

Physician Assistant Program Student Handbook



DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION

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Dear Student:

Welcome to the Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program at Indiana State University (ISU). You have been selected because of your exceptional qualifications and potential to be successful in this rigorous medical program. The curriculum has been designed to aid you in your learning and focuses on a holistic approach to health care education. We believe you will find that the curriculum will provide you with the most advanced theory and clinically-relevant experiences.

This handbook has been prepared to document the policies and procedures that will guide your experience in the Program. This handbook provides direction to the PA-Students and the Professional Faculty/Staff while carrying out the normal daily activities of the program, and with making decisions about the quality of the curriculum and your academic progress. The materials have been developed to ensure that you have a quality experience and progress to graduation from a program of which you can be proud.

If you have any questions about this handbook or the policies and procedures that are documented, please contact me at any time.

Best wishes for a positive and rewarding learning experience.

Douglas Stevens, PA-C
Program Director, Physician Assistant Program

.....
I, _____, have read and understand the PA Policies and Procedures Handbook. I agree to abide by all policies found therein during my tenure in the program. If I fail to uphold this agreement, I am aware that I may be disciplined in accordance with program policy.

Student's Signature

Date

Please return to the Program Director each year/semester (and observe for updates on the [PA Website](#)).

**Students who do not submit form to the Program Director will be removed from all clinical responsibilities until the signed document is returned.

INTRODUCTION

This handbook contains useful information that will enable you to successfully progress in your physician assistant academic career at Indiana State University (*hereinafter referred to as ISU*). In addition to this handbook, you will find policies specific to graduate studies that apply to you in the current [Graduate Catalog](#).

INTRODUCTION TO INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Mission Statements

University - Indiana State University combines a tradition of strong undergraduate and graduate education with a focus on community and public service. We integrate teaching, research, and creative activity in an engaging, challenging, and supportive learning environment to prepare productive citizens for Indiana and the world.

College – The College is dedicated to fostering student excellence and developing productive citizens who function as skilled professionals. Further, we champion teaching, research, creative activities, community involvement through health initiatives, and life-long learning.

Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation (hereinafter referred to as the AMR Department) - The mission of the Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation is to provide excellence in inter-professional preparation / practice of collaborative healthcare and wellness. The department supports the development of productive citizens through mentorship in the quest for new knowledge and research, community engagement, clinical experience, service learning, and progressive comprehensive health care.

Physician Assistant Program - The mission of the Indiana State University Physician Assistant Program is to create a student-centered educational environment that engages individuals to become compassionate, competent physician assistants who possess the clinical skills to contribute positively to the dynamic health care needs of rural and underserved populations.

Vision Statements

University - Inspired by a shared commitment to improving our communities, Indiana State University will be known nationally for academic, cultural, and research opportunities designed to ensure the success of its people and their work.

College – The College will be recognized as a leader in providing qualified health and human service professionals who serve diverse populations through education, scholarship, innovation, service, and community engagement.

University Core Values

INTEGRITY - We demonstrate integrity through honesty, civility, and fairness.

SCHOLARSHIP - We value high standards for learning, teaching and inquiry.

TRANSFORMING - We foster personal growth within an environment in which every individual matters.

RESPONSIBILITY - We uphold the responsibility of university citizenship.

EDUCATION - We provide a well-rounded education that integrates professional preparation and study in the arts and sciences with co-curricular involvement.

EMBRACE DIVERSITY - We embrace the diversity of individuals, ideas, and expressions.

STEWARDSHIP - We exercise stewardship of our global community.

PA Program Goals:

To educate Physician Assistants to:

- Practice in a cost-effective and socially responsible manner, applying the principles of evidence-based medicine and critical thinking in clinical decision making.
- Practice compassionate primary care medicine, communicating effectively with patients and families.
- Partner with supervising physicians and other professional colleagues, including the need to serve rural and underserved areas.
- Utilize practice and system-based analysis to ensure patient well-being.
- Commit to high ethical standards responsive to the needs of the profession, the individual, and society.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Physician Assistant Committee (PAC)

The PAC is composed of the Medical Director, Program Director, and PA core faculty.

At the end of each semester, the PAC reviews the academic record of every PA student to determine academic standing. The PAC is empowered to apply the policies set forth in the PA Student Handbook. Determinations such as academic probation, professionalism probation, probationary leave, remedial assignments, and dismissal from the PA program or other decisions about a student's standing deemed appropriate are made by the PAC.

Academic Advisement Policy

Each student is assigned an academic advisor at the beginning of the year. The PA Program faculty advises students regarding their academic progress and provides support for their general adjustment to a rigorous graduate environment. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with their faculty advisor early in the academic year to discuss their academic and non-academic concerns.

We are committed to academic success. Students are encouraged to seek help from instructors as needed in a given course rather than waiting until examination time. Office hours are printed on course syllabi and posted outside the instructor's office.

Students and advisors should meet a minimum of one time per semester. Students may meet with their advisor more regularly, as needed. The main purpose of academic advisement is to help students achieve their educational goals. Academic advisors assist students with the following:

- Monitoring academic progress and reviewing study habits.
- Solving problems encountered in particular courses.
- Referring to other support services within the program and the college.
- Modifying course of study during the semester.
- Informing students about graduation requirements.

Faculty are not trained as professional counselors for the emotional problems of students. Advisors who assess that a student is in need of professional counseling and/or special services, e.g., testing for learning disabilities will refer the student to the Program Director who will then make a referral to the ISU Counseling Center.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

It is a requirement that you read and abide by the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#). The PA program adheres to the University policies and procedures defined within the ISU Graduate Catalog and the College of Health and Human Services Student Handbook. Academic integrity is a core value of our community of learners. Every

member of the academic community (students, faculty, and staff) is expected to maintain high standards of integrity in all facets of work and study. The Policy on Academic Integrity describes appropriate academic conduct in research, writing, assessment, and ethics.

Academic Probation

Academic probation is a conditional status designated by the PAC when a student violates one of the conditions set forth in the section on Academic Standards. The PAC renders decisions based on academic record, attendance and/or professional conduct. If the student fails progression in the program on two separate occasions, they are subject to removal from the program.

The decision of the PAC is conveyed to the student in writing (ie: email) and the student is referred to the Program Director. The student may request a reconsideration of the decision within 10 days by submitting a formal request for reconsideration in writing to the PAC c/o the Program Director. If reconsideration is requested, the PAC will convene promptly and submit their decision to the student in writing.

Students may appeal the PAC's decision to the Department Chair. If denied, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services. All appeals must be submitted within two weeks of the PAC's final decision with appropriate documentation in support of the appeal.

At the end of the each semester, the performance of the student on academic probation will be reviewed for the removal or continuation of the probationary status or dismissal from the program.

Professionalism Probation

Professionalism probation is a conditional status designated by the PAC when a student violates one of the conditions set forth in the section on Professionalism and /Attitude and /Civility Policy. If a student consistently shows unprofessional behavior during any phase of the program, they are subject to removal from the program.

The decision of the PAC is conveyed to the student in writing (ie: email) and the student is referred to the Program Director. The student may request a reconsideration of the decision within 10 days by submitting a formal request for reconsideration in writing to the PAC c/o the Program Director. If reconsideration is requested, the PAC will convene promptly and submit their decision to the student in writing.

Students may appeal the PAC's decision to the Department Chair. If denied, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services. All appeals must be submitted within two weeks of the PAC's final decision with appropriate documentation in support of the appeal.

At the end of the each semester, the performance of the student on professionalism probation will be reviewed for the removal or continuation of the probationary status or dismissal from the program.

Additional Expenses

Additional expenses may be incurred due to the cost of the National Criminal History Check, 10-panel drug screen, clinical and lab fees, required health insurance, and other miscellaneous costs. Clinical sites may require additional fees and documentation which may include but not limited to disability or liability insurance, boarding, and parking tags. Liability insurance information can be found at: <https://www.indstate.edu/risk-management/health-care-providers-liabilityprofessional-liability>

Admission Requirements

Admission requirements can be found at: <https://www.indstate.edu/health/physician-assistant-admission-criteria>

Attendance Policy

Because of the rigorous nature of the program, students are required to attend all course lectures, laboratories, preceptorships, call-back events and seminars. The importance of attending all scheduled activities is emphasized and is expected. **Each unexcused absence may result in a reduction of the final grade, at the**

discretion of the instructor (ie, one letter grade = 10 points). Excessive unexcused absences or lateness from any course (including preceptorships) in the curriculum may be grounds for sanction and dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to observe the following policies:

A. Excused Absences:

Absence from any clinical placement or laboratory setting is highly discouraged and must be made up to the satisfaction of the instructor or the grade may be adjusted as per the course syllabus.

1. **All** unanticipated absences due to illness, accident or other unexpected events may be considered excused if **reported immediately** to the Program Director and instructor/preceptor responsible for the missed event or class. The program administration recognizes that unexpected events do occur. Attendance will be recorded during each class session. **If you must be absent, please call (Didactic Coordinator: Chelsea Elwood PA-C, 812-821-0391) and/or leave a message for the Program Director before the start of the activity.**
2. Absences requested for elective physician/dentist appointments for student or dependents will be considered excused only if the request is made at least 48 hours in advance of the appointment. Students absent from class for physician/dentist appointments must present a note from the physician/dentist confirming the appointment. Due to the intense nature of the curriculum, students are strongly encouraged to schedule appointments for evening and weekend hours to avoid class conflicts. Administrative assistants will maintain a record of medical absence in individual student files.
3. All requests for other anticipated absences must be submitted in writing (email) to the Program Director and course instructors prior to the proposed absence. Requests will be considered on an individual basis and written notification will be provided to the student within one week of receipt of request.

B. Unexcused Absences:

1. Any absence which does not fall into the above category, will be considered unexcused and will be recorded. The final course grade will be reduced.
2. Students whose absence is determined to be unexcused will be required to provide a written explanation within 48 hours regarding the circumstances of his/her absence to the PA Program Director. This explanation, in almost all cases, will not eliminate the grade change.
3. Poor attendance may be considered in the deliberations of the PAC as part of academic progress.
4. Absences on the first or last day of a clinical rotation, course or lecture series; on the day of a scheduled exam; after or before a scheduled break, vacation or weekend are considered unexcused unless prior written approval has been granted. If such an absence is the result of a sudden unavoidable circumstance, the PA Program Director and/or course instructor should be notified as soon as possible and provided with a written explanation for the absence.

Failure to report an absence is considered more significant than the absence itself. The attendance policy is very clear and provides all students with guidelines for requesting excused absences. Disregarding the policy is considered a breach of professionalism and will impact course grades.

Bloodborne Pathogens/Infectious Diseases

Among healthcare professionals, risks for percutaneous and mucosal exposures to blood vary during the training and working career of each person but are often highest during the professional training period. Exposure to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus is most feared because of the consequences, but Hepatitis B and C also may be acquired via this route.

The University has developed a program to protect faculty, staff and students who have occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials. This Blood borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan, complies with the requirements of the OSHA Blood borne Pathogens Standard, 29CFR 1910.1030, the Indiana

Administrative Code 410 IAC 1-4 and identifies procedures to eliminate or reduce the risk of contracting a blood borne disease in the workplace. A copy of the Blood borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan is available in the Environmental Safety Office (Room 1221 in College of Business Building). The Blood borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan applies to all employees of Indiana State University, including part-time and temporary staff, who may as a part of their employment be exposed to blood, infected lab animals, or other potentially infectious material.

Health care and laboratory employees whose work may involve the risk of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials may include, but are not limited to, the following: physicians, nurses, nurse's aides, physician assistants, phlebotomists, medical technologists, therapists, athletic trainers, research laboratory personnel, research scientists, and animal laboratory personnel. Others whose positions may include some occupational exposure tasks include employees in law enforcement, custodial/housekeeping services, laundry services, maintenance, child care, equipment technicians, transportation service workers, or couriers involved in delivery and transport of potentially infectious materials.

Universal precautions refer to approaches to infection control in which all human blood and certain human body fluids are treated as if known to be infectious for HIV, HBV, HCV or other blood borne pathogens. Using this assumption when dealing with infectious materials eliminates the need for decision-making in regards to the extent of actual or potential disease hazards. The approach establishes minimum standards for contamination control that will effectively control blood borne pathogens if present. Universal precautions shall be observed to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. In situations where differentiation between body fluid types is difficult or impossible (i.e., uncontrolled or emergency situations), all body fluids shall be considered potentially infectious.

Clinical Year Policies

Students must successfully complete all the didactic coursework of the PA curriculum before assignment to the clinical phase of the program. During the second year (clinical phase) of the program, students are assigned to 11 clinical rotations. All students **MUST** read and acknowledge understanding of the PA Clinical Year Manual prior to engaging the Clinical Rotations.

The student will be learning FULL-TIME, for four weeks per rotation, under the supervision of a preceptor. Students are expected to totally immerse themselves in the clinical experience by participating in hospital rounds, grand rounds, and other available clinical educational endeavors. The student will be required to stand call when the preceptor is on call or at the request of the preceptor. The total number of hours of participation per week may exceed forty hours. Students are required to participate in 152 hours of clinical practice and obtain at least 160 patient encounters per four-week rotation. Students will be expected to work the normal hours of the practice. Students must maintain health insurance throughout the program. Failure to do so may result in removal from a clinical rotation and a delay in completing program requirements

The student is financially responsible for the purchase of books, lab coats, scrubs, and other materials essential to clinical practice assignments.

The student must abide by the Clinical Education Site (preceptor, facility, hospital) rules and regulations. **The clinical site reserves the right to cancel any preceptorship, at any time without notice and without cause. The decision of the clinical site is final. Students will be reassigned.**

Any student problem arising during the course of the clinical experience shall be discussed jointly by the preceptor and the Clinical Coordinator. The Clinical Education Site reserves the right to dismiss, at any time, any student whose condition or conduct jeopardizes the well-being of patients/clients and employees of the Clinical Education Site. This dismissal may, in most cases, result in a failing grade for that rotation. **Authorized withdrawals are not available in these situations.** The student's academic and clinical record will then be brought before the PAC for consideration.

Students may make requests, in writing, to the Clinical Coordinator, for specific clinical education sites. These requests should be made at least four months prior to the beginning of the clinical year. For a new clinical education site, the student must fill out an information form about the site and initiate contact with the preceptor.

These requests do not guarantee the use of the clinical education site or placement in that specific site; these are only requests until the Clinical Coordinator confirms the site can meet the program's objectives for clinical education.

The program reserves the right to limit placement with new preceptors or distant sites based on clinical performance, preceptor feedback, and academic standing. Students are prohibited from changing clinical assignments without prior authorization of the Clinical Coordinator. The final decision regarding all clinical placements rests with the Clinical Coordinator.

The student is financially responsible for travel and housing arrangements throughout the clinical year. While the program is committed to working with students regarding distant sites, the program cannot guarantee placement in specific areas. Students will be assigned to some sites outside of Terre Haute proper.

Code of Conduct for Students and Instructors

The Code of Conduct, as published by the ISU Student Judicial Programs, reflects general principles of behavior accepted by society and by institutions of higher education: [Student Conduct and Integrity](#)

In addition to the Code of Conduct the PA Program requests the following for students:

- If pagers or cellular phones are worn, they must be on vibrate or silent alert status. Students should never leave class to answer a page. Interrupting a professor's class with personal phone calls or pages is highly discourteous. Students should never use cellular communication during lecture or class activities.
- Students may not bring children to class. The content of the PA curriculum is not appropriate for minors.
- Students are expected to act professionally with all Facebook use, which includes posts, pictures, and any other function of Facebook. Facebook usage will be prohibited during any class time. HIPAA guidelines must be followed with all Facebook use. It is recommended that students adjust privacy settings on their personal accounts and associated groups to limit access to their personal account. Any violation of HIPAA or unprofessional conduct will be reviewed by the PAC for disciplinary consideration and may result in removal from the program. Any violation of HIPAA or unprofessional conduct may also prevent the student from obtaining future licensing and may have legal ramifications.

Students should be aware that the PA Program regards all faculty as professional with the highest standards of ethical conduct. Professionalism is clearly important not only for our program, profession and university, but for our students as well.

The following are parts of the code of ethics designed by the American Psychological Association, which we have adopted for the PA Program. Only those that pertain to our program faculty have been included.

"The teacher should encourage students in their quest for knowledge, giving them every assistance in the free exploration of ideas. Teaching frequently and legitimately involves presentation of disquieting facts and controversial theories and it is in the examination of perplexing issues that students most need the guidance of a good teacher. Disturbing concepts should not be withheld from students simply because some individual may be distressed by them. When issues are relevant, they should be given full and objective discussion so that students can make intelligent decisions with regard to them. However, presentation of ideas likely to be difficult for some students to accept should be governed by tact and respect for the worth of the individual.

Differing approaches to one's discipline should be presented to students in such a way as to encourage them to study the relevant facts and draw their own conclusions. Free expression of both criticism and support of the various approaches is to be encouraged as essential to the development of individual students and the field. In dealing with an area of specialization other than his or her own, a teacher should make it clear that he or she is not speaking as a specialist. In attempting to make an understandable and interesting presentation of subject matter to students, an instructor should not sacrifice adequacy of treatment to consideration of popular appeal.

A teacher should respect a student's right to privacy and not require students to give information that they may wish to withhold; neither should the teacher reveal information that a student has given with reasonable assumption that it will be held in confidence.

A teacher should require of students only activities that are designed to contribute to the student in the area of instruction. Other activities not related to course objective and not having secondary values should be made available to students on a voluntary basis. Exploitation of students to obtain research data or assistance with the teacher's own work is unethical.

Faculty members advising students electing their own field, as a major field of study with the intent of entering the profession should be sure that students understand opportunities and requirements in the field.”

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment, education or living environment. (McKeachi, W.J., 1986) Sexual harassment is illegal under U.S. Law. The PA Program will not tolerate sexual misconduct on the part of either faculty or students.

McKeachie, W. J. (1986). *Teaching tips: A guidebook for the beginning college teacher* (8th ed.).
Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company.

Contact Information

Email correspondence will be addressed to you via your ISU email account which you should check on a daily basis, Monday through Friday. Throughout your enrollment at ISU, it will be your responsibility to keep the PA Program informed of changes in your personal contact information.

Course Evaluation

Each semester, after completion of coursework, you will be required to complete a brief Course Evaluation which is designed to evaluate your perception of the effectiveness of your learning experience during that semester.

Curriculum Sequence

Spring I	Didactic Year	Credits	Summer II	Clinical	Credits
PASS 610	Bioscience	8	PASS 673	Women's Health Rotation	3
PASS 611	Physical Diagnosis	2	PASS 674	Internal Medicine Rotation	3
PASS 617	Intro to PA Practice	3	PASS 675	Geriatrics Rotation	3
PASS 619	Cardiopulmonary	2		Semester Total	9
PASS 635	Applied Research	2			
	Semester Total	17			
Summer I	Didactic Year	Credits	Fall II	Clinical	Credits
PASS 620	Clinical Medicine I	4	PASS 655	Clinical Project	1
PASS 621	Medical Genetics	1	PASS 676	Behavioral Medicine Rotation	3
PASS 622	Specialty Care I	2	PASS 677	Pediatrics Rotation	3
PASS 623	Specialty Care II	2	PASS 678	Floating Rotation	3
PASS 624	Pharmacotherapeutics I	3		Semester Total	10
PASS 626	Clinical Management I	3			
PASS 628	General Surgery	1			
	Semester Total	16			
Fall I	Didactic Year	Credits	Spring III	Clinical/Didactic	Credits
PASS 613	Clinical Diagnostics	1	PASS 679	Elective Rotation I	3
PASS 630	Clinical Medicine II	4	PASS 680	Elective Rotation II	3
PASS 632	Specialty Care III	3	PASS 686	Clinical Management III	3
PASS 633	Specialty Care IV	2	PASS 687	PA Practice Transition	4
				Semester Total	13

PASS 634	Pharmacotherapeutics II	3		
PASS 636	Clinical Management II	3		
	Semester Total	16	Didactic Course Total	60
			Clinical Course Total	33
			Program Total Credits	93

Spring II	Clinical	Credits
PASS 643	Clinical Skills	3
PASS 670	Family Medicine Rotation	3
PASS 671	Emergency Medicine Rotation	3
PASS 672	General Surgery Rotation	3
	Semester Total	12

Disability Support Policy

ISU seeks to provide effective services and accommodations for qualified individuals with documented disabilities. If you require a special accommodation because of a documented disability, you are required to register with the [Student Academic Services Center](#) at the beginning of your academic career.

Driving Policy

A student must plan for individual travel and is responsible for her/his own transportation, assumes responsibility for arrangements and travel costs for individual clinical experiences. A student of the Physician Assistant Program is not allowed to transport patients in her/his private vehicle for any purpose.

Emergency Services/Natural or Catastrophic Events

In the event that a catastrophic event occurs on a local, regional, or national level and disables communication to/from ISU, you should provide for your own and your family’s safety and contact your instructors by phone, private email, or through alternately provided numbers. Every effort on the faculty’s part will be made to reasonably attempt to continue with the course and to meet the course objectives. If, for any reason, there is no internet or telephone communication available for an extended period of time, postal service will be used and, in this instance, you will be awarded incomplete grades until revised completion plans can be determined. The [Department of Public Safety](#) website provides valuable information about the emergency response plan and other documents concerning student and faculty safety.

Employment Policy

Historically, some students in professional practice education have been successfully employed part-time while completing studies. However, experience has shown employment during this program is problematic and results in decreased success. For that reason, we strongly discourage students from working during the entire length of this program. If employment is essential, please consult with your faculty advisor about scheduling. **The PAC must be informed in writing of the student's work schedule each semester.** Employment is not considered an appropriate rationale for “excused absences.” The PA Program schedule and that of our clinical affiliates always has priority.

Evaluation

The following scale is used for the PA Program grade determination. Courses from other departments may use different scales for grades, which will be reflected in the course syllabus.

A+	94	B+	84	C+	74	F	<70
A	90	B	80	C	70		
A-	87	B-	77				

A. Good Academic Standing

A student's academic standing is based on the grades recorded with the Registrar. Students must maintain a semester GPA of 3.0 to remain in good standing in the program. If a student's GPA falls below 3.0 for a semester, then they will be placed on academic probation. If a student has two consecutive semesters below 3.0, then the student may be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the PAC.

B. Minimum Passing Grade

Any course grade below a "C" is failing and the course must be repeated when offered again (this could be the following year). If the student receives a failing grade upon repeating the course, then they will be dismissed from the program. Any exam grade below a "C" is failing and must be remediated according to the Guidelines for Remediation and Deceleration listed on page 18 of the PA Handbook.

C. Classroom and Clinical Evaluation

In the classroom and laboratory settings students may be evaluated by written examinations, case presentations, group projects, written assignments, graded lab work and practical examinations. Evaluations may also be based on class participation and class presentations. The faculty has the autonomy to select the specific method of evaluation used in individual courses. Evaluation methods will be provided to the student in the course syllabus. Many course syllabi are available electronically and may be reviewed in the classroom. Syllabi are tentative and may be modified by the instructor to best meet the educational objectives of the course. While on clinical rotations, students are evaluated on oral and written communication skills, interpersonal skills, professionalism, medical knowledge, correlative abilities, technical skills, and PA role performance. Students are evaluated by their preceptor and by examination.

D. Submission of Grades

The PA Program requests that program faculty members submit grades to the student body within one week of the administration of an exam, if possible. Grades may be distributed to the students by the staff/faculty in either hard copy or electronic media. Students with unsatisfactory performance on an examination are expected to meet immediately with instructors and/or course coordinators to discuss plans of action.

E. Grade Appeals

Please refer to the current [Graduate Catalog](#) for policies and procedures related to grade appeals.

F. Review of Examinations

Copies of individual examinations are temporarily on file in the Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation Department. Due to the nature of exam material, students will not be allowed to keep or obtain a copy of any examination. Students may access their examinations for review by appointment with their instructor.

Instructors are requested to review course exams with the class to ensure that the examination process becomes a learning experience.

Sharing information about PA Program evaluation instruments is considered unethical. The practice of copying or maintaining old test files for classmates and future students is prohibited. Knowledge of such actions may result in the administration of new tests to said students, validation of prior scores, and/or dismissal/sanctions based on the PAC action.

Examinations

Examinations are noted on the syllabus. Changes in the schedule will be communicated as soon as possible.

The program encourages, but does not demand, faculty to announce the exam length and format in advance of the examination date. More time may be allotted on the class schedule than may be needed for an exam. Course instructors designate the amount of time that students have to complete an examination.

Late arriving students may be excluded from the examination room. Additional testing time may not be allowed for late arriving students. Instructors may use their discretion to determine additional testing time or student

exclusion. Unexcused absences during examinations may result in a grade of “0”. Special arrangements may be granted for excused absences at the discretion of the instructor.

Students are prohibited from possessing any device capable of transmitting text, voice, or photos during examinations (unless specifically allowed, in writing, by the course instructor).

Fair Practice Work Policy

A Fair Practice Work Policy protects students from assuming the role of their credentialed supervisor, preceptor, professor, or clinical instructor. Students should be supervised in their field and clinical experiences and should not be serving as a workforce. Physician Assistant students should be supervised at all times and final decision making/patient care is the responsibility of the preceptor. All documentation regarding patient care must be reviewed and signed by the clinical preceptor.

Graduation

Graduation is dependent upon the successful completion of all courses and PA Program requirements. The PA Program and Registrar will review all student records prior to notifying the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). **Successful completion the ISU Physician Assistant Program entails:**

- Completing the Patient Record Portfolio (Case Log)
- Completing the Procedure Log
- Completing 44 weeks of clinical education and receiving eleven (11) passing grades, 40% of which comes from preceptors and includes an assessment of professionalism and adherence to acceptable standards of ethical conduct
- Passing all required PA courses and maintaining a minimum GPA of 3.0
- Meeting all curriculum requirements as published by the Registrar’s Office

Graduation from an ARC-PA accredited physician assistant program is required before a student may sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). For more information on certification and testing requirements please visit the [NCCPA](#).

Eligibility to “walk” onstage at graduation is determined by the Registrar’s Office. A student may successfully complete program requirements, yet have his or her degree officially conferred at a later time. All students must officially submit a request to graduate to the Registrar’s Office during the final year of the program. No degrees will be conferred if transcripts or fees are outstanding.

Health Insurance

All PA students are required to have health insurance. Documentation of health insurance coverage is required prior to participation in clinical education.

ISU does not assume responsibility for health-care-related costs arising from the illness or injury of a student.

HIPAA and /Patient Confidentiality and /Care

The ISU PA Program complies with all federal laws related to the confidentiality of student/patient/client medical information, including the Privacy Regulations issued pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). You are required to comply with such laws and the medical record confidentiality policies and procedures of any health care encounters you are assigned. Violation of HIPAA will result in your dismissal from the program.

All data gathered about a patient and his/her illness, including all items within a patient's medical history, is privileged information. Students should not discuss a patient's records in a manner or a situation that would reveal any information about that patient or his/her records to persons not involved in the patient's care or not part of the health care team. Charts or contents, e.g. lab reports, etc., are not to be removed from the hospital or

clinical setting. If photocopies of work are to be submitted to the program for evaluation, all specific references to the patient (i.e. name, address, and identification number) must be deleted.

Reference, at any time, to a patient in a dehumanizing or insensitive manner is not professional and **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**. The PAC will review such an infraction.

It is the student's responsibility to insure that ALL patients are also seen by the supervising preceptor. A patient should never be discharged without consulting with the preceptor. The student is to present each patient to their supervising preceptor for approval of entries into the medical record. All medical records must have the signature of a supervising preceptor. Each patient note should state the patient was seen and examined by the preceptor, and contain an entry from the supervising preceptor.

To protect the well-being of patients:

- A student, under NO circumstance may give a verbal order to any other health professional.
- A student, under NO circumstance may give written orders to be carried out without the supervising preceptor's approval and signature.
- A student under NO circumstances may sign prescriptions. The only signature that should appear on a prescription is that of the supervising physician or licensed physician assistant.

These guidelines must be strictly adhered to for the students' protection and the protection of the patients seen by students.

Illness Policy

Any student with a potentially communicable disease state that places patients in immediate danger should remove themselves from both the classroom and clinical components of the program. Students may return 24 hours after resolution of their symptoms. Please consult with your personal health care provider for guidance. Symptoms which should prompt evaluation for classroom and workplace fitness include but are not limited to:

- Acute phase of an upper respiratory infection
- Acute sore throat
- Fever over 100.5 F°
- Vomiting within the previous 24 hours
- Acute phase of mononucleosis
- Bacterial sinus infection
- Conjunctivitis
- Antibiotic treatment for less than 48 hours
- Open wounds/infectious skin disorders that are uncovered and/or untreated
- Suffering from any condition in an infectious state

The University Pandemic Influenza policy and COVID-19 Policy can be accessed at the [University H1N1 Policy](#) and [COVID-19 Policy and Updates](#) All faculty, staff, students, and clinical preceptors are expected to follow the University policy.

The PA preceptors and educators reserve the right to excuse any student for the day that may place patients, staff or students at risk of a communicable disease.

Immunizations and /Health Examinations

The Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) strongly recommends that all healthcare workers (including students in medical disciplines) be vaccinated against (or have documented immunity to) hepatitis B, influenza, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella. All students attending a college or university in the state of Indiana must provide verification related to Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Meningococcal. Additionally, some clinical sites may require additional screening or verification of immunization status.

Physician assistant students are at risk for exposure to and possible transmission of vaccine-preventable diseases because of their contact with patients or infective material from patients. Among healthcare professionals, risks for percutaneous and mucosal exposures to blood vary during the training and working career of each person but are often highest during the professional training period. Maintenance of immunity is therefore an essential part of our prevention and infection control program. Optimal use of immunizing agents and screenings safeguards the health of students and protects patients from becoming infected through exposure to infected workers. Therefore, all students enrolled in the ISU PA Program must provide documentation that he or she is compliant with all required immunizations or he/she will not be allowed to participate in the laboratory or clinical portions of the program.

All students are required to submit documentation of a physical health evaluation prior to enrolling in the program. To be compliant, the health evaluation must confirm that a student is:

- Free of any communicable disease which could jeopardize the health of patients or fellow classmates, and is
- Capable of performing the work assigned to him/her in the practice setting as a physician assistant student.

The Registrar and PA program is responsible for verifying each student's immunization and health status. As required by the ARC-PA, all health records are confidential and are not accessible to or reviewed by program faculty and staff. At least annually, the staff of the PA program will request verification of compliance for all students enrolled in the program.

All students must remain compliant with the above health policy. If a student fails to comply with the immunization and health status verification process, the student will be unable to register for courses and will be removed from participation in any clinical situation, including removal from a clinical rotation.

Some clinical affiliates (e.g. hospitals) may require that a student receive additional vaccinations, and/or have antibody titers drawn for specific conditions to meet variable state and/or institutional regulations. Moreover, at times, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices or Indiana Department of Health may revise their guidelines without prior notice. In these unforeseen instances, the student will be responsible for the cost of compliance.

All students must sign a record release form so that health related information can be forwarded to clinical education sites, if and when requested. Additionally, all students will be provided an up-to-date file verifying their compliance prior to beginning supervised clinical experiences. This file should be made readily available for hospital and facility administrators responsible for verifying student immunization and health status. If you have questions regarding your ability to comply with the above health policy, please contact the Program Director.

Requests for waivers and exemptions will be reviewed and adjudicated by the PAC based on accepted standards of practice as recommended by the CDC, and applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

National Criminal Background Check and /Drug Screening

Physician Assistants are qualified healthcare professionals who serve the public. As such, the AMR Department has adopted a criminal background check policy for its students to protect involved parties and ensure legal safety to individuals served during clinical education experiences. This policy serves to protect the department, university, clinical sites, recipients of medical services (i.e. the public), and students. However, this policy does not support the exclusion of applicants solely on the basis of a prior felony conviction. ISU and the AMR Department reserve the right to evaluate self-disclosed and national criminal background check reports and drug screens to determine the severity of the offense and potential endangerment to the public and ISU affiliations. Students who pose a clear threat to the safety and security of the public, ISU, or ISU affiliations and/or whose convictions are deemed to impede their ability to perform specified requirements of the PA Program shall not be admitted, or be dismissed from the Clinical Year at Indiana State University. Students may appeal PAC decisions in writing.

- All students will undergo a Criminal Background Check prior to enrollment which will be valid until graduation.
- Criminal background checks and drug screens will be kept in your student file, are considered confidential, and no results will be released.

Personal Appearance

Personal appearance is extremely important to facilitate acceptance by other health professionals and patients. A professional/conservative appearance can aid in establishing patient confidence and trust, even for a clinician that has limited experience. The appearance of one individual is often generalized to the entire profession. Your conformity to these requirements will aid in motivating the preceptors, potential preceptors, hospital administrators, and staff members to help you get the clinical exposure you need to be a great physician assistant. In addition clinical rotations may require extensive physical exertion. For example, students may be required to perform CPR, assist in the reduction of dislocations, position patients, or play with children. Thus, appropriate dress must also consider comfort and the work environment.

Personal appearance during assigned clinical experiences:

- Short clean white “intern” style lab coats/jackets must be worn at ALL times, except if the institution’s policy prohibits their use.
- Proper name identification badges, that are provided free by the university (a minimal cost to the student may be incurred for lost badges), must be worn at ALL times, without exceptions. In addition, you may also be required to wear a hospital identification badge.
 - In professional interactions with patients and others, a student must always introduce him or herself by their full name and identify themselves as an ISU physician assistant student.
 - In all professional communications, students will introduce him/herself as an ISU physician assistant student. No student will casually accept a “page” with the title “doctor”.
 - Students must use the designation ‘PA-Student’ following all notations in charts, records, and other medical forms. The abbreviation ‘PA-S’ is less familiar and should be avoided to prevent confusion as to title.
- The ISU PA Program embroidery must be placed on the right breast of your lab coat.
- Each student is expected to present a neat appearance at all times.
- Students should consider the image projected to the patient and others with regards to hairstyle, beards and mustaches. Hair must be clean and well groomed. Students with long hair will be expected to wear a suitable style while on duty.
- Clothes should be clean and conservative. Safety and professionalism must be considered at all times when evaluating hemlines and necklines. A shirt and tie with conservative dress slacks are considered appropriate dress for male students. Jeans are not acceptable or appropriate dress for either male or female students.
- Shoes should be well fitted and kept presentable. “Tennis shoes”, “joggers”, “sneakers”, and other forms of athletic shoes are not considered appropriate attire. The only exception is while wearing scrubs.
- Sandals and other forms of open-toed shoes are not considered appropriate attire.
- Excessive jewelry is a safety risk for students. Necklaces, bracelets, piercings, and long earrings can inadvertently cause harm to the student and/or patient.

A student failing to maintain a professional personal appearance may be removed from the clinical site by a preceptor or program faculty member. Removal may have course grade implications.

Probationary Leave

The PAC may impose probationary leave for a maximum of one year for a student who has failed to satisfactorily complete a course(s) or is failing to adhere to the policies and procedures of the PA Program.

Probationary leave that extends beyond one year will require students to immediately discontinue his/her course of study as a full-time student in the PA Program. During probationary leave students must successfully retake courses at ISU. Academic probation will likely result in prolonged time to graduation. Students must also attend

other courses if designated by the PAC. Upon return to full-time status in the program, the student will be maintained on academic probation and evaluated by the PAC following completion of the semester of return.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, the PAC will impose the probationary leave option to a student only once in his/her course of study.

Professionalism and /Attitude and /Civility Policy

Students are professional trainees and representatives of ISU and the physician assistant profession. Students encounter patients, families, and a variety of health professionals during both their didactic and clinical education. The quality of the training that ISU offers is dependent on the spirit of cooperation that is given by various healthcare sites.

In both the didactic and clinical settings, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the standards of an institution of higher education and are required to abide by the highest codes of academic honesty, ethical fitness, and professional conduct. All Physician Assistant students must be of good moral character to participate in clinical experiences and have contact with patients.

All students are expected to act in a mature, professional manner at all times. Any incident of rude or disrespectful behavior toward faculty, patients, preceptors, staff members, ancillary help, nurses, or any other allied health professional will be dealt with in a prompt manner and may impact course grades. This behavior will be brought to the attention of the Program Director and the PAC who have authority to recommend disciplinary action. All students will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Always address adult patients and their family members by using the appropriate prefix (i.e. Mr., Ms., or Dr.) along with their last name.
- Always address your faculty member or preceptor properly (i.e. Dr. x or Mr. /Ms. /Mrs.). If the faculty member or preceptor states that you may call him/her by their first names you may do so, however, never in the presence of patients, administrators, or other professionals.
- Only observe and/or participate in the care of patients that have been specifically assigned to you by the preceptor/instructor.
- Confine your clinical activities to only areas that have been previously cleared through the program.

Professional characteristics key to the development of a health care provider include, but are not limited to:

- Ethical conduct and honesty; (including academic honesty)
- Integrity;
- Ability to recognize one's limitations and accept constructive criticism;
- Concern for oneself, others, and the rights of privacy;
- Appropriate value judgment with respect to interpersonal relationships with peers, superiors, patients, and their families;
- Responsibility to duty;
- An appearance consistent with a clinical professional;
- Respectful and appropriate interactions with peers, faculty members, and any individual associated with the program;
- Punctual attendance at all program scheduled activities and adherence to deadlines set by the faculty and preceptors;
- Obeying the laws of society

Students have a portion of their course grades evaluated according to observed behavioral and attitudinal criteria felt to be important to the development of a physician assistant. These include qualities such as personal honesty, reliability, punctuality, attendance, initiative, ability to accept constructive criticism, interest in work, attention to dress codes, relating appropriately with co-workers and other health care professionals as well as patients, fostering confidence in his/her competence among patients, peers and supervisors, and demonstrating adequate and appropriate confidence in his/her abilities.

Unsatisfactory clinical evaluations regarding performance of the student in the student-patient-staff relationships will impact course grades. Unsatisfactory performance includes deviation from appropriate codes of conduct expected of a physician assistant student. The PAC will consider reports of student unsatisfactory performance to determine appropriate action.

A student may be removed at any time from a clinical experience at the discretion of the PA Program Director or the preceptor for failing to meet behavioral and attitudinal criteria. The decision to award a failing grade due to acts of unprofessional conduct (e.g. failing to meet behavioral and attitudinal criteria) rests with the course instructor. Clinical evaluations by preceptors which include unsatisfactory evaluations in the categories listed above will have course grade implications. Substantiated claims of unprofessional conduct will impact course grades and may be brought to the attention of the PAC for disciplinary consideration. At the end of each semester, a Professionalism Evaluation will be completed on each student by their advisor. Any behavioral or professionalism issues that are found will be brought before the PAC.

Social Media Use

Students are expected to act professionally with all social media use, which includes posts, pictures, and any other function of the site. Social media usage will be prohibited during any class time. HIPAA guidelines must be followed with all Social media use. It is recommended that students adjust privacy settings on their personal accounts and associated groups to limit access to their personal account. Any violation of HIPAA or unprofessional conduct will be reviewed by the PAC for disciplinary consideration and may result in removal from the program. Any violation of HIPAA or unprofessional conduct may also prevent the student from obtaining future licensing and may have legal ramifications.

Remediation and /Deceleration

Goals of Remediation/Deceleration:

- To assist the student in mastering an area of study in which they have exhibited weakness.

Guidelines for Remediation/Deceleration:

- If a student receives a grade of less than 70% out of a possible 100% on an exam*, they will have a mandatory meeting with the faculty instructor. At this meeting, the area covered by the exam* will be discussed. Any areas of deficiency will be clarified. The student will be required to retake the exam. The exam must be readministered within 2 weeks of the initial exam. The grade may be remediated to a maximum grade of 70% as a result of the retake according to the following:
 - A student may only adjust 2 remediation exams* per semester up to 70%. Any further grades below minimum standards will stand. However, the student must take a make-up exam if they had a grade below 70% even if the calculated final grade is above 70% (this is to make certain that the material is learned prior to moving on).
 - If a student receives a grade <70% more than twice in a semester, the program faculty will impose academic probation.
- *Exams = exams, papers, presentations, or clerkships

Roles and Responsibilities of Department and Program Members

Department Chair – Direct oversight of undergraduate and graduate programs within the Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Program Directors – Manage individual programs within the Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Medical Director – Provides support within the Physician Assistant Program in ensuring that both didactic instruction and supervised clinical practice experiences meet current practice standards.

Faculty – Manage and direct courses and facilitate student learning outcomes and course objectives for individual courses. Also provides advising for students within the Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Preceptor – Facilitate and evaluate clinical experiences and provides direct supervision of students in the clinical setting.

Student Services Assistant – Provides student guidance, manages student files, facilitates admission process and procedures documentation for verification and accreditation.

Administrative Assistant – Provides administrative support to the Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Schedule

Course schedules are prepared by the Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation Department and distributed by the Registrar's Office prior to each semester, subject to change as deemed necessary to meet the needs of the students, faculty, and institution. Scheduling after the first semester is variable. The program makes every attempt to offer ample advance notice related to any schedule changes. Coursework is offered during both the day and evening hours.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated within the ISU Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation Department or any of the facilities that ISU students operate in. All students are expected to read and adhere to the [ISU Sexual Harassment Policy](#).

Student Grievance Policy

All grievances should be formally filed following the [College of Health and Human Services Grievance Policy](#).

Student Records

The Physician Assistant Program Office maintains a student file on every student and for five years post-graduation which includes copies of communication sent or received pertaining to the student and his/her course of academic and clinical studies student advisement sessions, preceptor's evaluation of student forms, course registration, admissions' application, and grade reports. Students have access to their own file by asking the PA faculty or the Student Support Specialist. Files are kept in a locked cabinet within a locked room by the Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation Department. The Registrar's Office maintains a permanent electronic file/transcript indefinitely.

Sycamore Express for Graduate Students

[Sycamore Express](#) provides one-stop answers and assistance for currently enrolled ISU graduate students and can be a valuable resource to you.

Withdrawal/Time-Off/Leave of Absence

Please refer to the current ISU Catalog for policies and procedures related to leaves of absence or withdrawal. Due to the sequential nature of the PA curriculum, any student planning to take a leave of absence must meet with the PA Program Director to determine when the student may return to their studies within the PA Program. Each clinical course is a pre-requisite for the next. Withdrawal is highly discouraged and can result in prolonged time to graduation. The program will not authorize selective withdrawals for academic reasons (failing a course) to avoid sanctions by the PAC. In cases of prolonged absence from the academic program (> 3 yrs) the PAC will review course curricula to determine consistency with current requirements prior to re-enrollment.

The PA Program reserves the right to change, without notice, any statement in this Handbook concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, fees, curricula, and courses. Such changes shall be

effective whenever determined by the appropriate faculty and administrative bodies and shall govern both old and new students.

ISU does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or veteran status. In line with its commitment to equal opportunity, the University will recruit, hire, promote, educate, and provide services to persons based upon their individual qualifications meeting established criteria.

ISU is committed to affirmative action for employees and students through active recruitment, promotion, retention, and enrollment of minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and veterans.

The University subscribes to, and abides by, all federal and state legislation and regulations regarding discrimination.

PAC Approved – 1/20/16

SAC Approved – 2/6/17

PAC Approve _ 10/18/19