

STUDENT GUIDELINES

DEPARTMENT OF

Physician Assistant Studies



Department of Physician Assistant Studies
School of Health Professions
The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

May 2022

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Dear Physician Assistant Students,

On behalf of the faculty and staff, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Department of Physician Assistant Studies. You are commencing a course of instruction that will prepare you for one of the most exciting and in-demand health professions in the United States.

During the next thirty months, you will experience a curriculum that will be very challenging, yet personally and professionally rewarding. Your progression through the didactic and clinical curriculum will require a tremendous personal investment of time and effort. As a result of your investment, we are confident that you will become competent providers ready to care for a diverse and dynamic patient population. As you begin your journey, please know that we, the faculty and staff, are always available to assist you throughout this process.

Each of you have studied and worked hard to be here and we are confident that you will continue to do the work to ensure your ongoing success. We are all very excited about your futures. In order to prepare you for your next steps, please take the time to carefully read these Student Guidelines and familiarize yourself with the contents. The Student Guidelines will prove to be an excellent resource throughout your time at UT Southwestern in the PA program.

We sincerely look forward to getting to know each and every one of you. Welcome to PA school!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Temple Howell-Stampley', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Temple Howell-Stampley, MD, MBA, MACP
P. Eugene Jones Ph.D., PA-C Professorship in Physician Assistant Studies
Cissy and W. Plack Carr, Jr. Professorship in Medical Education
Department Chair and Program Director
Professor of Internal Medicine

I. Purpose of Student Guidelines

These Student Guidelines apply to students enrolled in the Department of PA Studies in the School of Health Professions at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (“UT Southwestern”). These guidelines are in addition to and not instead of the policies and procedures outlined in the General Catalog and School of Health Professions Catalog, available online at: <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/utsw-catalog/>. Students are also expected to abide by the catalogs, UT Southwestern’s [*Handbook of Institutional Policies and Operating Procedures*](#), the Board of Regents’ *Rules and Regulations* of the UT System, course syllabi, and all other rules and requirements applicable to students.

Please read these Student Guidelines carefully. At the end of this manual, you will find an acknowledgment form stating you have received a copy of these Student Guidelines and you understand your responsibilities to comply. The form is to be signed, dated and returned to the department office during orientation.

The Student Guidelines is a general information publication only. It is not intended to, nor does it contain, all policies that relate to students. The Student Guidelines, although revised annually, cannot always reflect up-to-the minute changes and are subject to revision by UT Southwestern at any time.

UT Southwestern reserves the right to withdraw a course at any time, or to change fees or tuition, rules, calendars, curriculum and any other policies or requirements affecting students. The Student Guidelines do not constitute a contract, express or implied, between any applicant, student, employee, or faculty member and The University of Texas System, its Board of Regents, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, or the School of Health Professions.

II. Handbook of Institutional Policies and Operating Procedures.

UT Southwestern’s [*Handbook of Institutional Policies and Operating Procedures*](#) is maintained electronically and available online.

To find individual policies, go to the link above. Click the drop down arrow for Institutional Handbook Catalog. Then choose the appropriate chapter. Policies are listed by number. If you know the policy number, use the Advanced Search option.

- Chapter 1 – Organization and Governance (ORG)
- Chapter 2 – Administration (ADM)
- Chapter 3 – Ethics, Compliance, and Standards of Behavior (ETH)
- Chapter 4 – Campus Security and Preparedness (SEC)
- Chapter 5 – Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)
 - ETH-154 v4 Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct
 - ETH-153 v5 Title IX Sexual Harassment: Formal Grievance Policy
- Chapter 6 – Information Security, Privacy, and Resources (ISR)
- Chapter 7 – Fiscal Management (FIM)
- Chapter 8 – Facilities and Support Services (FSS)
 - FSS-103 v1 Protected Expression on Campus

- Chapter 9 – Employees (EMP)
- Chapter 10 – Students, Postdoctoral Scholars, Residents, and Fellows (EDU)

EDU-100 General Administrative Policies

- EDU-102 Learner Complaints and Resolutions
- EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities
- EDU-105 Learners' Personal Information
- EDU-106 Professional Liability Insurance
- EDU-107 Immunization and Infectious Disease Prevention Requirements
- EDU-110 Student Participation in Selection of Food Service Vendors
- SEC-153 Identification and Badges
- EDU-113 Student Travel
- EDU-114 Background Checks
- EDU-117 Fitness for Participation
- EDU-118 Drug Testing Requirement
- EDU-119 Admissions
- EDU-120 Non-medical Leaves of Absence

EDU-150 Student Conduct and Discipline

- EDU-151 Student Conduct and Discipline
- EDU-151P-01 Procedures for Student Discipline

EDU-200 Student Educational Records

- EDU-201 Student Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

EDU-250 Student Organizations

- EDU-251 Student Organizations

EDU-300 Student Financial Responsibilities

- EDU-301 Student Debts
- EDU-302 Scholarships, Fellowships, and Grants
- EDU-303 Tuition and Fees
- EDU-304 Residence for Tuition Purposes
- EDU-305 Tuition Exemptions

EDU-500 UT Southwestern School of Health Professions

- EDU-502 Academic Decisions School of Health Professions
- EDU-505 Student Employment

- Chapter 11 – Faculty (FAC)
- Chapter 12 – Research (RES)
- Chapter 13 – Intellectual Property (INP)
- Chapter 14 – Health System Operation (HSO)

Non-Discrimination Statement

UT Southwestern is committed to providing equal opportunities to all members of the campus community and to maintaining an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. In accordance with the Board of Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, UT System policy, and applicable federal and state law, no individual will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in UT Southwestern services, programs, and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, genetic information, protected veteran status, citizenship status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

III. Academic Affairs

A. Essential Functions

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals with a disability. In accordance with these and other federal and state laws, UT Southwestern is committed to providing equal opportunities for qualified applicants for admission and qualified learners with disabilities.

It is the policy of UT Southwestern that no qualified individual shall, based upon disability, be denied admission to, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity at UT Southwestern. All qualified applicants who can perform the essential functions of the desired academic program, with or without reasonable accommodation, will be given equal consideration for admission without regard to disability.

The essential functions for students in the School of Health Professions are distributed to all admitted applicants and are available here: EDU-103 v4 Appendix A-2

Students who wish to request reasonable accommodation due to disability should refer to EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities.

B. Academic Standards and Progress

1. General

All aspects of academic performance must be satisfactory for the student to be promoted and remain in the program. Academic decisions will be made in accordance with the student guidelines for each program and EDU-502 Academic Decisions.

2. Faculty Advisor

All students will be assigned a member of the faculty as their Faculty Advisor. Each student is encouraged to meet with their Faculty Advisor whenever a personal or academic problem arises that might impede their progress in the program. The role of the Faculty Advisor is to ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress in the program and that a timely referral is made to institutional services as appropriate. Each student is required to meet with his or her Faculty Advisor

at least once each semester so that the Faculty Advisor may ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress and to suggest any needed improvements.

3. Grading

- EDU-502 Academic Decisions

For more specific information on grading please refer to the Program Specific Grading section.

NOTE: Courses taught by other departments may use different grade scales.

4. Examinations

Students are expected to take all examinations on the scheduled date. The course instructor may allow rescheduling of an examination if circumstances warrant (e.g. documented illness, previously identified religious holiday, or death in the family). The Learning Specialist in Student Academic Support Services may approve rescheduling of an examination as a reasonable accommodation due to disability (See EDU-103); otherwise, there will be no exceptions to this policy.

If a student fails to take a scheduled examination without obtaining permission from the course instructor in advance, the student will receive a “zero” on that scheduled examination. Examinations are generally “timed,” therefore; all examinations will begin on the scheduled date and at the scheduled time. A student who has been delayed may be admitted to the examination up to 15 minutes after the session has started. The student will not be given any extra time to complete the examination. Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the start time will automatically receive a “zero” on the examination. Under extenuating circumstances and with timely notification from the student, exceptions to this policy may be considered by the course instructor.

5. Satisfactory Performance and Progress

a. Academic Performance

Students enrolled in the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions are expected to meet certain academic standards and exhibit professional and ethical behavior. Academic performance and professionalism are monitored on an ongoing basis by department faculty and administration. The assignment of grades; distribution of progress reports; designation of academic warning, probation, suspension, and dismissal; requirements for withdrawals; and requirements for graduation at the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions are set forth in EDU-502. See section V.I.1 for information about specific academic performance standards in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies.

b. Academic Deficiencies

An academic deficiency is defined as any aspect of academic performance that does not meet established Department of Physician Assistant Studies program or departmental standards.

If an academic deficiency occurs, the student will be referred to the Department's Committee on Student Progress for review. The Committee on Student Progress has wide discretion to evaluate student performance and determine appropriate action. Depending upon the frequency, nature, and extent of the deficiency, the Committee on Student Progress may recommend a student be (1) placed on academic warning, probation or suspension, (2) required to repeat a course, an exam, a rotation, or extend training, (3) required to remove the deficiency by specific remediation activities, or (4) dismissed from the program. These actions are not necessarily progressive. For example, a student may be dismissed for serious academic deficiencies, even if the student was not previously placed on academic warning or probation. Graduation may be delayed for students who are required to repeat a course or a rotation or extend their training, which may result in additional tuition and fees to satisfactorily complete the program curriculum.

Students may be placed on academic probation at the end of any semester in which performance does not meet established program or departmental standards. A student placed on academic probation must remedy the particular academic deficiencies as required by the Committee on Student Progress and Chair. A student may only be placed on academic probation for one semester. If a student fails to overcome the specified academic deficiencies the following semester, the student will be dismissed. If the student meets the conditions for academic probation a second time, the student will be dismissed. Academic dismissal is a permanent separation from UT Southwestern and is recorded on the official transcript. Students who have been dismissed may not reapply for admittance to any UT Southwestern school or program.

Academic decisions in Health Care Sciences (HCS) designated courses are the responsibility of the HCS course director. If academic deficiencies occur within HCS designated courses, students are required to follow the remediation guidelines established by HCS course directors. Academic deficiencies in HCS designated courses may prompt review by the Committee on Student Progress.

For information about academic decisions and grievance and appeal procedures, please refer to: EDU-502 Academic Decisions – Health Professions. See section V.I.2 for specific information about academic deficiencies in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies.

c. Student Academic Support Services (SASS)

SASS is located on the first floor of the S Building on South Campus and offers a comprehensive array of resources and support services to enhance student learning. Access to SASS is free to all students. Learning comprehension and retention activities, which are provided to students both individually and in groups, may include the following:

Learning Skills and Academic Advising/Counseling: For students experiencing academic problems, assistance with learning skills, academic assessment, advising, and counseling is available. Assistance is also available to all students who are performing satisfactorily but seek to improve their study skills. The SASS Director is qualified to administer psycho-educational assessments to students who may have information processing problems.

Support for Students with Disabilities: The SASS Director is also the Learning Specialist and responsible for facilitating the interactive process and handling applicant and student

requests for accommodation due to disability in accordance with EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities. The Learning Specialist is available to students who wish to request reasonable accommodations due to disability, either before or after matriculation. The Learning Specialist consults with the Academic Accommodations Committee, as necessary, to evaluate disability accommodation requests. The Learning Specialist coordinates approved accommodations and monitors effectiveness.

Medical Leave of Absence: The Learning Specialist, in conjunction with the Academic Accommodations Committee, processes student requests for Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA) as a reasonable accommodation due to disability, in accordance with EDU-103. If the MLOA request is approved, the Learning Specialist informs the student and appropriate program faculty and administrators about the parameters of the MLOA and ensures the student has complied with all pre-requisites for return.

Learning Skills Seminars: Seminars are presented for the benefit of all students and address common issues such as effective use of resources, time management and test-taking skills. Students may complete self-assessments as part of the seminars to develop insight into their beliefs and behaviors towards learning and resilience.

6. Standards of Conduct

All students are expected and required to obey federal, State, and local laws; to comply with the Regents' *Rules and Regulations* and all policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of The University of Texas System and UT Southwestern; to follow directives issued by an administrative official of the UT System or UT Southwestern in the course of his or her official duties; and to observe standards of conduct appropriate for an academic medical institution.

Requisite standards of conduct are outlined in EDU-151 Student Conduct and Discipline. All disciplinary actions will be handled in accordance with EDU-151P-01 Procedures for Student Discipline.

7. Attendance

If classes, labs, or other activities are missed for any reason, the decision as to whether the work can be made up is at the discretion of the course instructor. HCS course policies regarding attendance may differ from the Department policies and the HCS course policy applies.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the course instructor or preceptor as soon as the student knows they will be absent or late and to make arrangements to make up missed work, if permitted. Excusable reasons for absence are limited to: (1) illness; (2) death or illness in immediate family; (3) jury duty; (4) military service; (5) subpoena; and (6) faculty-approved attendance at professional conferences. An absence that is not timely reported is considered unexcused.

For additional information please refer to the Program Specific Attendance section below.

The Learning Specialist may approve a student to be absent or to make up missed work as a reasonable accommodation due to disability in accordance with EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities, and such absences or missed work will not be counted against a student.

8. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Compliance Requirements

All students having direct contact with patients and/or access to patient records, or “protected health information,” are required to abide by all UT Southwestern policies and procedures governing patient privacy and medical records. Students will receive HIPAA compliance training, in accordance with UT Southwestern policy. Furthermore, clinical affiliates may impose additional requirements for HIPAA training of students.

Students must complete HIPAA training within the first 30 days of enrollment at UT Southwestern, regardless of the number of hours in which a student is enrolled. At the time of matriculation, students will be provided with the URL to the on-line HIPAA training in [Taleo Learn](#).

C. Electronic/Telephone/Mobile Device Use

1. E-Mail and Social Networking

Students are expected to abide by all UT Southwestern policies governing use of UT Southwestern’s information resources. All students will be assigned a university e-mail account using Microsoft Exchange/Outlook. All e-mail information from the academic and clinical departments will be sent to the Outlook address with the extension “@utsouthwestern.edu.” **Students are responsible for checking and responding to Outlook e-mail within 48 hours, as instructed by the department.** Auto-forwarding to a non-UT Southwestern email account(s) is strictly prohibited. Users must use UT Southwestern’s Microsoft Outlook Web Access to retrieve UT Southwestern email when not using the Outlook client. UT Southwestern information resources, including email accounts, belong to UT Southwestern and should never be considered private. UT Southwestern email is made available to users for use in UT Southwestern-related activities and to facilitate the efficient exchange of useful information. With the privilege of email comes the responsibility to use email in an appropriate manner that demonstrates civility and respect for others. Misuse of UT Southwestern information resources may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

At no time are users allowed to post confidential information to social networking or other publicly available websites. All rules and policies for information security and privacy apply when utilizing social media and social networking sites.

For additional information on email and social networking please refer to the guidelines posted at <http://www.utsouthwestern.net/intranet/services/news-bureau/social-media/guidelines/>

For additional information on all use of information resources, please refer to Chapter 6 (Information Security, Privacy & Resources) in the *Handbook* and to: ISR-104 Acceptable Use of Information Resources.

2. Telephones

The telephones designated for student use are located in the 4th floor student lounge and in the main lobby, as well as in the student resource center (computer laboratory) on the 7th floor. Students should not use departmental telephones. Students should provide the Department's main number to persons who need to reach them in an emergency. Otherwise, students should use other means for obtaining personal messages while they are on campus.

3. FAX

The Departmental and Dean's Office FAX machines are not for student use.

4. Cell phones/Smart phones/Pagers

Cell phones/smart phones/pagers must be turned off, silenced, or on vibrate during class and when guidelines dictate in a clinical facility, according to the policy of the facility. **Students may not have cell phones/smart phones, pagers, or any other electronic devices on their person or at their desk during written or practical exams, except as explicitly instructed for remote exams.** Other arrangements should be made for emergency calls during exams.

5. Tablets and laptop/notebook computers

Tablets and laptop/notebook computers may be used in the classroom, only in a manner that does not disturb other students or the instructor. During exams, students may not use computers, tablets, or any other electronic devices without instructor approval, except as explicitly instructed for remote activities.

For further clarification on the use of any electronic devices, students should consult their instructors.

IV. Student Affairs

A. Student Rights

1. Protection of Education Records

The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and the Texas Public Information Act regarding disclosure of student records. Please refer to EDU-201 Student Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

2. Mistreatment

UT Southwestern is committed to providing students with clear pathways and processes for bringing forward concerns and complaints and to resolving complaints using reasonable, fairly administered, and well-publicized policies and procedures. UT Southwestern employs various complaint and resolution procedures, depending on the substance and nature of the complaint.

A student who believes he or she has been mistreated in the teacher-learner relationship can attempt to resolve the issue informally through communication with the faculty member or the student's faculty advisor. For formal complaints regarding mistreatment, the student should submit a complaint in writing to the program director or department chair within five (5) working days of the incident. If the matter is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, a student may appeal in writing to the Dean (or designee) within five (5) working days of the program director's or chair's decision. The decision of the Dean or his designee is final.

For complaints regarding discrimination on a basis other than Title IX Sexual Harassment, the student should follow the complaint procedure outlined in the School of Health Professions catalog. [SSHP Catalog: http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/utsw-catalog/general/student-info/academic-policies.html#policy%20against%20discrimination](http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/utsw-catalog/general/student-info/academic-policies.html#policy%20against%20discrimination)

Complaints or reports of Title IX Sexual Harassment should be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator in accordance with ETH-153 Title IX Sexual Harassment: Formal Grievance Policy.

Please refer to EDU-102 Learner Complaints and Resolutions for guidance on the various complaint and resolution policies and processes available to students.

B. Other General Guidelines

1. Inclement Weather Policy

As an academic medical center providing patient care, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center must remain open regardless of weather conditions. If you question whether a specific class has been postponed due to weather, call the Department office and your class telephone tree contact for information.

Due to the variability of supervised practice activities, cancellations will vary depending upon the site. If inclement weather makes it dangerous to travel to the clinical facility, the student must contact the clinical instructor and the clinical facility as soon as possible to inform them that he or she will not be there and to see that any important patient responsibilities are covered. The student should speak directly to the supervising instructor and discuss alternatives for completing patient responsibilities, including attempting to come in later in the day.

In making the decision regarding attendance during inclement weather, consider that:

1. The student has a professional responsibility to the patient/client and the facility to which he or she is assigned.
2. The student can best judge the danger to their own safety based on transportation situations and other factors.

2. Student Exposure to Blood and/or Body Fluids and Environmental Hazards

Procedures for Exposure can be found at EDU-107 Immunization and Infectious Disease Prevention Requirements.

If you have been exposed to a patient's blood or body fluid, first rinse the affected area thoroughly and page the UT Southwestern Occupational Health pager (214-645-1600) immediately. You will receive instructions about post-exposure protocol.

If the exposure occurs at Parkland, VAMC, or other facility, you need to contact the UT Southwestern exposure pager (214-645-1600) as well as the facility exposure pager or charge nurse.

3. Use of UTSW Logo

- ADM-201 Use of University Name, Logomark, Logotype, and Seal

4. Smoking on Campus

- SEC-205 Tobacco-Free Environment

5. Weapons on Campus

- SEC-155 Weapons on Campus

6. Children in the Workplace

- SEC-351 Children in the Workplace

7. Protected Expression on Campus

- FSS-103 Protected Expression on Campus

8. Tutoring Services

Free tutoring services are offered to students in the SSHP taking the following Health Care Sciences courses: anatomy, anatomy laboratory, physiology, and neuroscience (summer semester) and pathology (fall semester). Pre-exam reviews are open to all SSHP students and post-exam reviews are held by invitation only depending on students' examination grades.

9. Student Health Services

UT Southwestern provides for the health of students through the Student Health Service which is located at the James W. Aston Center, 8th Floor (U8.409) South Campus, 5303 Harry Hines Blvd., two blocks south of the Southwestern School of Health Professions (SSHP) building. Student Health Service is staffed full-time by a provider and medical support staff. Office hours are 8AM to 12PM and 1PM to 5PM Monday through Friday.

The Student Wellness and Counseling Center provides personal counseling, psychotherapy, group therapy, and psychiatric services and is located at 5323 Harry Hines Blvd., in the S Building on South Campus, Suite S2.100 (2nd floor). To schedule an appointment, call 214-645-8680. The UTSW

Wellness and Crisis Line is a confidential service that offers an opportunity for UTSW students to talk with trained counselors about urgent concerns after hours. A counselor is available every day of the year, including holidays, at 214-645-8680.

Detailed information for services provided by the Student Health Clinic can be found at: <http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/student-services/student-health-service/index.html>

Detailed information for services provided by the Student Wellness and Counseling Center can be found at: <http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/student-services/wellness-counseling/>

Information regarding required immunizations can be found at: EDU-107 Immunizations

10. Student Health Insurance

All SSHP students are required to have and maintain valid major medical health insurance coverage while enrolled. This coverage may be with the UT System-sponsored plan or coverage from another provider. For students who do not have their own health insurance policy, UT Southwestern has contracted with the AcademicBlueSM Student Health Plan, a Blue Cross Blue Shield plan. Information regarding health insurance requirements is included with registration materials and can also be found here: <http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/student-services/student-health-service/student-health-insurance.html>

11. Student Assistance Committee

A significant percentage of practicing physicians, healthcare professionals and basic scientists will become impaired or experience a major setback during their careers due to chemical dependency, psychiatric or physical disorders, or an overwhelming life stressor. Often, these problems can occur during their training. EDU-117 Fitness for Participation sets forth how the administration will manage suspected or confirmed impairment. To the extent the impairment is related to a disability and the student needs reasonable accommodations, students should refer to EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities.

UT Southwestern has established the Student Assistance Committee (SAC) help impaired students and students facing life problems that are significantly impacting their ability to function effectively. SAC was established based on the following premises:

1. Chemical dependency and psychiatric disorders are treatable conditions and major life stressors can be overcome with appropriate support and supervision.
2. Students with problems that are negatively impacting their ability to function have a responsibility to themselves, their profession, and society to recognize and seek assistance in combating the problem(s). If a student is unable or unwilling to seek assistance, fellow students, faculty, and administrators have a responsibility to identify these individuals and assist them in obtaining the most competent and effective support available.
3. An institution responsible for training physicians, health professionals and basic scientists should encourage and facilitate the recognition and treatment of serious problems and provide ongoing support for students who are struggling due to these problems.

The purpose of SAC is to work with students and concerned faculty and administrators to encourage and facilitate recognition, intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation of students with a suspected or confirmed impairment. The goal of SAC is to support and assist impaired students so that they can regain full functioning, successfully complete their training, and acquire the skills and perspective necessary to have a fulfilling professional career. SAC is dedicated to assisting students in obtaining help while continuing their education, with the fewest possible restrictions and without stigma.

SAC is very aware that its ultimate success depends upon student trust and confidence. All SAC actions and proceedings are confidential. SAC may periodically report information to the dean or associate dean regarding a student's compliance, progress, and fitness for continued participation in UT Southwestern-related activities. SAC may consult with other individuals concerned about a student with the permission of the student. All records, files, or other medical, psychiatric, and chemical dependency information, including the results of alcohol or drug testing, will be maintained as confidential, in accordance with applicable law and UT Southwestern policy.

Students may refer themselves to SAC by contacting any one of its members. Students may also be referred by the dean or associate dean pursuant to EDU-117 Fitness for Participation. Faculty, mentors, program directors, course directors, or fellow students who have concerns about a student should contact their associate dean.

Students in need of assistance with drug or alcohol abuse, dependence, or other related problems may contact the Chair of the Student Assistance Committee (214) 645-3192, Student Health Services (214-645-8690), or Student Wellness and Counseling (214-645-8680) for confidential counseling.

V. Program Specific Information

A. Mission, Vision, and Program Goals of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies

Mission

The Mission of the UT Southwestern Department of Physician Assistant Studies, in accordance with the *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession* as set forth by the consortium of the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), the Accreditation Review Commission for Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), is as follows

- Excel in the art and science of physician assistant education
- Promote inter-professional primary health care delivery to a diverse and dynamic population.
- Encourage leadership, service, and excellence among our faculty, staff, students, and graduates.
- Foster a commitment to diversity and inclusion, evidence-based medicine, quality improvement, and patient safety.

(last revised 3.30.20; reaffirmed 04.04.22)

Vision

The vision of the Physician Assistant Studies Program is to become a destination PA program for economically and environmentally disadvantaged faculty, staff and students while achieving and maintaining excellent outcome measures.

(last revised 3.30.20; reaffirmed 04.04.22)

Program Goals

The Goals of the UT Southwestern Department of Physician Assistant Studies are:

- To exceed the U.S. national average first time pass rate on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE).
- To provide student clinical education opportunities in diverse and medically underserved areas/populations.
- To demonstrate excellence in scholarship, leadership, and service.
- Provide longitudinal educational experiences in evidence-based medicine (EBM) and quality improvement and patient safety (QI/PS).

(last revised 3.30.20; reaffirmed 04.04.22)

Success in Goal Accomplishment

- PANCE GOAL
 - For the past five years, 98% of students passed the PANCE on their first attempt exceeding the U.S. national average each year.
- CLINICAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES
 - 100% of students completed clinical education opportunities in diverse and medically underserved areas/populations.
- SCHOLARSHIP, LEADERSHIP, SERVICE
 - In the past two years, the faculty and staff have held 18 state/national leadership positions

- Served on >250 professional, institutional, and community committees; received >65 awards and honors to include international research recognition and various teaching awards from state and national organizations.
- From 2018-2021, our faculty contributed to 35 published manuscripts, 6 funded grant submissions, 46 oral presentations and workshops at local and national professional meetings, and 24 poster presentations. Each of our staff members have been involved in at least two departmental or SHP committees and have contributed on one funded grant application and one manuscript. Our students contributed to 2 published manuscripts, and 2 presentations at local and national professional meetings. 20% of each cohort between 2021 and 2022 has been involved in either committee service or community service.
- **EBM & QI/PS CURRICULA**
 - 100% of students complete our EBM curriculum that includes longitudinal experiences focused on the critical appraisal of research articles and application to clinical care. This includes completion of a 1 credit didactic course followed by an EBM module as part of the 8-week Family Medicine rotation. Additionally, students have the option of selecting EBM as the focus of their graduate project and up to 6 students are selected to participate in the Embedding Quality into Practice (EQUIP) initiative.
 - 100% of students complete didactic phase lectures addressing the basic concepts QI/PS and how to conduct QI/PS projects. In the clinical phase, all students participate in QI/PS assignments during the Primary Care Preceptorship course to enhance their understanding of quality improvement within the healthcare system.

B. Accreditation Statement

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center Physician Assistant Program sponsored by the University of Texas. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA Standards.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be March 2023. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Standards and ARC-PA policy.

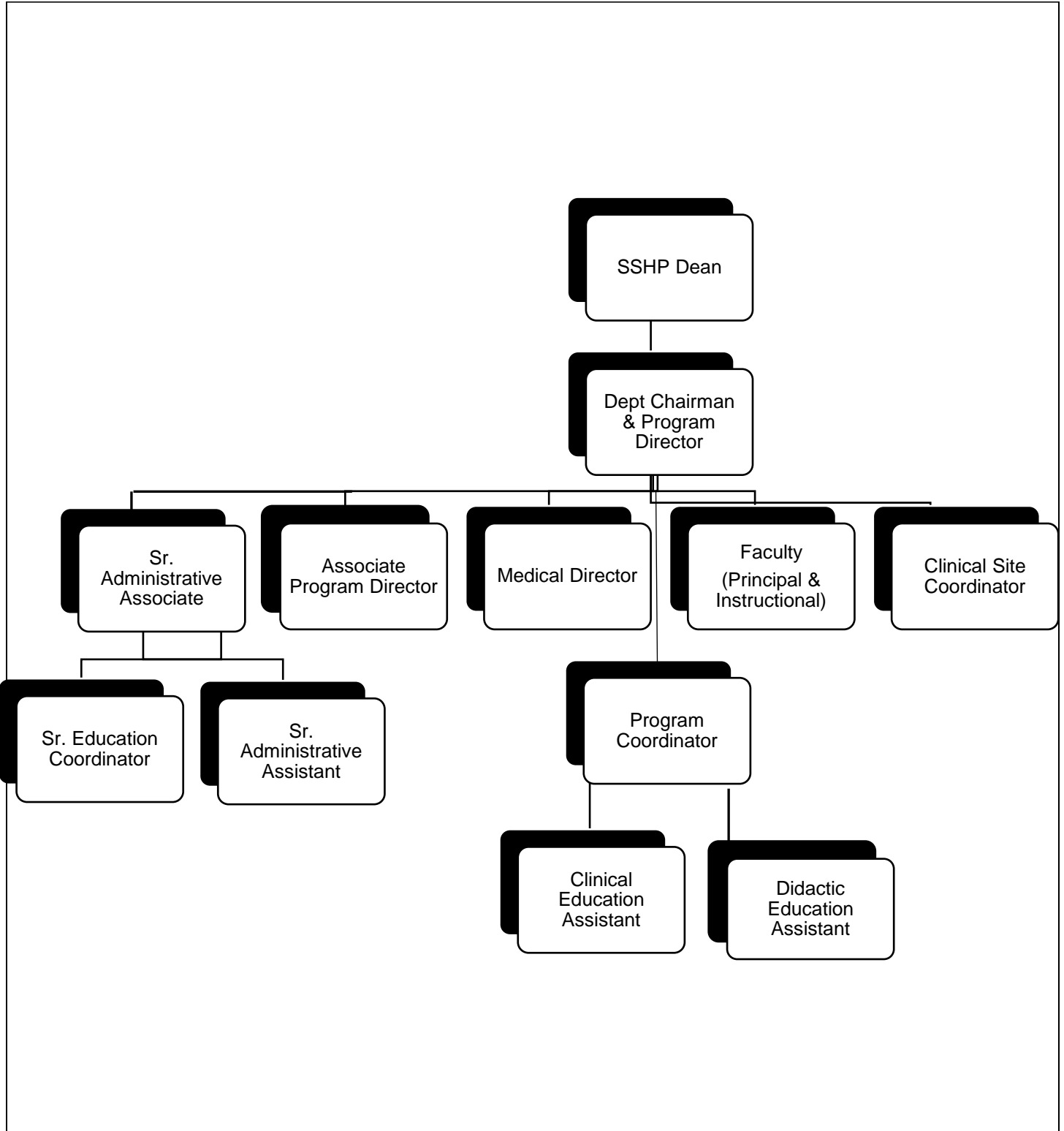
[Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant](#)

12000 Findley Road, Suite 150

Johns Creek, Georgia 30097

Phone: 770-476-1224

C. Organizational Chart for Department of PA Studies



D. Program Competencies and Program Learning Outcomes

The UT Southwestern Physician Assistant Program's defined Program Competencies are based on the Competencies of the PA Profession (Adopted 2005, amended 2012, 2021). Its Program Learning Outcomes were derived from the sub-competencies and reflect the seven domains of PA professional competencies required for entry into practice. Each MPA designated course includes specific course learning outcomes and instructional objectives that guide student acquisition of the Program Learning Outcomes as they progress through the curriculum. Upon successful completion of all courses within the curriculum, students are enabled to achieve all Program Competencies.

Program Competency 1 Knowledge for Practice: Demonstrate knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care.

Knowledge for Practice Program Learning Outcomes

- 1.1 Apply principles of clinical sciences to diagnose disease and utilize therapeutic decision making, clinical problem-solving, and other evidence-based practice skills.
- 1.2: Discern among acute, chronic, and emergent disease states.
- 1.3 Apply principles of epidemiology to identify health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources, and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for individuals and populations.
- 1.4 Identify and address social determinants that affect access to care and deliver high quality care in a value-based system.
- 1.5 Consider cost-effectiveness when allocating resources for individual patient or population-based care.
- 1.6 Access and interpret current and credible sources of medical information.

Program Competency 2 Interpersonal and Communication Skills: Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills Program Learning Outcomes

- 2.1 Communicate effectively to elicit and provide information recognizing and providing solutions to communication barriers.
- 2.2 Establish meaningful, therapeutic relationships with patients and families to ensure that patients' values and preferences are addressed and that the needs and goals are met to deliver person-centered care.
- 2.3 Provide effective, equitable, understandable, respectful, quality and culturally competent care that is response to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs.
- 2.4: Demonstrate sensitivity, honesty and compassion in all conversations, in particular difficult conversations (e.g., end of life, adverse events, bad news, disclosure of errors and other sensitive topics).
- 2.5 Understand emotions, behaviors, and responses of others, which allows for effective interpersonal interactions.
- 2.6 Accurately and thoroughly document medical information for medical, legal, financial, quality improvement and patient safety purposes.
- 2.7 Demonstrate emotional resilience, stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity.

Program Competency 3 Person-centered Care: Provide person-centered care that includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management and health care that is evidence-based, supports patient safety, and advances health equity.

Person-centered Care Program Learning Outcomes

- 3.1 Gather essential and accurate information about patients through history-taking, physical examination, and the use of laboratory data, imaging, and other tests.
- 3.2 Elicit and acknowledge the story of the individual and apply the context of the individual's life to their care, such as environmental and cultural influences.
- 3.3 Interpret data to make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and clinical judgment.
- 3.4 Develop and implement effective patient management plans.
- 3.5 Counsel and educate patients and their families to empower them to participate in their care and enable shared decision-making.
- 3.6 Refer patients appropriately; ensure continuity of care throughout transitions between providers or settings, and follow-up on patient progress and outcomes.
- 3.7 Provide health care services to patients, families, and communities to prevent health problems and to maintain health.

Program Competency 4 Interprofessional Collaboration: Demonstrate the ability to engage with a variety of other health care professionals in a manner that optimizes safe, effective, patient- and population-centered care.

Interprofessional Collaboration Program Learning Outcomes

- 4.1 Work effectively with other health professionals to establish and maintain a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, inclusivity, ethical integrity, and trust.
- 4.2 Communicate effectively with colleagues and other professionals to establish and enhance interprofessional teams.
- 4.3 Engage the abilities of available health professionals and associated resources to complement the PA's professional expertise and develop optimal strategies to enhance patient care.
- 4.4 Recognize when to refer patients to other disciplines to ensure that patients receive optimal care at the right time and appropriate level.

Program Competency 5 Professionalism and Ethics: Demonstrate a commitment to practicing medicine in ethically and legally appropriate ways and emphasizing professional maturity and accountability for delivering safe and quality care to patients and populations.

Professionalism and Ethics Program Learning Outcomes:

- 5.1 Adhere to standards of care in the role of the PA in the health care team.
- 5.2 Demonstrate accountability to patients, profession, and society.
- 5.3 Demonstrate cultural humility and responsiveness to a diverse patient population including diversity in sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, and abilities.

5.4 Demonstrate a commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of care, confidentiality, patient autonomy, informed consent, and compliance with relevant laws, policies, and regulations.

5.5 Demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning, personal wellness and self-care that supports the provision of quality patient care.

5.6 Demonstrate flexibility and professional civility when adapting to change.

5.7 Implement leadership practices and principles in professional role as a PA.

Program Competency 6 Practice-based Learning and Quality Improvement: Demonstrate the ability to learn and implement quality improvement practices by engaging in critical analysis of one's own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and practice improvement.

Practice-based Learning and Quality Improvement Program Learning Outcomes

6.1 Exhibit self-awareness to identify strengths, address deficiencies, and recognize limits in knowledge and expertise.

6.2 Identify, analyze, and adopt new knowledge, guidelines, standards, technologies, products, or services that have been demonstrated to improve outcomes.

6.3 Develop a professional capacity for ongoing quality improvement.

Program Competency 7 Society and Population Health: Recognize and understand the influences of the ecosystem of person, family, population, environment, and policy on the health of patients and integrate knowledge of these determinants of health into patient care decisions.

Society and Population Health Program Learning Outcomes

7.1 Apply principles of social-behavioral sciences by assessing the impact of psychosocial and cultural influences on health, disease, care seeking, and compliance.

7.2 Recognize the influence of socioeconomic, environmental, and funding streams on the health of the individual and community.

7.3 Demonstrate accountability and responsibility for removing barriers within the health system that affect patient care.

7.4 Utilize principles of epidemiology in disease surveillance and outbreak tracing

E. List of Courses

DIDACTIC PHASE

SUMMER I

	<u>SEMESTER HOURS</u>
MPA 5101 Professional Practice Issues I	1
HCS 5207 Introduction to Human Neuroscience	2
HCS 5309 Human Anatomy Lab	3
HCS 5308 Human Anatomy	3
HCS 5407 Human Physiology	4

FALL

MPA 5102 Integration Skills I	1
MPA 5215 Pharmacology I	2
MPA 5305 Patient Evaluation I	3
MPA 5509 Clinical Medicine I	5
HCS 5306 Introduction to Pathology	3
HCS 5106 Professional Development	*

SPRING

MPA 5103 Integration Skills II	1
MPA 5130 Evidence-Based Medicine	1
MPA 5204 Clinical Prevention and Population Health	2
MPA 5206 Patient Evaluation II	2
MPA 5216 Pharmacology II	2
MPA 5510 Clinical Medicine II	5
HCS 5106 Professional Development	1*

SUMMER II

MPA 5208 Clinical Skills	2
MPA 5231 Psychiatry	2
MPA 5307 Patient Evaluation III	3
MPA 5511 Clinical Medicine III	5

CLINICAL PHASE

MPA 5350 Professional Practice Issues II	3**
MPA 5428 Clinical Elective	4
MPA 5430 Psychiatry	4
MPA 5432 Emergency Medicine	4
MPA 5433 Surgery	4
MPA 5451 Infectious Disease	4
MPA 5450 Directed Study	4
MPA 5422 Women's Health	4
MPA 5423 Pediatrics	4
MPA 5830 Internal Medicine	8
MPA 5831 Family Medicine	8
MPA 5832 Primary Care Preceptorship	8

*1 hour to be awarded at end of spring semester

**May be divided into 2 courses: MPA 5050W

TOTAL= 112 hours over 30 months

F. Clinical Rotation Information

1. Clinical Site Identification

Clinical site identification, coordination, evaluation, and review is the sole responsibility of the PA Program Faculty. Prospective and enrolled PA students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. Students may make suggestions to PA Program Faculty regarding potential clinical sites; however, all decisions regarding clinical sites are at the complete discretion of the program.

2. Changes in Clinical Rotations

Requests for any changes in clinical rotation schedules must be in writing and contain good cause for the change. The program's clinical coordinator will review and approve or deny all such requests. Requests must be received by the clinical coordinator no later than 75 days in advance of the requested change in a student's clinical rotation schedule. The clinical coordinator will respond to change requests within 10 business days of receipt. Requests for changes in clinical rotation schedules as a reasonable accommodation due to disability should be submitted to the Learning Specialist pursuant to EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities. Changes in clinical rotation schedules due to academic issues or a leave of absence may result in a delay in graduation.

3. Out-of-State Rotations: Clinical Elective

Students are required to complete a Clinical Elective (MPA 5428). The Clinical Elective can be completed in any medical or surgical setting within or outside the state of Texas, as long as an appropriate site, qualified preceptor, and completed affiliation agreement exists. Students completing the elective at out-of-state will incur costs at their own expense.

4. Out-of-State Rotations: Primary Care Preceptorship

Students are required to complete the Primary Care Preceptorship (MPA 5832). The Primary Care Preceptorship must be completed in one of the following outpatient settings: general internal medicine, family medicine, pediatrics, women's health, or geriatrics. This rotation may be completed out-of-state. If students choose to complete the Primary Care Preceptorship at an out-of-state location, costs will be at the students' expense.

G. Evaluation

In general, the student's achievement in departmental courses is determined by:

- (1) course participation
- (2) written examinations
- (3) clinical performance evaluations
- (4) objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs)
- (5) other written and/or oral assignments

H. Grading

Individual course directors retain the primary responsibility for evaluating coursework and assigning grades. Five grades are used to calculate the grade point average (GPA): A (excellent), B (good), C (fair), D (poor) and F (failure). Numerical scores are used to determine each letter grade and may vary. Under certain conditions, an instructor may report grades under the pass/fail system. Grade designations under this system are P (Passing) and F (Failure). Grades of P and F under the pass/fail system are not used in calculating GPA.

At the discretion of the instructor, an incomplete (I) mark may be used in reporting a student's standing in the semester's work. An incomplete (I) must be removed under written conditions and within one year from the end of the semester in which the incomplete (I) was reported. Should the established conditions not be met, the instructor must assign a grade, or upon written approval of the dean, new written conditions may be established. An incomplete (I) is not considered a final grade and, therefore, is not used in calculating the GPA.

The program courses will be graded by the following scale or the appropriate equivalent:

90	-	100	A
80	-	89	B
70	-	79	C
65	-	69	D
Below		65	F

For information about Grievances and Appeals please refer to: EDU-502 Academic Decisions School of Health Professions.

Program courses graded on a Pass/Fail basis include:

- MPA 5101 – Professional Practice Issues I
- MPA 5350 – Professional Practice Issues II
- MPA 5208 – Clinical Skills
- HCS 5106 – Professional Development
- All Clinical Phase Courses

I. Satisfactory Performance and Progress

1. Academic Performance

Academic Performance is reviewed regularly by the Department's Committee on Student Progress to ensure satisfactory performance and progress. In general, satisfactory performance and progress are defined as:

- a. Completing the PA required course sequence as stipulated.
- b. Achieving a minimum grade of "C" or "Pass" in each course, with the exception of Clinical Medicine I (MPA 5509); Clinical Medicine II (MPA 5510); and Clinical Medicine III (MPA 5511), in which a minimum of a "B" grade must be achieved.
- c. Maintaining a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher.

- d. Demonstrating acceptable clinical competence appropriate to the curriculum sequence. Clinical competence includes, but is not limited to, clinical judgment, technical and psychomotor skills, interpersonal skills and attitudes, and professional behavior. Clinical rotation performance considers all required components as described in each course syllabus.

An academic deficiency occurs when any of the above requirements are not met. Health Care Sciences (HCS) designated courses are the responsibility of the appropriate HCS course director. If academic deficiencies occur within HCS designated courses, students are required to follow the guidelines established by HCS course directors.

2. Advancement to Clinical Phase

A student may begin the Clinical Phase when all didactic course work in the curriculum has been completed in good academic standing with a grade of “A”, “B”, or “C” (with the exception of MPA 5509, MPA 5510, and MPA 5511, in which minimum grades of “B” must be maintained), or “Pass” and a cumulative GPA of at least 2.75. If the above grades have not been achieved by the last day of the final week in the semester preceding the clinical phase, the student will not be allowed to begin clinical phase coursework.

3. Academic Deficiencies

The Physician Assistant Program Faculty are responsible for identifying and informing the Department’s Committee on Student Progress of any student having difficulty with one or more of his/her Master of Physician Assistant (MPAS) designated courses. This review occurs throughout enrollment (e.g. during the block/course, end-of-semester, and review of end-of-rotation components). The Committee on Student Progress will review the faculty findings to determine if an academic deficiency has occurred.

An academic deficiency occurs when a student: (1) fails to achieve at least a “C” or higher in every letter grade course, with the exception of MPA 5509, MPA 5510, and MPA 5511, in which minimum grades of “B” must be achieved, (2) fails to achieve a grade of “Pass” in Pass/Fail designated courses, (3) fails to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.75, (4) fails to meet attendance requirements, (5) fails a preceptor evaluation during clinical course, (6) fails an end-of-rotation examination, (7) fails to exhibit adequate academic progression, (8) fails to demonstrate acceptable clinical competence appropriate to the curriculum sequence, or (9) fails to meet professionalism standards.

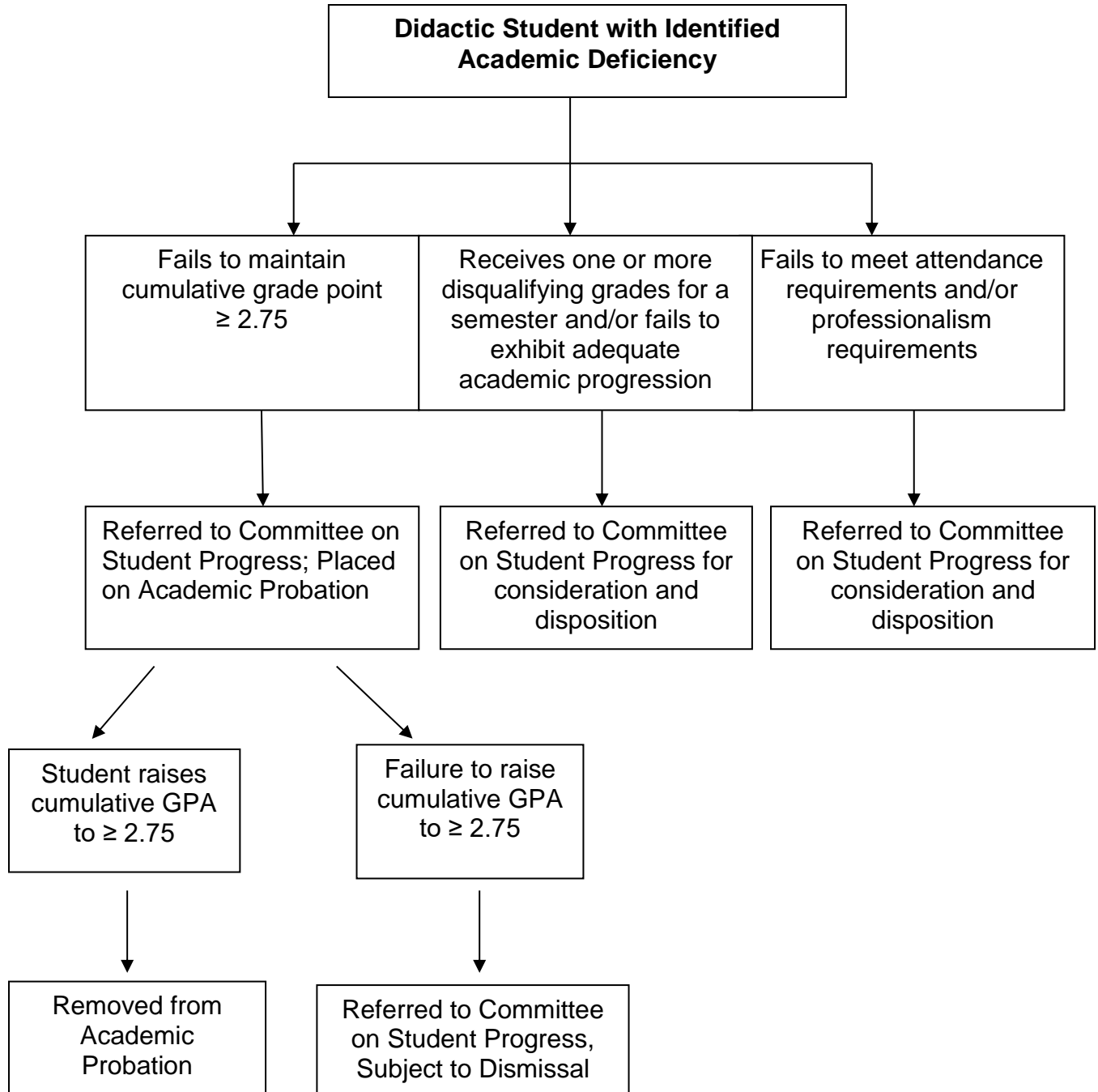
When an academic deficiency has occurred, the student will be referred to the Department’s Committee on Student Progress (Flow Charts 1-2). Depending upon the frequency, nature, and extent of the deficiency, a student may be (1) given an academic warning, (2) placed on academic suspension or academic probation, (3) required to repeat a course or extend training, (4) required to remove the deficiency by specific remediation activities, or (5) dismissed from the program. Graduation may be delayed for students who are required to repeat a course or extend their training, which may result in additional tuition and fees to satisfactorily complete the program curriculum. Decisions of the Committee on Student Progress will be communicated to the student in writing. Remediation notification will be in accordance with the Department’s Remediation Policy, Section I.4.

Academic probation should be regarded as a serious matter and is official notice to the student that his/her performance during the probationary period must improve to acceptable standards in order to remain eligible to continue in the Program. Placement on academic probation may be recommended to the Committee on Student Progress by any faculty member when student performance falls below the academic standards established by the program. Any student who fails to improve his/her performance to an acceptable standard in the areas identified by the Committee on Student Progress are subject to dismissal from the Program without previously being placed on Academic Probation. In accordance with institutional policy, a student may be placed on Academic Probation one time during their entire enrollment.

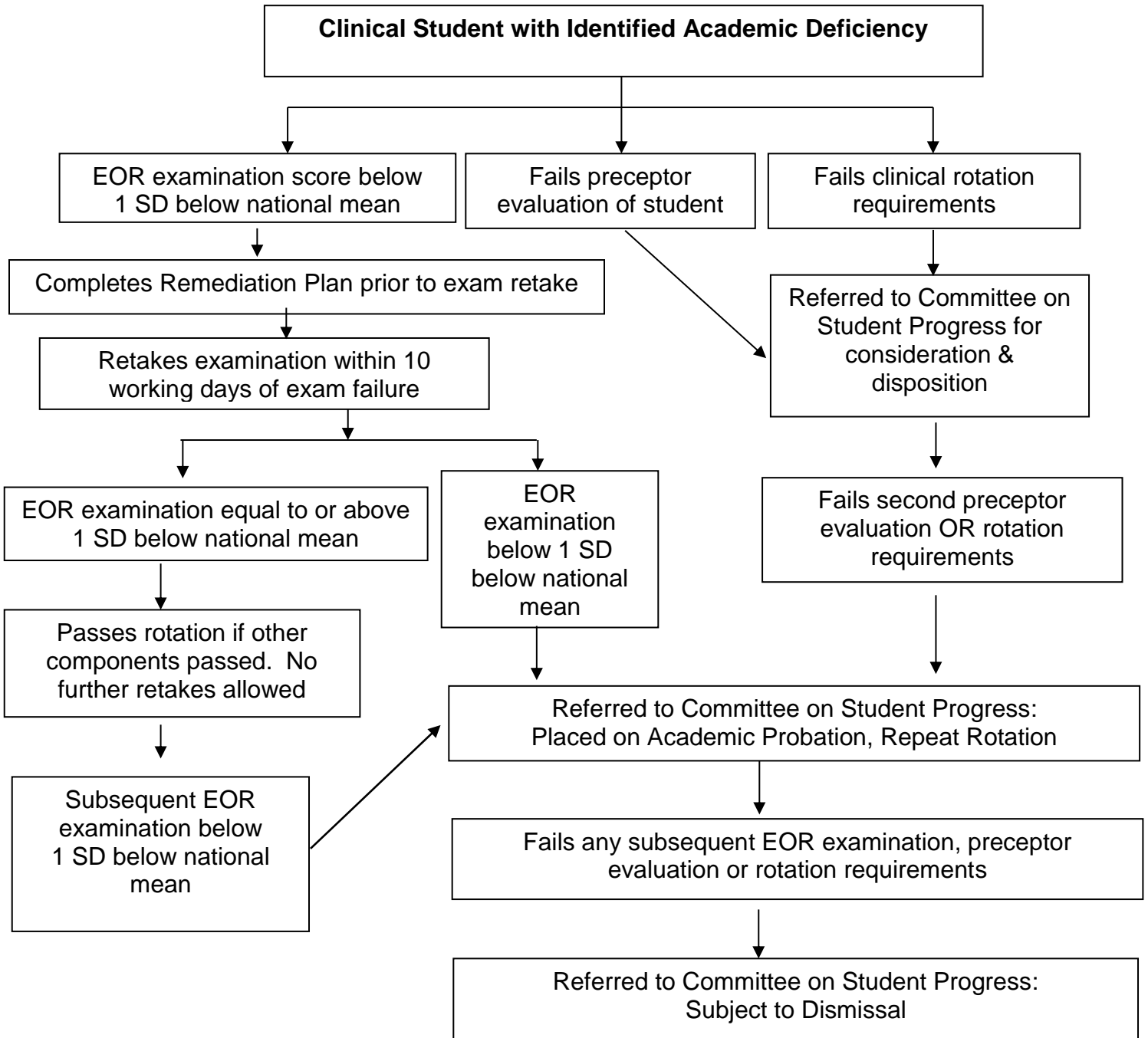
- A didactic phase student will be placed on academic probation if he/she fails to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or above. If a student fails to raise the cumulative grade point average to a 2.75 or above, the student will be referred to the Committee on Student Progress and is subject to dismissal from the Program (Flow Chart 1).
- A clinical phase student will be placed on academic probation if he/she (1) fails to achieve a passing score on the one allowed PAEA EOR retake, (2) fails a subsequent PAEA EOR exam after previously passing a retake PAEA EOR exam, (3) receives more than 1 failing preceptor evaluation, or (4) receives more than 1 failing grade on other rotation requirements (Flow Chart 2).

Only one rotation in the clinical phase may be repeated. Failure of any component including a score below one standard deviation below the currently published national mean on the PAEA EOR examination that occurs when a student is already on academic probation is referred to the Committee on Student Progress and is subject to dismissal.

Flow Chart 1. Didactic Student with Identified Academic Deficiency



Flow Chart 2. Clinical Student with Identified Academic Deficiency



4. Remediation Policy

a. General Considerations

The remediation process is designed to help faculty identify and assist students who may experience academic or professional difficulty. The process is proactive, with the goal of identifying at risk students as early as possible. The goal of this policy is to help the student assimilate and master the material, not to improve the grade. The Committee on Student Progress will use the following process to identify and remediate students deemed at risk.

Students are assessed on the program's established competencies, professionalism, and performance on an ongoing basis. During Faculty Meetings student performance is reviewed to identify occurrences, patterns, or trends.

b. Methods of Identification and Evaluation

The student is expected to be proactive and notify the course director/block leader if they are having difficulty with course requirements. The course director/block leader, Faculty Mentor, or other faculty member identifies at-risk students through faculty meeting reports, review of academic performance, and advisory sessions. During the didactic phase, all students will be required to remediate exam failures (grades below 70%/"C" with the exception of all Clinical Medicine course grades, which require a minimum grade of 80%/"B"). During the clinical phase, students must complete a remediation plan to be eligible for the one allowed "retake" of an End of Rotation examination. Any subsequent failure of end-of rotation examinations or any failure of preceptor evaluations will require repeat of the rotation in entirety. Other requirements deemed in need of remediation (e.g., summative evaluation activities) will be addressed within an individualized plan.

Identified students will be referred to and must meet with their Faculty Mentor for assessment of root causes within 5 working days of notification. Referrals to campus assistance programs may be instituted to assist in evaluation and assessment (Student Health Services, Student Academic Support Services, Student Assistance Committee, or other resources as necessary).

c. Remediation Plan Development and Implementation

When indicated, the course director/block leader and any other involved parties will develop and implement a remediation plan. Clear expectations regarding the acceptable completion of the remediation plan and its due date will be documented and acknowledged in writing by the student. A copy of the remediation plan will be placed in the student's program academic file.

A remediation plan may include but is not limited to:

1. Reading assignments
2. Written completion of instructional objectives developed to target deficiencies identified during review of failed exam
3. Written response to selected exam items with reference citations
4. Written self-reflection exercise

5. Individual faculty-led tutoring (especially skills related deficiencies)
6. Additional clinical practice experience that may require repeating a rotation in its entirety
7. Requirement to use MPA 5428 Clinical Elective in area specified by Committee on Student Progress
8. Virtual learning activities or simulation training

d. Remediation Plan Oversight, Completion, and Review

The Course Director/Block Leader will be responsible for oversight of an implemented remediation plan. Student progress and completion will be reported to the Department's Committee on Student Progress.

During the didactic phase, students who require more than two remediation plans during a semester will be referred to the Committee on Student Progress for in-depth review of their academic performance since matriculation prior to final consideration and disposition.

J. Graduation Requirements

A candidate for the degree of Master of Physician Assistant Studies in Southwestern School of Health Professions must meet all of the requirements listed in the catalog.

<https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/utsw-catalog/shp/programs/physician-assistant/>

1. The student must demonstrate a high order of scholarly achievement in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies, including appropriate professional competencies. The program's Committee on Student Progress determines whether adequate mastery has been acquired.
2. The student must complete satisfactorily a minimum of 112 semester hours at UT Southwestern School of Health Professions.
3. The student must discharge all financial obligations to the Medical Center. In the event of nonpayment, one or more actions may be taken by the Dean: a) readmission may be denied; b) a student's grades and official transcript may be withheld; and c) the degree to which the student would otherwise be entitled may be withheld.
4. The student must complete the academic requirements listed on his or her degree plan, including completion of any academic deficiencies in prerequisite courses, by the times stated in the student's official letter of acceptance. The student is responsible for submitting official documentation of successful completion of the prerequisites to the Office of the Registrar.
5. The student must pay a graduation fee designated to partially offset the costs associated with the diploma and diploma cover production, regalia, and the commencement ceremony. All students completing a degree or certification must pay the fee without regard to whether they attend the commencement ceremony or not.
6. The student must successfully complete all required courses in the degree plan. For courses with letter grades, a grade of C or higher must be achieved in every course, with the exception of MPA 5509, MPA 5510 and MPA 5511, in which minimum grades of B must be achieved. For courses graded Pass/Fail, a grade of Pass must be achieved. A cumulative grade-point average of ≥ 2.75 must be maintained throughout enrollment.

7. The student must complete and submit a Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) examination following completion of the didactic curriculum and again after completion of the majority of clinical rotations.
8. The student must successfully complete and receive a passing grade on all required summative assessments at the end of the clinical curriculum.
9. The student must successfully complete a graduate project as approved by program faculty.
10. The student must complete all requirements for graduation within five consecutive years of the original date of matriculation.

Please note: Students who are delayed in completing the program will be awarded their diplomas upon completion of all graduation requirements.

K. Profession Specific Behavior

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior exemplified by such characteristics as:
 - a. Honesty
 - b. Accountability, including acknowledgement of personal errors, omissions and limitations
 - c. Follow through with promised information and/or service
 - d. Maintenance of confidentiality of privileged information
 - e. Accurately documenting and/or presenting one's own work in patient care settings
 - f. Treat all patients equally without regard to ethnicity, race, gender, religion or any other attribute
2. Demonstrate cooperativeness and consideration in interactions with others, including willingness to participate in teamwork and flexibility when change is necessary
3. Follow instructions
4. Demonstrate timeliness and promptness in meeting all commitments
5. Demonstrate thoroughness and completeness in work
6. Pursue continuing professional growth through:
 - a. Self-evaluation
 - b. Acceptance of constructive criticism
 - c. Setting goals for personal achievement
7. Demonstrate emotional resilience and tolerance of ambiguity
8. Communicate respectfully in all interactions

L. Attendance

Regular attendance is mandatory for all MPA and HCS courses. During the didactic phase, students are expected to be present for all classes unless designated as an Institutional Holiday according to the School of Health Professions Academic calendar.

During the clinical phase, Institutional Holidays are defined by the Medical School Academic calendar for the MS3 students. These holidays include Thanksgiving break (Thurs through Sunday), Winter Break and Spring Break. Otherwise, students are expected to be at their assigned clinical site if the site is open.

Students will be responsible for reporting any absence and the reason for the absence before the scheduled starting time on each day of the absence. During the didactic phase, students must call the Department office at 214-648-1701. During the clinical phase, students must call the Department office at 214-648-1701 **and** notify their clinical rotation site. Student emails to faculty are not considered adequate notification of an absence.

A student who is absent because of illness or injury for a continuous period of more than three days or requires hospitalization or surgery regardless of length of stay, must submit a medical provider's statement indicating a release to return to school without limitations. If the student experiences any limitations that impact his/her ability to perform the essential functions of the program, he/she will need to request accommodations through Student Academic Support Services.

Section III.B.7 provides a list of excusable absences. All other absences are regarded as unexcused. Repeated tardiness or absences that exceed 10% of expected attendance will incur an academic deficiency and be referred to the Committee on Student Progress for disposition. Students who may need a leave of absence from the program due to medical condition should request an accommodation due to disability pursuant to EDU-103.

1. Conference Attendance

Students with high academic standing may be given permission to attend the American Academy of Physician Assistants Annual Conference and/or Texas Academy of Physician Assistants Conference at their own expense. Students must send a written request via email to the appropriate program coordinator (Academic or Clinical) by 45 days in advance of the conference for approval. Conference attendance often requires absence from didactic or clinical educational activities; therefore, a student must be in good academic standing to be eligible. Conflicts with clinical rotation schedules may preclude conference attendance.

M. Attire

Didactic Phase: Dress at Southwestern School of Health Professions should be suitable for an academic medical institution, being mindful that interaction with patients from clinics throughout the building is possible. The following is adapted from the UT Southwestern UHHR 03 Personal Appearance and Dress Code for Hospital and Hospital-Based Clinics Policy: [Handbook of Institutional Policies and Operating Procedures.](#)

- Identification badges: must be worn at all times, appropriately positioned for visible identification at chest or shoulder high. Badges must not be obscured with photos, service pins, tape, etc. The photo id must be prominent and not covered by other badges. (see V.Q.1. below)
- Hair: clean and neat and of a natural color only; for example, blonde, brown, black, red, gray.
- Facial hair (beards, sideburns, and mustaches): clean and neatly trimmed.
- Jewelry: maximum 2 rings per hand and 2 earrings per ear.
- Facial or tongue jewelry (tongue, lip, brow, nasal columella): prohibited.
- Make-up: minimal and conservative.
- Tattoos: covered and not exposed at any time, unless in a place that is unable to be covered.

- Clothing: inappropriately revealing or tight-fitting garments, T- shirts/shirts with religious, political or offensive slogans are prohibited.
- Clothing during patient contact: white coats must be worn; “blue jean cut” slacks or pants (denim material slacks/pants in any color) are not considered appropriate attire. Hemlines should be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.
- Footwear: clean and neat, commensurate with job duties in a way that does not interfere with one’s work and does not pose an infection prevention issue.
- Cologne or perfume should be minimal.

Clinical Phase: Other standards in addition to the above include the following:

- Attire requirements (e.g. scrubs, business attire) are dictated by the clinical rotation sites.
- Dangling earrings, bracelets, lanyards, etc., that could create a safety hazard: prohibited.
- Cologne or perfume: prohibited.
- Artificial nails: prohibited due to infection control concerns. Natural nails must be neatly trimmed to a length not to exceed ¼ inch.

N. Other required certifications

All students are required to be certified as American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Providers prior to entering the Clinical Phase.

O. Policy on Posting Grades

1. Grades emailed to student’s utsouthwestern.edu Outlook email address
2. Grades available on UT Brightspace (<https://d2l.utsouthwestern.edu/d2l/login/>)
3. Links to access the Exam Soft grade module will be emailed.

P. Departmental/Program Specific Grievances and Appeals

See EDU-502 Academic Decisions School of Health Professions

Q. Emergency Drills & Evacuation

In the case of fire or fire drill, all Department of Physician Assistant Studies students are to assemble in the open parking lot along the Harry Hines Boulevard near the bus stop and away from the building and parking structure. Students must report to their instructor for accounting of persons and for additional instructions. Students must not leave the assigned report area until cleared by their instructor.

R. Other Program Specific Topics

1. Identification Badges

Every student is provided an identification badge by UT Southwestern which must be worn in a readily visible location at all times while on campus and at clinical affiliates. Students must not attempt to use another student’s ID badge or permit another student to use their ID badge. Students must identify themselves upon request. See SEC-153 Badge and Identification Requirements.

2. Prohibited Roles

Physician Assistant students cannot serve as instructional faculty, clinical staff, or administrative staff at any time throughout enrollment, including during the didactic phase and while on clinical rotations.

3. Disease Prevention Requirements

Physician Assistant students must follow immunization requirements as outlined in Policy EDU-107 Immunization and Infectious Disease Prevention Requirements. While enrolled, students must also provide annual documentation of TB screening and Influenza vaccination and any other documentation as required by the institution.

4. Medical Advice

Due to accreditation requirements of the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA), department faculty **are not** allowed to provide medical advice or personal healthcare to PA students except in an emergency.

5. Employment

UT Southwestern recognizes that some students may choose to accept outside employment while enrolled in the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions. The curriculum in the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions is rigorous and requires all students to devote a significant amount of time, effort, and concentration to their studies. Although outside employment is not prohibited, students are encouraged to carefully consider how outside employment may impact their ability to maintain the level of performance required by departmental and program standards. It is the policy of UT Southwestern that attendance, assignments, deadlines, class schedules, clinical duties, performance standards, or other course or degree requirements will not be altered to accommodate a student who chooses to accept outside employment while enrolled in the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions.

Physician Assistant students may not be employed by the UT Southwestern Department of Physician Assistant Studies.

6. Shadowing Experiences

No shadowing experiences are sponsored or administered by the Department of PA Studies. As noted above, the curriculum in the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions is rigorous and requires all students to devote a significant amount of time, effort, and concentration to their studies. Although shadowing experiences are not prohibited, any such experience must be undertaken in a volunteer or observer role with no indication of enrollment as a PA student. Students are encouraged to carefully consider how shadowing experiences may impact their ability to maintain the level of performance required by departmental and program standards. It is the policy of UT Southwestern that attendance, assignments, deadlines, class schedules, clinical duties, performance standards, or other course or degree requirements will not be altered to accommodate a student who chooses to participate in

shadowing experiences while enrolled in the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions. Shadowing experiences are not covered by institution provided malpractice policies.

7. Change of Address/Name

Students are expected to keep the Office of Enrollment Services and the PA Department fully apprised of their correct name, mailing address, and phone number. If name, address, and/or phone number change during enrollment, students must notify the Office of Enrollment Services **and** send an email to the PA Department.

8. Student Participation in Clinical Simulation Activities

Learning the skill of obtaining and documenting a focused or complete history and physical examination is one of the essential skills of a health care provider. To become proficient, one must perform and repetitively practice various components of obtaining the history and performing the physical examination on others. Traditionally, learners of all schools at UTSW have practiced the components on patients, standardized patients, and other learners who have participated voluntarily in the activity. These practices must be conducted within ethical and legal boundaries. This policy addresses the situations and conditions in which learners can practice taking a history and performing a physical exam on other learners.

This policy refers to an activity that involves a learner practicing any component of taking a history or performing a physical examination on another learner as a “Learner Practice Activity.”

Policy: Learners at UTSW may participate in Learner Practice Activities as long as the following conditions are met:

1. Supervisors will explain the expectations for the learner being examined and the learner doing the examination before seeking volunteers for the Learner Practice Activity, which includes whether an audio/visual recording will be captured.
2. Absolutely no personal device recordings or pictures will be allowed.
3. Participation in the Learner Practice Activity is completely voluntary for the learner being examined and learner doing the examination. The voluntary condition is absolute. This policy forbids any pressure by others, either expressed or implied, for learners to volunteer for Learner Practice Activities. Deciding not to volunteer will not result in any reprisal from supervisors, other learners, or any other member of the UTSW community. Learners will not be graded based on their participation in Learner Practice Activities.
4. Learners will not fill roles typically fulfilled by standardized patients or standardized patient educators in situations such as formal Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCEs) or review and score other learners’ OSCE recordings.
5. Learners will not participate in any way in the evaluation of other learners for academic purposes. Learners participating as patients may provide oral, formative feedback as part of the Learner Practice Activity.
6. All Learner Practice Activities must include, at least, a third person who is observing the encounter and has been approved by both participants and take place in a private and

confidential setting. The observer may also be a learner and may be observing in real time via a camera from another room.

7. Physical examinations during Learner Practice Activities are specifically limited to vital signs and general, skin, HEENT, neck, cardiovascular, lung, abdomen, musculoskeletal, and neurological exams. Genitourinary, rectal, and breast examinations are strictly forbidden during Learner Practice Activities.
8. No procedures, such as intravenous insertions, ultrasound, or nasogastric tubes, are allowed on learners during Learner Practice Activities.
9. All individuals participating in a Learning Practice Activity, including the learner performing the exam and the observer(s), must agree to recognize the strict confidentiality and privacy of information regarding the learner being examined. This obligation to confidentiality is permanent and does not expire when the Learner Practice Activity ends. If a learner discovers an abnormality when performing an exam on another learner, the learner performing the exam must immediately notify their mentor or Group Leader. Otherwise, both the examining learner and the observer(s) must keep this information confidential and not share it with other persons.
10. All learners must follow personal protection equipment guidelines and appropriate hygiene protocols when performing an exam during a Learner Practice Activity.

Learners who would like to request disability-related reasonable accommodation for Learner Practice Activities should refer to EDU-103 Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Applicants and Learners with Disabilities. Learners may request religious accommodation for these activities by contacting the Dean's Office. Learners should refer to EDU-102 Learner Complaints and Resolutions if they would like to make a complaint about Learner Practice Activities.

VI. Acknowledgement Form
STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Date: _____

Dallas, Texas

By signing below, I acknowledge receipt of the UT Southwestern Department of PA Studies Student Guidelines and I understand it is my responsibility to comply.

I understand that the Student Guidelines is a general information publication only and is not intended to, nor does it contain, all policies that relate to students. The Student Guidelines, although revised annually, cannot always reflect up-to-the minute changes and are subject to revision by UT Southwestern at any time.

I understand UT Southwestern reserves the right to withdraw a course at any time, or to change fees or tuition, rules, calendars, curriculum and any other policies or requirements affecting students.

I understand the Student Guidelines do not constitute a contract, express or implied, between any applicant, student, employee, or faculty member and The University of Texas System, its Board of Regents, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, or the School of Health Professions.

Student's Name (PRINT)

Student's Signature

To be retained in your departmental files
RETURN TO the Department of PA Studies