student Referral for Personal Issues (A3.07)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program is committed to supporting the well-being and academic success of its students. The program ensures that all students have timely access to university counseling, mental health, and wellness resources when personal issues arise that may impact academic performance or progression through the program.

Procedure

- Students experiencing stress, anxiety, emotional distress, or other personal difficulties may seek confidential support through the University of Tampa Student Counseling Services.
- Contact information for counseling and related support services is provided to all students during orientation and is published in the PA Student Handbook and on the UT website.
- If a student discloses a need for support to a faculty or staff member, the student will be encouraged to contact the appropriate university resource directly. Faculty may facilitate the referral but will not provide counseling or therapy themselves.
- A UTampa Counseling Services representative will be invited to speak with each PA cohort at least once annually to review available services, referral procedures, and points of contact.

- In the event of a mental health emergency or crisis, students are instructed to contact campus safety or 911 and will be referred to the university's emergency response procedures.
- Faculty may consult the Program Director if there are any concerns regarding student wellness or fitness for duty.

Clinical Site and Preceptor Procurement Policy (A3.08)

Policy: All supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) are arranged by the University of Tampa PA Program. At no time are prospective or enrolled students **required** to solicit or provide clinical sites or preceptors for their clinical education.

The PA Program is responsible for ensuring that all SCPEs meet ARC-PA accreditation standards and that sites and preceptors are appropriately vetted, qualified, and evaluated.

Procedure

- The Clinical Education Team coordinates the placement of students at approved clinical sites through formal affiliation agreements.
- If a student becomes aware of a potential clinical site or preceptor, they may voluntarily submit the lead to the Clinical Education Team for evaluation. There is no guarantee that the site will be used, and students may not contact potential sites directly.
- Clinical sites and preceptors are assessed through a formal review process to ensure they meet program standards for educational quality, supervision, and scope of practice.
- Students should not initiate conversations with potential clinical sites regarding SCPE placement on behalf of the program.

Student Immunization and Health Screening Policy (A3.09a-b)

Immunizations and Health Screening Requirements

Policy: All students enrolled in the University of Tampa PA Program must comply with the most current CDC recommendations for healthcare personnel regarding immunizations and health screenings. These requirements must be met prior to matriculation and maintained throughout enrollment.

Failure to maintain compliance with immunization or health screening requirements may result in delayed progression or removal from clinical activities.

Procedure: Submission and Verification

- Students must submit complete immunization records and health screening documentation to the PA Program before matriculation and as updated.
- Documentation must be submitted to the PA Program's designated clinical clearance platform or compliance coordinator.
- Additional immunizations or lab titers may be required based on clinical site requirements or public health guidance.
- Failure to submit required documentation may result in registration hold or administrative withdrawal from coursework.

Public Program Information and Advertising (A3.10, A3.11)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program is committed to providing accurate, current, and transparent information about the program to all prospective and enrolled students. All public announcements, advertisements, and programmatic website content reflect the actual structure, status, costs, and outcomes of the program.

Required program information is made readily available on the PA Program's official website.

Procedure

The PA Program website includes the following:

- Accreditation status, as provided by ARC-PA (A3.11a)
- Program goals and evidence of effectiveness in meeting those goals (A3.11b)
- PANCE pass rate summary reports (A3.11c)
- Curriculum and course components, including clinical rotations (A3.12d)
- Academic credit awarded (A3.11e)
- Estimated tuition, fees, and other costs (A3.11f)
- Program-defined competencies for graduation (A3.11g)
- Information about campus-specific resources, if applicable (A3.11h)
- Annual student attrition data using ARC-PA's required table (A3.11i)

The program updates its website regularly and conducts additional annual audits prior to the ARC-PA required April 1 deadline for PANCE and attrition reporting.

Students may access this information at: <https://www.ut.edu/graduate-degrees/departments-of-physician-assistant-medicine/physician-assistant-medicine-program>

Students are encouraged to notify the Program Director if any public program information appears out of date or inconsistent with their experience.

Admissions Requirements and Process (A3.12a-e, A3.13)

Admissions Requirements and Process (A3.12)

Policy: The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program uses a holistic, structured, non-rolling admissions process grounded in equity, transparency, and alignment with ARC-PA Standards. All applicants must apply through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) and meet all published minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for interview and matriculation. All applicants are evaluated using the same published academic and technical standards.

The admissions cycle opens through CASPA in late April. To be considered for admission, an application must reach verified status in CASPA by the published deadline. The current verified application deadline is January 15 of the admissions cycle. Applicants are responsible for allowing sufficient time for CASPA verification.

The program uses a structured, non-rolling review process. Eligible applicants are reviewed after the application deadline using the program's approved admissions process, which includes pre-interview

review, interview evaluation, and final rank-order decision making. Interviews are typically conducted in February, and initial offers of admission are typically released in March.

Meeting minimum eligibility requirements does not guarantee an interview or admission.

Applicants and students should refer to the official PA Program website for the most current admissions requirements, prerequisite coursework, required assessments, timeline, and application instructions.

Special Populations (A3.13a)

Policy: The PA Program does not maintain separate admissions standards for special populations.

Prior Healthcare Experience or Education (A3.13b)

Policy: Prior healthcare experience or education is not required for admission but may be considered as part of the program's holistic review process.

Advanced Placement (A3.13c / A3.15)

Policy: The program does not offer advanced placement for any applicant based on prior education, certification, or experience. All matriculants must complete the full curriculum in sequence.

Academic Standards for Enrollment (A3.13d)

Policy: All applicants must meet the program's published academic admission requirements, including minimum GPA requirements, prerequisite coursework requirements, and any other published admissions criteria.

All prerequisite coursework required for admission must be completed by the time of application unless the program's current published admissions requirements expressly state otherwise. Applicants must also complete all required assessments and submit all required materials by the published deadlines to remain eligible for consideration.

Technical Standards for Enrollment, Progression, and Graduation (A3.13e)

Policy: The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program requires students to possess the essential non-academic abilities and functional capabilities necessary to participate in and complete the curriculum safely and effectively.

Technical standards do not replace the Program's competencies or milestone expectations. Rather, they describe the functional abilities students need to participate in the educational program and demonstrate the Program competencies at the required developmental levels.

Students must be able to meet the Program's technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, throughout enrollment. Students must demonstrate Level 2 performance in the applicable Program competencies before entering supervised clinical practice experiences and Level 3 performance in all Program competencies as a requirement for graduation.

The complete Technical Standards for Enrollment, Progression, and Graduation are provided in Addendum C of this Handbook.

Procedure:

1. Initial Attestation - Following acceptance and before matriculation, each student must attest that the student can meet the Program's technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation.
2. Reasonable Accommodation - Students seeking reasonable accommodation must initiate the request through the University's designated accessibility office. The PA Program does not independently diagnose disabilities or approve accommodations. Approved accommodations are implemented through collaboration among the student, the accessibility office, the Program, and, when applicable, clinical education sites. Accommodations must not fundamentally alter essential curricular requirements, eliminate required competencies, compromise patient safety, or impose an undue burden.
3. Ongoing Responsibility - Technical standards apply throughout the didactic, clinical, and summative phases of the Program. Students are responsible for continuing to meet the standards, with or without reasonable accommodation. A diagnosis, health condition, or disability does not by itself determine whether a student meets the technical standards. The relevant consideration is whether the student can perform the essential functions of the Program safely and effectively, with or without reasonable accommodation.
4. Change in Circumstances - A student whose health, functional status, or circumstances change in a manner that may affect the student's ability to meet the technical standards should promptly contact the University's designated accessibility office and notify the Program when appropriate.
5. Review of Continued Ability to Meet the Standards - The Program may initiate a review when there is an objective concern regarding a student's ability to participate safely, progress through the curriculum, perform in a clinical setting, or demonstrate required Program competencies. Any such review will be conducted in accordance with University policy, applicable disability law, and the Program's student progression procedures. The review will focus on the student's current functional ability to meet the essential requirements of the Program, with or without reasonable accommodation.
6. In-Person Participation - The Physician Assistant Medicine Program is an in-person professional curriculum and cannot be completed entirely through remote participation. Students must participate in required on-campus, laboratory, simulation, clinical, and assessment activities. Limited remote instruction or participation may be authorized by the Program in specific circumstances. Such authorization does not establish an option or entitlement to complete the curriculum remotely.
7. Required Certifications and Assessments - Students must meet the knowledge and performance requirements necessary to obtain and maintain Program-required certification in Basic Life Support, Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support, and Pediatric Advanced Life Support. Students

must also complete Program-defined physical examination, procedural, simulation, emergency-response, and other performance assessments within established safety and performance expectations, with approved accommodations when applicable.

8. Questions and Requests - Questions regarding the PA Program's technical standards or program-specific requirements should be directed to the Department of Physician Assistant Medicine. Questions or requests regarding disability accommodations should be directed to the University's designated accessibility office.

<https://www.ut.edu/graduate-degrees/departments-of-physician-assistant-medicine/physician-assistant-medicine-program/admissions>

Academic Standards and Graduation Requirements

Policy: To remain in good academic standing within the University of Tampa PA Program, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
2. Earn a minimum final grade of 70% (C or better) or S (Satisfactory) in all didactic and clinical courses
3. Pass all components of the didactic and clinical summative exams.
4. Complete the program within 150% of the published program length (i.e., within 41 months for a 27-month program)
5. Meet all professional behavior expectations as outlined in the PA Student Handbook
6. Successfully meet all program-defined competency benchmarks in didactic and clinical phases

Procedure – Academic Standing and Monitoring

- Student academic performance is monitored each semester by the PPP Committee.
- A student who falls below a 3.0 GPA or earns a course grade below 70% will be subject to probation, deceleration, or dismissal based on program policies. See those sections.
- Students failing to meet academic standards will be referred to the PPP Committee for a holistic review and disposition decision based on published program policies.

Graduation Requirements

To be eligible for graduation and conferral of the Master of Physician Assistant Medicine (MPAM) degree, a student must:

1. Successfully complete all didactic and clinical courses
2. Achieve a final cumulative GPA of **3.0** or higher
3. Meet the minimum level of competence in all required program competencies
4. Complete all non-academic requirements, including program evaluations, end-of-program summative assessment, professionalism standards, and university exit procedures
5. Fulfill all financial obligations to the University

Procedure - Graduation Clearance

- The Program will verify all academic and non-academic graduation requirements in collaboration with the Registrar's Office and UTampa Graduate Studies.
- Students are responsible for completing all required forms and financial clearance for graduation.

Program Endorsement for the PANCE

Policy: In accordance with NCCPA guidelines, the UTampa PA Program must endorse each graduate before they are permitted to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE).

Procedure:

Students will be endorsed for the PANCE once they have:

- Completed all academic and clinical coursework
- Demonstrated satisfactory professional conduct and judgment
- Successfully passed all components of the program's summative evaluation
- Been reviewed and approved by the Program Director and Medical Director as eligible for certification

Program Completion and Progression (A3.14b)

Policy: Students enrolled in the University of Tampa PA Program must complete all program requirements within 150% of the published program length. For a 27-month program, this equates to a maximum completion time of 41 months from the date of matriculation.

Program	Program Credit Hours	Min Cumulative GPA	Expected Time Frame	Maximum Time Frame
Master of Physician Assistant Medicine (MPAM)	112	3.0	7 terms (27 months)	11 terms (41 months)

Procedure

- Students who leave their original cohort for any reason (academic, personal, or health-related) must complete all remaining coursework within the 41-month limit from the initial matriculation date.
- Leaves of absence, deceleration, or repeated coursework may delay graduation, but the student must still meet the overall time-to-completion requirement unless granted an approved extension due to extraordinary circumstances.

Program Progression

Successful progression through the PA Program is based on the following criteria:

1. **Completion of all didactic and clinical courses** with a minimum passing grade ($\geq 70\%$) or (S) Satisfactory.

2. **Maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher**
3. **Demonstration of professional and ethical behavior** as outlined in the Professionalism Policy
4. **Successful completion of summative assessments** and demonstration of program-defined competencies

Department Grading Scale

Policy: The minimum course grade for progression in the curriculum is a “C” (70%). All courses (unless stated otherwise within the course syllabus) will have a standard grading scale for determining minimum progression scores/course grades.

Procedure: The grading scale for the PA program:

90%-100%	= A
80%-89%	= B
70%-79%	= C
<70%	= F

^ = Any grade below 70% is a non-progression grade

Course-specific requirements for successful completion will be detailed in the course syllabus and may include exams, practicals, written assignments, professionalism scores, or participation requirements.

Remediation, Probation, Deceleration, and Dismissal

Related ARC-PA Standards: A3.14a-f, A3.16, B4.01-B4.03

Overview

Students enrolled in the University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress, professional behavior, and eligibility for progression through all phases of the curriculum. When a student does not meet program expectations, the Program may implement supportive or corrective actions that may include success coaching, formal remediation, academic probation, deceleration, or dismissal, depending on the nature, severity, and pattern of the concern.

Definitions

Success Coaching: A structured, skills-based, time-limited support process intended to help students strengthen learning strategies, organization, metacognition, accountability, and test-taking approach. Success coaching will be offered as support based on academic standing. Enrollment in success coaching is a decision process driven by program leadership, program faculty, and the PPP committee.

Remediation: A formal, documented intervention used when a student has not met an academic, clinical, or professional standard defined by the program. Remediation may include a written plan with required activities, timelines, reassessment, and monitoring.

Academic Probation: A formal status indicating that a student has failed to meet one or more academic or professional expectations. Students on probation remain enrolled on a conditional basis and must

satisfy the terms of a written improvement or remediation plan. Failure to meet probation requirements may result in dismissal.

Deceleration: The process by which a student is removed from the original cohort and placed into a later cohort to repeat a portion of the curriculum, when approved by the Program. Deceleration is not guaranteed and is only available in limited circumstances.

Dismissal: Administrative separation from the Program due to failure to meet academic, professional, technical, or progression standards.

General Academic and Progression Standards

1. Students must successfully complete all didactic and clinical courses, maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, demonstrate professional and ethical behavior, and meet all summative and progression requirements.
2. The minimum passing course grade for progression is 70%. Any final grade below 70% is a non-progression grade.
3. A final grade below 70% in any didactic course constitutes course failure and will result in dismissal from the Program. Because of the cohort-based structure and instructional design of the curriculum, deceleration is not permitted for didactic course failure.
4. Students must achieve the program's required milestone benchmarks for progression. At a minimum, students must demonstrate **Level 2** performance on required program competencies and sub-competencies to enter supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs), and must demonstrate **Level 3** performance on required program competencies and sub-competencies for graduation and program endorsement related to PANCE eligibility, consistent with published program policy. In the clinical phase, to progress must meet all competency requirements for each supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE)
5. All students must complete degree requirements within 150% of the published program length, which for this program is 41 months from matriculation. Leaves of absence, deceleration, or repeated coursework do not reset the maximum time for program completion.

Success Coaching

The Program may offer success coaching when a student demonstrates academic difficulty, declining performance, clinical deficiencies, or other indicators that place the student at risk of not meeting program expectations.

Formal Remediation

Formal remediation is documented and may include a written plan with specific expectations, required activities, timelines, professionalism concerns, methods of reassessment, and assigned monitoring. Successful completion of remediation may permit continued progression, but it does not erase the original concern or exempt the student from future review if deficiencies recur. Remediation does not replace or change the initial earned score on any assessment.

Professionalism Concern Reports (PCRs)

The Program uses a Professionalism Concern Report (PCR) to document concerns related to professional behavior, conduct, communication, reliability, accountability, integrity, clinical readiness, or other professionalism standards. PCRs may be submitted by faculty, staff, preceptors, or students, as appropriate, in accordance with program policy.

Each PCR will be classified as follows:

Level 1 PCR (Minor Professionalism Concern):

A low-level or isolated lapse in professionalism that does not involve dishonesty, harassment, discrimination, patient safety risk, or other serious misconduct. Examples may include repeated tardiness, minor dress code violations, delayed response to required communication, isolated discourtesy, or failure to complete routine administrative requirements on time. These examples are illustrative and not exhaustive.

Level 2 PCR (Major Professionalism Concern):

A serious or repeated professionalism concern involving conduct inconsistent with the ethical, behavioral, or safety expectations of the Program or profession. Examples may include harassment, discrimination, academic dishonesty, falsification of records, breach of confidentiality, threatening behavior, insubordination, patient safety concerns, failed drug screen, unexcused absences, or repeated Level 1 concerns. These examples are illustrative and not exhaustive.

PCR level	Description	Examples
Level 1: Minor Concern	A low-level or isolated lapse that does not involve dishonesty, harassment, discrimination, patient safety risk, or other serious misconduct.	Repeated tardiness; minor dress-code violations; delayed response to required communication; isolated discourtesy; late completion of routine administrative requirements
Level 2: Major Concern	A serious or repeated concern involving conduct inconsistent with the ethical, behavioral, or safety expectations of the Program or profession.	Harassment; discrimination; academic dishonesty; falsification of records; breach of confidentiality; threatening behavior; insubordination; patient safety concerns; failed drug screen; unexcused absences; repeated Level 1 concerns

Examples are illustrative and not exhaustive. The Program will consider the nature, severity, context, and pattern of the behavior when classifying a concern.

Professionalism Review and Escalation

Professionalism concerns are reviewed holistically and may result in advising, success coaching, formal remediation, probation, suspension, or dismissal depending on the severity, context, and pattern of the behavior.

1. A first Level 1 PCR will normally result in review with the student's faculty advisor and may include feedback, reflection, and informal corrective action.
2. A second Level 1 PCR may result in a formal professionalism improvement plan and/or additional review.

3. A third Level 1 PCR is considered a Level 2 PCR and will result in referral to the Progression, Promotion, and Professionalism (PPP) Committee for review, with probation or other disciplinary action considered.
4. Any Level 2 PCR will result in immediate referral to the PPP Committee.
5. A Level 2 PCR may result in formal remediation, a professionalism development plan, probation, suspension, or dismissal, depending on the nature and severity of the conduct.
6. Two repeated Level 2 PCRs, or a single egregious professionalism violation, will result in dismissal from the Program.

All PCRs, meetings, remediation plans, professionalism development plans, probation decisions, and outcomes will be documented in the student's academic file.

PCR history or concern	Program response	Possible outcome
First Level 1 PCR	Review with the student's faculty advisor	Feedback, reflection, and informal corrective action
Second Level 1 PCR	Additional review of the repeated concern	Formal professionalism improvement plan and/or other corrective action
Third Level 1 PCR	Reclassified as a Level 2 PCR and referred to the Progression, Promotion, and Professionalism (PPP) Committee	Formal remediation, probation, or other disciplinary action may be considered
Any Level 2 PCR	Immediate referral to the PPP Committee	Professionalism development plan, formal remediation, probation, suspension, or dismissal, depending on the nature and severity of the conduct
Two Level 2 PCRs	Formal review of the repeated major concerns	Dismissal from the Program
Single egregious violation	Immediate review by the PPP Committee	Dismissal from the Program

Academic Probation (A3.14a)

Probation will result from any of the following circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Semester GPA below 3.0
- Cumulative GPA below 3.0
- Two or more final course grades of "C"
- Failure of two end-of-rotation examinations on the first attempt
- Failure of a supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE)
- Failure to satisfy a remediation or improvement plan
- Failure to achieve required milestone benchmarks for progression

- Three Level 1 Professional Conduct Reports (PCRs)
- One Level 2 Professional Conduct Report (PCR)
- Other academic professionalism conduct or progression concerns identified by the Progress Promotion and Professionalism (PPP) Committee as warranting conditional enrollment or probationary status.

Students placed on probation will receive written notice of:

- The academic progression or professionalism concern(s) resulting in probation
- The requirements for return to good standing
- The consequences of failing to satisfy those conditions

Academic probation status is reported to the Associate Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies. Probation may be lifted after one semester if the student achieves a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, successfully completes the assigned remediation/ improvement plan, and avoids any new probation triggers.

Deceleration (A3.14d)

The University of Tampa PA Program does not permit deceleration during the didactic phase due to fixed cohort size and instructional design. In limited clinical-phase circumstances, a student may be considered for deceleration following PPP Committee review and Program Director approval. Students are not permitted to request deceleration. Only the program director can authorize deceleration.

Deceleration is not automatic, may be granted only once, is subject to space and sequencing availability, and does not extend the Program's maximum completion timeline of 41 months. Students may not repeat courses previously passed.

A written deceleration plan will outline the courses or experiences to be repeated, the expected date of return, and any conditions that must be met for continued enrollment and progression.

Dismissal (A3.14f)

Students will be dismissed for any of the following circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Earning a final grade below 70% in any didactic course
- Cumulative GPA below 3.0 for two terms
- Failure of more than one clinical phase course
- Two Level 2 Professional Conduct Reports (PCRs)
- Failure of required summative or progression benchmarks
- Conduct endangering patient safety or program integrity
- Inability to complete the Program within 41 months
- Failure to return from an approved leave of absence or failure to satisfy return conditions

- Other circumstances that prevent the student from meeting graduation requirements
- Two consecutive terms on probation
- Three terms of probation total during the program
- Conduct unbecoming of a future healthcare professional

Dismissal may also occur following Progress Promotion and Professionalism (PPP) Committee review for:

- Two non-consecutive terms of academic probation statuses during the Program
- Three first-attempt failures on PAEA end-of-rotation (EOR) examinations
- Failure to meet the terms of a remediation probation or deceleration plan
- Repeated or unresolved professionalism concerns
- Failure to achieve Level 2 milestones required for entry into supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs)
- Failure to achieve Level 3 milestones required for graduation and Program endorsement related to PANCE eligibility
- Other serious concerns identified through the Program's academic or professionalism review process
- Failure to report criminal legal issues

The Progress Promotion and Professionalism (PPP) Committee reviews relevant information and makes recommendations in accordance with Program policy. The Program Director makes the final Program-level decision regarding academic standing probation deceleration and dismissal.

Students have the right to appeal a dismissal decision in accordance with University policy. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Program Director or designee within five working days of notification of dismissal.

The University of Tampa requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 for graduation from all graduate programs, including the PA Program. GPA is not subject to rounding.

Appeals

Students may appeal probation, deceleration, leave of absence, or dismissal decisions in accordance with the applicable University of Tampa graduate academic appeal policies and any PA Program-specific appeal procedures stated elsewhere in this Handbook.

Related Policies

Students should also review the following related sections of this Handbook:

- Professionalism Policy
- Withdrawal Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy
- Student Grievance and Appeals Policies
- Technical Standards

Grade Appeal

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program is committed to ensuring students have access to a fair and structured process for appealing grades. Students may appeal individual assessment grades or final course grades if they believe an error or an unfair evaluation has occurred. Grade appeals must be submitted within established timelines and follow the procedures outlined below. All final course grade appeals are ultimately governed by the University's Graduate Grade Appeal Process.

Procedure:

1. Individual Assessment Grade Appeals (e.g., exam, assignment, quiz)

- Students must submit the **Grade Petition Form** (located on the cohort's Canvas site) within **2 business days** of grade posting.
- The appeal should clearly describe the basis for the request and any supporting documentation.
- The course instructor will review the appeal and respond in writing within **5 business days**.
- If unresolved, the student may escalate the matter to the Associate Program Director or Director of Clinical Education (DCE), depending on course phase.
- The decision made at the program level for individual assessment grades is final and not subject to further appeal.

2. Final Course Grade Appeals

- Students must first meet with the **course instructor** and the **Program Director** in an effort to resolve the dispute informally.
- If unresolved, the student may initiate a formal appeal through the **University of Tampa Graduate Grade Appeal Process**, which is outlined in the University's academic policies.
- Appeals must be submitted in writing and follow the required timeline as specified in the UT Graduate Catalog.

Student Grievance (A3.14g)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program is committed to maintaining a respectful, supportive, and fair learning environment. A student may file a grievance at any time regarding a perceived injustice, unresolved conflict, or complaint related to an individual course, faculty member, clinical experience, or the PA Program as a whole.

Procedure

Students are encouraged to address concerns promptly and at the lowest appropriate level through direct communication.

Step 1: Informal Resolution

- The student should first attempt to resolve the issue through direct discussion with the individual involved (e.g., course director, instructor or clinical preceptor).
- If not resolved verbally, the student may submit the concern in writing to that individual for further consideration.

Step 2: Escalation

- For didactic coursework, unresolved concerns should be escalated to the Associate Program Director. If still unresolved, the concern may be referred to the Program Chair.
- For clinical coursework, unresolved concerns should be brought to the Director of Clinical Education (DCE). If still unresolved, the concern may be referred to the Program Chair.

Step 3: Formal Grievance - Due Process

If the concern remains unresolved after informal steps:

- The student may file a formal written grievance to the PA Program Director/Chair, documenting the issue and previous resolution attempts.
- If the issue remains unresolved after meeting with the Program Director/Chair, the student may appeal in writing to the:
 1. Dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences
 2. The appeal should include:
 - A detailed written statement of the grievance
 - Dates and documentation of all previous resolution attempts
 - Any supporting materials

Additional Guidance

Students are encouraged to refer to the University of Tampa Student Handbook and Graduate Catalog for full institutional grievance procedures, including appeals related to academic decisions, Title IX, or discrimination complaints.

Student Appeals (A3.14h)

Policy: A student has the right to appeal any decision made by the University of Tampa PA Medicine Program that relates to a policy outlined in this Student Handbook. This includes, but is not limited to, decisions regarding progression, remediation, deceleration, dismissal, professionalism, or academic integrity.

Procedure

- The student must submit a formal written appeal (Academic Petition) within 5 working days of being notified of the decision they wish to contest. This is sent to the Program director and Dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences.
- Appeals proceed to the Academic Appeals Committee, and if procedural fairness is questioned, to the assistant VP and executive director of Graduate and Continuing Studies
- The written appeal should clearly state:
 - The decision being appealed
 - The specific reason(s) for the appeal
 - Any supporting documentation
 - The resolution or action requested by the student

Student Employment (A3.14i)

Internal Employment

Policy: Students in the University of Tampa PA Program are not permitted to be employed by the program in any capacity. While students with specific prior knowledge or skills may be invited to assist in learning activities, such participation is voluntary, non-compensated, and must occur under direct faculty supervision.

- Students may not serve as the primary instructor for any component of the curriculum.
- Students may not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs).
- Students may not receive financial compensation for performing any instructional, clinical, or administrative roles related to the PA Program.

External Employment

Policy: The PA Program strongly discourages students from engaging in outside employment during the professional phase due to the academic rigor and time commitment required.

- Students may work outside the program at their own discretion, if employment does not interfere with coursework, required clinical experiences, or professional expectations.
- Work obligations will not be accepted as an excuse for absence, tardiness, or missed assignments.
- No curricular accommodation will be made for external employment.
- Students may not represent themselves as a PA-S or Student Physician Assistant (SPA) in any context outside of official UT-sponsored clinical experiences.
- The University's liability insurance does not cover students during external employment. Students are personally responsible for any liability or risk incurred during outside work.

Student Travel to Clinical Rotation Sites (A3.14j)

Policy: Students in the University of Tampa PA Program are responsible for all costs and logistics associated with travel to and from assigned supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs), regardless of the site's geographic location.

This includes:

- Personal transportation (fuel, tolls, vehicle maintenance, parking)
- Lodging or housing during rotations away from campus
- Meals and incidental expenses during travel or at remote sites
- Any associated relocation costs for distant or rural clinical assignments

The program does not reimburse students for travel-related expenses and does not guarantee that clinical sites will be within daily commuting distance from campus or from the student's residence.

Risk and Liability

- Students assume full personal responsibility for the safety and condition of their chosen method of transportation.
- Students are expected to carry appropriate automobile insurance and abide by state laws related to travel and vehicle operation.
- Travel time and logistics do not exempt students from attending scheduled clinical shifts, didactic sessions, or required program activities.
- The University of Tampa and the PA Program are not liable for any accidents, injuries, tickets, or vehicle-related issues incurred during travel to or from clinical sites.

Additional Notes

- Clinical assignments may occur in evenings, weekends, holidays, or across non-traditional schedules. Students are expected to plan accordingly.
- Failure to attend or arrive on time at a clinical site due to transportation issues may be considered a professionalism or academic violation.

Student Records, Access, and Privacy (A3.16a-f, A3.17, A3.18)

Student Academic Records

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program maintains secure student records that document each student's eligibility for admission, progression, and graduation. These records are maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and University policies.

Each student's record will include, at a minimum:

- **A3.16a** – Evidence that the student met published admissions criteria
- **A3.16b** – Documentation of institutional and program health screening and immunization compliance
- **A3.16c** – Performance evaluations and grades throughout the program
- **A3.16d** – Documentation of remediation efforts and their outcomes
- **A3.16e** – Summaries of any formal academic or behavioral disciplinary actions
- **A3.16f** – Confirmation that the student met all requirements for program completion

Records are stored on secure, access-controlled servers or in locked physical cabinets accessible only to authorized PA program personnel.

Access to Records (A3.17)

Policy: Students have the right to review their own academic records in accordance with FERPA. However, students are not permitted to access or review the academic records or confidential information of other students or of faculty members.

Requests to review one's own educational records must be submitted in writing and will be fulfilled in a timely manner, not to exceed 45 calendar days.

Student Health Records (A3.18)

Policy: Student health records are considered confidential and are not maintained by the PA Program, with the exception of immunization and tuberculosis screening documentation required for clinical compliance. These records are securely stored by the appropriate University department (e.g., Student Health Center).

- The PA Program does not accept physical examination forms or other HIPAA-protected health data. A program form is provided.
- Students must submit an attestation of a physical exam that acknowledges that the candidate meets the technical standards for admission.
- The release of any health-related information to the program requires the student's written, signed, and dated consent.
- Clinical affiliates may request additional HIPAA attestations or confidentiality agreements as part of onboarding.

FERPA Compliance

Policy: The University of Tampa complies fully with FERPA. Directory information may be released without prior consent unless a student submits a written request to withhold such information.

- Non-directory information, including grades, academic standing, or disciplinary action, will not be released without the student's written, signed consent.
- Consent must specify what is to be released, to whom, and for what purpose.

HIPAA Education and Compliance

Policy: All PA students must demonstrate competency in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) prior to participating in any experiential learning or supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE).

Procedure

- HIPAA training will be delivered prior to starting clinical rotations.
- Students must also adhere to clinical site-specific HIPAA protocols, which will be reviewed as part of site orientation or onboarding.

Background Check and Drug Screening

Policy: All PA students must complete a criminal background check and drug screen prior to matriculation and as required thereafter for clinical education compliance.

Procedure

- The program will designate an approved third-party vendor for these screenings.
- Students are financially responsible for the cost of all screenings.
- Students will be informed of their results and must disclose any new legal charges that arise during enrollment to the Program Director immediately.
- Failure of the student to report criminal legal issues or positive drug screens may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

Student Absences and Medical Clearance Policy

Related ARC-PA Standards: A1.02, A3.05, A3.07, A3.14, A3.16

Policy:

To support the safety of students, faculty, staff, patients, and clinical partners, any University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine student who is absent from didactic or clinical activities for three or more consecutive days due to illness must provide medical clearance before returning to program-related activities.

Medical clearance must be based on an in-person healthcare evaluation unless otherwise required or permitted by applicable university policy, public health guidance, or program direction during a declared public health emergency.

Acceptable forms of in-person medical clearance include:

- primary care or specialty provider office visit
- urgent care or walk-in clinic visit
- emergency department visit
- retail health clinic or similar in-person healthcare evaluation

Unacceptable forms of medical clearance include:

- online-only or telemedicine notes that do not involve an in-person evaluation
- emails, self-certifications, or informal notes without provider documentation
- documents that do not include the date of service or confirmation of fitness to return

Procedure:

1. Students who anticipate being absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness must notify the appropriate program personnel as soon as possible.
 - For didactic activities, students must notify course faculty and the Associate Program Director or designee.
 - For clinical activities, students must notify the preceptor, Director of Clinical Education, and other required program personnel in accordance with clinical attendance procedures.
2. Before returning, the student must submit documentation of medical clearance from an in-person healthcare provider evaluation.
3. Documentation must include the provider's name, date of evaluation, and a statement indicating that the student is cleared to return to academic, clinical, or program-related activities, with or without stated restrictions.
4. Medical clearance documentation must be submitted to the Program Office or other designated program personnel and may be reviewed by program leadership before the student is permitted to return.
5. Failure to provide required medical clearance in a timely manner may result in continued absence status, unexcused absences, delayed return to activities, or referral for further review under applicable program policies.

Attendance & Absence Policy

Due to the fast-paced and interactive nature of this course, attendance and participation are expected at all scheduled class sessions and activities. Many class sessions include application-based exercises, discussions, case work, and in-class activities that cannot be fully replicated outside of class.

Students are expected to manage routine personal appointments and responsibilities outside of scheduled class time whenever possible. Examples of absences that are generally **not considered excused** include, but are not exhaustive:

- Routine dental or medical appointments
- Oil changes or routine car maintenance
- Travel arrangements/vacations
- Non-urgent personal errands
- Oversleeping or poor time management

Reasonable absences for significant life events or unavoidable circumstances will be handled with professionalism and discretion. Examples may include:

- Illness
- Family emergencies
- Funerals/bereavement
- Weddings of immediate family or close friends
- Religious observances
- University-approved activities

Students should notify faculty as early as possible regarding anticipated absences. Repeated absences, tardiness, or leaving class early may impact the professionalism and participation components of the course grade.

The program reserves the right to determine whether an absence is considered excused based on the circumstances provided.

Special Circumstances:

- Students with chronic health conditions, disabilities, pregnancy-related needs, or other circumstances requiring individualized planning should work with the Program Director, appropriate program leadership, and the Office of Accessibility Services as applicable.
- During a declared public health emergency or other extraordinary circumstance, the Program may implement additional or alternative return-to-participation requirements consistent with university policy and applicable public health guidance.

Overall Curriculum and Instructional Expectations (B1)

The professional phase of the University of Tampa PA Program includes both didactic and clinical components that are intentionally structured to prepare students for entry-level PA practice. The curriculum emphasizes the integration of biomedical and clinical sciences, development of clinical reasoning, and patient-centered care across diverse populations and settings.

The program promotes interprofessional collaboration, use of health information technology, evidence-based medicine, and the development of professional behaviors required in contemporary clinical practice. Students are expected to engage actively with faculty, peers, and the broader healthcare community.

All students are introduced to instructional expectations, attendance policies, and professional conduct standards during orientation and in each course syllabus.

Curriculum Mapping (B1.01)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program curriculum is intentionally designed and mapped to align with the program's mission, goals, ARC-PA Standards, and program-defined competencies. The curriculum integrates core biomedical and clinical sciences, emphasizes the development of clinical reasoning, and ensures students are prepared for diverse patient populations and healthcare environments. Instruction is further aligned with evolving medical knowledge, interprofessional education, professionalism, and evidence-based medicine

Procedure

The curriculum is mapped in a central platform across the following elements:

- Competency Domains and Subdomains
- Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
- Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
- Instructional Objectives (IOs)
- ARC-PA Standards
- Bloom's Taxonomy Levels (three-level)
- Content Areas (e.g., organ systems, patient populations)

Curricular maps are maintained by the Associate Program Director/Curriculum Committee and DCE and are reviewed regularly for quality assurance and alignment. Students may request access to curriculum mapping data by submitting a formal request to the program director.

Course Sequencing (B1.02)

Policy: The sequencing of courses within the University of Tampa PA Program is intentionally designed to promote cumulative learning. Course content builds upon prior knowledge and skills to foster progressive development in medical knowledge, clinical reasoning, and professional competencies.

Procedure:

- The Associate Program Director in collaboration with the program director, reviews curriculum mapping data and student performance trends annually to ensure that content and sequencing are pedagogically appropriate and scaffolded for optimal student learning.
- Objective Student input is collected through:
 - End-of-course evaluations (which include specific questions on content clarity and sequencing),
 - End-of-program evaluations, and
 - Feedback to faculty advisors and/or class officers.
- These data points are reviewed during the annual PA Faculty Curriculum Retreat, where faculty evaluate:
 - Sequencing logic across the curriculum
 - Integration between didactic and clinical components
 - Course prerequisites and dependencies
 - Impact of any curriculum revisions
- Adjustments to sequencing, if needed, are approved by faculty vote and documented as part of the annual PA Program Assessment Report.

Note: Any substantial changes to course sequencing that impact program length, credit hours, or progression timelines will be communicated to currently enrolled and incoming students per university policy.

Course Syllabi (B1.03)

Policy: Each didactic and clinical course in the University of Tampa PA Program must include clearly stated Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Instructional Objectives (IOs) to ensure alignment with program competencies, educational goals, and ARC-PA standards.

Procedure

- All courses must utilize the University of Tampa PA Program Master Course Syllabus Template.
- Each syllabus must, at a minimum, include the following components:
 - a) course name
 - b) course description
 - c) faculty instructor of record
 - d) course goal(s)
 - e) course *learning outcomes* in measurable terms that guide student acquisition of required *competencies*
 - f) *instructional objectives* in measurable terms that can be assessed
 - g) outline of topics to be covered that align with *learning outcomes* and *instructional objectives*
 - h) detailed description of the student assessment(s) and evaluation(s)
 - i) plan for grading

This requirement applies to both didactic and supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE) courses.

Faculty are responsible for ensuring that all course syllabi are updated annually and submitted to the Curriculum Committee for review and archival prior to the beginning of each academic term. All syllabi

are retained in a centralized electronic repository accessible to program faculty and relevant university administrators.

Examinations, Testing Procedures, and Assessment Review

Related ARC-PA Standards: A3.01, A3.16, B1.03, B4.01, B4.02

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program maintains standardized expectations for examination administration, testing security, assessment review, and assessment-related student conduct across all didactic courses. Detailed course-specific assessment formats, grading plans, testing schedules, testing software deadlines, attendance requirements, and make-up examination procedures are published in each course syllabus and must be followed by all students.

All didactic assessments shall be administered under conditions that protect assessment integrity, student confidentiality, and fairness. Students are expected to comply with all program and course requirements related to secure testing, approved materials, proctoring, attendance, and exam review.

Procedure / Expectations:

- Students are responsible for complying with all published testing requirements, including required software download deadlines, device-readiness expectations, exam-day instructions, and other procedures established by the Program or course faculty.
- All course syllabi must clearly describe assessment methods, grading, and expectations for successful course completion.
- Attendance at examinations and other required assessments is mandatory. Missed examinations, unexcused absences, and make-up testing will be addressed in accordance with the course syllabus and applicable program policies.
- Examinations must be taken on the date and at the time designated by the Program or course faculty. Students may not independently reschedule an examination.
- Students who expect to miss a single class session should communicate directly with the course director as soon as possible. Students requesting to miss an entire day of scheduled program activities must obtain advance approval from the Program Director whenever feasible. Missed required assessments that are not approved in advance may result in a Professionalism Concern Report or other action consistent with program policy.
- Examination content is secure. Students may not copy, photograph, record, reconstruct, distribute, discuss in unauthorized settings, or post actual exam items, answer choices, or other secure testing content in any format, including email, Canvas, group chats, cloud storage, or social media.
- Unless specifically authorized as part of an approved accommodation or testing procedure, students may not access or possess during an examination any unauthorized electronic devices, communication tools, or outside materials. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to, smart watches, recording devices, wireless headphones or earbuds, Meta glasses or similar smart eyewear, phones, tablets, external storage devices, and other electronic or wearable devices capable of storing, transmitting, receiving, or recording information. Students may be required to remove, store, or surrender prohibited items before testing begins.

- The Program may require examinations to be administered in designated secure testing spaces and may use available security measures, including direct proctoring, restricted seating, device collection, and video monitoring when permitted by university policy and published program procedures. Program-operated testing rooms, including rooms equipped with cameras, may be used for secure exam administration and monitoring.
- Students receiving approved accommodation shall test under conditions that maintain both the accommodation and the security of the assessment. The Program retains authority to determine the testing location, start time, and proctoring conditions necessary to preserve exam security and operational feasibility. Unless otherwise approved by the Program, students receiving accommodation are expected to test within the Program's designated testing window and may be required to begin at the scheduled class start time or earlier. When use of an outside testing center does not adequately support exam security, timing, or proctoring needs, the Program may require accommodated testing to occur in designated program testing rooms or other approved secure locations consistent with the student's accommodation plan.
- Delayed same-day or later-day examination administration is not guaranteed and may be denied when it creates exam security concerns or cannot be supported through an approved secure testing arrangement.
- Examination review will occur only through program-approved processes. After each major examination, faculty may review the lowest-performing cohort concepts with the class through a secure group review process or other approved instructional format. If an item is adjusted following faculty review, the adjustment and related concept will be communicated to the class.
- Individual full-exam reviews are not permitted unless specifically authorized by the Program.
- Students with questions regarding examination content, scoring, or possible item error must use the official program process for item challenge or grade petition. Item challenges must be submitted through the designated Canvas discussion board or other approved electronic process and must include the student's name and rationale. Anonymous item challenges will not be considered. Accepted item challenges will result in the same scoring adjustment for all affected students.
- Any scoring adjustment must be based on documented item- or exam-level review. End-of-course grade curving is not permitted.
- Suspected exam security violations, unauthorized device use, improper access to materials, or other testing irregularities will be documented and reviewed under applicable academic integrity, professionalism, and student conduct procedures.

Use of Artificial Intelligence and Generative Tools

Policy:

The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program recognizes that artificial intelligence (AI) and generative tools are increasingly used in education and healthcare. Students may use such tools only as permitted by the Program, course director, clinical faculty, or assignment instructions. The use of AI does not replace the student's responsibility for original thought, sound clinical reasoning, academic integrity, professionalism, or compliance with program and university policy.

Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, quality, appropriateness, and integrity of any work they submit, present, or rely upon, regardless of whether AI or generative tools were used in its development.

Procedure / Expectations:

- Students may use artificial intelligence or generative tools only when such use is permitted by the course director, assignment instructions, clinical faculty, or program policy. Faculty may restrict, prohibit, or condition AI use for specific assignments, activities, documentation, or courses.
- Students are responsible for all submitted work, including any content developed, revised, summarized, or edited with the assistance of AI. Use of AI does not excuse inaccurate information, poor clinical judgment, plagiarism, misrepresentation, or failure to meet assignment or professional expectations.
- When required by the course director, assignment instructions, clinical faculty, or program policy, students must clearly disclose the use of AI or generative tools and describe the extent of that use. Failure to disclose required AI use may be treated as an academic integrity or professionalism concern.
- Students may not enter, upload, paste, or otherwise disclose protected health information, patient identifiers, secure examination content, unpublished course materials, confidential student information, or other confidential program or university information into any AI or generative platform unless expressly authorized by the Program and permitted by applicable law and policy.
- Students may not use AI or generative tools during examinations, quizzes, practical examinations, OSCEs, summative assessments, PBLs, in-class assignments or other secure or prohibited assessment settings unless explicitly authorized as part of the assessment process. Unauthorized use will result in academic integrity review, professionalism review, or other disciplinary action consistent with program and university policy.

Additional Guidance:

Artificial intelligence and generative tools are assistive resources and are not authoritative sources of medical judgment, clinical decision-making, or patient documentation. Students are expected to independently verify information, apply appropriate professional judgment, and comply with all course, clinical, and program expectations when using these tools.

Didactic Curriculum (B2)

Prerequisite Course Content (B2.01)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program ensures that all required instructional content, learning objectives, and competency assessments are delivered during the professional phase of the curriculum. Prior academic coursework, including prerequisite classes, may not substitute for any required element of the PA curriculum including any previously held certificates or licenses.

Procedure:

- All required program content (as defined by ARC-PA Standards B2.02–B2.20 and the UT PA Program competencies) will be delivered during the 7-semester, 27-month professional phase.
- Admissions criteria ensure that students have foundational prerequisite knowledge prior to matriculation; however, this content will not be used to satisfy or replace professional-level content, assessment, or instructional time.
- The curriculum committee and course directors review content and instructional design annually to ensure that all competencies are taught and assessed explicitly within the PA curriculum and not presumed based on prior education.

Required Didactic Curriculum Content (B2.02 – B2.20)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program ensures that the didactic curriculum includes all required content areas as outlined in ARC-PA Standards B2.02 through B2.20. These include biomedical sciences, patient assessment, clinical medicine, pharmacology, ethics, health systems, and other foundational topics necessary for the clinical practice of medicine. Content is delivered through sequenced, integrated coursework designed to support program competencies.

The PA Program Curriculum Committee and Assessment Committee jointly review curriculum content. A summary table mapping required ARC-PA content areas to specific courses and instructional locations may be requested from the Program Office.

Informed Consent for Laboratory Participation

Policy: Students are expected to actively participate in laboratory experiences both as learners and as simulated patients. These experiences may include, but are not limited to, physical examination, palpation, auscultation, simulated procedures, and therapeutic interventions.

All students are required to sign an informed consent for:

- Participation in lab activities,
- Being audio/video recorded for educational or promotional purposes,
- Declining to act as a simulated patient when medically necessary or due to sincerely held religious beliefs, with appropriate documentation.

Procedure

- Students should wear appropriate lab attire and maintain professional behavior.
- Students are expected to treat peers with professionalism and respect during all lab activities.

- Unsafe or inappropriate behavior will be addressed by the course director(s) and may result in programmatic disciplinary review as per UTampa PAM policies.

Laboratory Assignments

Policy: Lab assignments may be adjusted by faculty to ensure educational equity, safety, and an inclusive learning environment.

Laboratory and Equipment Safety

Policy: Faculty and students are jointly responsible for ensuring safety in all laboratory environments.

Procedures

1. Labs remain locked when not in use. They are badge accessible, but doors to these restricted areas must be closed upon exit.
2. Equipment is never used for self-treatment.
3. Role-play exercises require professional conduct and proper supervision.
4. Gloves and closed-toe shoes are required in dissection labs.
5. Safety equipment (e.g., eye wash stations, emergency numbers) must remain accessible.
6. Equipment must be checked before use and immediately reported if damaged.
7. Equipment and task trainer maintenance and calibration are conducted as needed.
8. All lab spaces must be cleaned and restored to their original condition immediately after use to maintain a professional and safe learning environment.

Use of Research Subjects

Policy: All research involving human or animal subjects, whether conducted as part of a formal research project, course assignment, or capstone, must have Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and comply with federal and institutional regulations.

Procedure

- Research proposals must be submitted to the UT Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- No data may be collected until IRB approval is secured.
- Questions regarding IRB compliance should be directed to the Program Director or IRB Chair.

Clinical Curriculum (B3)

Related ARC-PA Standards: B3.01-B3.06

During the clinical phase of the University of Tampa PA Program, students complete supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) in a variety of disciplines, settings, and populations in accordance with ARC-PA Standards. These experiences are essential to achieving program-defined learning outcomes in medical knowledge, clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning, and professional behavior. Students are expected to engage fully in clinical learning activities and maintain compliance with all clinical policies and procedures outlined in this Handbook, applicable SCPE syllabi, and the Clinical Year Manual.

Clinical Education Structure and Telehealth Use Policy (B3.01)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program ensures that each clinical student has access to sufficient and appropriately structured clinical experiences to achieve all SCPE learning outcomes. This includes ensuring an adequate number of qualified preceptors and clinical sites, regulating the extent of telehealth and telemedicine exposure, and maintaining a minimum level of in-person, direct patient care.

Procedures:

1. Preceptor and Clinical Site Sufficiency (B3.01a)

- The Clinical Team, under the direction of the Director of Clinical Education (DCE), maintains an active database of pre-approved clinical sites and preceptors.
- Annual review will ensure that the number of sites and preceptors meets projected student placement needs across all SCPE categories.
- All preceptors must meet the qualifications required by ARC-PA Standards and program policy.

2. Telehealth and Telemedicine Limitations (B3.01b-c)

- No individual SCPE may have more than 50% of its clinical hours fulfilled through telehealth or telemedicine encounters, except in behavioral health.
- Across the entire clinical year, no more than 20% of total SCPE hours for any student may be fulfilled through telehealth or telemedicine experiences.

3. In-Person Clinical Experience Requirement (B3.01d)

- All SCPEs, excluding behavioral health when permitted, must include direct in-person patient care.
- Telehealth may be used as a supplemental mode of care delivery but may not fully replace in-person clinical experiences in these specialties.

4. Behavioral Health Exception (B3.01e)

- Behavioral health SCPEs may be completed entirely, up to 100%, via telehealth or telemedicine provided that all required learning outcomes are met, preceptor evaluation supports achievement of competencies, and the experience includes meaningful student-patient interaction and appropriate preceptor supervision.

5. Monitoring and Documentation

- Students must document the mode of care delivery, in-person versus telehealth, for each patient encounter in the designated clinical tracking system.
- The DCE or designated staff will review cumulative reports regularly to ensure compliance with telehealth limitations and address any variance.

6. Noncompliance Response

- If a student's SCPE is at risk of exceeding the telehealth threshold, the Program may arrange supplemental in-person experiences, modify the assignment, or take other corrective action necessary to ensure compliance.

Clinical Phase Overview and Policies

Related ARC-PA Standards: A3.08, A3.09, B3.01-B3.06, B4.01, B4.02

Overview

During the clinical phase of the University of Tampa PA Program, students complete supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) in a variety of disciplines, settings, and populations in accordance with ARC-PA Standards. These experiences are essential to achieving program-defined learning outcomes in medical knowledge, clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning, and professional behavior. Students are expected to engage fully in clinical learning activities and maintain compliance with all policies outlined below.

SCPE Attendance Policy

Policy: Students are required to attend all scheduled SCPE activities according to the clinical site's operational hours and the assigned preceptor's schedule. Each SCPE requires full participation to meet clinical hour requirements, learning outcomes, and program expectations. Students are expected to participate in all assigned hours of each SCPE unless an alternate plan is approved in advance by the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) or designee. Variations in schedule, site hours, or learning activities may occur based on the practice setting, but all changes must remain consistent with program expectations and required learning outcomes.

Procedure:

- Students are expected to follow the assigned preceptor's schedule unless otherwise directed by the Program.
- If a student expects to be absent, late, or otherwise unable to attend a scheduled clinical day, the student must notify **both the preceptor and the Program** as soon as possible and follow the published absence procedures.
- Absences from SCPEs must be addressed in accordance with program policy. Missed time may require make-up time or other corrective action as determined by the DCE in consultation with the preceptor.
- Requests for schedule changes, time away, site reassignment, or other significant placement-related modifications must be reviewed through the DCE or designee. The Program retains final authority over clinical placement decisions and approval of alternative arrangements.
- Unexcused absences, repeated tardiness, failure to follow attendance procedures, or failure to complete required clinical participation may result in professionalism review, corrective action, loss of clinical credit, or failure of the SCPE, consistent with the course syllabus and program policy.
- Students are also responsible for timely completion of all required clinical documentation associated with each SCPE, including patient encounter logs, procedure logs, time or attendance logs, and other site- or course-required documentation. Failure to complete required clinical logs or related documentation may result in corrective action, professionalism referral, loss of clinical credit, or failure of the SCPE.

Transportation and Housing

Policy: Students are responsible for securing and funding their own transportation and housing during clinical rotations.

Procedure:

- Students should anticipate rotations outside the immediate Tampa area.
- The program encourages early planning and discussion with the DCE about potential locations.

Student Right to Decline Participation

Policy: Students may request to decline participation in specific clinical procedures that conflict with sincerely held religious or cultural beliefs. This request must be made in writing to the DCE and may require documentation. Approved requests will not affect course grades or progression, though students must still meet all learning outcomes.

Procedure:

- Students should notify the DCE in writing as early as possible.
- If a conflict arises unexpectedly during a rotation, the student must notify the preceptor in a professional manner and follow up with the DCE.

Patient's Right to Decline Participation

Policy: Patients may refuse to participate in clinical education encounters with students without penalty.

Procedure:

- Preceptors and students must respect patient autonomy and document refusals when required by the site.

University Closure and SCPE Attendance

Policy: University closure due to weather or emergency does not automatically cancel clinical rotations.

Procedure:

- Students are expected to attend SCPEs unless the clinical site is closed or personal safety is at risk.
- Students must notify the DCE and preceptor if they cannot safely attend.
- Make-up time may be required.

Required SCPE Documentation

Policy: Students must maintain and present required documentation to clinical sites as part of onboarding and compliance.

Required Documents Include:

- Biographical sketch or resume
- Immunization record and proof of physical examination
- BLS certification
- Background check results
- Urine drug screen (as required by site)
- Skills/procedure log or letter of competency (as needed)

Procedure:

- Students must upload and maintain current documentation in the program's designated tracking system.
- Sites may refuse access if documentation is incomplete or out of date.

Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) Patient and Setting Diversity Policy (B3.04 and B3.06)

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program ensures that all students complete supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) that collectively provide exposure to a comprehensive range of patient populations, healthcare settings, and clinical disciplines. These experiences are designed to support program-defined learning outcomes and prepare students for the breadth of entry-level PA practice.

Procedure:

The Clinical Education Team, under the direction of the Director of Clinical Education (DCE), intentionally develops and monitors SCPE assignments to ensure that students encounter:

- **Patients across the lifespan:** including infants, children, adolescents, adults, and elderly individuals
- **Various populations:** including those from varied cultural, socioeconomic, and geographic backgrounds, and medically underserved communities
- **A range of clinical settings:** such as outpatient clinics, inpatient hospitals, emergency departments, and surgical suites.
- **Required core clinical disciplines,** as outlined in ARC-PA Standard B3.06:
 - Family Medicine
 - Emergency Medicine (including emergent care)
 - Internal Medicine (including care for elderly patients)
 - Surgery (including pre-operative, intra-operative, and post-operative care)
 - Pediatrics (including infants, children, and adolescents)
 - Women's Health (including prenatal and gynecologic care)
 - Behavioral and Mental Health Care

Monitoring and Compliance:

- Student case logs and encounter documentation are regularly reviewed by the DCE and clinical faculty to verify that each student is meeting the expected diversity of experiences.
- If gaps are identified in a student's exposure to required disciplines or populations, the program will arrange supplemental rotations or reassignment to ensure compliance.

Summative Evaluation Requirement (B4.03)

Related ARC-PA Standards: B4.03, B4.01, B4.02

Policy:

All University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine students must successfully complete the program's summative evaluation within the final four months of the Program. The summative evaluation is administered through PAM 800 and is a required graduation component used to confirm that each student has achieved the program-defined competencies and sub-competencies required for entry into clinical practice.

Successful completion of the summative evaluation requires demonstration of the Program's required milestone benchmark for graduation. At a minimum, students must demonstrate Level 3 performance on required program competencies and sub-competencies, consistent with published program policy. Successful completion of the summative evaluation is required for graduation and for program endorsement related to eligibility for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE).

Procedure:

- The summative evaluation is administered during the final phase of the curriculum, within the final four months of the Program, through PAM 800.
- The summative evaluation may include written, clinical, technical, professional, and other assessment components as determined by the Program.
- Summative components are designed to assess the Program's required competency domains, including:
 - Clinical and technical skills
 - Clinical reasoning and problem-solving
 - Interpersonal and communication skills
 - Medical knowledge
 - Professional behaviors
- Students will receive scheduling instructions, expectations, and preparatory information from the Program.
- Students must successfully complete all required summative components and meet the required Level 3 milestone benchmark for successful completion of the summative evaluation.
- A student who does not meet the required summative standard will not be considered to have successfully completed the summative requirement and may be subject to remediation, additional review, delayed graduation, or other action consistent with program policy.
- Students who have not successfully completed the summative evaluation will not be cleared for graduation or for program endorsement related to PANCE eligibility until all summative requirements have been successfully completed.
- Students who have scheduled a PANCE date before final program clearance may be required to cancel or delay that date until the Program confirms successful completion of all graduation and summative requirements.
- Summative outcomes and any related remediation or follow-up actions will be documented in the student record in accordance with program policy.

Professionalism

Related ARC-PA Standards: A3.01, A3.04, A3.14, A3.16, B4.01, B4.02

Overview

Professionalism is a cornerstone of the University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program and a prerequisite for successful progression, graduation, and entry into clinical practice. Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in all academic, clinical, simulation, service, and community settings. Professional expectations include ethical conduct, respectful communication, accountability, reliability, integrity, and adherence to University and Program policies.

Professionalism is assessed throughout the curriculum and may affect academic standing, progression decisions, clinical participation, graduation eligibility, and program endorsement related to certification and licensure processes.

Core Expectations of Professionalism

Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism through behaviors that include, but are not limited to:

- respectful and professional communication with peers, faculty, staff, patients, preceptors, and community partners
- punctuality, reliability, preparedness, and timely completion of assigned responsibilities
- adherence to dress, appearance, identification, confidentiality, and conduct expectations
- honesty, ethical behavior, academic integrity, and accountability for actions
- civility, collegiality, and contribution to a respectful and inclusive learning environment
- protection of privacy and confidentiality in accordance with FERPA, HIPAA, and program policy
- appropriate use of technology, social media, and electronic communication
- professional behavior in all classroom, laboratory, simulation, clinical, and university-related settings

Examples of Professionalism Concerns

Professionalism concerns may arise from behaviors including, but not limited to:

- disrespectful or inappropriate communication
- repeated tardiness, unexcused absences, or failure to follow required procedures
- inappropriate attire, appearance, or identification noncompliance
- academic dishonesty, falsification, or dishonorable conduct
- breach of confidentiality or improper handling of protected information
- disruptive classroom, lab, simulation, or clinical behavior
- failure to follow program, site, or university expectations
- conduct that affects patient safety, team trust, or the integrity of the Program

Examples are illustrative and not exhaustive.

Professionalism Concern Reports (PCRs)

The Program uses a Professionalism Concern Report (PCR) to document professionalism concerns. PCRs may be submitted by faculty, staff, preceptors, or students, as appropriate, in accordance with program policy. Professionalism concerns are reviewed holistically and may be addressed through advising, feedback, success coaching, formal remediation, probation, referral to the Progression, Promotion, and Professionalism (PPP) Committee, suspension, or dismissal depending on the nature, severity, and pattern of the concern.

The Program classifies PCRs as follows:

Level 1 PCR (Minor Professionalism Concern):

A low-level or isolated lapse in professionalism that does not involve dishonesty, harassment, discrimination, patient safety risk, or other serious misconduct.

Level 2 PCR (Major Professionalism Concern):

A serious or repeated professionalism concern involving conduct inconsistent with the ethical, behavioral, or safety expectations of the Program or profession.

Detailed professionalism review, PCR escalation, probation, and dismissal processes are described in the **Remediation, Probation, Deceleration, and Dismissal** section of this Handbook.

Dress, Appearance, and Identification

Policy: Students in the University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program are expected to maintain a professional appearance consistent with the responsibilities of a healthcare professional and the standards of the learning or clinical environment.

Dress and appearance must support safety, infection prevention, effective communication, patient confidence, and professional representation of the student, the Program, and the University.

Requirements may vary by course, laboratory, simulation activity, clinical assignment, or event. Students must comply with the most restrictive applicable requirement established by the Program, course faculty, clinical site, or healthcare facility.

General Expectations:

- 1. Minimum Standard**

Unless otherwise directed, students must wear business casual attire or Program-approved scrubs during scheduled Program activities.

- 2. Identification**

Students must wear their University or Program-issued identification badge in a visible location during required academic, laboratory, simulation, clinical, service, and community activities unless prohibited for safety or infection-control reasons. Students must clearly identify themselves as physician assistant students and must not represent themselves as licensed physician assistants or other healthcare professionals.

- 3. Business Casual Attire**

Business casual attire should be clean, neat, appropriately fitted, and suitable for a professional healthcare or academic environment. Examples may include dress pants, khakis, skirts, dresses, blouses, collared shirts, sweaters, and other comparable professional attire.

4. Program-Approved Scrubs

Scrubs may be worn when authorized for a course, laboratory, simulation, clinical activity, or other Program-approved event. Scrubs must be clean, appropriately fitted, and in the color or style designated by the Program or clinical site. Scrubs worn in clinical or laboratory environments should not be worn when visibly soiled or when doing so would conflict with infection-prevention expectations.

5. Attire Not Permitted

Unless specifically authorized, the following are not considered appropriate professional attire:

- jeans or denim;
- shorts;
- athletic, exercise, or gym clothing;
- sweatpants, leggings worn as pants, or pajama-style clothing;
- t-shirts, tank tops, or clothing with inappropriate wording or images;
- clothing that is excessively tight, revealing, torn, frayed, or transparent;
- open-toed shoes in laboratories, simulation areas, or clinical settings;
- footwear that does not provide appropriate support, protection, or safety; and
- hats or head coverings that are not worn for religious, cultural, medical, safety, or Program-approved purposes.

6. Casual or Program-Approved Dress Days

On designated casual days, students may wear clean jeans that are free of holes, excessive fading, tears, or fraying. Jeans must be paired with an appropriate shirt and footwear. Casual dress authorization does not eliminate expectations for cleanliness, modesty, safety, or professional representation.

7. Grooming and Personal Hygiene

Students must maintain personal hygiene and grooming appropriate for close interaction with patients, peers, faculty, staff, and healthcare professionals. Hair, facial hair, fingernails, cosmetics, fragrances, jewelry, and accessories must not interfere with patient care, personal protective equipment, infection prevention, communication, or safety. Fingernails must be maintained in a manner consistent with laboratory and clinical infection-control standards. No artificial nails, nail enhancements, or nail-polish products.

8. Hair and Facial Hair

Hair must be clean and secured when necessary to prevent interference with patient care, procedures, equipment, sterile fields, or safety. Facial hair must be maintained in a manner that permits proper use of required personal protective equipment, including respirators, when applicable.

9. Jewelry and Accessories

Jewelry and accessories must be limited when necessary for safety, infection prevention, patient care, or professional appearance. Faculty, preceptors, or clinical sites may require removal of jewelry or accessories that present a safety or infection-control concern.

10. Body Art and Body Piercings

Visible body art and piercings must be consistent with professional, safety, infection-control, and clinical-site expectations. Students may be required to cover body art or remove or secure piercings when directed by the Program or a clinical site.

11. Footwear

Footwear must be clean, professional, stable, and appropriate for the activity. Closed-toed shoes are required during laboratory, simulation, procedural, and clinical activities unless otherwise specifically authorized.

12. Clinical Site Requirements

Students must comply with all dress, grooming, identification, personal protective equipment, and infection-control requirements established by their assigned clinical site. Clinical site requirements may be more restrictive than the Program's general policy. Failure to comply with site requirements may result in removal from the site, loss of clinical time, or other academic or professionalism consequences.

13. Religious, Cultural, Medical, and Disability-Related Considerations

Students seeking an exception or modification related to religion, culture, disability, medical need, or another protected basis should contact the appropriate University office and the Program as early as possible. Approved modifications must remain consistent with essential safety, infection-control, identification, and patient-care requirements.

14. Compliance and Correction

Faculty, staff, preceptors, or clinical-site personnel may direct a student to correct attire, appearance, identification, or grooming that does not comply with applicable expectations.

A student may be removed from an academic, laboratory, simulation, clinical, or Program activity until the concern is corrected. Missed activities or clinical time may be subject to the applicable attendance and make-up policies.

Repeated or significant noncompliance may result in a Professionalism Concern Report or other action consistent with Program and University policy.

Communication, Civility, and Social Media

Students are expected to communicate respectfully and professionally in all verbal, written, and electronic interactions. This includes communication through email, Canvas, text messaging, clinical documentation systems, and social media. Students are individually responsible for the content they post, share, or transmit electronically. Inappropriate use of social media or electronic communication may result in a professionalism review and disciplinary action.

Academic Integrity and Accountability

Students must comply with the University's Honor Code and all Program expectations related to academic honesty, exam security, documentation integrity, and ethical conduct. Academic dishonesty, falsification, unauthorized collaboration, or other integrity violations may result in referral for professionalism and academic review.

Students must also comply with the Program's **Use of Artificial Intelligence and Generative Tools** policy. Unauthorized, undisclosed, or inappropriate use of AI in academic, clinical, or assessment settings may constitute an academic integrity and/or professionalism violation and may result in disciplinary action consistent with program and university policy.

Documentation and Appeals

Professionalism concerns, PCRs, related meetings, remediation plans, probation decisions, and other outcomes will be documented in the student record in accordance with Program policy. Students may appeal formal professionalism-related actions through the applicable grievance or appeal procedures described elsewhere in this Handbook.

Miscellaneous Items

White Coat and Hooding Ceremonies

Policy: The University of Tampa PA Program will host a White Coat Ceremony to formally welcome students into the clinical phase of their education. A Hooding Ceremony will occur prior to commencement to recognize graduating students.

Selection of Class Representatives and Faculty Class Advisor

Policy: Each PA student cohort may elect class officers to serve as communication liaisons between the student body and program faculty and administration. Class officers are intended to support student leadership, organize class communication, and help bring forward broad cohort concerns or feedback in an orderly manner. Class officers do not replace a student's right to communicate directly with faculty, advisors, program leadership, or university offices, and do not supersede any grievance, appeal, mistreatment, Title IX, or safety reporting process. Students must remain in good academic standing to maintain officer roles.

Officer Roles and Responsibilities:

- **President:** Leads class meetings and serves as the primary representative for the cohort.
- **Vice President:** Supports the President and assumes duties in the President's absence.
- **Secretary:** Maintains meeting notes and assists with official class communication.
- **Treasurer:** Manages class funds and coordinates fundraising activities, if applicable.
- **Social Chair/Outreach:** Helps organize class events, service activities, and community outreach efforts, if applicable.

Elections: Class officers are elected by majority vote of the cohort. Program leadership or faculty may facilitate elections and provide guidance regarding officer roles and expectations.

Recommended Communication Pathways for Student Concerns

Policy: Students are encouraged to address routine concerns promptly and at the lowest appropriate level through direct and professional communication. These communication pathways are intended to support timely problem-solving and appropriate escalation of concerns. They do not replace formal grievance, appeal, Title IX, mistreatment, discrimination, accessibility, or safety reporting processes described elsewhere in this Handbook or in university policy.

Routine Academic Concerns

For routine academic concerns, students should generally use the following sequence:

1. Course Instructor or Course Director
2. Faculty Academic Advisor, if additional support is needed
3. Associate Program Director for unresolved didactic concerns, or Director of Clinical Education

- for unresolved clinical concerns
4. Program Director, if the matter remains unresolved
 5. Dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences, if escalation beyond the program is appropriate under university policy

Routine Cohort-Wide Academic Concerns

For broad class-wide academic concerns, students may first bring the concern to class officers or the Faculty Class Advisor for assistance in organizing and communicating the issue. Cohort concerns may then be brought forward to the appropriate course leader, the Associate Program Director, the Director of Clinical Education, or the Program Director, as appropriate to the issue.

Routine Non-Academic Concerns

For routine non-academic concerns related to communication, student experience, scheduling, professionalism climate, or other program matters, students should generally use the following sequence:

1. Faculty Academic Advisor or appropriate faculty/staff member
2. Associate Program Director or Director of Clinical Education, as appropriate
3. Program Director
4. Dean, if escalation beyond the program is appropriate under university policy

Urgent or Protected Concerns

Students should not delay reporting concerns involving safety, mistreatment, discrimination, harassment, Title IX issues, retaliation, patient safety, or other serious matters. These concerns may be reported directly through the appropriate program or university reporting process without following the routine communication pathway above.

Formal Grievances and Appeals

Students wishing to pursue a formal grievance or appeal should follow the Student Grievance and Student Appeals sections of this Handbook, as well as applicable university policies.

That version keeps the spirit of what you want, but avoids conflict with your grievance policy and makes clear that urgent/protected concerns can bypass ordinary channels.

Student Organizations and Leadership Opportunities

- **Student Ambassadors:** Represent the PA Program during campus tours, admissions events, and other outreach activities. Ambassadors must be in good academic and professional standing.
- **Pi Alpha National Honor Society:** Students may apply to Pi Alpha if they meet eligibility criteria based on leadership, community service, and academic excellence. Details: [PAEA Pi Alpha](#)
- **SAAAPA Membership:** All students will be members of the Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA), supported by the program. This includes access to leadership opportunities, advocacy resources, and national networking. Details: [Student Academy](#)
- **FAPA Membership:** All students will be members of the Florida Academy of Physician Assistants (FAPA), the state's professional PA organization. The program will cover the cost of student membership. FAPA provides legislative advocacy, networking, educational conferences, and leadership opportunities specific to PAs practicing in Florida. Details: [FAPA](#)

Certification Exam Resources

NCCPA Blueprint Resources:

- Task and Organ Area Content: <https://www.nccpa.net/examscontentblueprint>

PAEA End-of-Rotation Exam Blueprint:

- Content areas and resources: <https://paeaonline.org/assessment/end-of-rotation/content>

Professional Organizations

- ARC-PA: <https://www.arc-pa.org>
- NCCPA: <https://www.nccpa.net>
- PAEA: <https://www.paeaonline.org>
- AAPA: <https://www.aapa.org>
- FAPA (Florida Academy of PAs): <https://www.fapaonline.org>
- Florida Medical Board (PA Licensing): <https://flboardofmedicine.gov/physician-assistant>

University Resources

Students may access current contact information for major university offices, including Counseling Center, Registrar, Financial Aid, Health Center, Library, IT, Student Accounts, Student Affairs, and Campus Safety, through the University of Tampa website and student portal. The Program may also provide an updated quick-reference list during orientation.

Addendums

Addendum A: Competency Framework

Program Competencies and PLOs

Competency/PLO 1: Clinical and Technical Skills (CTS)

Graduates will demonstrate the clinical and technical skills necessary to provide safe, effective, patient-centered care.

Clinical Skills

1. **History and Physical Examination**
Obtain histories and perform focused and comprehensive physical examinations appropriate to the patient presentation.
2. **Clinical Data Interpretation and Synthesis**
Recognize, interpret, and synthesize clinical findings, patient information, and diagnostic study results to inform patient assessment.
3. **Patient Communication for Understanding and Shared Decision-Making**
Communicate effectively with patients to support understanding, shared decision-making, and patient-centered care.
4. **Patient Safety, Infection Prevention, and Risk Reduction**
Apply patient safety, infection prevention, and risk-reduction practices during clinical and procedural care.

Technical Skills

5. **Program-Defined Diagnostic Tests, Procedures, and Interventions**
Perform program-defined diagnostic tests, procedures, and interventions safely and effectively.
6. **Technical Proficiency and Psychomotor Skill**
Demonstrate technical proficiency and psychomotor skill in program-defined routine clinical and procedural tasks.
7. **Aseptic, Sterile, and Safety Practices**
Prepare for, perform, or assist with procedures using appropriate aseptic, sterile, and safety practices.

Competency/PLO 2: Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities (CRPS)

Graduates will apply clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities to assess patients, make informed clinical decisions, and develop appropriate management plans across patient populations and settings.

1. **Prioritized Differential Diagnosis and Problem Representation**
Formulate prioritized differential diagnoses and accurate problem representations.
2. **Diagnostic and Therapeutic Intervention Selection**
Select and justify diagnostic and therapeutic interventions.

3. **Management Plans Across Care Types**

Develop management plans for acute, chronic, emergent, and preventive care, including appropriate follow-up and monitoring, within PA scope and under appropriate supervision.

4. **Outcome Evaluation and Plan Revision**

Evaluate outcomes and revise care plans appropriately.

Competency/PLO 3: Interpersonal and Communication Skills (COM)

Graduates will communicate effectively with patients, families, and members of the healthcare team to support patient-centered care and shared decision-making.

1. **Verbal and Nonverbal Communication with Patients**

Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication with patients.

2. **Written Documentation**

Create accurate, timely, and professional written documentation.

3. **Shared Decision-Making with Patients and Families**

Engage patients and families in shared decision-making.

4. **Difficult or Emotionally Sensitive Conversations**

Navigate difficult or emotionally sensitive conversations with professionalism and empathy.

Competency/PLO 4: Medical Knowledge (MK)

Graduates will apply foundational and clinical medical knowledge, evidence, and ongoing learning to support safe and effective patient care.

1. **Foundational Biomedical Knowledge**

Demonstrate foundational knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, and pharmacology.

2. **Normal and Abnormal Clinical Findings**

Distinguish normal from abnormal clinical findings.

3. **Evidence-Based Medicine and Literature Appraisal**

Apply evidence-based medicine and appraise medical literature critically.

4. **Learning Needs and Ongoing Improvement**

Identify learning needs through self-assessment and develop a plan for ongoing learning and improvement.

Competency/PLO 5: Professional Behaviors (PB)

Graduates will consistently demonstrate professional, ethical, accountable, and patient-centered behaviors in educational and clinical environments.

1. **Integrity, Accountability, Empathy, and Respect**

Demonstrate integrity, accountability, empathy, and respect in professional interactions.

2. **Ethical and Legal Standards**

Uphold ethical and legal standards in clinical care.

3. **Privacy, Confidentiality, and Autonomy**

Protect patient privacy, confidentiality, and autonomy.

4. **Self-Assessment, Quality Improvement, and Risk Management**

Apply self-assessment, quality improvement, and risk-management principles to improve patient care.

Students must demonstrate the program-defined **Level 3: Competent** graduation expectations in accordance with program progression and summative evaluation policies.

Addendum B: Program Milestone Document

The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program uses a milestone framework to describe expected developmental progression across the program's competency domains and sub-competencies. Milestones provide a structured way for students and faculty to understand performance expectations over time, guide feedback, support remediation when needed, and inform progression and graduation decisions. In general, **Level 1** reflects early learner performance, **Level 2** reflects readiness to enter supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs), **Level 3** reflects the expected level of competence at graduation, and **Level 4** reflects aspirational early-career proficiency beyond the minimum graduation standard. Milestones are assessed using multiple sources of evidence across the curriculum and should be interpreted in conjunction with course expectations, clinical evaluations, summative assessment requirements, and other program progression policies.

Go to <https://www.ut.edu/graduate-degrees/department-of-physician-assistant-medicine/physician-assistant-medicine-program/competencies-program-learning-outcomes> to see the complete **PA Program Competency Milestones** framework.

Addendum C: Technical Standards for Enrollment, Progression, and Graduation

Technical Standards for Enrollment, Progression, and Graduation

Technical standards describe the essential nonacademic abilities and functional requirements necessary for a student to participate in and complete the Physician Assistant Medicine Program safely and effectively. They do not replace the Program's competencies or milestone expectations.

The examples listed within each technical standard are illustrative and are not intended to be exhaustive. The essential requirement is the student's ability to perform the functions necessary to participate safely and effectively in the curriculum and demonstrate the Program's competencies, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Purpose and Relationship to Program Competencies

The University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Program is committed to educating qualified students who can develop the knowledge, clinical skills, professional behaviors, and judgment required for entry-level PA practice.

Technical standards identify the functional abilities students need to demonstrate the Program competencies at the required developmental levels. Students must be able to meet these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, throughout enrollment. At graduation, students are expected to meet the Program's **Level 3 competency expectations** for entry-level practice.

Applicants who are accepted into the Program must attest to their ability to meet the technical standards or request reasonable accommodation through the University's designated accessibility process. Enrolled students must continue to meet these standards throughout the didactic, clinical, and summative phases of the curriculum.

Observation and Information Acquisition

Students must be able to obtain, interpret, and use information presented through educational, laboratory, simulation, and clinical experiences.

This includes, but is not limited to, the ability, with or without reasonable accommodation, to:

- observe demonstrations, procedures, physical findings, patient behaviors, and changes in patient condition;
- obtain clinically relevant information from patients, families, healthcare professionals, medical records, diagnostic studies, and monitoring equipment;
- distinguish and interpret information needed to perform patient assessments and provide safe clinical care; and
- integrate information obtained through appropriate sensory, technological, or assistive methods.

The essential requirement is the ability to acquire and interpret clinically relevant information safely and accurately, rather than reliance on any single sensory method.

Communication

Students must be able to communicate effectively, respectfully, accurately, and efficiently in academic and clinical settings.

This includes, but is not limited to, the ability, with or without reasonable accommodation, to:

- receive, interpret, and respond to verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic communication;
- communicate effectively with patients, families, peers, faculty, staff, preceptors, and members of the healthcare team;
- elicit and convey information in a manner that supports patient understanding, shared decision-making, and patient-centered care;
- communicate effectively during urgent, emotionally sensitive, or rapidly changing situations;
- create accurate, timely, organized, and professional written documentation; and
- use English sufficiently to complete the curriculum, communicate safely in clinical settings, and maintain appropriate clinical records.

Motor and Procedural Functions

Students must possess the functional abilities necessary to participate safely in physical examination, laboratory, simulation, procedural, and clinical activities.

This includes, but is not limited to, the ability, with or without reasonable accommodation, to:

- perform focused and comprehensive physical examinations;
- use appropriate examination instruments, clinical equipment, and safety devices;
- perform or assist with program-defined diagnostic tests, procedures, and interventions;
- complete tasks requiring appropriate fine-motor and gross-motor coordination;
- apply aseptic, sterile, infection-prevention, and risk-reduction practices;
- respond appropriately during urgent and emergency situations; and
- complete clinical and procedural activities within the safety and performance parameters established for the activity.

Students must be able to provide or direct appropriate assistance during emergencies, including initiating basic life support and participating in program-required emergency-response training.

Cognitive, Integrative, and Clinical Reasoning Abilities

Students must possess the cognitive and integrative abilities necessary to acquire, retain, analyze, synthesize, and apply information in academic and clinical settings.

This includes, but is not limited to, the ability, with or without reasonable accommodation, to:

- comprehend and apply knowledge in the biomedical, behavioral, and clinical sciences;

- recognize and distinguish normal from abnormal findings;
- interpret histories, physical findings, diagnostic studies, and other clinical information;
- formulate prioritized differential diagnoses and accurate problem representations;
- select and justify diagnostic and therapeutic interventions;
- develop, implement, evaluate, and revise patient-management plans;
- understand spatial, anatomical, physiologic, and three-dimensional relationships;
- identify clinically important information in a timely manner;
- solve problems and make decisions in routine, complex, urgent, and uncertain situations; and
- recognize limitations, identify learning needs, and seek assistance when appropriate.

Behavioral, Interpersonal, and Professional Attributes

Students must demonstrate the behavioral self-regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, judgment, reliability, and professionalism necessary to function safely and effectively in demanding academic and clinical environments.

This includes, but is not limited to, the ability, with or without reasonable accommodation, to:

- demonstrate integrity, accountability, empathy, compassion, and respect;
- interact effectively with individuals from varied backgrounds, identities, experiences, and perspectives;
- establish and maintain appropriate professional relationships and boundaries;
- work collaboratively with peers, faculty, staff, patients, families, preceptors, and healthcare teams;
- receive, reflect upon, and respond constructively to feedback;
- adapt to changing circumstances, uncertainty, unexpected outcomes, and competing demands;
- manage stress and maintain professional behavior during physically and mentally demanding situations;
- exercise sound judgment and recognize circumstances requiring assistance or supervision;
- protect patient privacy, confidentiality, and autonomy;
- comply with ethical, legal, academic, and professional standards; and
- maintain behavior consistent with patient safety and the responsibilities of the PA profession.

A diagnosis, health condition, or disability does not in itself determine whether a student meets this standard. The relevant consideration is whether the student can perform the essential functions of the Program safely and effectively, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Technology, Documentation, and Information Management

Students must be able to use the technology and information systems necessary to participate in the curriculum and clinical education.

This includes, but is not limited to, the ability, with or without reasonable accommodation, to:

- access and use the University's learning-management, communication, testing, and educational systems;
- use electronic health records, clinical documentation tools, and healthcare information systems;
- access, evaluate, and apply medical information and evidence-based resources;
- maintain accurate, timely, secure, and professional academic and clinical records;
- comply with information-security, confidentiality, and privacy requirements; and
- adapt to new technologies used in education and healthcare.

In-Person Participation

The Physician Assistant Medicine Program is an in-person professional curriculum and cannot be completed entirely through remote participation.

Students must be able to participate in required on-campus, laboratory, simulation, clinical, and assessment activities. Limited remote instruction or participation may be authorized by the Program in specific circumstances, but such authorization does not create an option or entitlement to complete the curriculum remotely.

Attendance and participation requirements remain subject to approved reasonable accommodations and University policy.

Certification and Emergency-Response Requirements

Students must meet the knowledge and performance requirements necessary to obtain and maintain Program-required certification in:

- Basic Life Support (BLS);
- Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS); and
- Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS).

Students must also successfully complete Program-defined physical examination, procedural, simulation, and emergency-response assessments within established safety and performance expectations, with approved accommodations when applicable.

Reasonable Accommodation

The University of Tampa and the Physician Assistant Medicine Program are committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities in accordance with applicable law and University policy.

Students seeking accommodation must initiate the request through the University's designated accessibility office. The PA Program does not independently diagnose disabilities or approve accommodations.

Approved accommodations are implemented through collaboration among the student, the accessibility office, the Program, and, when applicable, clinical education sites. Accommodations must not

fundamentally alter the essential requirements of the curriculum, compromise patient safety, eliminate essential competencies, or impose an undue burden.

Students are encouraged to request accommodations as early as possible because some academic, laboratory, simulation, and clinical accommodations may require advance planning.

Ongoing Responsibility to Meet the Standards

Technical standards apply throughout the entire Program, including the didactic, clinical, and summative phases.

Students must notify the appropriate University office if a change in health, function, or circumstances may affect their ability to meet the technical standards or may require a new or modified accommodation.

The Program may require review of a student's continued ability to meet the technical standards when there is an objective concern related to safety, participation, progression, clinical performance, or the ability to demonstrate required competencies. Such review will be conducted in accordance with University policy and applicable disability law.

Questions regarding the PA Program's technical standards or program-specific requirements may be directed to the **Department of Physician Assistant Medicine**. Questions or requests concerning disability accommodations should be directed to the University's designated accessibility office.

Handbook Acknowledgment and Required Consents

By signing below, I acknowledge the following:

1. Student Handbook Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the contents of the University of Tampa Physician Assistant Medicine Student Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for complying with the policies and procedures contained in this Handbook, as well as applicable University policies.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

2. Academic and Professional Communication Authorization

I authorize the Program, consistent with applicable law and university policy, to share information reasonably necessary for academic administration, clinical placement, credentialing, licensure-related processes, references, and other program-related professional purposes.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

3. Photography, Video, and Audio Recording Authorization

I understand that I may be photographed, video recorded, or audio recorded for educational purposes during classroom, laboratory, simulation, or program activities. I also authorize the Program and University to use approved photographs, video, or recordings for recruitment, promotional, or informational purposes in accordance with university policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

4. Use of Academic Work for Internal Educational and Accreditation Purposes

I authorize the Program to use my academic work, including papers, examinations, assignments, and projects, for internal educational, assessment, and accreditation purposes. The Program will remove my name when appropriate.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

5. Laboratory Participation Consent

I understand that laboratory participation may include serving both as a learner and, when appropriate, as a simulated patient participant. I agree to comply with laboratory participation expectations and to notify faculty of any limitations or concerns requiring consideration.

Signature: _____

Date: _____