



University of
Pittsburgh

School of Health and
Rehabilitation Sciences

**Physician Assistant Studies
Class of 2021
Student Handbook**

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Introduction

Welcome to the University of Pittsburgh Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program.

This handbook includes policies and procedures detailing our responsibilities to you and your responsibilities to the program and the PA profession. These policies and procedures will remain in effect for the duration of your time as a student in the PA Studies Program.

This Handbook is reviewed annually (last was August 31, 2020) and is published by the University of Pittsburgh PA Studies Program. The program reserves the right to revise its contents at any time, and any changes will apply to all current students. The faculty reserves the right to revise the curriculum and the schedule of required courses. You are responsible for reading and understanding the content within this handbook. If you have any questions or concerns about the content, you are genuinely welcome to discuss the matter with the Program Director.

This handbook supplements the current School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) Graduate Student Handbook (<https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/current-students/student-handbooks>) and the University of Pittsburgh Graduate and Professional Studies Catalog for the Pittsburgh Campus (<https://catalog.upp.pitt.edu/index.php>).

On behalf of the PA Studies faculty and staff, please accept our best wishes for your success as a student and future colleague.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emily Murphy". The signature is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Emily Murphy MPAS, PA-C, DFAAPA

Director, Physician Assistant Studies Program

Assistant Professor and Vice Chair for Academic and Administrative Affairs, Department of Physician Assistant Studies

University of Pittsburgh Mission

The University of Pittsburgh, founded in 1787, is one of the oldest institutions of higher education in the United States. As one of the nation's distinguished comprehensive universities, the resources of the University constitute an invaluable asset for the intellectual, economic, and social enrichment of Pennsylvania, while the international prestige of the University enhances the image of Pennsylvania throughout the world.

The University's mission is to:

- Provide high-quality undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences and professional fields, with emphasis upon those of special benefit to the citizens of Pennsylvania;
- Offer superior graduate programs in the arts and sciences and the professions that respond to the needs of Pennsylvania, as well as to the broader needs of the nation and the world;
- Engage in research, artistic, and scholarly activities that advance learning through the extension of the frontiers of knowledge and creative endeavor;
- Cooperate with industrial and governmental institutions to transfer knowledge in science, technology, and health care;
- Offer continuing education programs adapted to the personal enrichment, professional upgrading, and career advancement interest and needs of adult Pennsylvanians; and
- Make available to local communities and public agencies the expertise of the University in ways that are consistent with the primary teaching and research functions and contribute to social, intellectual, and economic development in the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

The trustees, faculty, staff, students, and administration of the University are dedicated to accomplishing this mission to which they pledge their individual and collective efforts, determined that the University shall continue to be counted among the prominent institutions of higher education throughout the world.

This mission statement was approved by the University's Board of Trustees on February 16, 1995 and is unchanged to date.

Program Mission

The mission of the Physician Assistant Program is to develop highly qualified Physician Assistants who will serve as collaborative leaders in patient care, professional service, and advocacy for all populations.

Program Vision

The vision for PA Studies at the University of Pittsburgh is to develop the next generation of leaders who will advance health care and the Physician Assistant profession through our nationally-recognized and academically-rigorous educational and research efforts.

Program History and Plan of Study

The PA Studies Program is housed within the Department of Physician Assistant Studies in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) of the University of Pittsburgh. SHRS is one of the six Schools of the Health Sciences of the University of Pittsburgh. All of the above are committed to your education so you will acquire the academic and technical skills required to become outstanding PAs.

The program received “Accreditation – Provisional” status from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) in Fall 2009, and the first class was admitted in January of 2010. In March 2012, the program accreditation status was changed to “Accreditation – Continued,” and in March 2018 this was extended through March 2028. The goals and objectives of the program are guided by the criteria set forth in the *Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education* established by the ARC-PA.

The program follows a rigorous, 24-month curriculum, with all graduates receiving a Master of Science degree. The didactic and clinical phases of curriculum are designed to enable the student to acquire proficiency in the competencies of the physician assistant profession. The didactic phase of our curriculum provides a 12-month comprehensive background in the basic and medical sciences which includes courses in human anatomy, medical physiology, pathophysiology, and genetics. Clinical coursework includes: history taking and physical examination, clinical medicine, pharmacology, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures used in medicine, and patient education and counseling. Course content is presented through traditional lecture, integrated instruction, case discussions and hands on skills labs. The curriculum is presented by practicing medical and surgical physician assistants, physicians and other health care providers who have the expertise in their respective specialty. The rigor of the 12-month clinical phase of the program matches the intensity of the didactic curriculum and is strengthened by the relationship that exists between the university and UPMC, the academic health center. The clinical year includes experiences in family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, women’s health, emergency medicine, general surgery, and behavioral health. Each student is also given the opportunity to choose two electives in one or two medical or surgical specialty areas.

Student Professional Standards

The Class of 2011, the inaugural class of our program, established the following standards for themselves and future students:

“We, as students of the University of Pittsburgh Physician Assistant Studies Program and as professionals, vow:

To act as strong advocates for our patients’ well-being while empowering them with the knowledge to better manage their health.

To uphold the integrity of the University and Physician Assistant profession with our conduct and ethical approach to medical decision making.

To deliver healthcare services without regard to sex, age, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socio-economic and political status.

To demonstrate professionalism in the academic and clinical setting.

To practice empathy and compassion with patients and their families.

To encourage partnership among students, educators, patients, healthcare community.

To build a foundation based on the principles of beneficence, respect for autonomy, nonmaleficence, and justice.

To ensure integrated, well managed, and effective care of our patients.

To dedicate ourselves to lifelong learning in order to provide quality evidence-based patient care.

To promote the profession by engaging with the community, strengthening interprofessional relations and instilling patient trust.

To pursue leadership roles not only in our own profession, but in all aspect of medicine and society.

When faced with a challenge we will not stray from our virtues nor partake in any activity that will bring discredit or dishonor to ourselves, the University, or the profession.

We commit to embody these core values that will be upheld throughout our professional careers.”

Physician Assistant Student Society (PASS)

The purpose of the PA Student Society shall be:

1. To serve as the certified organization for the students of the University of Pittsburgh Physician Assistant Studies program.
2. To promote academic achievement and clinical excellence within the Program
3. To guide the incoming class in becoming successful students, community members and clinicians
4. To aid the faculty with continuing development of the Program through feedback and open communication
5. To serve the Pittsburgh community through volunteer activities and involvement
6. To promote the physician assistant as a member of the health care delivery team at the local, national, and international levels.

The students elect officers each February to fill the following positions:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Social Media and Web Chairs (2)
- Interprofessional Affairs/Primary Care Progress Chairs (2)
- Diversity Chair
- Service Chair
- Fundraising Chair

The internal and external responsibilities of each office position are outlined in the constitution of the society.

Program Technical Standards

Technical standards refer to the physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of curriculum. These essential abilities include motor, sensory, communicative, intellectual, behavioral, and social criteria. These are common among PA programs. All candidates must possess the necessary intellectual ability and skills in observation, communication, motor, and behavior to enter and successfully complete the program. These standards are adopted from the report of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) (1979) Special Advisory Panel on Technical Standards for Medical School Admissions, the *Professional Development Conference for Medical School Admissions Officers* (AAMC, 2007), and “Developing Educationally Effective and Legally Sound Access and Diversity Policies” (Yell, Plotner, & Shriner, 2013).

Program graduates must acquire the competencies which cover a broad knowledge base in the biomedical, clinical, and behavioral sciences, as well as the skills essential to practice in a primary care setting. Students must possess the physical and mental potential for becoming trained PAs. Graduates must have the knowledge, skills, and ability to function in a variety of clinical settings in order to provide quality patient care.

Observation

- Candidates must be able to observe visual presentations in the classroom, laboratory, and patient bedside.
- Candidates must be able to observe patients closely and at a distance to observe the patient’s condition and complete a patient exam.
- Candidates must be able to immediately comprehend and respond to auditory instructions or requests.

Communication

- Candidates must be able to speak, hear and observe patients to obtain pertinent information.
- Candidates must be able to communicate in a clear and effective manner with patients and their families both orally and in writing, using appropriate grammar, spelling, and vocabulary.
- Candidates must possess the skills of sensitivity and confidentiality in patient communication. They must abide by the HIPAA policy.
- Candidates must be able to communicate with the health care team effectively and efficiently.

Motor Skills

- Candidates must be able to elicit information on patient exam by palpation, auscultation, and percussion as well as carry out diagnostic maneuvers.
- Candidates must be able to examine and treat patients with coordination of muscular movements, equilibrium, and sensation.
- Candidates must be able to manipulate equipment and instruments for basic laboratory tests and procedures such as airway management, suturing, needle placement & IV, stethoscope & ophthalmoscope, tongue blades, gynecologic speculum and scalpel.
- Candidates must be able to transport themselves from room to room and location to location in an efficient manner to see patients.
- Candidates must have the physical stamina to complete both the didactic and clinical portions of the training program which includes sitting, standing, and moving from classroom to laboratory to hospital.

Intellectual Ability

- Candidates must possess problem solving ability, a skill demanded of physician assistants.
- Candidates must be able to collect, measure, organize, prioritize, analyze and assimilate data in a limited time frame. Information presented in lecture must be successfully applied in the clinical setting by the candidate.
- Candidates must be able to read and understand the medical literature and use this knowledge in problem solving and patient care.

Behavior

- Candidates must be able to use their intellectual ability and exercise good judgment in completing their responsibilities for the diagnosis and treatment of patients.
- Candidates must have the capacity to respond to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner.
- Candidates must be able to develop rapport with patients and their families and their colleagues.
- Candidates must be able to handle the physical, mental and emotional stress while functioning effectively.

- Candidates must demonstrate compassion, motivation, integrity, flexibility and a consciousness of social values.
- Candidates must be willing and able to effectively interact with a diverse population.
- Candidates must be able to accept criticism and modify behavior and practice as needed.
- Candidates must work cooperatively preserving relationships with other members of the health care team.
- Candidates must understand and apply ethical standards in practice.
- Candidates must demonstrate resilience at a level necessary to deliver sound patient care in all settings and to interact with interdisciplinary health care teams.

Competencies for Entry Level Practice

Organized below by domain and consistent with the [*Core Competencies for New Physician Assistant Graduates*](#) established by the Physician Assistant Education Association, at the completion of the PA Studies Program, graduates are able to:

Patient-Centered Practice Knowledge

Competency 1: Gather clinical information, formulate differential diagnoses, order and interpret laboratory and imaging, perform necessary core duty procedures, and diagnose, prevent, treat and manage illness among acute, chronic, and emerging disease states

Competency 2: Integrate into practice appropriate literature to make evidence-based decisions on patient care

Society and Population Health

Competency 3: Integrate into practice the cultural norms, needs, influences, and socioeconomic, environmental, physiological and other population-level determinants affecting the health of the individual and community being served

Competency 4: Integrate into practice the interventions that diminish health disparities involving race or ethnicity, sex, sexual identity, age, disability, socioeconomic status, and geographic location involving the individual patient and the community being served

Competency 5: Integrate into practice basic principles of public health including epidemiology, disease prevention, surveillance, reporting and intervention. Provide appropriate referrals involving the public health system to ensure patient advocacy and in the maintenance of population health

Health Literacy and Communication

Competency 6: Communicate effectively and respectfully with patients, families, and other health care professionals

Interprofessional Collaborative Practice and Leadership

Competency 7: Coordinate care to optimize the health of patients and populations.

Professional and Legal Aspects of Health Care

Competency 8: Provide standard-of-care practice while demonstrating respect for the dignity and privacy of patients

Competency 9: Incorporate a personal wellness plan to prevent impairment and burnout

Competency 10: Demonstrate professional accountability

Health Care Finance and Systems

Competency 11: Differentiate the types of health care systems and health insurance coverage, including Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Competency 12: Practice health care informed by an understanding of the financial implications to patients, organizations, and society.

Competency 13: Recognize personal limitations and incorporate a quality improvement process designed to maximize patient safety, prevention of medical errors, and incorporation of risk management.

Didactic Year

Course & Lecture Objectives: Students are responsible for all course learning outcomes/individual lecture objectives and in class material. Students are required to complete the assigned readings when listed so that in class time is most productive. Case-based learning is used throughout the curriculum as a means of facilitating the attributes and skills essential to clinical decision-making and lifelong learning.

Academic Advising

Students are randomly assigned to an academic advisor upon admission to the program. Students must meet with their advisor at least once per term. It is the student's responsibility to meet with their advisor at the first sign of any academic difficulty or if there are any issues that may be interfering with academic or professional performance. Referrals to other instructional or support services, either internal or external to the university, may be advised.

Program principal faculty (those who do not hold "adjunct" status in their title, the Program Director and the Medical Director do not participate as health care providers for students in the program. Students are prohibited from consulting or asking for medical advice from principal faculty, adjunct faculty, guest lecturers, Program Director, or Medical Director. All students are and will be referred to student health on main campus or to their primary care provider.

Program Evaluations and Surveys

The program encourages each student to complete all course surveys, instructor surveys, and program surveys. The PA Studies program also asks that all students complete a survey for selected guest instructors. The ARC-PA also requires that each program survey their students regarding faculty and courses for ongoing accreditation purposes. This is a responsibility that should be taken seriously. Constructive suggestions are beneficial and aid the faculty in designing course materials for successful student learning.

General Program Policies

- As a member of the University of Pittsburgh Community, you are responsible for all University, SHRS, and PA Program Studies requirements and policies.
- This handbook outlines specific policies and procedures that deal with the expectations and professional conduct of our graduate PA students.
- Program policies, guidelines, and expectations may be modified or implemented at any time. Students will be provided with advanced notice of any changes, when possible prior to their implementation.
- These policies apply to all courses offered by the Physician Assistant Program, and will not necessarily be restated in each individual class syllabus.

1.0 Attendance Policy

The PA Studies Program faculty believes that significant learning occurs in the classroom and your attendance is vital to the educational process. Attendance is reflective of commitment, acquisition of knowledge and professionalism. In the program, it is expected that all students will assume responsibility for meeting all academic and clinical obligations with punctuality. Students remain responsible for all of the work in the courses in which they are registered. The following items refer to the Didactic Year; refer to the Clinical Year Handbook for its policies.

1.01 Regular class hours are 8:00 AM -5:00 PM M-F. There will be evening and weekend classes. Students will be given as much notice as possible for any evening or weekend classes.

1.02 Student attendance is required in all classes and is a component of professional comportment.

1.03 Students must arrive at all educational and clinical sessions with the necessary lab instruments, texts, attire, and other materials as designated by the instructor, or may otherwise be excluded from participation in the activity. Make up competencies for lack of preparation may not be offered.

1.04 Employment is not an acceptable excuse for class absence, missed or late assignments or poor performance.

1.05 In case of an absence or tardiness, it is the student's responsibility to call the Department of PA Studies Administrative Assistant at 412-624-6743 as soon as the absence or tardiness is known (or as soon as possible in case of emergencies) with a general reason and anticipated date and time of return to program activities. Failure to comply with this policy will result in a professionalism deduction. It is the student's responsibility to contact course directors and instructors regarding missed course work due to absence or tardiness.

1.06 The only excused absences are the following:

- Illness, injury or emergent care. More than 3 missed days (consecutive or non-consecutive) due to illness, injury or emergent care in a calendar year must be accompanied by a medical excuse.
- Religious and cultural holidays
- Medical or counseling appointments (This does not include appointments to complete program requirements such as TB tests, physical exams, immunizations, drug screens, etc.)
- Mandatory court appearances
- Bereavement or funeral of a spouse, child, stepchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, parent, stepparent, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, or father-in-law.
- National, regional, or state professional meetings preapproved by the Program

1.07 Signed documentation and/or proof of reason for absence may be requested for any absence. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an unexcused absence for each day that is missed.

1.08 Personal Days: For 1 day each didactic semester, each student may claim one (1) calendar day off as a “personal day.” Assignments and assessments (exams, quizzes, competencies, etc.) scheduled for these days are due or must be completed on the scheduled day (extensions and rescheduling will not occur for personal day reasons). Personal days may not be divided and spread over more than one calendar day. Personal Days cannot be banked for use in future semesters.

1.09 Procedure for claiming a Personal Day – As soon as possible, but before 7:30AM on the morning of a Personal Day, the student must call the program administrative assistant at 412-624-6743. A specific reason and documentation are not required – simply state that you are taking a Personal Day. The Program may identify dates in which personal days will be prohibited. The Program will inform students of these dates as soon as they are identified.

1.10 Frequent tardiness will be addressed in professional development assessments and may result in a remediation plan.

2.0 Dress Policy

The PA Studies Program places a high value on maintaining a professional appearance that reflects general hygiene and a strong professional identity. This policy was developed in careful consideration of the Program's professional mission, professional impression, cultural sensitivity, infection control, and safety. Professional appearance helps to build trust and confidence in both patients and fellow health care providers.

Students are expected to present a positive image at all times when present within or when representing the University of Pittsburgh's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. This includes daily class attendance, clinical experiences, shadowing, and meetings.

The dress code will be interpreted and enforced by the Program faculty. Any student in violation of the dress code may be excluded from the activity, may be subject to a reduction in the professionalism component of a course grade, and may be subject to further action if recurrent violations occur.

2.01 General Standards

- Personal hygiene must be maintained.
- Hair should be clean at all times. Hair longer than shoulder length must be pulled away from the face when working in actual or simulated patient care scenarios. This includes laboratory sessions.
- Facial hair should be clean and well groomed.
- Fingernails should not interfere with the ability to perform designated tasks nor be detrimental to the patient's safety. Nail polish should be in good repair.
- Clothing must be clean and in good repair.
- Avoid strong fragrances such as perfumes or cologne. Be aware that many people are sensitive to fragrances which may cause allergies or headaches.
- Dangling jewelry is prohibited.
- Hats are not permitted, with the exception of religious or cultural head coverings.
- Tops should be of appropriate length and height to adequately cover the chest, abdomen, and back at all times.
- Skirt hemlines should be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee.

- Undergarments should not be visible above, below or through clothing.

2.02 Special Attire

2.02a Human Anatomy Class and Labs

- Scrub top and bottom
- Closed-toed shoes
- Protective eyewear (goggles)
- Optional attire for anatomy lab includes a protective mask, and/or lab coat to be worn over scrubs

2.02b History Taking & Physical Examination 1 & 2 Labs

Appropriate lab attire will enable the student to adequately perform a detailed physical examination by identifying anatomic landmarks necessary to distinguish normal from abnormal findings and for the execution of technical procedures. Hair must be off the face during labs.

- Short-sleeved T shirt
- Gym-type shorts. Shorts should not be shorter than mid-thigh.
- Spandex and other form fitting shorts are not permitted.
- Sports bra if appropriate

2.02c Diagnostic and Therapeutic Procedures in Medicine 1 & 2 Labs

- Appropriate lab attire will enable to student to adequately perform technical procedures.
- Hair must be off the face during labs.
- Comfortable, loose-fitting top that will allow easy movement and potential exposure of arms (ex. T shirt, scrub top)
- Comfortable, loose-fitting bottom that will allow for easy movement and potential exposure of legs (ex/ athletic pants, athletic shorts not shorter than mid-thigh, scrub bottoms)
- Spandex and other form fitting shorts/pants are not permitted.

2.03 Prohibitions

The following types of attire are not to be worn for any program-related activity:

- Spaghetti-strap or sleeveless tops or dresses (unless arms are covered by a sweater, cardigan or lab coat that will not be removed)
- Halter or tube tops
- Transparent fabric

2.04 Professional Attire

Professional attire must be worn on Wednesdays. Professional attire must also be worn when students are working with real or simulated patients (including Standardized Patients) in a clinical setting, simulated clinical setting, or assessment/exam setting.

Faculty may, at their discretion, add additional professional attire days or remove the professional dress requirement for specific days. Students will be notified of these changes.

- Suits
- Dress slacks
- Collared, button down shirts (with or without tie)
- Dress blouse
- Sports coats
- Blazers
- Sweaters
- Dresses, skirts
- Dress shoes, hard soled shoes (no open toe shoes)
- Professional appearing polo-style shirts in good repair and neatly pressed

2.05 Lab Coats

Unless instructed otherwise by preceptor or faculty, lab coats must be worn during:

- Real or simulated patient encounters.
- Competency assessments/exams
- At other times if instructed by faculty
- Lab coats must be clean, ironed and fit properly.
- The sleeves of lab coats should not be rolled up.
- Lab coats must be short jackets (long jackets are traditionally worn by attending physicians, resident physicians, certified physician assistants and other certified advance practice providers.

2.06 Identification

- Students must be clearly identified in the clinical setting to distinguish them from other health profession students and practitioners.
- All students must wear photo ID badges and lab coats during real or simulated patient encounters.. ID badges may also be required for some guest lecture sessions.
- If an individual clinical site requires its own ID, the student must wear both.

2.07 Each clinical site may have additional dress code guidelines.

2.08 if a student has a personal objection to this dress policy, they should bring it to the Program Director for consideration. The Program recognizes that these statements utilize language which is, in some cases, imprecise and that the formulation of this policy is predicated on cultural norms.

3.0 Professional Development Policy

3.01 Students' professional behavior is continuously monitored throughout the program.

3.02 PA students may not take the responsibility or the place of qualified staff or faculty. PA students must not have access to records or other confidential information of other PA students.

3.03 Professional Development includes adherence to this policy and all others.

3.04 In order to respect the learning environment of classmates and faculty, use of electronic communication devices is limited to emergencies. Audible pagers and cellular phones must be turned to vibrate during classes and lab sessions.

3.05 Use of personal devices for non-instructional reasons during class time is inappropriate.

3.06 Students enrolled in the program must be committed to working collegially with other members of the class, faculty, staff, division, department, school, and university. Students must maintain respect for their fellow classmates, faculty and staff. The physician assistant student must not participate in or conceal any activity (blog posts) that will bring discredit or dishonor to fellow classmates, faculty, staff, administration or the University of Pittsburgh. They should report illegal or unethical conduct by a fellow classmate(s) to the appropriate University authorities. If a student is found to be responsible for such egregious acts, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal.

3.07 All program related injuries, i.e. needle sticks, cuts, falls, etc. must be reported within 24 hours, in writing, on the incident report form provided by the program.

3.08 Assessment of Professionalism

3.08a During the didactic year, students will have a formal Professional Development evaluation once per semester.

Faculty are here to help students succeed. Personal feedback and support are key elements in helping students to recognize areas of strength and of weaknesses. Technical skills must be integrated with interpersonal professional behavior for students to succeed as physician assistants.

Students need to demonstrate competency in technical skills as observed and evaluated throughout the didactic year. These skills are evaluated by means of examinations and competencies. Students also need to demonstrate social and behavioral skills. These skills are evaluated by means of the Professional Development Evaluation.

1. The program faculty will complete the evaluation once each semester. Criterion by which each student is evaluated will include; time management, communication, deportment, motivation, work ethic, and respect. This allows for individual faculty assessment of student behavior, and for documenting strengths and weaknesses of each student.
2. Faculty advisors will meet one on one with student advisees to provide feedback.

3. If problem areas are identified, and remain unresolved, the student will be required to meet with the Program Director to discuss specific steps for improvement. Such steps may include, but are not limited to, referral to appropriate resources, developing a contract regarding behavioral modification, on-going advisory meetings and other means of assisting the student to improve problem areas.
4. This form is then reviewed with the student, signed and dated by both faculty member and the student, and filed in the student's record. By the end of the didactic phase the student will have had three "Professional" evaluations.

3.08b Unprofessional behavior may result in a deduction of one percentage point from the student's final course grade with a maximum deduction of 10%.

3.08c Preceptor Evaluation forms used during clinical year include professionalism assessments.

3.09 Deducted points may be earned back by contacting the course instructor with your plan for an additional academic or service activity for instructor approval. Points will be credited upon successful completion of the approved activity. Signed documentation of activity completion will be required.

4.0 Advising Policy

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Students will be contacted to set up required meetings with their advisor at least once per semester. Students are free to set up additional appointments with their advisor, especially when they feel they are having academic or professional challenges. In addition to the faculty advisor, students are always welcome to schedule a meeting with individual course instructors, the Director of Didactic Education, Program Director or Department Chair.

5.0 Policy on Resolving Concerns, Conflicts, and Other Matters

5.01 If a student has an issue or a concern with a faculty or staff member, or with another student, they should first speak directly to that faculty or staff member, or other student. This includes questions about courses and grades: See the course instructor first.

If a student has a question about a course or grade, they should first speak to the lead instructor for the course. If it is not resolved, they should then speak to the Director of Didactic Education and/or Director of Clinical Education.

5.02 If the student does not feel an issue was fully or appropriately addressed after speaking to the recommended contact person (s), the student should then bring the concern to the Program Director.

5.03 If the student still feels that the matter is not resolved or is looking to appeal a grade, the next point of contact is SHRS Ombudsperson Kellie Beach (kbeach@pitt.edu).

The ombudsperson provides provide guidance in managing conflicts/problems and provide information about institutional policies and university grievance procedures that may be related to your conflicts/grievances. More information about this role can be found at: <https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/library/documents/students/2017/Ombudsperson%20description%20for%20website.pdf>

6.0 Exam Policy and Procedures

6.01 All personal belongings must be left outside the exam room

6.02 Baseball caps or hats of any type are not permitted during exams.

6.03 Cell phones and other electronic communication devices, including smart watches, must remain outside of the testing environment for the duration of the examination.

6.04 If a student has an extenuating circumstance that would necessitate access to their cell phone, they must notify the instructor prior to the beginning of the exam and arrangements will be made.

6.05 Use of phones, calculators, tape recorders, or other electronic devices are not permitted during exams unless otherwise indicated by the course instructor or proctor.

6.06 Students should leave the room after completion of their exam. Students will not be permitted to return to the room until all students have completed the examination.

6.07 Restroom breaks are strongly discouraged during exams.

6.08 No food will be permitted unless medical necessity prescribed by the student's health care provider.

6.09 Student questions during the exam must be limited to those of a technical nature regarding the examination itself, such as errors in spelling or numbering, missing pages, etc. Students are not permitted to ask questions regarding the meaning or intent of any questions on the examination.

6.10 The time limit for the exam will be announced at the beginning of the examination session. It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of the remaining time. Proctors will not update students on the time remaining.

6.11 All test answers must be legible and easily interpretable, or will otherwise be marked incorrect.

6.12 For computerized answer sheets, only the answer recorded on the computerized sheet will be considered.

6.13 Points may be deducted for illegible writing and/or misspellings at the instructor's discretion.

6.14 Late arrivals

6.14a Exams will begin promptly at the scheduled time. Students are expected to arrive before this.

6.14b Students arriving late for an exam will not be given additional time to complete the exam.

6.14c Students who anticipate a late arrival for an exam must notify the course instructor or program staff as soon as possible.

6.15 Exam review and grade posting

6.15a Completed exams will not be made widely available for student viewing.

6.15b Students may individually discuss exam performance, by appointment, with the course instructor. This must be scheduled within two weeks of the exam.

6.15c Students are not permitted to copy, photocopy or duplicate exam questions or answers in any way.

6.15d Grades may only be released by program faculty.

6.15e Grades will be posted by course instructors after analysis and review of class performance.

6.15f Students are not to ask instructors about the release of grades or their individual grades. All instructors post grades as soon as possible after each assessment.

6.16 Missed exams

6.16a Notification of absence for an exam must be given to the instructor prior to the scheduled exam.

6.16b Absence from an exam does not automatically grant the student the right to take it at a later date.

6.16c Determination of whether an absence is excused or unexcused is at the discretion of the course instructor. Unexcused absence will result in a 10% deduction from the exam grade.

6.16d Students should contact the course instructor as soon as possible (within 24 hours) after their return to classes to schedule a make-up exam.

6.16e Missed exams will be made up based on the availability of the course instructor and/or program staff.

6.17 Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT): Students are required to take the PACKRAT during of each phase of the curriculum. This test allows students to compare their medical knowledge to a national peer group. Students may also use the results of this examination to identify any deficiencies in task performance or system specialty.

7.0 Grading Policy

The letter grade system for graduate courses in the physician assistant program is as follows:

Grade	Percent	Quality Points
A+	97 to 100	4.00
A	94 to 96	4.00 Superior attainment
A-	90 to 93	3.75
B+	87 to 89	3.25
B	84 to 86	3.00 Adequate graduate-level attainment
B-	80 to 83	2.75
C+	77 to 79	2.25
C	74 to 76	2.00 Minimal graduate-level attainment
C-	70 to 73	1.75
D+	67 to 69	1.25
D	64 to 66	1.00
D-	60 to 63	0.75
F	Less than 59	0.00 Failure

Grading for the Clinical Year is as follows: (see clinical year handbook):

H: Honors

S: Satisfactory (Pass)

U: Unsatisfactory (Non-pass)

Other Grades:

Upon completion of a course, one of the grades listed below may appear on the student's transcript. None of these carry quality points.

G grade: Signifies unfinished course work due to extenuating circumstances. Students are required to complete course requirements no later than one year after the term in which the course was taken. After the deadline has passed, the G grade will remain on the record and the student will be required to reregister for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation.

I grade: Signifies incomplete course work due to nature of the course, clinical work, or incomplete research work in individual guidance courses or seminars.

W grade: Signifies that the student withdrew from the course.

R grade: Signifies that a student has resigned from the University.

8.0 Academic Remediation Policy and Procedures

Advancement through the Program is based on the demonstration of the student's ability to master the content, skills, and professional behaviors consistent with program expectations. These expectations are delineated in the Student Handbook, the 'Competencies for Physician Assistants' and in course and lecture objectives. It is the responsibility of this Physician Assistant Program to assure the student's competency of the content within each course, and to facilitate student progress through the curriculum.

Remediation is a process by which students review areas of weakness as identified through student assessment. The goal of the remediation process is to assist the student to assess their approach, understanding, knowledge and application on an assignment, exam, course, or procedure. If completed satisfactorily and demonstrates competency, the student may continue in the Program.

Successful completion of the remediation assignment may not result in a change of the original grade received for the assessment and any decision to change a course grade is at the discretion of the course instructor.

In addition to the specific course instructor's recognition, each student is also accountable for recognizing when they are not grasping the material. Once the concern by the student or instructor has been identified, a meeting with the lead instructor of the course is scheduled. At this meeting, strategies will be developed in a way that will enable the student to successfully grasp/retain the content. Each remediation plan will consist of an assessment of student learning needs, determining why they feel they are not grasping the material as well as having a counselor (if warranted) meet with students to determine if test anxiety or other stressors are interfering with their performance, as well as to assist students in studying effectively. Implementation of a faculty-facilitated remediation plan will then be established to enable the student to focus on their individual learning styles, and develop strategies (cases scenarios) to improve critical thinking, clinical application of course content as well as improving test taking skills when indicated.

Remediation Procedure

As part of the Program's commitment to the remediation process the following objectives, as is indicated by individual needs, will be met:

- Establishment of clearly specified goals and objectives for the remediation process.
- Provision of a high degree of structure.
- Use of a variety of approaches and methods in remedial instruction.
- Application of sound cognitive theory in the design and delivery of remediation.
- Provision of a highly coordinated remediation program.
- Use of formative evaluation to guide remediation development and improvement.

- Provision of a counseling component integrated into the structure of remediation when indicated.
- Provision of tutoring performed by well-trained tutors.
- Assurance of consistency between exit standards for remediation.
- Use of learning communities in remediation where indicated.
- Use of supplemental instruction, (clinical scenarios, videos) to support the remediation process when necessary.
- Integration of critical thinking into the remediation process.

8.01 A student who receives less than 74% on an assignment, competency or exam will be required to contact the course instructor within 72 hours of the grade being posted to discuss remediation. The instructor will notify the student's advisor of the meeting and remediation process and result.

The student and instructor will assess time management, study skills, individual strengths and weaknesses and circumstances that may be interfering with the student's performance.

The student and instructor will develop a plan of remediation that may include but is not limited to:

- Repeating the assignment or of a similar one developed by the instructor.
- Researching and documenting from an approved resource the correct answers to missed exam questions.
- Extra reading or writing assignments.
- Another process agreed upon by the student and instructor.
- Referral to University, private academic, or professional resources as necessary.

8.02 Student progress will be monitored with enough frequency to ensure that deficiencies in students' knowledge, skills and professionalism are identified in a timely fashion. Once identified, students with deficiencies will be required to enter the program's remediation process. Students will meet with course directors and/or the remediation team to identify the nature and underlying causes of the problems. Opportunities for remediation will be identified and the program will work with students to their fullest ability. Remedial actions may include but not be limited to referral for tutoring, time management, study skills enhancement, test taking strategies, and/or personal counseling.

8.03 The successful completion of remediation will be determined by the primary instructor with consultation with the remediation team as indicated according to the specific content assessed.

9.0 Academic Probation Policy

Graduate students must have a 3.000 cumulative GPA to be eligible to graduate. Graduate students who have completed at least 9 credits and whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.000 will be placed on academic probation and will receive written notification of this status. At this point it is the student's responsibility to meet with their advisor. In order to be removed from academic probation, the student will need to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.000 within their next two terms of study.

Failure to do so may subject the student to immediate dismissal from the program at the discretion of the Department Chair in collaboration with the Associate Dean of graduate studies.

Students who fail to demonstrate progress toward meeting graduation requirements in a timely manner may be placed on academic probation or recommended for dismissal from the program by the department chair, in collaboration with the Associate Dean of graduate studies. SHRS reserves the right to terminate a student at any time for academic or other reasons. Dismissal from the program is at the discretion of the SHRS Dean.

Only course work completed within the Physician Assistant curriculum will be calculated in the cumulative GPA.

Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.000 in order to begin clinical rotations.

10.0 Graduation Requirements

Candidates for the degree of Master of Science from the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences must, in addition to completing all course and other degree requirements, have a minimum GPA of 3.000. **Only course work completed within the PA Studies curriculum will determine the cumulative GPA.**

All students must be registered for at least 1 credit during the term in which they plan to graduate. An Application for Graduation must be filed in the SHRS Office of Student Services at the time of registration for the term/session in which the student expects to graduate. No student will be graduated with an existing F, G, or I grade in a required course. No student will be graduated who has not resolved all financial obligations with the University. Graduation caps, gowns, and hoods may be purchased from The Book Center.

Students who complete the program in six consecutive semesters will graduate in December. Students will only be awarded diplomas on the dates specified by the University each semester.

10.01 Full Graduate Student Status

To maintain full graduate status, the student must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.000 (based on 4.000) in their graduate study. Students whose GPA drops below a 3.000 while in the program will be placed on academic probation.

10.02 Minimum Academic Standard

All required and prerequisite coursework must be taken for a grade, when letter grade option is available, unless approved by the Department Chair/Program Director.

Students must receive a grade of C or better in all courses required by their program curriculum. Students who receive a grade below a C in a required course must repeat that course and attain a grade of C or better to graduate. (Note: University regulations state that a student may repeat any course in which a grade of B- or lower is received **if an authorization to repeat the course is given by the student's advisor/faculty.**)

Each course in the program is offered only once during the academic year. Achieving a grade less than a "C" will require that the student remediate his/her knowledge in the course material to a level of competence to be determined by the course instructor (see policy on remediation 13.0). The

student should be aware that in some cases, remediation could require taking a leave of absence from the Program until the course is offered again.

Students will not be permitted to register for a course until they attain a C or better in its prerequisites.

Failure to receive an acceptable grade after the second opportunity to complete a required course may result in the student being dismissed from the program and SHRS. (Refer to SHRS Graduate Student Handbook for more information.)

10.03 Service Requirements

The Pitt PAS program strives to be a contributing member of both the university community, and the community at-large. As a result, the program expects students in the cohort to participate in service activities outside of the curriculum. All students, during their didactic year are expected to participate in 4 hours of community service per semester (Spring, Summer, and Fall semesters). Service hours will be accounted for in the Professional Development meetings with advisors that occur during the didactic year semesters. Service opportunities will be provided or accessed as much as possible during the didactic year by the faculty, and any service opportunities outside of these events are to be approved and a number of hours established by any of the primary faculty in the program prior to the event or service task. Because the basis of service is time and effort, this does not include donation of money or goods to an organization or event.

PA Student Society officers will receive 2 hours of service time for each semester in which they serve. Student volunteers for interview day will receive 2 hours of service for their time.

Proof of attendance may include, but is not limited to, accessing faculty at the event itself, signature from a supervisor or group leader at the event, sign-in provided at a larger event, and photographs taken at the event itself indicating the location and the student's presence at the event.

10.04 Interprofessional Education Activities Requirement

The Pitt PAS program strives to educate students to practice individualized health care in inter-professional teams. As a result, the program expects students in the cohort to participate in inter-professional education activities outside of the curriculum. All students, during their didactic year are expected to participate in 1 inter-professional education activity per semester (Spring, Summer, and Fall semesters). The activities will be accounted for in the professional development meetings with advisors that occur during the didactic year semesters. Inter-professional education activity opportunities will be provided or accessed as much as possible during the didactic year by the faculty, and any activities outside of these events are to be approved prior to the event or service task.

Proof of attendance may include, but is not limited to, accessing faculty at the event itself, signature from a supervisor or group leader at the event, sign-in provided at a larger event, and photographs taken at the event itself indicating the location and the student's presence at the event.

11.0 Academic Integrity Policy

11.01 Students have the responsibility to be honest and to conduct themselves in an ethical manner while pursuing academic studies. Students have the right to be treated by faculty in a fair and conscientious manner in accordance with the ethical standards generally recognized within the academic community (as well as those recognized within the profession). Should a student be accused of a breach of academic integrity or have questions regarding faculty responsibilities, procedural safeguards including provisions of due process have been designed to protect student rights. These may be found in SHRS Guidelines on Academic Integrity: Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing Procedures. See <https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/academicpolicies/> for additional information.

11.02 Student Obligations

A student has an obligation to exhibit honesty and to respect the ethical standards of the profession in carrying out their academic assignments. Without limiting the application of this principle, a student may be found to have violated this obligation if they:

- Refer during an academic evaluation to materials or sources, or employs devices, not authorized by the faculty member.
- Provide assistance during an academic evaluation to another person in a manner not authorized by the faculty member.
- Receive assistance during an academic evaluation from another person in a manner not authorized by the faculty member.
- Engage in unauthorized possession, buying, selling, obtaining, or use of a copy of any materials intended to be used as an instrument of academic evaluation in advance of its administration.
- Act as a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation process.
- Utilize a substitute in any academic evaluation proceeding.
- Practice any deceit in an academic evaluation/assessment.
- Depend on the aid of others in a manner expressly prohibited by the faculty member, in the research, preparation, creation, writing, performing, or publication of work to be submitted for academic credit or evaluation.
- Provide aid to another person, knowing such aid is expressly prohibited by the faculty member, in the research, preparation, creation, writing, performing, or publication of work to be submitted for academic credit or evaluation.
- Present as one's own, for academic evaluation, the ideas, representations, or words of another person or persons without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources.
- Submit the work of another person in a manner which represents the work to be one's own.
- Knowingly permit one's work to be submitted by another person without the faculty member's authorization.
- Attempt to influence or change one's academic evaluation or record for reasons other than achievement or merit.
- Indulge, during a class (or examination) session in which one is a student, in conduct which is so disruptive as to infringe upon the rights of the faculty member or fellow students.

- Fail to cooperate, if called upon, in the investigation or disposition of any allegation of dishonesty pertaining to a fellow student.
- Violate the canons of ethics of the student's professional discipline.

12.0 Documents and Deadline Policies

12.01 The program uses EXXAT APPROVE to monitor requirements. This must be purchased prior to matriculation into the PA program. Renewals of all requirements must be completed on time in order to remain current with no lapse of coverage. Requirements are listed below. Detailed guidelines for each requirement can be found on the EXXAT Required Document dashboard. Required documents are subject to change. Students will be notified of any changes.

- Annual Health Appraisal Form
- Hepatitis B Vaccination and Titer
- MMR
- Varicella
- Tuberculosis
- American heart Association CPR Certification
- American Heart Association ACLS Certification
- HIPAA Training Certificate
- Blood Borne Pathogen Training
- Health Insurance
- Pennsylvania Act 33 Child Abuse History Clearance
- Pennsylvania Act 34 Criminal Background Check
- Act 73 FBI History Clearance
- Drug Screen
- Flu Shot
- Mandated Reporter Training
- Crisis Training
- Epic and Cerner Training

12.02 Students may also be required to provide site-specific documentation while in the clinical phase of the program (e.g. confidentiality agreements, security forms, interviews, etc.)

12.03 It is the sole responsibility for each student to remain current with all requirements with no lapse of coverage (even one day) throughout the length of the program. Any lapse in coverage will result in a deduction of 10% from the student's grade for each component of any assessments (exams, quizzes, competencies, assignments, etc.) that occur while the student is out of compliance. Being out of compliance may also restrict a student from participating in simulation activities.

12.04 Liability Insurance Coverage: Students must carry professional student liability insurance coverage while participating in clinical education. This coverage is provided by the SHRS group insurance plan and the cost will be automatically included in the student's tuition bill each fall term.

12.05 EXXAT STEPS ACCOUNT: Students must obtain an account prior to clinical year orientation, typically scheduled in November of didactic year.

12.06 ACLS CERTIFICATION: Students must successfully complete Advanced Cardiac Life Support during the fall semester of the didactic year, regardless of current certification status prior to entering the clinical year and must maintain a valid ACLS provider card throughout the clinical phase. ACLS certification prerequisite HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BLS must be obtained through American Heart Association.

13.0 Correspondence Policy

13.01 The primary mechanisms of communication with students will be email and announcements via the Canvas learning management system. Students are expected check their University-provided email account and Canvas dashboard ***at least every 24 hours*** to remain up-to-date on program information.

13.02 Students are required to use the University e-mail address for all communication and must only email program faculty and staff via "pitt" e-mail addresses that end in @pitt.edu. Program Faculty and staff will not respond to e-mails from non-Pitt accounts.

13.03 Students are expected also maintain a current name, address, phone number, and emergency contact with the program. Any changes to this information must also be submitted in a timely manner.

14.0 Social Media Policy

14.01 PA Studies students are expected to not provide any content to a social media site (blog, feed, online forum, or any other site or service that permits users to share info with others) that contains any information (favorable or non-favorable) that may be associated or identified with a clinical site, patient, or preceptor.

14.02 PA Studies students must not transmit any material (by uploading, posting, email or otherwise) regarding the program, department, school, university, profession, fellow students, faculty, staff, simulated patients, clinical sites, patients, or preceptors, that is or may be perceived as disruptive, threatening, profane, abusive, harassing, tortuous, libelous, embarrassing, defamatory, obscene, privacy-invading, hateful, racially-insensitive, or otherwise objectionable as determined by the program, division, department, school, or university.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, completion of remediation, disruption of progress through the program, negative impact on course grade(s), and/or dismissal.

15.0 Policy for Student Employment While Enrolled

15.01 Acceptance into the Physician Assistant Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh requires a full-time commitment. It is an intense and rigorous program that can be demanding, so student decisions regarding employment while enrolled must be carefully made and consider that work commitments are not acceptable excuses for poor performance or missing program obligations.

15.02 Students must not be required to work for the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

15.03 Students must not substitute for or function as:

a) instructional faculty (individuals providing instruction or supervision during the didactic and/or clinical phases of the program, regardless of length of time of instruction, faculty status or rank; *Standards of Accreditation*, ARC-PA, 2019) and

b) clinical or administrative staff (individuals providing administrative, secretarial, or clerical help to the program; *Standards of Accreditation*, ARC-PA, 2019).

16.0 Policy on Faculty as Health Care Providers

16.01 The principal faculty, program director, and medical director must not participate as health care providers for students in the program, except in an emergency situation.

16.02 For any non-emergency care or the answer to personal health questions:

- Schedule an appointment with the University Student Health Service (SHS) at 412-383-1800
- If more immediate care is required, the SHS offers walk-in hours Monday - Friday from 1 – 3 p.m
- Nurse Triage is also available for minor illnesses, every Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 12:00pm and 1:00pm – 4:00pm
- For more information visit <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shs/>
- Contact your primary care provider
- Seek care at an urgent care center or emergency department

17.0 Policy on Student Mistreatment

The University of Pittsburgh Physician Assistant Studies Program is committed to ensuring professional, respectful, and positive learning environments for all students. If you feel that you have experienced mistreatment, please contact the Physician Assistant Studies Program Director or Director of Clinical Education by email or by phone at 412-624-6743.

Examples of mistreatment, as identified by the Association of American Medical Colleges, include but are not limited to:

- Public humiliation
- Being threatened with harm
- Being physically harmed
- Being required to perform personal services
- Being subjected to unwanted sexual advances
- Being asked to exchange sexual favors for grades or other rewards
- Sexual harassment
- Being denied opportunities based on gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, etc.
- Being subjected to offensive comments
- Receiving lower evaluations or grades for factors other than performance

18.0 Department Space Usage Policy

Physician Assistant Studies students are free to access, on a 24/7 basis outside of Departmental instructional activities and other events, the following spaces in the Murdoch Building:

- Main Classroom
- Skills Laboratory
- Student Kitchen
- Quiet Study lounge (this space is intended to be a quiet and focused learning environment for Physician Assistant Studies students)
- Two dressing rooms near the classroom doors (when not otherwise in use)

When using the above spaces, students should always leave spaces as they were found, keeping in mind that program staff and faculty are actively preparing these rooms for labs and instruction.

Students may not access, unless instructed:

- Patient exam rooms
- Department of Physician Assistant Studies office space
- Any other space other than those listed above

19.0 Policy on Providing and Soliciting Clinical Sites or Preceptors

Students must not be required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors.

20.0 Student Records and Confidential Information Policy

Student academic records must be readily accessible to authorized program personnel and must include documentation:

- a) That the student has met published admission criteria,
- b) That the student has met institution and program health screening and immunization requirements,
- c) Of student performance while enrolled,
- d) Of remediation efforts and outcomes (if applicable),
- e) Of summaries of any formal academic/behavioral disciplinary action taken against a student, and
- f) That the student has met requirements for program completion.

Students and other unauthorized persons must not have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty.

Student health records are confidential and must not be accessible to or reviewed by program, principal or instructional faculty or staff except for immunization and screening results, which may be maintained and released with written permission from the student.

21.0 Policy on Policies

Program policies apply to all students, principal faculty, and the program director regardless of location. Certain program policies may be superseded by those at clinical sites.

Program policies and practices must be made readily available and consistently applied to all students.

Guidelines on Academic Integrity

SHRS has developed a set of principles that apply all students. Students desiring information about an academic unit's specific procedures and the makeup of its Academic Integrity Hearing Board may obtain a copy of the procedures and other necessary information from the SHRS Website:

<https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/academicpolicies>.

A student desiring information about an academic unit's specific procedures and the makeup of its Academic Integrity Hearing Board may obtain a copy of the procedures and other necessary information from the Office of the Dean, either in the academic unit in which they are registered or in the academic unit in which a particular course is taught. Additional information or guidance may be obtained from the Office of the Provost. Copies of this document and guidelines for academic units should be distributed by the deans to all instructional staff in each academic unit. "Academic unit" is used to refer to a college, academic unit, or regional campus.

Disability Resources and Services

The Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS, 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890 or 412-624-3346 Fax, and 412-536-5568 VP, provides a broad range of support services and resources to assist students with disabilities such as visual impairment, auditory impairment, mobility impairment and hidden disabilities (learning disabilities, psychological disabilities). Services include, but are not limited to: tape recorded textbooks, sign language interpreters, adaptive computer technology, Braille copy, non-standard exam arrangements and personal counseling. DRS can also assist students with accessible on-campus housing and transportation. Students interested in registering for services should contact DRS to schedule an appointment with the Coordinator and be prepared, if requested, to provide appropriate documentation of this disability. Students with disabilities who require special testing, accommodations or other classroom instruction modifications should notify their Department Chair, the instructor, and DRS no later than the fourth week of the term. Students may be asked to provide documentation of their disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. Please see the website listed here:

<http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drswelcome>.

Approvals for academic accommodation must be renewed and provided to the program for each term of study.

Professional Organizations/Professional Contacts

- National Commission Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA): <http://www.nccpa.net>
- Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA): <http://www.paeaonline.org>
- Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (PSPA): <https://pspa.net/>
- Pennsylvania State Medical Board Regulations for PAs and Osteopathic Regulations for PAs: <http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/049/049toc.html>
- American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) <http://www.aapa.org/>

AAPA Student Resource Websites

- <https://www.aapa.org/career-central/career-resources/?tag=pa-student>
- <http://www.healthcareers.com/aapa/>
- <http://www.facebook.com/AAPAstudents>
- http://www.facebook.com/AAPAstudents#!/AAPAstudents?v=app_7146470109

University Policy and Procedures

University Policies and Procedures: <http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/academicpolicies/>

Policies, Procedures & Handbooks Site » <http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/>

SHRS Guidelines on Academic Integrity » <http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/academicpolicies/>

SHRS Academic Integrity Officers are:

1. Kevin Conley, PhD, ATC (Undergraduate)
2. G. Kelley Fitzgerald, PhD (Graduate)

Computing Ethics and Guidelines » <http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/current-students/academic-policies>

Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action » <http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/current-students/academic-policies>

Sexual Harassment » <http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/current-students/academic-policies>

Student Code of Conduct » <http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/current-students/academic-policies>

University Student Resources

University Counseling Center:

Nordenberg Hall
119 University Place
412-648-7930
<http://www.counseling.pitt.edu>

Career Development >> <http://www.careers.pitt.edu/>

Financial Aid >> <https://oafa.pitt.edu/financialaid/>

Libraries >> <http://www.pitt.edu/taxonomy/term/765>

Student Health >> <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shshome>

Crisis and Emergency Services>> <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/crisisemergency/>

Email, grades, blackboard, schedules >> <https://my.pitt.edu/portal/server.pt>

Travel Grants >> <http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student.aspx?id=291>

Tuition Rates >> <http://www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/index.php>

Graduate Catalog >> <https://catalog.upp.pitt.edu/content.php?catoid=73&navoid=6370>

Emergency Phone Numbers

Student Health Services: 412-383-1800

Environmental Health & Safety: 412-624-9505

UPMC Presbyterian Hospital Emergency Department: 412-647-3334

University Counseling Center: 412-648-7930 <http://www.counseling.pitt.edu>

Pitt Police: 412-324-2121

Faculty and Staff Contact Information

University of Pittsburgh
 School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
 Department of Physician Assistant Studies
 3420 Forbes Avenue, Second Floor
 Pittsburgh, PA 15260

PHONE: 412-624-6743

www.shrs.pitt.edu/PAProgram

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Acknowledgement and Signature

University of Pittsburgh Physician Assistant Studies Program Student Handbook

This Handbook is published by University of Pittsburgh Physician Assistant Studies program, which reserves the right to revise the contents at any time. Any changes apply to all current students. The faculty reserves the right to revise the curriculum and the schedule of required courses. You are responsible for reading and understanding this handbook. If anything in this handbook is unclear, please discuss the matter with the Program Director.

I, _____, have received and have read the School of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences Physician Assistant Studies Program Student Handbook and the Orientation Presentation for the Class of 2021. I agree to abide by all policies found therein. If I fail to uphold this agreement, I am aware that I may be disciplined in accordance with Program, School, and University policies and procedures.

Student Signature

Date