



**STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**HANDBOOK**

**2020-2021**

**College of Health Professions  
Department of Health Professions  
Division of Physician Assistant Studies**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES (MSPAS)**

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<sup>1</sup> ARC-PA Standards refer to the Standards 5<sup>th</sup> edition: <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/standards-of-accreditation/>.

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## INTRODUCTION

Dear Student,

Welcome to the MUSC Division of Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) academic program. The faculty and I are pleased you chose to pursue your goal of becoming a physician assistant here at MUSC. It is a privilege for me, on behalf of your dedicated faculty and staff, to welcome you to an exciting 27-month training experience.

As stated in Standard A3.02 of the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), this [Student Policies and Procedures Handbook](#) is your primary resource for policies and procedures related to your educational experience in the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies curriculum. Please refer to this document, in addition to the Clinical Year Handbook, the College of Health Professions Student Policies and Procedures Handbook, and the MUSC Bulletin which are available online.

- [CHP Student Policies and Procedures Handbook](#)
- [MUSC Bulletin](#)

It is important that you understand all components of this handbook, the College of Health Professions Student Policies and Procedures Handbook, and the MUSC Bulletin **before you begin classes**. You should refer to these handbooks when you have questions about the expectations within the College or the PAS program. If you have questions or concerns, please speak with your academic advisor. An academic advisor will be assigned to each student prior to the start of classes. The program sets high standards in order to ensure patients receive quality care from our graduates. You were chosen for this program because the faculty and I are confident you have the potential to excel in this program and positively impact the lives of the patients you encounter.

The faculty congratulates you on your acceptance into this academically rigorous program. We hope you will find your years at the Medical University of South Carolina full of great experiences, fun, learning and personal growth. Remember to be flexible, to seek opportunities to collaborate with your classmates and faculty, and to conduct yourself with the highest level of professionalism at all times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Helen Martin, DHSC, PA-C, DFAAPA  
Assistant Professor and Program Director  
Division of Physician Assistant Studies

## DIVISION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

The MUSC Physician Assistant Studies program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). ARC-PA has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the Medical University of South Carolina Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Medical University of South Carolina. 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 2023. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation *Standards* and ARC-PA policy.

(ARC-PA Standard A3.12 a)

The success of the program in achieving its goals and its first-time PANCE pass rates for the five most recent graduating classes is available on the [PAS web site](#).

(ARC-PA Standard A3.12 b, c)

### **Our Vision**

To enhance access to high quality health care throughout South Carolina and beyond.

### **Our Mission**

To educate highly competent physician assistants who are compassionate, culturally aware and attuned to the primary health care needs of the people of South Carolina and beyond. They will be prepared to:

- Provide quality, evidence based, patient-centered care as integral members of interdisciplinary health care teams
- Advocate for the physician assistant profession
- Help meet the health needs of the larger community through education and service

### **Our Values**

- Quality, safe, and accessible patient-centered health care
- Responding compassionately and respectfully to the needs of the population served
- Ethical and professional behavior
- Diversity and inclusion
- Confident life-long learners
- Advancing medical knowledge
- Virtuous leadership

### **Program Goals**

The Physician Assistant Studies program assesses its own success by the success of its students and alumni. The PAS program strives to:

- Recruit a richly diverse student body with varying experiences, attributes, sensitivities and academic backgrounds
- Train physician assistant students to have the knowledge and skills to provide quality health care
- Graduate students who are highly satisfied with the quality of their education, the state of their professional development, and their overall capability to function as a physician assistant
- Be fully compliant with all standards established by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA)

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the completion of the program, graduates will competently:

- Elicit a detailed and accurate medical history, perform a complete physical examination, and record all pertinent data
- Perform, order, and interpret diagnostic studies
- Perform or refer for therapeutic procedures
- Provide complete and accurate patient assessment in order to formulate a management plan in a variety of healthcare settings
- Provide patient education and counseling to address health maintenance and disease prevention
- Facilitate the referral of patients to address their medical and psychosocial needs

In keeping with the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the Division, students are expected to develop basic core competencies recognized as fundamental to successful practice as a physician assistant. Educational activities centered on these core competencies are integrated throughout the program's didactic and clinical education curriculum.

These competencies, encompassing patient medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, supervised patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice, are described in the following document:

[Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession](#) published by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

## FACULTY

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## STAFF

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## OFFICE PROCEDURES AND NOTIFICATIONS

Office Hours: Regular business hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday-Friday.

Books, Equipment and Supplies on Loan: Any supplies loaned to students must be signed out by the program staff or faculty.

Photocopying: Students who require materials photocopied should utilize the copier in the Health Professions Student Life Office (first floor of the A Building).

Faculty Appointments: Appointments with faculty should be made with the faculty member via email or in person at least 24 hours in advance, if possible. Sign-in at the Administrative Assistant's desk when you arrive and wait to be asked to proceed to the office.

Bulletin Boards: These areas are to be utilized for sharing information, notifications of pertinent class information and/or promulgating public relations.

Classrooms and Laboratories: These rooms should be kept neat, clean, and free from debris and personal articles. Food and beverages are not allowed in the majority of classrooms and labs. Materials and equipment must be returned to their original places, safety precautions must be adhered to, and equipment in need of repair must be reported immediately to the program staff or faculty.

Inclement Weather: Formal cancellation of MUSC classes is made by the President's Office and is announced on the radio and television. Updated information is made available via the university's public information telephone system, available at 843-792-MUSC (6872). Students are encouraged to enroll in the University Notification System which will give notice, via text message, email and phone call of hazardous weather, or other safety concerns related to the MUSC campus. More information can be found on the [MUSC Public Safety](#) web site.

Student Records: Upon request, students may be granted access to their personal records maintained by the program or by the University. Requests should be made directly through the Program Director. Access to records of other students is strictly prohibited. (ARC-PA Standard A3.18)

## CURRICULUM (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.12 D-F)

Follow these links for more information on the following topics:

- [Curriculum](#)
- [Course Descriptions](#)
- [Estimates of all costs related to the program](#)
- [Refunds of tuition and fees](#)



<u>Summer Semester</u>		<u>Credits</u>
PA 606	Human Anatomy	6
PA 607	Introduction to the PA Profession	1
PA 630	Bioethics	1
PA 632	Principles of Pharmacology	2
PA 643	Human Physiology & Basic Pathophysiologic Concepts	3
		<b>13</b>
<u>Fall Semester</u>		
PA 614	Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine I	6
PA 617	Clinical Problem Solving I	2
PA 624	Pharmacotherapeutics I	3
PA 634	History and Physical Examination Skills	2
PA 654	Diagnostic Medicine I	2
PA 662	Pathophysiology I	3
PA 695	Research Methods for Health Professionals	3
		<b>21</b>
<u>Spring Semester</u>		
PA 615	Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine II	6
PA 618	Clinical Problem Solving II	2
PA 625	Pharmacotherapeutics II	3
PA 636	Clinical Skills and Procedures	2
PA 655	Diagnostic Medicine I	2
PA 663	Pathophysiology II	3
PA 690	Graduate Project I	1
IP 711	IP Foundations & Teamstepps	1
IP 768	Public Health	1
		<b>21</b>
<u>Summer Semester</u>		
PA 616	Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine III	3
PA 619	Clinical Problem Solving III	1
PA 626	Pharmacotherapeutics III	2
PA 642	Pertinent Topics in Pediatrics	1
PA 651	Geriatrics	1
PA 652	Principles of Emergency Medicine	2
PA 653	Principles of Surgical Care	2
PA 691	Graduate Project II	1
		<b>13</b>
<u>Clinical Year</u>		
PA 670	Clinical Rotation I	5
PA 672	Clinical Rotation II	5
PA 674	Clinical Rotation III	5
PA 676	Clinical Rotation IV	5
PA 678	Clinical Rotation V	5

PA 679	Clinical Rotation VI	5
PA 680	Clinical Rotation VII	5
PA 682	Clinical Rotation VIII	5
PA 685	Clinical Rotation Elective	5
		<b>45</b>
Total Curriculum Credits		<b>113</b>

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.16)**

The MUSC Physician Assistant Studies program does not grant advanced placement. Advanced Placement is defined by ARC-PA as a waiver of required coursework included in the PA curriculum for applicants to the program and/or a waiver of required coursework included in the PA curriculum for currently enrolled students in the program which results in the student advancing in the curriculum without completing required curriculum components at the sponsoring institution.

### **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES**

The Division of Physician Assistant Studies is committed to ensuring that otherwise qualified candidates with disabilities are given equal access through reasonable accommodations to its services, programs, activities and education. The Division works closely with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) officers in College's Office of Student Life and Recruitment in this process. Each case is considered individually for best outcomes.

Students wishing to request reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact disability services to start the process of documenting their disability and determining eligibility for services prior to the start of the program. While this can be started at any time, accommodations cannot be implemented retrospectively. MUSC has policies regarding the type of documentation required in order to document a disability and request accommodations. To learn more about this process, please go through the [Disability Services Office website](#).

Students with disabilities are expected to perform all essential functions of the program with or without reasonable accommodation. The University will work with the student and respective campus disability office to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations. While we will make every effort to work with our students with disabilities to accommodate their disability and related needs, it is important to note we are not able to or required to provide requested accommodations that would fundamentally alter the essential functions or technical standards of the program.

*NOTE: Students with accommodations approved before August 2018 will continue to function under the previous accommodation policy.*

All students who need accommodations are required to complete the accommodation request form and provide proper documentation. **You are expected to initiate this process *prior* to the**

**start of** classes each semester in order to allow the necessary time to document everything needed, especially if testing has not been completed.

These are the necessary steps prior to any services being approved:

1. Please schedule an appointment with the Director of the Office of Student Life and Recruitment who serves as the ADA College Coordinator within CHP, and whose office is located in the Office of Student Life and Recruitment (A103). The Director will walk you through the initial steps of what medical documentation needs to be filled out and/or provided in order to be approved for your requested accommodations.
2. The College Coordinator, in concert with the 504 ADA Student Coordinator, ensures that the appropriate paperwork is completed, confers with you on what accommodation you are requesting, and validates your documentation from your medical professional as to your documented disability. It may at times be necessary for you to sign a release of form, such that your medical condition for which you are seeking relief may be verified by the 504 ADA Student Coordinator. Decisions regarding accommodation are made on a case-by-case basis.
3. If your request for accommodations is approved, the College Coordinator generates a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) which documents what accommodations have been granted. You are responsible for promptly obtaining the LOA and presenting it to each faculty at the beginning of the term. As you obtain new faculty over the course of your program, you must contact the College Coordinator to provide you with a LOA for them to have on record.
4. If your requested accommodations are not approved, you are encouraged to meet with the college coordinator to discuss the reasons for the denial and further documentation that is required for grievance procedures.

### **ACADEMIC STANDARDS (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.15)**

#### **Evaluation and Grading**

During the didactic phase of the curriculum, students are evaluated by written exams, case presentations, graded lab work and practical exams, such as objective structured clinical examinations (OSCE). Evaluations may also be based on class participation and class presentations. It is the prerogative of the instructor to select the specific method of evaluation used in a course. Information on evaluation is found in the course syllabus. Course syllabi are provided to and reviewed with students during the first week of a course. Course syllabi detail completion deadlines and requirements related to courses. All merit courses will be graded using the scale below.

The MUSC [Grading System](#), illustrated below, is employed in all courses of the PAS curriculum. A merit grade of 2.0 or above is considered passing. *Note: Select PAS courses are graded on a Pass/Fail system. Please be advised that these courses will not contribute to a student's semester or cumulative GPA but must be passed in order to progress through the program.*

Percentage of total possible points earned in the course	Merit grade for the course that is recorded on the transcript
≥ 90%	4.0
89%	3.9
88%	3.8
87%	3.7
86%	3.6
85%	3.5
84%	3.4
83%	3.3
82%	3.2
81%	3.1
80%	3.0
79%	2.9
78%	2.8
77%	2.7
76%	2.6
75%	2.5
74%	2.4
73%	2.3
72%	2.2
71%	2.1
70%	2.0
69%	1.9
68%	1.8
67%	1.7
66%	1.6
65%	1.5
64%	1.4
63%	1.3
62%	1.2
61%	1.1
60%	1.0
<60%	0.0

Students must successfully complete all the didactic coursework and competencies of the PAS curriculum and other required experiences before progression to the clinical phase of the program.

### **Exam Policy**

### **Testing Software**

Most courses within the PAS curriculum utilize computerized testing. Prior to your first exam you will be instructed on software installation and testing procedures.

## **Testing Expectations**

- All students are required to have a privacy screen for their computer.
- Students should respect each other and reduce distractions in the room as much as possible.
- All students are expected to be seated, quiet, and ready to log in at the appointed exam start time.
  - Have all study materials packed away in preparation of exiting the room upon exam completion.
  - Bring as little into the exam room as possible; personal items other than those listed here will be kept under your table during the exam.
- No hats/hoodies/obstructive headwear will be worn during the exam.
- No food (unless medically necessary) will be on the table or eaten during the exam; all candy should be unwrapped prior to start of the exam.
- Students are allowed one drink in an enclosed container on the table.
- Anyone wanting permission to leave the exam room will request this from the proctor.
- Answering questions will be at the discretion of the proctor.
- Scratch paper, if allowed, will be provided by the proctor and will be collected at the end of the exam.
- Should your computer freeze during the upload of answers, notify the proctor.
- Prior to leaving the exam room, each student may be required to show the proctor evidence of exam upload.
- Once finished with the exam, each student should quietly collect their belongings and exit the exam room in a manner to prevent distractions.
- Students will refrain from collecting in areas near the testing room as the noise is distracting to those still taking the test.
- If needed, the proctor will post a time that students may return to the room.
- Students shall not discuss or share exam contents until all students have taken the exam.
- Students shall not discuss or share exam contents with students outside their cohort.
- Faculty will not discuss exam results until all students have taken the exam.

## **Online Exam Proctoring (as applicable)**

- Students are required to have audio and video access via Zoom (or another product if defined by the program or course director) on their phone during online exams.
- The phone will be placed in such a fashion to allow monitoring of the student, screen, keyboard, general area around computer, and any scratch paper that is allowed by the course director.
- Audio and video monitoring by the exam proctor may be recorded.

## **Time Standard**

- The NCCPA has established a standard time of one minute per multiple choice question (MCQ) on the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE).
- To help you prepare to perform within this time limit, PAS faculty have adopted one minute per MCQ as our standard.

- The minimum, average time per MCQ will decrease as shown below to prepare students to perform under these constraints.
  - Didactic courses:
    - Semester 1: 90 seconds per item
    - Semester 2: 90 seconds per item
    - Semester 3: 75 seconds per item
    - Semester 4: 75 seconds per item
  - Clinical courses:
    - Semesters 5-7: 60 seconds per item

#### **Academic Standards – Didactic Phase**

- A course Merit Grade of less than 2.0 is defined as a course failure. A grade of “Fail” in a Pass/Fail course also constitutes course failure.
- Failure of a course will result in deceleration for one year. The failed course must be repeated at MUSC in the following year along with any other courses or course audits required by the agreed upon remediation.
- Failure to earn a Merit Grade of 3.0 or higher (or a “Pass” grade in a Pass/Fail course) in the repeated course may warrant dismissal.
- Upon satisfactory completion of repeated coursework and agreed upon remediation plan, the student will be reinstated to the established curriculum in good academic standing.
- A student who passes all courses and maintains both an academic semester and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above is considered to be in good academic standing.
- A student not currently on academic probation whose semester GPA is below 3.0 in any academic semester or whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. The student will remain on academic probation until the academic semester and cumulative GPA are elevated to 3.0 or higher.
- Students who achieve the stipulated GPA requirements will be reinstated to good academic standing.
- A student may be dismissed from the program if they remain on academic probation for two consecutive semesters.
- Students failing more than one course in the PAS Program will be dismissed.

#### **Academic Standards – Clinical Phase**

- Progression into the clinical phase is contingent upon the student achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater at the conclusion of the didactic phase and demonstrating minimum competencies that will be defined in specific course syllabi throughout the didactic phase. Students who do not meet these conditions will undergo review by the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee (APPC) to establish an individualized plan for remediation prior to entry into the clinical year (see the Student Remediation section of this handbook for sample remediation plans).
- Bullets 2 through 6 under the Academic Standards – Didactic Phase, above, also apply to the clinical phase.

- Good academic standing in the clinical phase requires that all clinical rotation grades be 3.0 or higher.
- A course grade of less than 3.0 during the clinical phase constitutes failure.

**Clinical rotation evaluation methods are further discussed in the PAS Clinical Year Student Handbook.**

### **SUMMATIVE EVALUATION (ARC PA STANDARD C3.01, C3.04)**

A Summative Evaluation is required by the Accreditation Review Commission for Physician Assistant Education (ARC-PA) within the last 4 months of the program. Each student must successfully pass all components of the Summative Evaluation to be eligible for completion of the program and graduation. Students must pass all of its components to graduate. The components of the Summative Evaluation include the following.

- 1) Comprehensive Clinical Knowledge Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Exam
- 2) Clinical Stations Exam (EKG, X-ray, Lab, Procedures) Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Exam
- 3) Professionalism Exam Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Exam
- 4) Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

### **Summative Evaluation and Testing**

#### **OSCE**

Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is an evaluation of a student's communication, clinical knowledge, and professionalism skills. An OSCE is performed as a clinical situation, where each student will interact with a standardized patient, and within a specified amount of time, is expected to do the following: 1) establish rapport with a patient, 2) obtain a patient's history, 3) perform an appropriate physical exam, and 4) write an assessment and management plan. One OSCE will be required per student. The standardized patient is an actor/actress who is given a detailed script to perform for the scenario with the student. The PAS faculty will determine if the student has achieved competence in the combined learning outcomes. OSCEs are recorded for the benefit of students and faculty. A score of 75%, which is the average of the scores achieved on the physical exam (20 maximum points) and documentation (16 maximum points) portions of the OSCE, is required to pass this component of the Summative Evaluation.

#### **Comprehensive Board Style MCQ Exam**

Each student will take three multiple choice question exams: 150 question Clinical Knowledge exam, 50 question Clinical Stations exam, and 10 question Professionalism exam to evaluate the student's medical and clinical diagnostic knowledge. The exams will include clinical vignettes or scenarios of common clinical diagnoses or presentations that may include pictures of clinical findings, X rays, EKGs, lab results, or other diagnostic information, questions covering learning objectives found within the Clinical Year syllabi, and professionalism themed questions. Students are expected to understand differential diagnoses, appropriate lab/diagnostic tests, or selecting an assessment or management plan. The minimum passing grade for each exam is 75%.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND THE HONOR CODE

The Division of Physician Assistant Studies expects its students to demonstrate honesty, integrity and professionalism in all aspects of student life. Our students are ambassadors for the University and the PA profession. A commitment to these three principles of conduct is necessary to foster a positive image of the University and profession within our communities. The Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee monitors students for professional development and conduct. Any student who does not comply with these program standards of professional conduct is subject to dismissal from the program.

The program enforces the [MUSC Honor Code](#). All students are expected to review and comply with this code of conduct. (ARC-PA Standard B2.19)

## ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONALISM PROGRESS COMMITTEE (APPC)

### Introduction to MUSC PAS Program Policies

Students enrolled in the PAS program are required to comply with all policies set forth by the Medical University of South Carolina, College of Health Professions, and Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program. Links to University and College policies are available on the [Systems and Policies web page](#).

The PAS program reserves the right to impose more stringent requirements beyond the minimal provisions for the College of Health Professions as a whole. Students who fail to meet requirements pertaining to academic and/or professional standing will be placed on academic and/or professional probation, or may be dismissed. The following paragraphs describe program-defined “*academic performance and progression information*” (ARC-PA Standard A3.15a-f):

### APPC Structure

The APPC is composed of a PAS program faculty chairperson and appointed PAS core faculty.

### APPC Function

- The APPC serves to monitor academic and professional performance throughout a student’s enrollment in the MUSC PAS program.
- At the end of each semester, and as necessary, the APPC will review the academic and professional conduct records of each PAS student.
- Should a student issue arise concerning a deviation from an acceptable academic and/or professional policy, the APPC is tasked with conducting a thorough investigation.

### APPC Procedures and Actions

- Any deviation from the MUSC, College of Health Professions, or PAS Program academic and/or professional standards will be referred for review by the APPC.
- The student will be invited, via email to appear before the APPC to discuss their professional behavior and/or academic standing. A response to the read-receipt request that accompanies the email is required.



- The student will have the option of accepting or declining the APPC's invitation and must respond in writing via email to the APPC within 3 calendar days of receipt of the invitation.
- After meeting with the student (or should the student decline to meet with the APPC), the APPC will determine if further action is necessary. The APPC will present their recommended action(s) (see below), if deemed necessary, in writing, to the PAS Division Director within 3 business days.
- If a student is suspected of violating the [University Honor Code](#), the violation will be referred directly to the University Honor Council and may or may not be subject to APPC investigation.

Possible APPC Recommendations:

- A formal written warning
- Academic and/or professional probation
- Removal from academic and/or professional probation
- Deceleration
- Probationary leave
- Medical leave
- Remediation
- Referral to CAPS and or CAE
- Dismissal from the program
- Other: as determined by the APPC members

The Division Director will review the APPC's recommendation. The Division Director may seek additional information from the student or others prior to coming to a decision, which will be conveyed to the student in writing within 7 calendar days of receiving the APPC recommendation. Per MUSC and CHP policy, any student may appeal the final decision of the Division Director in writing to the Dean within **7 calendar days** of the program decision, see [Academic Review and Appeal](#) web page.

**PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES (ARC-PA STANDARD B4.02)**

A student placed on professional probation at **any time** while enrolled in the MUSC PAS program will remain on professional probation throughout their enrollment in the program. Following successful completion of clinical rotations, the APPC and/or Program Director will review the student's performance and will recommend, if indicated, to remove the student from professional probation.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the standards of an institution of higher education and are required to abide by the highest codes of academic honesty, ethical fitness and professional conduct. Students are expected to abide by the [MUSC Code of Conduct](#).

As students of the PA profession, PAS students are expected to behave according to professional expectations outlined by the American Academy of Physician Assistants in the [Guidelines for](#)

[Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession](#), the Code of Conduct for Certified and Certifying PAs from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants ([NCCPA Code of Conduct](#)), and the Physician Assistant Professional Oath:

I pledge to perform the following duties with honesty and dedication:

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

#### CHP-PAS PROGRAM REQUISITE MAINTENANCE (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.17b)

For clarification, “*requisites*” in this context means all requirements placed on PAS students relating to health insurance, health maintenance, or other items required to maintain enrollment through the PAS program. Examples include payment of tuition and fees, proof of health insurance, and proof of immunization (e.g., Hep B) and health screening (e.g., TB).

After matriculation into the PAS program, students are made aware of requisite requirements during the New Student Orientation and through review of the CHP PAS Student Policy and Procedure Handbook. Students are required to submit requisites to the PAS program and track compliance in an on-going manner. Continuous monitoring for immunization and health screening compliance is maintained by the Clinical Education Team (CET) from the time of matriculation using an automated notification system (RxPreceptor). That system will notify students of missing or expired documents. Documents must be updated prior to expiration of the original document.

Students will be notified prior to the expiration date of any requisites requiring update. Regarding items tracked by the CET, students found to have a requisite item expiring within 30 days will be notified of such by a member of the Clinical Education Team. This notification will request that the student update or replace any expiring documents. If the student has not updated the document within 14 days of expiration, a list of non-compliant students will be generated by the CET and provided to the Division Director. The Division Director will then notify students via email of their expiring requisite item(s) and remind the student of the repercussions if the item is not updated

or replaced.

**Repercussions for failure to maintain, replace, or provide a requisite item include(s):**

- One infraction will result in restriction from all MUSC University-sponsored activities (to include classroom or lab attendance, patient encounters including clinical rotations) until the expired or missing item is provided, updated, or replaced.
  - NOTE: Additional repercussions for failing to maintain requisites during the clinical year are specified in the Clinical Year Student Handbook.
- Two or more infractions will result in placement at the bottom of the selection list for clinical year rotations.
- Three or more infractions, or recurrent non-compliance with this policy, will result in referral by the Division Director to the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee (APPC) for professionalism review.

**STUDENT REMEDIATION (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.15c, A3.17d)**

Any student placed on academic or professional probation will undergo an individual remediation process, which will address their deficiencies related to course competencies or professional behavior.

**The goals of remediation are:**

- To facilitate the student's mastery of knowledge in areas in which they are academically deficient.
- To assist the student in professional development.

**Guidelines for remediation may include, but are not limited to:**

- Academic Remediation
  - **Didactic phase**
    1. Meeting with APPC to discuss deficiencies.
    2. Meeting with faculty advisor and/or Program Director.
    3. Application of remediation options as indicated:
      - a. Referral to Center for Academic Excellence (CAE).
      - b. Recommendation to participate in group, or private tutoring.
      - c. Scheduled visits with course director and/or faculty advisor.
      - d. Referral to CAPS.
      - e. Additional examination(s) to demonstrate required course competencies.
      - f. Additional assignment(s) to demonstrate required course competencies.
  - **Clinical phase**
    1. In addition to the guidelines listed for didactic phase academic remediation:
      - a. Repetition of the clinical rotation and demonstration of competency by achieving minimum required scores on End-of-Rotation exams, preceptor evaluations, professionalism, attendance and compliance, and patient

encounter reporting. The student will be placed with a preceptor who will work with the student to remediate deficiencies.

b. Removal from the clinical rotation schedule with implementation of tutoring and scheduled assessments via clinical and written examinations. This action may result in a delay in graduation.

- **Professional remediation**

- Meeting with APPC to discuss deficiencies related to professional behavior.
- Meeting with faculty advisor.
- Written assignments addressing topics concerning professionalism.
- Referral to CAE and/or CAPS.

### **STUDENT DECELERATION (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.15c)**

Student deceleration generally occurs under three circumstances which require different mechanisms to address: non-academic causes, academic causes during the didactic phase of study, and academic causes during the clinical phase of study.

#### **Non-Academic Deceleration**

A student who is unable to complete a semester or course of instruction for a reason not related to failure of a course must petition the Program Director to reenter the program at an appropriate time. Reasons for non-academic deceleration may include, but are not limited to, personal or family medical problems and student professionalism.

If the student's request for a leave of absence is granted, e.g., medical leave of absence, or if a leave of absence is recommended by the Academic and Professional Progress Committee (APPC) to enforce a professionalism-related leave of absence, the Program Director will make the final determination regarding the student's leave of absence parameters. If the absence occurs during the didactic phase, reentry will generally occur in the subsequent academic year in order to allow the student to continue successful completion of the curriculum. During a leave of absence, the student will not be eligible for student health insurance through the university or eligible for student loans related to enrollment in the PAS program.

If the absence occurs during the clinical phase, reentry may occur over a more flexible schedule, but generally will not exceed one academic year from the start of the leave period. Unlike deceleration for periods of time which exceed a semester, deceleration during the clinical phase of study may not affect the student's eligibility for student health insurance or eligibility for student loans related to enrollment in the PAS program.

#### **Academic Deceleration – Didactic Phase**

Course failure in the didactic phase of the curriculum is defined under the section **ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Academic Standards – Didactic Phase**, above. If a student were to fail a course, the APPC will meet to review the student's performance and make recommendations.

If the APPC determines the student is suitable for readmission, the student will be placed on a

leave of absence from the PAS program and invited to reintegrate with the designated cohort, generally the next incoming class, at the point in the curriculum when the failure occurred. The student will be informed that during their leave of absence they will not be eligible for student health insurance through the University or eligible for student loans related to enrollment in the PAS program. The student will ONLY be allowed to reenter once. The student must complete the program with the designated student cohort.

The student will be required to repeat for credit any course(s) in which a merit grade  $< 3.0$  was obtained. The student will also be required to demonstrate continued competence in all courses previously passed with a merit grade of  $\geq 3.0$  (in the semester in which the student failed a course) by completing all course requirements (including attendance, participation, evaluation, etc.). Failure to meet these specifications may result in dismissal from the program. Failure of any course(s) (i.e., course merit grade  $< 2.0$ ) will result in immediate dismissal from the program. If a student is dismissed from the program, s/he is not eligible to reapply.

Merit grades from all courses taken for credit are included in the student's cumulative GPA, e.g., both the merit grade of the failed course and the merit grade when the course is repeated will be included in the cumulative GPA. Merit grades from courses in which the student is required to demonstrate continued competence will not be reported on the student's transcript, nor will they affect the student's semester or cumulative GPA. Performance at an adequate level as described in the preceding paragraph will be required for continuance in the program.

As for all students on Academic Probation, the student's semester and cumulative GPA must be  $\geq 3.0$  by the end of the probational period, which may be allowed to extend to the end of the semester following the student's return.

Failure of a second course in a subsequent semester will result in dismissal from the program.

#### **Academic Deceleration – Clinical Phase**

Course failure in the clinical phase of the curriculum is defined under the section **ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Academic Standards – Clinical Phase**, above. When a student fails a course, the APPC will meet to review the student's performance and make recommendations.

If the APPC determines that the student is suitable for readmission, the student will continue onto their next scheduled rotation, typically completing all scheduled rotations before being reassigned to repeat the failed rotation. A failed rotation is designated as a failed course, therefore if the student fails an additional rotation they will be dismissed from the program. Deceleration during the clinical phase of study will result in the student graduating in a semester subsequent to the semester of graduation of the remainder of their student cohort.

#### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Attendance policy requirements are formulated by each course director and will be included in individual course syllabi.

Specific attendance requirements during supervised clinical training (i.e., rotations) are provided in the Clinical Year Student Manual.

### **DRESS CODE**

Students must remember that MUSC is a professional institution, and as such, it is expected that students display an appropriate level of judgment with regard to personal hygiene, grooming and dress. Additional requirements may be imposed in laboratory settings or patient care areas. Please avoid heavy fragrances, perfumes or colognes which may be offensive to peers and precipitate or aggravate unpleasant symptoms in patients encountered in patient care settings. The required on-campus PAS attire is either business casual or scrubs. It is required that the student display the MUSC ID badge properly (visible and above the waist) at all times while on campus.

### **FACULTY ADVISORS – STUDENT ADVISEMENT (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.15)**

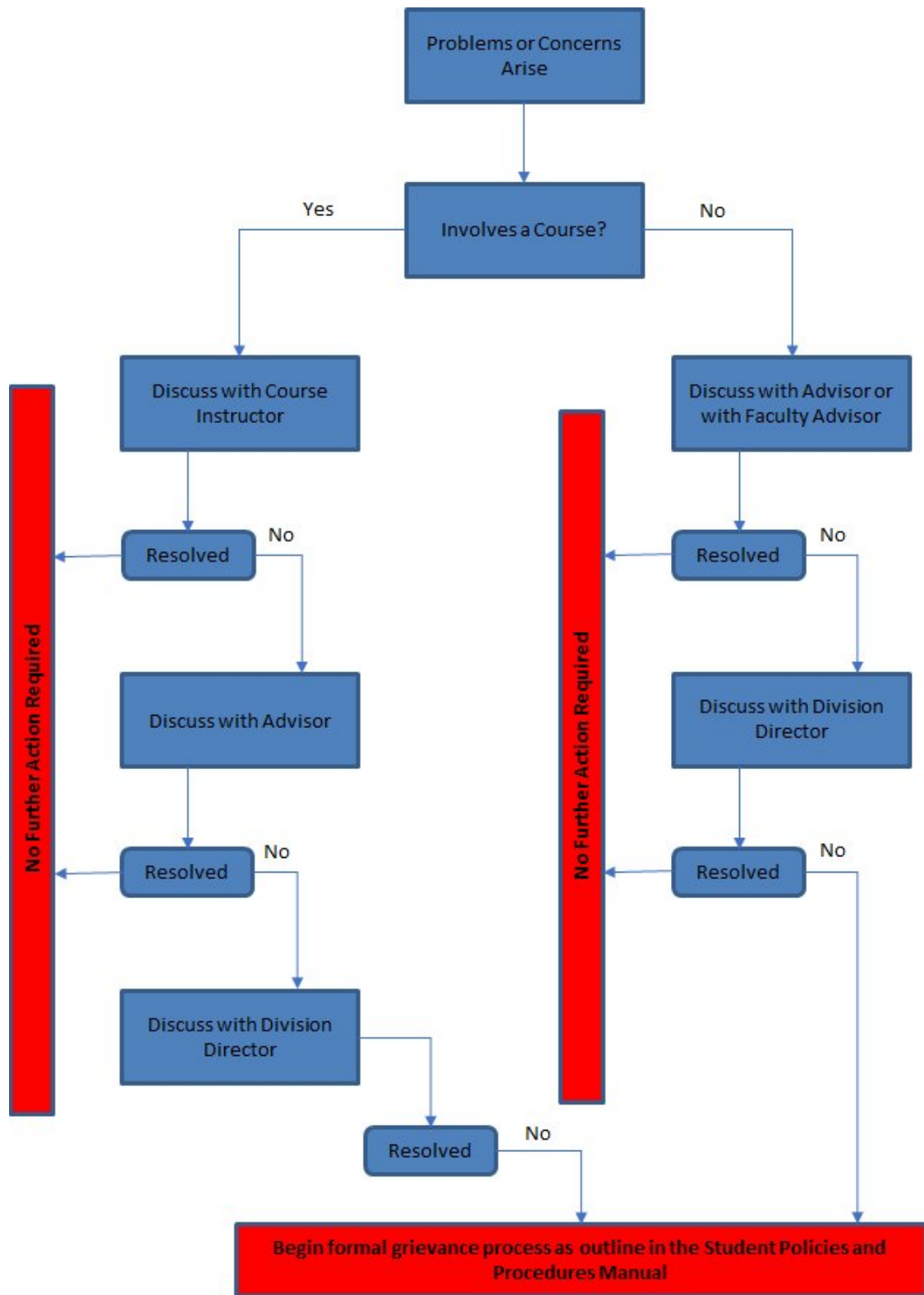
Student advisors serve as the initial point of contact for addressing grievances, allegations of harassment, or other academic, professional or personal challenges which may threaten student success.

Each student will be assigned to a faculty advisor upon entering the professional program. The faculty advisor will be available to the student throughout the 27 months of the professional program. Students are expected to meet with their advisors each semester during the didactic phase and as needed during the clinical phase of training.

Concerns regarding course work should be addressed as outlined in the Issue Resolution Flow Chart below.

### **Withdrawals and Dismissal, Allegations of Harassment Processing, and Student Grievances (ARC-PA Standard A3.15)**

Additional information concerning policies and procedures for withdrawal, and dismissals, processing allegations of harassment, student complaints and/or grievances can be found in the [CHP Student Policies & Procedures Handbook](#).



**ISSUE RESOLUTION FLOW CHART**

## STUDENT REFERRALS (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.10)

### **Center for Academic Excellence (CAE)**

In support of MUSC's mission to provide resources which facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attributes specific to chosen professions, the Center for Academic Excellence aims to cultivate knowledge and critical thinking through dialogue and collaboration. The Center is dedicated to creating an environment for learning and discovery which fosters personal growth and promotes each person's uniqueness and independence. The Center provides specialists and supplemental instructors to enhance the students' learning process and ensure academic success. In addition, individual consultants can assist students in discovering their own learning style and offer test-taking and study strategies for success in all MUSC courses. Contact information and appointment requests can be made online by visiting the [Center for Academic Excellence website](#).

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

Specialists in clinical psychology are available to support students' academic and personal development while training at MUSC. Evaluation and treatment is available to all students. Information regarding the services provided and contact information for scheduling an appointment are available online by visiting the [CAPS website](#). Confidentiality is fundamental to the services provided to students.

### **Behavioral and Support Intervention Team (BSIT)**

The BSIT is designed to reach out to students who seem to be hurting or struggling, and to help maintain a safe campus by intervening when potential red flag behaviors are identified. Reporting issues of concern can assist the BSIT in connecting students with the appropriate resources. Being a student presents a host of challenges. Sometimes those challenges can result in a student needing help in difficult times. The BSIT works with students who need assistance with issues ranging from classroom disruption to threats of self-harm or harm to others. Visit the [BSIT website](#) for more information.

### **Disability Support Services**

The Office of Disability Support Services is responsible for guaranteeing equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. For more information visit the [Disability Services for the MUSC College of Health Professions website](#).

### **Protocols for Student Exposure to Infectious Agents (ARC-PA Standard A3.08)**

An occupational exposure to blood-borne pathogens by students is a major concern to MUSC. To appropriately address any student exposures while in a clinical setting, MUSC has established protocols in accordance with OSHA's Blood borne Pathogen Standard and Center for Disease Control recommendations. In the event of exposure to potentially infectious bodily fluid, all students in a clinical setting located on- or off-campus should refer to the following MUSC protocol found on the [Blood Borne Pathogen Exposures website](#). Students on clinical rotations must also contact the PAS Clinical Coordinators (L. Woodall: 843-792-6490; M. Ewald 843-792-



4490) and follow the procedures outlined in the PAS Clinical Year Student Handbook. MUSC has established policies which apply to all students and employees in order to minimize exposure and morbidity. These policies are described at the locations described below. **If you have any questions or concerns you should immediately contact the MUSC Office of Student Health Services.**

- [Office of Student Health Services](#)
- [MUSC COVID Guidelines](#)
- [Immunization Policies and Requirements for incoming students \(and Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure Policy\)](#)
- [Infection Control Manual](#) (what to do if exposed to various infectious conditions)

### **MyQuest Training**

All MUSC students are required to complete yearly training modules found on the [MyQUEST](#) website. The training modules are administered by the MUSC CHP Office of Student Life and Recruitment. Outstanding modules to be completed are listed under 'Enrollments'.

### **Student Harassment Policy (ARC-PA Standard A3.15)**

The MUSC Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion oversees all harassment, discrimination, and retaliation complaints, including sexual harassment complaints, for the University. Please refer to the following link to access procedures for registering complaints: [OGE](#). Your academic advisor and the Program Director are also available to provide guidance regarding sexual or other forms of harassment, discrimination or retaliation.

### **MUSC Public Safety**

Public Safety is responsible for creating and assuring a safe, orderly, and secure environment. If you have immediate danger concerns or in an emergency situation. Call 911 or contact public safety at 843-792-4196. Learn more on the [MUSC Public Safety](#) website.

### **PROGRAM PROGRESSION AND COMPLETION (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.17)**

Requirements for graduation are formulated by the College of Health Professions and are strictly adhered to by the Department of Health Professions and the Division of Physician Assistant Studies. Graduation requirements are found in the [MUSC Bulletin](#) and on the [CHP Graduation Requirements](#) web page. The MUSC PAS Program Graduation Audit Check-List itemizes graduation requirements (see below).

## MUSC PAS GRADUATION CHECK-LIST

The following check-list will be used by the MUSC Division of Physician Assistant Studies faculty and staff to certify that graduate candidates have met all requirements for graduation:

- Has satisfied all course requirements with a grade of 2.0, or higher

**Academic Coordinator Initials and date**\_\_\_\_\_

- Has achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0, or higher

**Academic Coordinator Initials and date**\_\_\_\_\_

- Is in good professional standing

**Medical Director Initials and date**\_\_\_\_\_

- Successfully passed all aspects of the summative evaluation as defined by the academic program and the Clinical Year Handbook

**Clinical Coordinator for Evaluation Initials and date** \_\_\_\_\_

- Satisfied all financial obligations to MUSC; and participated in a financial aid exit interview (if applicable)

**Student Services Coordinator Initials and date**\_\_\_\_\_

- Has met institution and program health screening and immunization requirements and maintained health insurance throughout the program;

**Clinical Education Manager Initials and date**\_\_\_\_\_

- Recommended for graduation by the program faculty;

**Division Director Initials and date**\_\_\_\_\_

## ADDITIONAL MUSC AND PAS POLICIES

### Social Media Guidelines

Visit the [MUSC social media](#) website for more details. The following are additional PAS policies.

#### 1. Maintain a proper PA student/patient relationship.

Do not interact with current or previous patients on social networking sites. Any on-line interaction with a patient or caregiver must be limited to follow-up and/or answering their questions.

#### 2. Do not “friend” a patient.

“Friending” bears the risk of clouding the patient-PA relationship. In addition, it allows a patient to have access to your personal life, which may have a negative impact on the trust they have in you as a healthcare provider. Remember you are highly respected and trusted by the public and you should seek to “do no harm.”

#### 3. Do not “friend” a member of the faculty or a clinical preceptor.

“Friending” a preceptor bears the risk of clouding the preceptor-student relationship. Your preceptor is not your friend, and the relationship should be strictly professional in nature. Wait until after graduation to become social with a past member of the faculty or preceptor.

#### 4. Do not make comments about patients.

Do not comment in any way about a patient or their caregivers on a social media site or post photos involving these persons. Even without using their name or photo, a coworker or someone who knows the patient may still realize who you are referring to and report your activity. Items posted online cannot be removed permanently, even should you delete them after the fact. Website administrators can retrieve previously deleted activity, which can be used during legal proceedings.

#### 5. Ensure you follow MUSC’s social media guidelines, which are as follows:

MUSC is an advocate for new methods of electronic communication and social networking. However, we are aware that electronic communication and social networking open the door for possible serious ramifications related to issues such as professionalism and confidentiality. Content owners are responsible for posting and using content in accordance with MUSC values, the MUSC codes, HIPAA, and other existing communications, privacy and conflict of interest, and information security policies and procedures. Consider the following guidelines when participating in electronic communications:

- a. **Transparency: Be transparent about your identity and relationship to MUSC.**
  - Identify yourself as an MUSC student only when appropriate (e.g. discussing professional matters).
  - Provide an appropriate disclaimer that helps distinguish your views from those of MUSC.
  - While there might be reasons to register using your MUSC email address, consider changing to your personal email address to avoid the misperception that your views represent the views of MUSC.
- b. **Judgement: Be thoughtful about how you present yourself. Anything you post can have immediate and/or long-term consequences.**

- You can be sued for libel or slander.
  - Membership in some groups may reflect negatively on you.
  - Companies may use information you post in advertising or for other marketing purposes.
  - Be conscious of potentially inappropriate images being posted of you.
  - Be thoughtful of the content of your wall posts and status updates.
- c. Professionalism: Adhere to professional standards of conduct, including compliance with all applicable MUSC and Medical Center policies.**
- Off-campus and off-duty, you still represent MUSC and your profession.
  - Patients, families, faculty, future employers, and the media routinely monitor sites.
  - Maintain professional boundaries with patients and their families.
  - Do not post anything about a patient (de-identified or not).
  - Obtain written consent before posting copyrighted material.
  - Social networking should not interfere with your professional duties or academic obligations.
- d. Personal Privacy & Safety: Be aware of risks to your privacy and safety.**
- Read the site's Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.
  - Restrict access to your personal information and remember to update your privacy settings periodically.
  - Many social networking sites and mobile applications “talk” to each other. Be aware of how your activity online may update your social networking profile.
  - Consider maximum privacy settings at least initially and beware sites often change their policies without notifying you.
  - Privacy controls are not fool-proof and technology flaws exist.
  - Scams and identity theft exist so do not post detailed personal information.
  - Report any threat of violence to the appropriate authorities.
- e. Computer Security: Be aware of computer security risks. Social networking sites are frequently targeted by cyber criminals.**
- Do not use any University or Medical Center computer that handles sensitive data or supports critical functions to access social networking websites or personal e-mail accounts without permission.
  - Never use your MUSC password on personal e-mail accounts or social networking sites.
  - Do not assume your data will always be secure. Your data is only as secure as your username and password and how this information is stored.

### **MUSC Social Media Guidelines and FERPA**

Please be aware that protected confidential student and/or patient information may not be shared or posted. All comments, photos, or other information shared via social media platforms should remain appropriate and professional and should in no way infringe upon regulations as stated in FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. For more information visit the [US Department of Education's FERPA](#) website.

### **Student Employment** (ARC-PA Standard A3.04, A3.05, A3.15)

As stated in the ARC-PA Standards, students must be informed about “*policies about student employment while enrolled in the program*” (Standard A3.15e). Standard A3.04 states that “*PA students must not be required to work for the program*”. The PAS program does not permit PAS students to work for the program at any time while a student. This includes as instructional faculty (ARC-PA Standard A3.05) or as “*clinical or administrative staff*” i.e., while on clinical rotations (ARC-PA Standard A3.05). Some students may be offered employment as a tutor through the MUSC Center for Academic Excellence, which is not considered to be employment by the PAS program.

Experience has shown that most students are unable to give an adequate effort to the program if they continue employment. We discourage all students from seeking employment while enrolled in the program. If employment is essential, then the PAS Division Director should be informed in writing of the student’s work schedule. Class meetings missed due to work schedules will be considered unexcused absences.

### **Title, Identification, and Representation** (ARC-PA Standard A3.06)

An official MUSC name badge with the student’s name and photograph must be worn at all times on campus or during educational activities and completely visible to others. Role and title confusion are common problems encountered in dealing with patients, e.g., some patients identify all those wearing white coats as physicians. Students should be aware of this problem and avoid misrepresentation by politely explaining their role and position. In professional interactions with patients and others, a student must introduce himself/herself as a “physician assistant student” using the title of Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss. Students must use the designation “Physician Assistant – Student” following all notations in charts, records and other medical forms. The abbreviation “PA-S” is less familiar and should be avoided to prevent confusion as to title. In all professional communications, a student should introduce himself/herself as a physician assistant student. No student should casually accept the title of “doctor”.

### **Patient’s Rights and Confidentiality of Medical Records and Health History Information**

All data gathered about a patient and his or her illness, including all items within a patient's medical history, is privileged information. All students are required to be fully informed concerning the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), and to have successfully completed HIPPA training prior to engaging in patient interactions. MUSC’s HIPPA regulations may be reviewed on the [MUSC Bulletin](#) website.

- Students must never discuss a patient's records in a manner or situation that would reveal any information about that patient or his or her records to persons not involved in the patient's health care.
- Charts or contents, e.g., lab reports, etc., are not to be removed from the hospital or clinical setting. If photocopies of written documentation are to be submitted to the program for evaluation, all specific references to the patient (e.g., name, address, and identification number) must be deleted.
- Reference, at any time, to a patient in a dehumanizing or insensitive manner is not

professional and will not be tolerated. The APPC will review such an infraction.

### **Student-Faculty Research Teams**

Graduate students and faculty are encouraged to disseminate the findings from their research through presentations at local, state, and national meetings or via publication or the MUSC Student Research Day. The projects are considered as joint student-faculty effort. All papers or presentations will include all members as authors.

### **Clinical Year Requests**

As stated in (ARC-PA Standard A3.03), *“Students must not be required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors”*.

Students may make requests to the Clinical Coordinator for placement at specific clinical education sites in the areas of women's health/OB-GYN, pediatrics, and psychiatry. These are sites which are not already developed (i.e., sites that do not have an active contractual agreement with the PAS program). These sites must be within the state of South Carolina (exceptions MAY be made at the discretion of the Clinical Coordinator.). If a student is unsure about a site, it may be submitted for review and possible approval. Students are NOT required to do this and are prohibited from "cold calling" or reaching out to sites without prior notification.

These requests are made during the fall semester of the didactic phase of the program. The Clinical Coordinator will announce the deadline and process for these requests. Requests submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. The preceptor must be a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner. Written requests do not automatically guarantee that the site will be approved for the student. These are only requests until the Clinical Coordinator confirms the clinical and educational adequacy of the site.

### **International Placements**

International rotations are possible for elective and ACE rotations only, but prior approval must be obtained from the Clinical Coordinator. These rotations are subject to availability and international health conditions / travel advisories. If approved by the Clinical Coordinator, the student must visit the MUSC Center for Global Health to begin appropriate paperwork and University-level approval. If the MUSC Center for Global Health determines that the location you are proposing to travel to is “unsafe” (for any reason) there will be no further discussion of this rotation. Students are permitted to complete international rotations only after Rotation II. No more than one international rotation will be permitted. Rotation site availability is limited based on the hosting organization and demand may outweigh number of available openings. The Clinical Coordinator reserves the right to determine final permission for all international rotations, regardless of preliminary approval. The Program Director may also provide input on these decisions, when necessary. Further information regarding international rotations will be announced at a later time. *Please refer to the MUSC PAS Clinical Year Handbook for more detailed information related to this topic.*

During the clinical year, students are commonly placed in areas where they have indicated that

they have permanent housing available. **The program is not required to provide housing to the student during the clinical year.** Although housing is not guaranteed, there may be housing available throughout the state at no cost to the student through the SC Area Health Education Consortium (AHEC). Housing is not provided for out-of-state or international sites, and students will be expected to make their own arrangements for housing for out-of-state or international placements during the clinical year.

The Clinical Coordinator will attempt to meet with all students prior to the clinical year, to determine each student's clinical year interests and career goals. A separate housing survey (collected during the didactic phase of study) will also collect information on housing availability for each student during their respective clinical year. Students are strongly encouraged to make an appointment to meet with the Clinical Coordinator regarding concerns if such concerns exist after the meeting and survey are complete. Appointments may be made by contacting the Clinical Coordinator.

Further information regarding the clinical year will be included in the Clinical Year Handbook, which will be provided to students during the Clinical Year Orientation.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

MUSC provides professional liability insurance through the South Carolina Insurance Reserve Fund (IRF) to MUSC/MUHA pharmacists, medical students, students/instructors, nurse midwives, physicians assistants, nurse practitioners, residents and physicians who are listed on the MUSC/MUHA payroll and who are acting on behalf of or within his/her job scope at MUSC/MUHA.

Please contact Megan Cleary-Faber at [843-792-4463](tel:843-792-4463) or Felicia Enoch at [843-792-2408](tel:843-792-2408) if you need verification of your professional liability coverage. Please contact Jennifer Taylor, Insurance Programs Manager at [843-792-0757](tel:843-792-0757) with any questions regarding insurance coverage or your responsibility for maintaining coverage. Please contact Christel All, Professional Liability Manager and University Clinical Risk Manager at [843-876-8289](tel:843-876-8289) with any concerns about risk issues or to report occurrences. You may learn more about professional liability insurance by visiting the [Office of Insurance Programs website](#).

### **Principal Faculty Serving as Health Care Providers for PA Students (ARC-PA Standard A3.09)**

The ARC-PA Standards state that the "...*principal faculty*, the Program Director and the Medical Director *must* not participate as health care providers for students in the program, except in an emergency situation."

### **Major Medical Health Insurance**

Each student must be covered by major medical health insurance for the entire period he or she is enrolled in the PAS program. Proof of insurance must be provided to Student Health Services and also must be available to the PAS faculty and staff if requested. Students will be automatically enrolled in the University insurance plan and billed. To opt out of the insurance, the student must provide proof of insurance each semester to Student Health Services.

### **Student Health Record Access (ARC-PA Standard B3.19)**

Please note that the program does not maintain student health records “*except for immunization and screening results*” as specified in the ARC-PA Standards. Your health records are confidential and available to you through [Student Health](#). Immunization and tuberculosis screening results are maintained confidentially by the Department of Health Professions Clinical Education Team.

### **Access to Confidential Information (ARC-PA Standard A3.18)**

The ARC-PA Standards expressly state that “*PA students... must not have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty.*” (ARC-PA Standard A3.18) In order to meet this standard, all student records are maintained confidentially in a locked room and within locked file cabinets. Students may be given access to their own records on request to the Program Director, however under no circumstances will they be given access to records of other students or faculty. Faculty offices are kept locked when faculty are not physically present in order to secure any confidential information held there. Faculty records are securely maintained outside of the program suite.

### **TECHNICAL STANDARDS/DISABILITY (ARC-PA STANDARD A3.13)**

The University and PAS Division both publish the minimum abilities needed by all students. While admission decisions do not take disabilities into consideration, nor are applicants invited to disclose a disability, all persons interested in entering a health profession education program should be aware of minimum abilities required for success. Visit the [MUSC Minimum Abilities](#) website for more information. The PAS Minimum Skills (Technical Standards) are detailed below.

Upon admission, a student who discloses a disability (with certification) is assured of reasonable accommodations. PAS students seeking accommodations should initiate their request to the [Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#). If a change in health status occurs which has potential to affect a student’s ability to perform according to the technical standards, the student should contact the Student Services Coordinator. If necessary, a faculty committee will be appointed by the Program Director to assess the student’s ability to remain in the program.

### **Minimum Skills for Eligibility to Participate in Educational Programs & Activities**

PAS applicants, and students, either independently or with the help of compensatory techniques and assistive devices, must possess the following skills:

- **Observation:** Observe materials presented in the learning environment including audiovisual presentations in lectures and laboratories, microscopic examination of microorganisms, gross organs and tissues in normal and pathologic states. Observe patients, both at a distance and closely. This ability requires functional vision, hearing and somatic sensation.
- **Communication:** Elicit information from patients, including the ability to speak, hear and observe patients and perceive nonverbal communications. Describe changes in mood, activity and posture. Communicate with patients and their families and the health care



team through oral, written, and electronic forms. Convey sensitivity and respect in all communications with patients and their families as well as all members of the health care team.

- **Motor:** Elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other components of the physical examination. Execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Such skills require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and sensation. Manipulate equipment and instruments to perform basic laboratory tests and medical procedures required to attain curricular goals (e.g. needles, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, tongue blades, intravenous equipment, gynecologic speculum, and scalpel).
- **Laptop/Computer Requirements:** Ability to complete computer-based assignments, and use the computer for searching, recording, storing, and retrieving information. Ability to complete assessment examinations via computer-based software.
- **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** Apply knowledge and reasoning to solve problems as outlined by the curriculum. Comprehend three dimensional relationships and the spatial relationships of structures. Collect, organize, prioritize, analyze and assimilate large amounts of technically detailed and complex information within a limited time frame. This information will be presented in a variety of educational settings, including lectures, small group discussions, and individual clinical settings. The candidate should be able to analyze, integrate, and apply this information appropriately for problem solving and decision-making.
- **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** Use intellectual ability, exercise good judgment, and complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients. Develop appropriate professional relationships with patients and colleagues. Tolerate physical, mental, and emotional stress in training and patient care. Adaptable, flexible and able to function in the face of uncertainty within the healthcare team. Display a high level of compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity, and a consciousness of social values. Possess sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems. Accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior.

If you have any questions about whether you meet the standards as described above, please contact the [MUSC Office of EEO and University Accessibility Services](#).

### **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Requirement**

The skills of Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) are essential for PAS students to possess. This requirement is also a stipulation of student credentialing at most of the clinical rotation sites throughout the state. All students must be certified prior to the clinical year and must maintain certification throughout the clinical year. BLS and ACLS training will be provided by the PAS program at no additional cost to the student. If the student elects to obtain BLS or ACLS certification through a training center outside the PAS program, the costs associated will be the responsibility of the student.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

To ensure the success of the program and the provision of the highest quality education, the evaluation of both the process and the outcomes of the academic program must be regularly and systematically conducted. The desired outcome of the program is to graduate students who have successfully met, or exceeded, all academic and professional requirements.

It is a requirement of the Medical University and the College of Health Professions that each student completes an on-line evaluation of each course and instructor. Details are provided within course syllabi.

Furthermore, graduating students are required to participate in a college-mandated exit interview, complete a college-mandated exit survey, and complete additional end-of-program surveys.

The MUSC PAS program also strongly encourages graduates to complete an assessment survey that will be administered one year after graduation. This information is used for program improvement and is essential for reporting and accreditation purposes.

## CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

The national certification examination is a computerized examination managed by the National Commission for Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Passing this entry-level examination entitles the successful candidate to use the initials PA-C (Physician Assistant, Certified).

### [National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants](#)

12000 Findley Road, Suite 100  
John's Creek, GA 30097-1409  
P: 678-417-8100  
[F: 678.417.8135](tel:678.417.8135)  
[nccpa@nccpa.net](mailto:nccpa@nccpa.net)

## LICENSURE

Upon graduation, it is the student's responsibility to determine the licensure laws for the state in which they choose to practice. In South Carolina information about obtaining a license can be received by writing to:

### [SC Board of Medical Examiners](#)

Attn: Physician Assistant Licensing Board  
Synergy Business Park  
Kingstree Building  
110 Centerview Drive, Suite 202  
Columbia, SC 29210

### Other Contact Information:

Phone: (803) 896-4500  
Fax: (803) 896-4515

### **Conduct for Treatment of Trainees**

MUSC strives to impart the values of professional and collegial attitudes and behaviors in interactions among members of the University community. MUSC prohibits attitudes and behaviors toward students that are unfavorable to the development of mutual respect. Policies may be found at the [MUSC Office of Compliance website](#) .

### **International Travel Requirements**

In order to participate in any international travel that involves any medical activities (missions, rotations, etc.), students must follow policies outlined on the [MUSC International Travel](#) website. Failure to do so may result in the inability to participate in international travel and/or disciplinary actions.

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

### **The Dean's Award**

Graduate students who have achieved the highest academic record at the end of the curriculum with a cumulative GPA of 3.8 or above, will be nominated for the Dean's Award and one will be selected by the Dean.

### **Outstanding Student Award**

Each year the Division of Physician Assistant Studies awards the Outstanding Student Award to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding attributes throughout their tenure in the program. Fellow classmates and faculty choose the recipient at the end of the senior summer semester. The following procedures are used:

- All graduating students and program faculty will vote for one person for outstanding student, votes will be tallied, and the winner will receive the award at the graduation ceremony.
- If the elected student is not eligible for graduation with the remainder of the class cohort, the award will go to the runner-up.

### **Outstanding Student Award Selection Criteria**

1. Professional – Demonstrates the ability to act as a member of the health care team and be involved in the advancement of the PA profession.
2. Empathetic – Demonstrates the ability to work well with others recognizing individual needs.
3. Preserving – Demonstrates the ability to set lasting goals and utilize initiative.
4. Responsible – Demonstrates dependability and the ability to assume responsibility for own actions.
5. Independent – Demonstrates the ability to be sincere, helpful, and patient.
6. Leadership – Demonstrates willingness to be involved in student and/or professional activities.
7. Initiative – Demonstrates the ability to be resourceful and self-directed.
8. Constructive – Demonstrates a positive attitude and the ability to be creative.
9. Inquisitive – Demonstrates the ability to question for patients' welfare and for self-

improvement.

10. Organized – Demonstrates the ability to be logical and systematically functional.

**STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**Medical University of South Carolina  
College of Health Professions  
Division of Physician Assistant Studies**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed full name), have read the Student Policies and Procedures Manual for the Division of Physician Assistant Studies in its entirety and understand all sections. I have asked my student services coordinator, faculty advisor or Division Director to explain any sections that I had difficulty understanding. I understand that I am responsible for following all the provisions set forth by this manual while I am enrolled in the program. I recognize that these policies are provided to support my professional and clinical development and help me become a successful physician assistant.

I also signify that I have read and understand the following documents and hereby pledge my support.

- MUSC Honor Code
- MUSC Bulletin
- College of Health Professions Student Policy Manual
- PAS Student Policies and Procedures Manual

I understand what is expected of me as a student of the Medical University of South Carolina and realize the University Honor Council will not accept a plea of ignorance.

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Student Signature

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Date

## **PAS STUDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE HANDBOOK UPDATES**

Revised May 2, 2017

Updated September 5, 2017: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES

Updated September 5, 2017: Time Standard

Updated November 29, 2017: Advanced Placement

Updated December 29, 2017: (hsm)

Updated January 11, 2018: Deceleration

Updated July 16, 2018: Requisite Policy

Updated August 1, 2018: Student Accommodations

Updated December 17, 2018: Testing Time Standard

Updated April 2019: APPC annual document review

Updated April 2020: APPC annual document review