



**Physician Assistant Studies
Class of 2026
Policy and Procedures Manual**

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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, school, and University. These policies and procedures will remain in effect for the duration of your time as a student in the PA Studies Program.

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.

This Handbook is reviewed annually (last 12/20/2024) 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,

Susan Graff, EdD, MS, PA-C
She/Her/Hers

Director and Assistant Professor, PA Studies Residential Program

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 lectures, flipped classroom design, 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 one elective.

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). **ARC-PA Standard A3.13e (5th edition).**

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 can: **ARC-PA Standard A3.12g (5th edition)**.

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.

Application of Policies

1.01 University, SHRS, and PA Residential Program policies apply to all students, staff, principal faculty, and the program director regardless of location. Certain program policies may be superseded by those at clinical sites. **ARC-PA Standard A3.01 (5th edition).**

1.02 University, SHRS, and PA Residential Program policies and practices must be made readily available and consistently applied to all students. **ARC-PA Standard A3.02 (5th edition).**

University and SHRS Policies

1.03 As a member of the University of Pittsburgh Community, you are responsible for *all* University, SHRS, and PA Residential Program Studies requirements and policies. The following are University Policies that the PA Studies Residential Program believes are most salient for your learning and well-being. Many resources and policies can be found in the [SHRS Academic Toolkit](#)

1.04 Student allegations of mistreatment. If you have experienced any of the following, even if you are unsure, you are encouraged but not required to report the concern to [Pitt Concern Connection](#) under the Office of Compliance, Investigations, and Ethics. **ARC-PA Standards A1.02j and A3.15f (5th edition).**

1.04a Sexual Misconduct: [University CS 20 Sexual Misconduct](#)

1.04b Sexual Harassment: [University Title IX Policy Policy CS_27](#)

1.04c Nondiscrimination Process and Procedures: [University CS 07 Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#)

1.05 Procedure for resigning from the University and refunds of tuition and fees. **ARC-PA Standard A1.02k (5th edition).**

1.05a Termination of Registration: [University AC 67 Termination of Registration](#)

1.05b [Tuition Adjustments](#)

PA Residential Program Policies

1.0 Attendance

The PA Studies Program faculty believes that significant learning occurs in the classroom and your attendance is required, as it 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 assigned 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 Monday-Friday. Additional program requirements may occur outside of regular hours including early morning, evening and weekend classes. Students will be given as much notice as possible when any early morning, evening or weekend classes occur.

1.01a Classes may occasionally be held virtually at the discretion of each course instructor as outlined in course syllabus/schedule. For virtual sessions, login details will be provided within each course module or via email.

1.02 Students must arrive at all educational and clinical sessions on time and 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.

1.03 In case of tardiness, it is the student's responsibility to notify the course instructor and academic advisor through university email. Anticipated tardiness should also be communicated to the course instructor as soon as possible through university email with an anticipated arrival time. It is the student's responsibility to also contact course directors and instructors with a proposed plan to complete missed class work. Recurrent tardiness without prior authorization or accommodations, in individual courses or across courses, will be addressed with the student's academic advisor and may be referred to the Student Development and Progression Committee.

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

1.05 Any foreseeable absence should be notified to the course instructor and academic advisor with sufficient notice of absence through university email as outlined in the 14.0 Correspondence Policy. The student may present a plan to the instructor to make up any missed work. If the plan is reasonable and feasible (based upon content, staff availability, etc.), the instructor will approve the make-up plan or will resend it to the student for adjustment. Not all activities are possible to make up at an alternative time, so advanced notice will assist in the determination of available opportunities for the learner to meet the required program competencies.

1.06 In the event of a missed educational session, it is the responsibility of the learner to obtain the missed material from a classmate. Any assignments presented during class should be completed without any extension. If an assignment or assessment was to be completed within the synchronous class time, an alternative assignment may not be available, and the points may not be available for make-up.

2.0 Expectations for Appearance

2.01 In the interest of personal safety and consideration for others, it is the policy of SHRS and the PA Studies Residential Program that students adhere to some basic standards of dress and grooming while attending classes, clinical assignments, and school sponsored events. These standards have been reproduced from the SHRS Graduate Student Handbook

2.01a Wear appropriate footwear that meets the expectations for the setting you are in.

2.01b Dress modestly (no inappropriate skin exposure, no exposed undergarments).

2.01c Minimize body odors (e.g., excessive smoke).

2.01d Avoid wearing excessive fragrances (e.g., perfume, cologne).

2.01e Maintain personal hygiene.

2.02 Students need to adhere to any dress codes and policies specific to any clinical sites in which the student practices. The Program recognizes clinical site dress codes may be less inclusive than Program guidelines and any issues should be discussed with the Director of Clinical Education.

2.03 If a student has a personal objection to the above dress policy, they should schedule a meeting with the Program Director.

2.04 Students will be required to wear the following articles of clothing and/or identifiers during the activities outlined below.

2.04a Anatomy Lab Unless instructed otherwise by faculty, the following must be worn during anatomy lab experiences

Scrub tops and bottoms and closed-toe shoes

Personal Protective Equipment as directed by course instructor

Identification - All students must wear photo ID badges, identifying them as physician assistant students.

2.04b Real, simulated patient encounters or outside program activities- Unless instructed otherwise by faculty, the following must be worn during real or simulated patient encounters

Lab Coats - Lab coats are short white jackets that identify you as a student in academic and clinical settings. Lab coats should be clean and ironed.

Identification - All students must wear photo ID badges, identifying them as physician assistant students. ID badges may also be required for some guest lecture sessions or other program activities outside the Department of PA Studies.

All students must wear photo ID badges, identifying them as a physician assistant student, in all clinical settings.

If an individual clinical site requires its own ID, the student must wear both.

2.04c Competency assessments/examinations Unless instructed otherwise by faculty, the following must be worn during competency assessments/examinations

Lab Coats - Lab coats are short white jackets that identify you as a student in academic and clinical settings. Lab coats should be clean and ironed.

Identification - All students must wear photo ID badges, identifying them as physician assistant students.

3.0 Department Space Usage Policy

3.01 When using any University space or space reserved by the Program, students should leave spaces as they were found, including but not limited to removing all food or other waste on surfaces and floor, replace chairs and tables in original formation, replace exam paper, and return any lab equipment.

3.02 Physician Assistant Studies students are free to access, 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)
- Conference Room
- Wellness Room

3.03 Students may not access, unless instructed or with prior approval:

- Patient exam rooms
- Patient dressing rooms
- Department of Physician Assistant Studies office space
- Any other space other than those explicitly permitted by the Program.

4.0 Professional Development

4.01 Students are expected to demonstrate the following six professional values while engaging in activities affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh including academic instruction and assessment, clinical education experiences, professional conferences, and community service. Further explanation of the six professional values can be found on the [Professional Development Rubric](#). Students are encouraged but not required to demonstrate these values outside of University affiliated activities, including personal social media accounts, unless such behavior violates the [University Student Code of Conduct](#).

4.01a Integrity Being honest and adhering to strong moral and ethical principles.

4.01b Reliability Following through and doing what you have committed to do, including adherence to the Program, School and University expectations outlined in this policy manual, syllabi, and other communications.

4.01c Accountability Taking responsibility when you fail to meet program expectations and provide an actional solution for the mistake and/or to prevent the mistake in the future.

4.01d Humility “The openness to new learning combined with a balanced and accurate assessment of our contributions, including our strengths, imperfections, and opportunities for

growth” Brown, B. (2021). *Atlas of the heart: Mapping meaningful connection and the language of human experience*. Random House.

4.01e Curiosity The desire to learn and retain information that encourages exploration and discovery that fosters student’s growth as a professional.

4.01f Generosity Extending the most generous interpretation to the intentions, words, and actions of peers, professors, preceptors, and patients.

4.02 Assessment of professional development will occur at the end of each semester during didactic year and following each clinical rotation and transition to practice in clinical year.

4.02a The student and the advisor will individually complete the [Professional Development Rubric](#). The advisor may request feedback from course instructors and staff to assist in completing the rubric.

4.02b The student and advisor will meet to discuss areas identified as “unacceptable” and areas of discordance between the student and advisor.

4.02c The advisor, in collaboration with the Program Director, has the discretion to finalize the rubric.

4.02d Students may appeal the outcome by initiating the Professional Development Committee review process.

4.03 All program faculty, instructors and staff have the discretion to address unacceptable behavior as outlined in the [Professional Development Rubric](#), outside of the formal professional development assessment process. The process outlined below does not apply to violations of the [University Student Code of Conduct](#). Additional information regarding this process can be found on [Professionalism Policy for 2025 Handbook.docx](#).

4.03a First Incidence of Unacceptable Behavior Verbal warning and discussion with the faculty member, instructor, or staff member who witnessed or experienced the behavior.

4.03b Second Incidence of Unacceptable Behavior Discussion with the faculty member, instructor, or staff member who witnessed or experienced the behavior and the student’s academic advisor to develop a remediation plan.

4.03c Third Incidence of Unacceptable Behavior Referral to the Department versus Program Professional Development Committee. Consider placing on [Professional Development Probation](#).

5.0 Communication

5.01 Communication between students and faculty and staff should be done through Pitt email and/or the Canvas learning management system.

5.01a 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.

5.01b 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.

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

5.03 All communications between students and instructors, staff, guests, and preceptors are expected to be courteous and professional in nature. Students must take responsibility for representing our Program’s values when they communicate verbally or in writing with faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, and patients. Students whose communication violates this policy will be addressed via the Professional Development procedure.

6.0 Social Media

6.01 The PAS Residential Program adheres to the [SHRS Social Media Policy](#) and supports the recommendations that fall outside the requirements. The policy states that SHRS students must

6.01a Respect the ethical standards of the profession in carrying out any academic assignments on social media.

6.01b Comply with HIPAA’s social media rules.

6.01c Read, review, and follow the social media policy of clinical rotation or other program affiliated sites.

6.01d Comply with School and University academic integrity guidelines.

6.01e Not post or transmit any information or reference about your work with patients.

6.01f Not post clinical encounters, clinical experiences or information that pertains to working with patients.

6.02 The PAS Residential Program is not responsible for student posts on private social media accounts.

7.0 Academic Integrity Policy

7.01 Students have the responsibility to be honest and to conduct themselves in an ethical manner while pursuing academic studies.

7.02 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).

7.03 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 the under [University Policy AC 39 Guidelines on Academic Integrity - Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing Procedures](#).

7.04 Students will comply with the [PAEA Assessment Exam Policies](#).

“Adhering to the PAEA Assessment academic integrity instructions, rules, and procedures for the exam as outlined in the Test-Taker Rules and Procedures and the Student Terms of Service.”

I understand and agree that the following conduct, whether attempted or completed, is strictly prohibited:

- Copying, capturing, recording, collecting, reconstructing, memorizing, discussing, soliciting, transmitting, broadcasting, streaming, or distributing PAEA Assessment Exam content, in whole or part;
- Giving or receiving assistance on a PAEA Assessment Exam;
- Viewing the content of another examinee’s Exam content or responses during a PAEA Assessment Exam administration;
- Taking a PAEA Assessment Exam on behalf of another person;
- Possessing, accessing, or using any computer, smartphone, electronic device, camera, recording device, or photographic equipment of any kind while taking a PAEA Assessment Exam, other than the authorized device(s) required to take the examination in accordance with PAEA Assessment Exam Policies;
- Possessing, accessing, or using any books, notes, papers, note-taking materials, study materials or test-taking aids of any kind while taking a PAEA Assessment Exam, except as explicitly allowed in accordance with PAEA Assessment Exam Policies;
- Talking or communicating with anyone about PAEA Assessment Exam content, in whole or part, while taking a PAEA Assessment Exam.

7.05 Students in program courses will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh’s Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. The student will also receive a zero for the assessment or assignment that violated this policy.

8.0 Assessment

8.01 Assessment Day-of Procedure

8.01a All personal belongings, including food and drink, must be left outside the testing environment unless determined to be an accommodation from DRS.

8.01b Baseball caps or hats of any type are not permitted during exams.

8.01c Cell phones and other electronic communication devices, including smart watches, must remain outside of the testing environment for the duration of the examination.

8.01d In the unlikely event an assessment needs to be delivered remotely you will be REQUIRED to have two devices. One device with a camera to be connected to a Synchronous Zoom Meeting (mobile device, tablet etc. with a Camera) and the other device (does not need camera) to take the quiz. More details will be provided by course instructors.

8.01e Students are permitted to wear ear plugs during assessments. Single use ear plugs are provided by the program for each assessment. Ear buds and headphones are not permitted during assessments.

8.01f For all assessments longer than 30 minutes, students should leave the room after completion of their assessment. Students will not be permitted to return to the room until instructed by the proctor. Students are expected to maintain a quiet testing environment once they leave the exam space.

8.01g 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.

8.01h 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.

8.01i All test answers must be legible and easily interpretable or will otherwise be marked incorrect. Points may be deducted for illegible writing and/or misspellings at the instructor's discretion.

8.02 Late arrivals

8.02a Exams will begin promptly at the scheduled time. Students are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled exam start time.

8.02b Students arriving late for an exam will not be given additional time to complete the exam. Students will be directed to a separate exam space to take the time if available.

8.02c Students who anticipate a late arrival for an exam must notify the course instructor as soon as possible. It will be up to the course instructor's discretion to allow additional time for the student to complete the exam versus rescheduling the exam.

8.03 Exam review and grade posting

8.03a Release of completed exams will be made at the discretion of the course instructor.

8.03b Students may individually discuss exam performance, by appointment, with the course instructor. This must be scheduled within one week of the exam.

8.03c Students are not permitted to copy, photocopy, duplicate, distribute or discuss exam questions or answers unless authorized by the course instructor. Copying, photocopying, duplicating, distributing or discussing exam questions or answers outside of processes authorized by the course instructor is a violation of the academic integrity policy.

8.03d 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 when all students have completed the exam and item analysis is finalized.

8.04 Missed exams

8.04a Notification of a planned absence for an exam must be given to the instructor prior to the scheduled exam.

8.04b Planned and unplanned absences from an exam do not automatically grant the student the right to make up the exam. Students should notify the instructor as soon as an absence is anticipated with a proposed make up plan including date, time, and proposed location of the exam. Instructors have full discretion to accommodate the makeup plan.

8.05 Required Standardized Assessments

8.05a Students are required to take all PAEA exams delivered by the program during the didactic and clinical year. Students must adhere to both the program's and the PAEA's Assessment Policies when taking PAEA assessments. These assessments may include but are not limited to PACKRAT I, PACKRAT II, EORs, and EOC.

8.06 Accommodations (assessment and non-assessment)

8.06a Students should apply for accommodations through DRS as early in the semester as possible. It is the responsibility of the student to reapply for their accommodations each semester.

8.06b Students must notify instructors that they want to use their approved accommodations. Instructors will inform students that they will apply those accommodations throughout the course unless otherwise notified. Students should notify instructors as soon as possible if they want to forgo using their accommodations with the understanding that students can choose to reinstate using their accommodations at any time.

9.0 Grading Policy

All SHRS graduate programs adhere to the University's grading system and grading policies for graduate students. Please refer to the [Office of the University Registrar on Grades](#) for more detailed information.

9.01 Grading System

Grade	Percent	Quality Points
A+	97 to 100	4.00
A	94 to 96.9	4.00 Superior attainment
A-	90 to 93.9	3.75
B+	87 to 89.9	3.25
B	84 to 86.9	3.00 Adequate graduate-level attainment
B-	80 to 83.9	2.75
C+	77 to 79.9	2.25
C	74 to 76.9	2.00 Minimal graduate-level attainment
C-	70 to 73.9	1.75
D+	67 to 69.9	1.25
D	64 to 66.9	1.00
D-	60 to 63.9	0.75
F	Less than 59.9	0.00 Failure

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

Grade	Percent	Quality Points
H		N/A - Indicates Honors (Exceptional) completion of class requirements
S		N/A - Indicates satisfactory completion of class requirements
U		N/A - Indicates unsatisfactory completion of class requirements

9.03 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.

9.04 Extra-credit opportunities, if available, will be assigned by the course instructor only. Students are not permitted to request extra credit from a course instructor. Students may not request a grade to be rounded or adjusted by the instructor at the end of the term.

9.05 SHRS Grade Appeal Process: Students may appeal grades they feel have been assigned incorrectly or improperly. A description of the SHRS Grade Appeal Process can be found on the [Academic Toolkit page](#).

10.0 Minimum Academic Standard

10.01 In addition to the University-wide regulations and standards detailed in the section on General Academic Regulations in the University Graduate Catalog, each student in the PA Residential Program is expected to be familiar with the following school-specific regulations and academic standards. The complete SHRS policy on minimum academic standard can be found under the [SHRS Graduate Student Handbook](#). **ARC-PA Standard A3.15a**

10.01a It is the student's responsibility to review her/his academic standing, to identify graduate program requirements and prerequisites for intended graduate program(s), and to monitor their completion.

10.01b Students must receive a grade of C or better in all courses required by their program curriculum.

10.01c 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.

10.01d 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.

11.0 Academic Remediation

11.01 Remediation is a process of evaluation of student performance in meeting the program's learning outcomes and instructional objectives for both didactic and supervised clinical practice experience components by allowing the program to identify and address any student deficiencies in a timely manner. ARC-PA Standards A3.15c and B1.04b (5th edition)

11.02 Students are required to remediate assessments when they receive less than the defined course benchmark as per the course syllabus, not to be less than 74%, on any assessment when:

11.02a The assessment category comprises 30% or more of the course grade.

11.02b The course instructor deems remediation is necessary to address student deficiencies that prohibit them from achieving program competencies even when the assessment is in a category that comprises less than 30% of the course grade.

11.03 Remediation must include a meeting with the course instructor.

11.04 The successful completion of remediation will be determined by the course instructor as indicated according to the specific content assessed.

11.05 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 course instructor's discretion. All remediations must be completed prior to the end of the term in which the remediation occurs to receive a final grade.

12.0 Academic Probation and Dismissal

12.01 The PAS Residential Program adheres to the SHRS policy on academic probation and dismissal. This policy can be found in the [SHRS Graduate Student Handbook](#).

12.01a 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/or suspension and will receive written notification of this status. At this point it is the student's responsibility to meet with his or her advisor.

12.01b To be removed from academic probation, the student will need to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.000 within their next two terms of enrollment. Failure to do so may subject the student to recommendation for immediate dismissal from the program by the Department Chair, in collaboration with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

12.01c Students must be removed from academic probation prior to starting clinical rotations.

12.01d 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.

12.01e 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.

12.01f Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event it is not mathematically possible for a student to remediate their cumulative program GPA within their next two terms of enrollment, the student may be immediately dismissed.

12.01g A student may appeal their dismissal with the University of Pittsburgh Provost office.
ARC-Standard A3.15g

13.0 Termination of Registration

13.01 The PAS Residential program adheres to all SHRS policies on Enrollment, Add/Drop, Monitored Withdrawal, Resignation, and Leave of absence. Below is a summary of these policies. The complete policies can be found in the [SHRS Graduate Student Handbook](#). This policy aligns with [University Policy AC 67 Termination of Registration](#).

13.02 Enrollment

10.02a A student must be registered for at least one credit in a twelve (12) month period from the time of admission until the degree is granted in order to maintain active status.

10.02b The enrollment appointment is the day and time when a student can begin enrolling. Once a student's enrollment appointment begins, adding, dropping, or editing classes can be done until the end of the add/drop period.

13.03 Add/Drop

13.03a Students can add or drop classes until the add/drop deadline. Add/drop during the summer sessions is dependent on the length of the class session.

13.03b Should a student find an error in their enrollment after the add/drop period has ended, a formal memo is required from the student's advisor to the SHRS, Director of Student Services, Registrar. If the error is the student's fault, the student may be charged a late fee at the discretion of the main University of Pittsburgh Registrar.

13.04 Monitored Withdrawal

13.04a After the add/drop period has ended, students may withdraw from a course that they no longer wish to attend by completing a Monitored Withdrawal Request form within the first nine weeks of the term in the fall and spring. Summer session deadlines depend on the length of the session.

13.04b The grade W will appear on the student's grade report and transcript. There is no financial adjustment to student's tuition or fee obligations involved in withdrawing from courses, but withdrawing may jeopardize satisfactory academic progress, financial aid, and assistantships or fellowships.

13.05 Resigning from the University for a Specific Term

13.05a If students decide to drop all of their courses **after the add/drop period has ended and before 60 percent of the term or session has been completed**, they must resign from the University for that term.

13.05b Official resignation from the University requires students to contact the Student Appeals Office.

13.05c An R grade will appear on the student's academic transcript. Tuition is prorated from the date of the student's notification to the Student Appeals Office of the student's desire to resign, unless 60 percent of the term has been completed, in which case there is no refund.

13.05d After the 60 percent point of the term or session has passed, students who wish to terminate their registration may process a withdrawal from all classes only with the permission of their academic Dean. If the reason for withdrawal is medical or psychological in nature, the academic Dean may consult with the director of the Student Health Service prior to making a determination. There is no financial adjustment associated with this procedure, which results in the assignment of W grades for the courses.

13.06 Leave of Absence The PAS Residential Program adheres to the SHRS Leave of Absence Policy. Under special conditions, graduate students may be granted one leave of absence. A maximum leave of one year may be granted to master's students. A complete description of the policy can be found in the [SHRS Graduate Student Handbook](#).

14.0 Deceleration

14.01 Deceleration refers to when a student is removed from their entering cohort but remains matriculated in the program. Students in the PAS Residential Program may choose or be required to decelerate.

14.02 Student Requested Deceleration Students may request to decelerate for personal reasons. Students should contact their advisor to discuss their options as soon as possible.

14.03 Program Required Deceleration The program may require a student to decelerate for the following reasons.

14.03a Failure to receive a grade of C or better in a course. Courses are only offered once per academic year.

14.03b Failure to meet the minimum academic standard prior to clinical year.

14.03c Failure to meet the adequate academic standard necessary to advance to clinical year as determined by the principal faculty and the program director.

14.03d Failure to meet the professional development expectations necessary to advance to clinical year.

15.0 Advising

15.01 Students must meet with their advisor at least once per term. In addition to the faculty advisor, students are always welcome to schedule a meeting with individual course instructors, the Director of Curriculum, Program Director or Department Chair.

15.02 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 interfere with academic or professional performance.

15.03 If necessary or preferred, the student can request a change of advisor. To initiate this process the student must complete an '[Advisor Change Form](#)' secure the required signatures and return the completed form to the Program Director and Program Administrator. Once a new advisor is assigned, the student will be notified via e-mail. It is then the student's responsibility to contact the new advisor and schedule an initial check-in meeting.

15.04 Advisors will provide timely guidance and if deemed necessary timely access and/or referral of students for services addressing personal issues which may impact their progress in the PA program. **ARC-PA Standard 3.10 (5th edition).**

15.05 In rare circumstances, students may be required to switch advisors. In this case, students will be notified by the program and assigned a new advisor as soon as possible.

15.06 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 the main campus or to their primary care provider. **ARC-PA Standard A3.09 (5th edition).**

15.07 All Program Staff, Instructional Faculty, Principal Faculty, the Medical Director, and the Program Director will receive orientation and regular updates on the proper practices for such referrals, including but not limited to medical and mental health issues, financial aid, disability resources and services, and career development.

16.0 Student Records and Confidential Information

16.01 Student academic records must be readily accessible to authorized program personnel **ARC-PA Standard A3.17**

16.02 Student academic records must include documentation:

16.02a That the student has met published admission criteria **ARC-PA Standard A3.17a**

16.02b That the student has met institution and program health screening and immunization requirements. **ARC-PA Standard A3.17b**

16.02c Of student performance while enrolled **ARC-PA Standard A3.17c**

16.02d Of remediation efforts and outcomes (if applicable) **ARC-PA Standard A3.17d**

16.02e Of summaries of any formal academic/behavioral disciplinary action taken against a student **ARC-PA Standard A3.17e**

16.02f That the student has met requirements for program completion. **ARC-PA Standard A3.17f**

16.03 Students and other unauthorized persons must not have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty. **ARC-PA Standard A3.18**

16.04 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. **ARC-PA Standard A3.19**

17.0 Student Employment While Enrolled

17.01 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.

17.02 Students must not be required to work for the Physician Assistant Studies Program. **ARC-PA Standard 3.04 (5th edition).**

17.03 PA students must not substitute for or function as **instructional faculty**. **ARC-PA Standard 3.05a (5th edition).**

17.04 PA students must not substitute for or function as **clinical or administrative staff**. **ARC-PA Standard 3.05b (5th edition).**

17.05 PA students must be clearly identified in the clinical setting to distinguish them from other health profession students and practitioners **ARC-PA Standard A3.06 (5th edition).**

18. Providing and Soliciting Clinical Sites or Preceptors

18.01 Students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. **ARC-PA Standard A3.03 (5th edition).**

18.01a It is the responsibility of the PAS Residential Program to secure an adequate number of clinical sites for all matriculated students. The process of establishing and maintaining a clinical site can be found in the [Clinical Site Affiliation Process](#).

18.02 Students may be required to complete up to four clinical rotations at sites secured by the program that fall outside of the designated 80 mile "local area." The maximum travel distance to out of area sites will be no more than 350 miles.

18.02 Students are permitted to make site requests of the Clinical Year team.

19.0 Student Grievances and Appeals ARC-PA Standard A3.15g (5th Edition)

19.01 Grievances

19.01a For cases in which a student experiences a grievance with a faculty or staff member, instructor, preceptor, or another student, the student should speak directly to that person as long as they feel safe to do so. This includes questions about courses and grades.

19.01b If the grievance is not resolved through direct communication or if the student does not feel safe speaking directly to the person involved, the student should speak to the Director of Curriculum or Director of Clinical Education.

19.01c If the student does not feel the grievance was fully addressed after speaking to the individual involved, and the Director of Curriculum or the Director of Clinical Education, the student should bring the concern to the Program Director.

19.01d If the student experiences a grievance for which they do not feel comfortable using the above procedure, the student should seek guidance from whomever (faculty or staff) they feel comfortable with in the program.

19.02 Escalating Grievances

19.02a If the student feels that the grievance is still not resolved after speaking to the Program Director, the student should bring the concern to the Department Chair.

19.02b If the student is dissatisfied with the response to the complaint, a written appeal may be made to the SHRS Associate Dean for Graduate Studies or the SHRS Dean; the appeal must be made within 3 weeks of the Chair's response. The Associate Dean's/Dean's response to the complaint will be communicated to the student within 3 weeks of the appeal. The Associate Dean's/Dean's decision is final.

19.03 Students who wish to bring a complaint regarding the Physician Assistant Studies Program's compliance with the ARC-PA *Standards* should submit a complaint in writing to the Department Chair. The written complaint must be signed by the student(s).

19.03a The Department Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 business days and will meet with the student or respond to the complaint in writing within 3 weeks of receipt of the complaint.

19.03b The student will be informed of the Chair's response to the complaint, the steps being taken to address the complaint, or the steps being taken to investigate it. Any investigation will be time limited.

19.04 Ombudsperson Students may contact the ombudsperson at any time with grievances or to inquire about non-grade related appeals not related to grades. The Ombudsperson is a person who handles complaints, serves as a mediator, and a spokesperson for the rights of a particular individual or group. The Ombudsperson in the School of Health and Rehabilitation

Sciences (SHRS) will be a neutral contact person (nonfaculty) for students with whom they can engage in informal discussions to express concerns about conflicts and other issues that may arise during the course of their education that they believe are difficult to address with their academic department. ****Policy 9.05 outlines the SHRS Grade Appeal Process.**

19.04a The SHRS Ombudsperson is Jessica Maguire (maguire@pitt.edu).

****Policy 1.04 Student allegations of mistreatment.** If you have experienced any of the following, even if you are unsure, you are encouraged but not required to report the concern to [Pitt Concern Connection](#) under the Office of Compliance, Investigations, and Ethics. **ARC-PA Standards A1.02j and A3.15f (5th edition).**

1.04a Sexual Misconduct: [University CS 20 Sexual Misconduct](#)

1.04b Sexual Harassment: [University Title IX Policy Policy CS 27](#)

1.04c Nondiscrimination Process and Procedures: [University CS 07 Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#)

20.0 Graduation Requirements

20.01 The PA Residential Program adheres to the SHRS Graduation Requirements which are outlined below. The complete SHRS policy on Graduation Requirements can be found in the [SHRS Graduate Student Handbook](#). **ARC-PA Standard 3.15b (5th edition).**

20.01a Student must be considered an “active student” at time of graduation; they must have been registered for at least one credit at the University of Pittsburgh within the last three terms or sessions.

20.01b Students may not enroll in courses outside the University of Pittsburgh in the semester they are graduating.

20.01c Students must have satisfactorily completed all required credits.

20.01d Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA 3.000. The GPA will be calculated as a composite of all courses taken at the University of Pittsburgh and counting toward completion of the degree.

20.01e Students must have completed all requirements for the program in which the student has enrolled.

20.01f Students may not have outstanding D, F, G or I grade in a required course.

20.01g. Students must have an updated and approved Plan of Study on file in Student Services.

20.01h Students must submit an application for graduation online through PeopleSoft, based on the deadlines determined for that term. Email notification of these deadlines will be sent to students in the prior term.

20.01i A student with outstanding financial obligations to the University is not eligible to receive the diploma, official academic transcripts, or any certification of completion of the academic program.

20.02 The PA Residential Program adheres to the SHRS policy stating that each student must complete the program within five calendar years of their first day of class in their first term. **ARC-PA Standard 3.15b (5th edition).**

20.03 Service Requirements All PAS Residential Program students must complete and provide proof of attendance for four hours of eligible community service each semester during their didactic year.

20.03a Eligible community service includes any University sponsored community service event and student organized events approved by the Director of Mentoring.

20.03b Donation of money or goods does not count towards required community service hours.

20.04 Interprofessional Education Activities Requirement All PAS Residential Program Students are required to participate in designated program endorsed interprofessional activities.

20.04a 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.

21.0 Non-academic and Non-technical Program Requirements

The following requirements are reviewed and updated annually for consistency with current scientific and clinical recommendations from federal (CDC, ACIP) and local health authorities as well as recommendations from a leading association of college health experts (AHCA). **ARC-PA Standard A3.07a (5th edition).**

21.01 Student health records are confidential and are not accessible to or reviewed by the 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. **ARC-PA Standard A3.19 (5th edition).**

21.02 It is the sole responsibility for each student to complete and submit all requirements by or before their due dates listed on EXXAT. 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 or being out of compliance may prevent the student from participating in coursework which may result in a deduction 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.**

21.02a Renewals of all requirements must be completed on time in order to remain current with no lapse of coverage. Detailed guidelines for each requirement can be found on the EXXAT Required Document dashboard. The required documents are subject to change based

on the current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Recommendation as well as input from our clinical partners. Students will be notified of any changes.

21.02b Students are responsible for all costs related to immunizations, physical examination, drug screens, and criminal background checks.

21.02c The program uses EXXAT to store and monitor requirements. This must be purchased by the student prior to matriculation into the PA program.

21.02d Students are required provide documentation that they have met institution and program health screening and immunization requirements. Students must upload documents, including designated health and immunization records, to EXXAT for verification service. Compliance with these requirements will be reported to the Program and documented in their permanent record. **ARC-PA Standard A3.17b**

21.02e Students are required to maintain copies of their health history form and immunizations as the student may be required to produce these records by request of their assigned clinical placement.

21.02f Students must comply with additional affiliated training site requirements and documentation including but not limited to clinics, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, clinical research facilities and community service providers.

21.03 Requirements

Pre-Matriculation
PAS Residential Health Appraisal Form – See below for more details
Required Vaccinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B • MMR • Varicella • Tdap • TB – 1 step • Flu Shot • COVID-19*
FBI Fingerprinting Clearance
Universal-Drug Screen
Pennsylvania Child Protection Clearances
Universal-Background Check
HIPAA Training
<i>*Exemptions may be granted with student attestation</i>
Start of Didactic Year
Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Training
During Didactic Year – Prior to Clinical Year
Clinical Year Orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood Borne Pathogen Training

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandated Reporter Training • Crisis Training
American Heart Association CPR/BLS Certification – Prerequisite to ACLS. Must be maintained through graduation.
American Heart Association ACLS Certification. Must be maintained through graduation.
FBI Fingerprinting Clearance
Universal-Drug Screen
Pennsylvania Child Protection Clearances
Universal-Background Check
Required Vaccinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B • MMR • Varicella • Tdap • TB – 2 step • Flu Shot • COVID-19*
<i>* Exemptions may be granted with student attestation</i>
Maintain Throughout Program
Health Insurance
Liability Insurance Coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

21.04 Health Screenings Students are required to have the PA Studies Student Health Appraisal Form completed and signed by a physician or other licensed healthcare provider.

21.05 Immunizations Students are required to comply with [University Policy CS 29 Vaccinations and Immunizations Requirements](#) and PA Residential Program requirements as recommended by the [CDC's AICP Recommendations and Guidelines for health care professionals](#). A complete list of immunizations requirements, dosing, exemptions and titer levels for domestic and international experiences can be found under [Required Immunizations](#).

21.05a Students must complete the requirements in Exxat.

21.05b Students must update their immunization record and demonstrate compliance as required during their tenure in the Program. Students who do not have an approved immunization record on file will not be permitted to participate in coursework which **may result in a deduction from the student's grade for each component of any assessments.**

Student compliance with the Program's immunization policy will be documented by the Program.

21.05c Per CS 29 Students subject to this Policy can request an exemption from the eligible vaccine requirements. Exemption requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and can only be requested for medical reasons, or based on an individual's religious beliefs or practices, or strong moral/ethical conviction. Individuals granted an exemption may be subject to additional mitigation measures.

21.05d Exemptions accepted by the University related to vaccination requirements do not transfer or otherwise apply to clinical placements. Each student must also comply with the vaccination requirements for all clinical sites to which such student is assigned, and students are hereby advised that many clinical sites will not accept or approve exemptions to their vaccination requirements for students. Questions about vaccination requirements for clinical placement sites should be directed to the Director of Clinical Education. Students not complying with clinical rotation site requirements regarding vaccinations for health care workers may have their graduations delayed and/or may not be able to complete the program.

22.0 Drug Screening

22.01 The drug screening policy applies to all University of Pittsburgh Physician Assistant Studies Program students who are either 1) conditionally accepted applicants or 2) enrolled PA students. The procedure for urine drug screen can be found in the

22.02 A urine drug screen (UDS) is required of each conditionally accepted applicant prior to full admission, and at least annually thereafter for every continuing student.

22.02a As a prerequisite to participating in patient care, students may be required to undergo one or more random urine drug screens. Such randomized testing is necessary to adhere to our clinical affiliates' requirements.

22.02b Students must complete additional urine drug screens as required by clinical facilities. Depending on the specific clinical site requirements, this may need to be repeated annually or more frequently.

22.03 Conditionally accepted applicants who have an adverse finding on a UDS report may be denied full admission/matriculation, and current students will be disciplined in accordance with established University/PA Program policy.

22.03a Urine drug screening results that limit the Program's ability to secure clinical experiences may result in a student being unable to complete the program on time or be recommended for graduation.

22.04 Acceptance into and successful completion of the University of Pittsburgh PA Studies Program does not imply or guarantee that the student will be able to obtain state licensure upon graduation. The PA Program is committed to accepting and educating students who meet established standards for professionalism, are of high moral character, and are suitable candidates for professional certification or licensure.

23.0 Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards

23.01 Prevention Students are responsible for completing training aimed at preventing exposure to infectious and environmental hazards before students undertake any educational activities that would place them at risk. Students are responsible for following procedures aimed at preventing exposure to infectious and environmental hazards while participating in activities that may place them at risk. **ARC-PA Standard A3.08a (5th edition).**

23.01a Students must comply with the University of Pittsburgh Environmental Health and Safety, faculty, staff, TA, and supervised clinical practice experience preceptor recommendations on hazards to ensure a safe learning and work environment. A full list of recommendations and trainings can be found under [Infectious and Environmental Hazards Methods of Prevention](#).

23.01b Students must immediately notify faculty, staff, TA, and/or supervised clinical practice experience preceptors of safety concerns via phone call or email even if no exposure has occurred.

23.02 Procedures for Care and Treatment after Exposure: Students are responsible for alerting the program immediately and working with their instructor or preceptor to submit an incident report form within 24 hours for all program related injuries, including but not limited to infectious exposures, needle sticks, cuts, falls or other injuries. **ARC-PA Standard A3.08b (5th edition).**

23.02a Students are responsible for seeking initial care and follow up after an exposure to an infectious or environmental hazard.

- If non-emergency medical attention is needed and the student is close to the University's Pittsburgh Campus, the student may utilize the Student Health Services office for the evaluation.

Student Health Services
Nordenberg Hall-Wellness Center
119 University Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: 412-383-1800

Hours of Operation:

Monday, Wednesday 8:30a - 9:00p Eastern
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:30a-5:00p Eastern

- If emergency medical attention is needed or the Student Health Services Office is closed, the student may utilize UPMC Presbyterian Emergency Department. Phone: 412-647-3333,
- If the student is at a distant site for program-related activities, the student may contact Student Health or UPMC Presbyterian ED to determine appropriate treatment steps.

23.02b Students must adhere to applicable University, Program, and clinical site exposure to infectious and environmental hazards policies, including completing all required forms in the policy specified time frame.

23.02c Financial Responsibility: Any expenses occurring from any injury or exposure during any educational activity will be the financial responsibility of the student, to be

paid directly by the student or any applicable insurance policy that the student owns, according to plan coverage. **ARC-PA Standard A3.08c**