

Pfeiffer University



MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Didactic Phase, Class of 2024

Welcome

Welcome to the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) program!

On behalf of the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program faculty and staff, I extend you a warm and heartfelt welcome. The program is committed to providing you with a supportive environment as you begin your journey to becoming a Physician Assistant. With this in mind, we have developed this student handbook to serve as a guide over your tenure with the program. Please read each section ***carefully and thoroughly***.

This handbook is available to you at: <http://www.pfeiffer.edu/mspas>

Best;

Michael Kehoe, PhD, PA-C

Michael Kehoe, PhD, PA-C
Interim Program Director
Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

About this student handbook (A3.01)

This student handbook has been developed to provide information regarding the policies and procedures applicable to students currently enrolled in the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) program and acquaint students with resources available to them.

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program policies align with the Pfeiffer University's institutional policies; and apply to all enrolled students, principal faculty, and the program director throughout all phases of the program regardless of location.

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program reserves the right to change the curriculum, any provision, policy, procedure, requirement, regulation or fee at any time, and at its own discretion subsequent to the publication of this handbook. Changes are applicable to all students of the program without regard to date of admission application or date of enrollment. Nonetheless, every effort will be made to keep students informed of any and all changes promptly and in writing.

Students are expected to read the student handbook in its entirety and refer to it throughout their time in the program. They are expected to reach out to their advisor, Director of Learning and Academic Success, a principal faculty member, or program director, in writing with any questions they may have. Students are responsible for the content within this handbook and subject to its policies and procedures even if they fail to read its content.

Accreditation Statement (A3.14a)

The ARC-PA has granted **Accreditation-Provisional** status to the **Pfeiffer University Physician Assistant Program** sponsored by **Pfeiffer University**.

Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program's ability to meet the ARC-PA *Standards* or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the *Standards* as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first cohort.

Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has established Accreditation Standards to maintain and promote appropriate benchmarks of quality in the education process of Physician Assistants. These Accreditation Standards are used as guidelines in the development, evaluation, and self-analysis of Physician Assistant programs. The ARC-PA provides recognition for educational programs that are in compliance with standards of quality for Physician Assistant education.

The standards are posted online at:

<http://www.arc-pa.org/documents/Standards4theditionwithclarifyingchanges9.2014%20FNL.pdf>

The policies and procedures stated in this Student Handbook align and are in compliance with these standards.

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Mission-Vision-Values

Mission

The mission of the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies is to educate servant leaders of diverse backgrounds as Physician Assistants who will provide exceptional healthcare in an inter-professional setting, serving rural medically underserved populations through community involvement, public health policy and advocacy.

Vision

The vision of the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies is to be recognized for its commitment to excellence in Physician Assistant education, scholarly activity and servant leadership in the areas of health disparities and social equity.

Values

In keeping with the Pfeiffer University Values the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies will abide by the following tenets:

- Educational excellence in a learner-centered community.
- Realization full potential
- Inclusion of diverse learners in a caring, accessible community - the Pfeiffer Family.
- Christian heritage and faith formation.
- Integrity and dignity

Program Goals (A3.14b)

The goals of the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies with respective measurements of success are as follows:

- To recruit, retain and successfully graduate highly qualified candidates of diverse backgrounds.
 - Admissions Data
 - Graduation Data
- To deliver an intellectually challenging and creative curriculum through innovative teaching strategies that facilitate the successful achievement of established learning outcomes and expected competencies.
 - Annual Curriculum Analysis
- To adhere to the highest standards of student performance and achievement of the Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession resulting in successful entrance into the profession with National Commission of Certification for Physician Assistants (NCCPA) Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE) first-time pass rates at or above the national average.
 - NCCPA PANCE Pass Rate Data
- To provide opportunities for students to interact with patients of diverse cultural and economic backgrounds which prepares and inspires graduates to provide compassionate, culturally sensitive, patient-centered, evidence-based healthcare in medically underserved communities locally, nationally and globally.
 - Ongoing programmatic analysis
 - Graduate surveys
 - Employer surveys
- To foster a scholarly setting where students will appropriately conduct critical appraisal of research resulting in improved patient outcomes and effective communication of their findings through medical writing.
 - Graduate capstone project data
 - Graduate surveys
- To afford students opportunities to participate in state and national professional organizations as advocates for the Physician Assistant profession resulting in continued participation throughout their careers.
 - Graduate surveys

Learning Outcomes & Expected Competencies

The Pfeiffer University of Master Science in Physician Assistant Studies is committed to providing students with a learner-centered educational environment where they will receive the requisite knowledge to provide compassionate, culturally sensitive, patient-centered, evidence-based healthcare in an inter-professional healthcare team.

Student success in achieving the program learning outcomes and expectations will be evaluated through a variety of assessment tools such as: multiple choice examinations, inter-professional collaborative group projects, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), reflection journals, clinical performance evaluations and a graduate research project.

The Pfeiffer University of Master Science in Physician Assistant Studies learning outcomes and expectations are based on the Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession as developed jointly by the National Commission on Accreditation of Physician Assistant (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 Assistant (AAPA)¹.

Upon completion of the Pfeiffer University of Master Science in Physician Assistant Studies graduates will demonstrate entry-level proficiency as Physicians Assistants in the following domains:

Medical Knowledge

The core competencies of Medical Knowledge seek to ensure that the Physician Assistant student continually investigates, questions, and pursues new knowledge.

Competency		Outcomes Domain
MK1	Demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care	KNWG
MK2	Demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations	KNWG
MK3	Correlate, integrate and apply the following to common emergent and non-emergent medical, surgical, and behavioral scenarios across the lifespan: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• History and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses• Management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment modalities• Interventions for surveillance geared to prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance	KNWG CRPS

¹ <https://www.nccpa.net/Uploads/docs/PACompetencies.pdf>

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

The Interpersonal and Communication Skills core competencies enable the Physician Assistant student to successfully receive and share information; establishing and maintaining a foundation of trust with all parties so that the environment is open and encouraging for honest dialogue.

Competency		Outcomes Domain
ICS1	Demonstrate interpersonal and communication (verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic) skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients' families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system	IS
ICS2	Accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes	IS

Patient Care

The core competencies of Patient Care seek to ensure that the Physician Assistant Student develops the ability to actively listen and attain medical histories, diagnose, properly inform and educate, and prescribe and perform necessary procedures in a way that maximizes patient comfort.

Competency		Outcomes Domain
PC1	Obtain an accurate history and perform a comprehensive physical exam	CTS
PC2	Accurately diagnose and formulate appropriate pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment plans	CRPS
PC3	Appropriately select and perform medical and surgical procedures common to primary care	CTS CRPS
PC4	Provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance	CTS

Professionalism

The Professionalism core competencies enable the Physician Assistant student to treat all people with respect, compassion, and dignity.

Competency		Outcomes Domain
PSM1	Demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements	PFSL
PSM2	Demonstrate sensitivity to a diverse patient population by identifying the socio-cultural, familial, psychological, economic, environmental, and spiritual factors impacting health care and health care delivery; and responding to these factors by planning and advocating the appropriate course of action at both the individual and the community level	PFSL

Team-based Learning & Improvement

The core competencies in Team-Based Learning and Improvement seek to ensure that the Physician Assistant student becomes a life-long learner, develops the skills necessary to evaluate medical research and its appropriate application to the practice of medicine.

Competency		Outcomes Domain
PBL1	Critically appraise the medical literature in order to use current practice guidelines and apply the principles of evidence-based medicine to patient care	KNWG CRPS

Systems-based Practice

The Systems-based Practice core competencies focus on the Physician Assistant student's ability to effectively perform their role as clinicians in diverse healthcare systems.

Competency		Outcomes Domain
SBP1	Provide advocacy and support geared to assist patients in obtaining quality care as they navigate the complexities of health care delivery systems	PFSL
SBP2	Demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost, while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient	PFSL

Leadership in Health Advocacy and Social Justice

Social accountability is an integral aspect of Physician Assistant practice; it has been part of the genetic make-up of our profession from its very beginning. Leadership in health advocacy and social justice encompasses involvement in legislative and community advocacy aimed at reducing health disparities and social injustice.

Competency		Outcomes Domain
LASJ1	Develop an interdisciplinary plan of advocacy for effective health policy changes that will facilitate health and social equity.	PFSL
LASJ2	Participate in the design and implementation of longitudinal projects that will promote the health of underserved populations.	PFSL
LASJ3	Apply valid, reliable research in advocacy to their current practice	PFSL
LASJ4	Educate community and professional organization leaders regarding existing health disparities and effective strategies to eliminate health inequities.	PFSL

*Key for Outcome Domains: Knowledge (KNWG), Clinical Reasoning Problem Solving (CRPS), Interpersonal Skills (IS), Clinical and Technical Skills (CTS), Professionalism (PFSL)

Program Description (A3.14d, A3.14e)

- **Overview**

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) is a 27-month continuous residential program; committed to creating an academic experience known for its excellence in PA education, scholarly activity and servant leadership in the areas of health disparities and social justice.

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program will have a strong emphasis on the unequal distribution of health, illness, disease, suffering and death by social status, where social status includes race/ethnicity, sex/gender, socioeconomic status, geographical region, and other factors locally, nationally and globally. Students will receive instruction in health policy, advocacy and community interventions best practices aimed at reducing health disparities.

The students will participate in collaborative service-learning experiences through community initiatives such as interdisciplinary community service initiatives where the students identify a specific healthcare disparity within the community, design and implement a self-sustaining program that addresses the disparity and empowers the community. Through these initiatives, students will gain real-life experience in culturally competent healthcare for the underserved.

Students will be evaluated and expected to meet the highest standards of competency in the six areas of Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession: Medical Knowledge, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Patient Care, Professionalism, Practice-Based Learning and Implementation and System-Based Practice throughout the didactic phase of the program. Students will be evaluated using a variety of assessment tools such as multiple-choice questions, verbal and written case presentations, simulation activities, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), short essays, reflection journals, and research projects.

Upon successful completion of all curricular elements of the program, the student will be awarded a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies.

- **Didactic Phase**

The program begins with a 15-month rigorous didactic phase which includes robust instruction in anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, pharmacotherapeutics, clinical laboratory and diagnostic studies, physical diagnosis, clinical medicine, behavioral medicine, community medicine, clinical research design, medical writing, evidence-based medicine, legal and ethical issues in medicine, and cultural issues in medicine. Instruction in professionalism, patient safety and advocacy are interwoven throughout the curriculum. The program will provide instruction on the four core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice: Values/Ethics for Interprofessional Practice, Roles/Responsibilities, Interprofessional Communication, Teams and Teamwork through creative and innovative active learning strategies such as interdisciplinary team-based and simulation learning. The students will participate in interprofessional experiences alongside other Pfeiffer health professions students.

- **Clinical Phase**

The didactic phase is followed by a 12-month clinical phase where the students will engage in approximately 2100 hours of supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs). Students will participate in seven core SCPEs Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Prenatal Care and Women's Health, Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Behavioral and Mental Health and two elective SCPEs (all SCPEs are five weeks long).

At the end of each SCPE, the students return to the main campus and participate in an End of Rotation Seminar. End of Rotation Seminar activities include an end of SCPE examination, OSCE, focused NCCPA board review with case discussions, an NCCPA-type practice exam, and round table discussions on topics regarding PA practice.

- **Scholarly Concentrations**

In response to the critical need of health care providers in the areas of Behavioral and Mental Health and Rural Medicine, the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program is offering Scholarly Concentrations in Behavioral and Mental Health and in Rural Medicine. The Scholarly Concentrations are offered during the clinical phase of the program; and will not extend the duration of the program.

- **Research**

A graduate research project is a requirement for graduation. The students may choose one of two options for the graduate research project. The first option is a three-part individual graduate research project which entails: a written case report, a literature review related to the case report, and an oral presentation of the case and key findings of the literature review. The second option is a collaborative graduate research project where a small group of students (three students maximum) identifies a health disparity in a specific community; conduct a literature review on the subject matter, design, and implement a community health initiative. The report (written and oral presentation) includes a literature review, a description of the project and its outcomes.

Curriculum Sequence (A3.14d)

Didactic Phase		
Semester 1 Spring		
Course Number	Course Name	Credits
PAS 600	Clinical Anatomy and Radiology with lab	5
PAS 601	Medical Physiology	2
PAS 602	Medical Interviewing, Counseling and Documentation	3
PAS 603	Essentials of Medical Genetics	1
PAS 604	Medical Microbiology	2
PAS 605	The Physician Assistant: Delivering Healthcare in America and Beyond	1
PAS 606	Epidemiology and Biostatistics: An Introduction to Clinical Research	1
PAS 607	Interprofessional Seminar I: Roles and Responsibilities	NC
TOTAL CREDITS		15
Semester 2 Summer		
PAS 608	Pathophysiology of Disease I	2
PAS 610	Clinical Medicine I	6
PAS 613	Pharmacology I	2
PAS 615	Physical Diagnosis I	4
PAS 617	Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics I	2
PAS 619	Evidence Based Medicine I	2
PAS 622	Public Health: Principles, Policy and Advocacy	1
PAS 623	Interprofessional Seminar II: Interprofessional Communication	NC
TOTAL CREDITS		19
Semester 3 Fall		
PAS 609	Pathophysiology of Disease II	2
PAS 611	Clinical Medicine II	6
PAS 614	Pharmacology II	2
PAS 616	Physical Diagnosis II	4
PAS 618	Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics II	2
PAS 620	Evidence Based Medicine II	2
PAS 624	Cultural Issues in Healthcare	1
PAS 625	Interprofessional Seminar III: Teams and Teamwork	NC
TOTAL CREDITS		19
Semester 4 Spring		
PAS 612	Clinical Medicine III	6
PAS 626	Advanced Clinical Pharmacotherapeutics	2
PAS 627	Clinical Skills and Procedures	4
PAS 628	Behavioral Medicine	2
PAS 621	Evidence Based Medicine III	2
PAS 629	Ethics, Law and Social Justice in Medicine	1
PAS 630	Interprofessional Seminar IV: Ethics and Values	NC
TOTAL CREDITS		17
TOTAL CREDITS DIDACTIC PHASE		70

Clinical Phase		
Semester V Summer, Semester VI Fall, Semester VII Spring		
Course Number	Course Name	Credits
PAS 700	Graduate Research Project	NC
PAS 701	Behavioral and Mental Health	5
PAS 702	Emergency Medicine	5
PAS 703	Family Medicine	5
PAS 704	General Surgery	5
PAS 705	Internal Medicine	5
PAS 706	Pediatrics	5
PAS 707	Women's Health	5
PAS 708	Orthopedics	5
PAS 709	Elective	5
TOTAL CREDITS		45
TOTAL CREDITS FOR THE PROGRAM		115

Didactic Phase

Semester I

PAS 600 Clinical Anatomy and Radiology with Lab

5 Credits

This is a clinically oriented course developed to integrate knowledge and understanding of human anatomy and function in health and disease. Anatomical landmarks and findings are correlated with imaging and pathophysiology. The cadaver laboratory sessions will reinforce the student's knowledge of anatomy and provide the student with the opportunity to visualize the texture, color, location, and three-dimensional relationships of anatomical structures. In conjunction with the cadaver lab session, there will also be corresponding online 'Virtual Lab' modules. Embryology and developmental biology will be incorporated into the course. This course will also introduce students to the fundamentals of anatomical structure as it correlates to radiologic imaging. Students will learn how to identify and locate key organs through a series of radiographic images. Integration of clinical concepts activities at the end of each body system re-enforces the application of anatomical concepts to clinical practice.

PAS 601 Medical Physiology

2 Credits

Medical Physiology is an integrated study of normal physiologic function of the cell and organ systems from a clinical perspective. Using a systems-based approach and synchronized with concurrent topics in Clinical Anatomy this course emphasizes normal physiologic function in preparation for Pathophysiology of Disease I and II.

PAS 602 Medical Interviewing, Counseling and Documentation

3 Credits

This course will equip the student with the fundamentals of patient-centered communication skills, patient education and basic counseling techniques as well as the components of the medical interview. The student will develop competency in behavioral change counseling strategies such as motivational interviewing. These concepts will be reinforced through the introduction to medical documentation.

PAS 603 Essentials of Medical Genetics

1 Credit

This course is an introduction to medical genetics where students will review chromosomes, DNA, RNA, protein synthesis, and inheritance patterns and continues with a clinical focus based on understanding different disease processes. Diagnostic techniques and an overview of embryonic development and teratogens will also be discussed. A variety of genetic diseases are explored, including what is known about the genetics involved, the signs and symptoms of the disease, and prevention and treatment options available. The roles of genetic counseling and screening, as well as the ethical and legal issues related to genetic screening and genetic testing, are also discussed.

PAS 604 Medical Microbiology/Infectious Disease Part I

2 Credits

This course provides the physician assistant student with the principles of medical microbiology and infectious disease. It covers mechanisms of infectious disease transmission, principles of aseptic practice, and the role of the human body's normal microflora. The biology of bacterial, viral, fungal, and parasitic pathogens and the diseases they cause are also covered. Additionally, the course provides the conceptual basis for understanding pathogenic microorganisms and the mechanisms by which they

cause disease in the human body. Relevant clinical examples are provided to facilitate the application, evaluation and correlation of laboratory data used in the diagnosis and treatment of common infectious disease states. Problem solving and communication skills are refined through small and large group clinical case discussions.

PAS 605 The Physician Assistant: Delivering Healthcare in America and Beyond

1 Credit

This course offers students a comprehensive overview of the fundamental structure and operations of the U.S. health care system. The course presents the complex nature of the organization, financing, and delivery of health care services in the US in a systematic fashion. Healthcare systems of other countries and global health challenges and reform are also explored.

Additionally, the course will closely examine the history, current issues and future trends of the Physician Assistant profession and their role in the U.S. healthcare system. Students will review legal and regulatory issues in Physician Assistant practice; gaining an appreciation for the importance of active participation in healthcare policy and legislation. The course will also introduce students to the role of other health service professionals and the principles of inter-professional practice.

PAS 606 Epidemiology and Biostatistics: An Introduction to Clinical Research

1 Credit

This course will explore fundamental concepts of biostatistics and epidemiology necessary to interpret clinical research articles and design clinical studies most commonly encountered in health research.

PAS 607 Interprofessional Seminar I: Roles and Responsibilities

NC

Physician Assistants must successfully function in a health care environment that effectively utilizes the resources and knowledge offered by each member of the healthcare team in the delivery of patient-centered care. Successful inter-professional practice results in an improvement in quality, reduction in cost, optimization of efficiency; ultimately achieving the best possible patient outcomes. These seminars will provide the Physician Assistant student opportunities to apply the principles of inter-professional practice to clinical scenarios while interacting with students from other healthcare disciplines. The seminars will be conducted over two days and will focus on the four inter-professional collaborative practice competency domains: Roles and Responsibilities, Interprofessional Communication, Teams and Teamwork, and Ethics and Values.

Semester II

PAS 608 Pathophysiology of Disease I

2 Credits

Pathophysiological Basis of Disease I is the first of a two-semester overview of medical physiology as well as an introduction to the underlying pathological basis for specific disease processes common to primary care. The clinical pathophysiology portion of the course serves as a transition from the basic medical sciences to clinical medicine. The student will be exposed to the study of disease, both congenital and acquired with an emphasis on providing understanding pathologic physiology in conjunction with information regarding medical history and laboratory data to solve case-based clinical problems during small group discussions. Students are taught how pathophysiology translates into patient signs, symptoms and laboratory test results. Students are also encouraged to begin the thought processes leading to the development of differential diagnoses. The course content is presented synchronized with

appropriate, correlative topics in Physical Diagnosis I, Clinical Medicine I, Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics I, and Pharmacology I.

PAS 610 Clinical Medicine I

6 Credits

This course integrates the epidemiology, risk factors (including genetics, as applicable), pathophysiology, signs and symptoms, history and physical findings, laboratory and diagnostic tests, differential diagnosis, therapeutic management, possible complications, prevention measures prognosis, patient education and follow-up of emergent and non-emergent disorders encountered in primary care across the lifespan. The course utilizes a systems approach and is delivered through a combination of traditional lectures and problem-based learning (PBL) sessions. The topics are synchronized with and correlative to topics in Pathophysiology of Disease I, Pharmacology I, Physical Diagnosis I and Clinical Laboratory Medicine I. Organ systems covered in Clinical Medicine I include Dermatology, Ophthalmology, Otolaryngology, Cardiology, Electrocardiography, and Pulmonary Medicine. At the end of each organ system students will engage in critical thinking and integration of clinical concepts exercises through team-based learning.

PAS 613 Pharmacology I

2 Credits

This course is designed to prepare the student for the clinical study of therapeutics by providing knowledge of the way drugs modify biological function. It includes a systematic study of the effects of drugs on different organ systems and disease processes, the mechanisms by which drugs produce their therapeutic and toxic effects, and the factors influencing their absorption, distribution and biological actions. The course consists of a combination of lectures and team-based learning (TBL) sessions. The topics are synchronized with and correlative to topics in Clinical Medicine I, Pathophysiology of Disease I and Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics I.

PAS 615 Physical Diagnosis I

4 Credits

This is a course where the student develops a systems-based approach to performing a full physical examination and critical thinking skills enabling them to formulate differential diagnoses and treatment plans. The course content has been synchronized and integrated with correlative content in Pathophysiology of Disease I, Clinical Pharmacology I, Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics I and Clinical Medicine I to maximize student learning.

Students will receive instruction through lectures and actively participate in labs where they interact with, interview and examine standardized patients. Students are primarily assessed by Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE); where they will interview and examine a standardized patient then document and present their findings to course instructors.

PAS 617 Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics I

2 Credits

This course is the first of a two-part series where the student receives instruction in medical laboratory and radiographic studies used in the diagnosis and management of common disorders of the major body systems. It also provides the rationale for the selection, utilization and interpretation of clinical laboratory, imaging and other diagnostic tests used to evaluate each system's principal functions. The topics are synchronized with and correlative to topics in Clinical Medicine I, Pathophysiology of Disease I and Pharmacology I.

PAS 619 Evidence Based Medicine I

2 Credits

This is the first course of a two-part series where the basic principles of utilizing research evidence in clinical practice are expounded on. Course I will focus on developing efficient strategies for searching and using available databases to access evidence-based journals and medical literature. Students will also acquire the skill of formulating an answerable research question. Course II will provide students with the requisite knowledge and skill to appropriately interpret and critically appraise research studies of intervention, harm, diagnosis and prognosis in an efficient manner. After appraising the study students will be able to determine if the information is valid and how it will affect the care of the patient. Course III will offer instruction on medical writing as students start to develop the foundation of their graduate research project.

PAS 622 Public Health: Principles, Policy and Advocacy

1 Credit

This course offers the student a population perspective on the determinants of health and disease. It will also explore best practices and the tools available to promote health and prevent disease. The student will examine public healthcare systems as well as society-wide systems (i.e. laws and taxation) and their role on health inequities in the United States and abroad. Additionally, the student will be introduced to public health policy: its purpose, how it is originated, and how it is implemented. Underlying theories and frameworks, as well as practical analytical tools needed for effective advocacy and communication, will be discussed. The course will also demonstrate how policymaking is a complex, multidisciplinary, and integrated top-down and bottom-up process that embraces a myriad of public and private stakeholders.

PAS 623 Interprofessional Seminar II: Interprofessional Communication

NC

Physician Assistants must successfully function in a health care environment that effectively utilizes the resources and knowledge offered by each member of the healthcare team in the delivery of patient-centered care. Successful interprofessional practice results in an improvement in quality, reduction in cost, optimization of efficiency; ultimately achieving the best possible patient outcomes. This seminar series will provide the Physician Assistant student opportunities to apply the principles of inter-professional practice to clinical scenarios while interacting with students from other healthcare disciplines. The seminars will be conducted over two days and will focus on the four inter-professional collaborative practice competency domains: Roles and Responsibilities, Interprofessional Communication, Teams and Teamwork, and Ethics and Values.

Semester III

PAS 609 Pathophysiology of Disease II

2 Credits

Pathophysiology of Disease II is the second of a two-semester overview of medical physiology as well as an introduction to the underlying pathological basis for specific disease processes common to primary care. The clinical pathophysiology portion of the course serves as a transition from the basic medical sciences to clinical medicine. The student will be exposed to the study of disease, both congenital and acquired with an emphasis on providing understanding pathologic physiology in conjunction with information regarding medical history and laboratory data to solve case-based clinical problems during small group discussions. Students are taught how pathophysiology translates into patient signs, symptoms and laboratory test results. Students are also encouraged to begin the thought processes

leading to the development of differential diagnoses. The course content is presented synchronized with appropriate, correlative topics in Physical Diagnosis II, Clinical Medicine II and Pharmacology II.

PAS 611 Clinical Medicine II

6 Credits

This course integrates the epidemiology, risk factors (including genetics, as applicable), pathophysiology, signs and symptoms, history and physical findings, laboratory and diagnostic tests, differential diagnosis, therapeutic management, possible complications, prevention measures prognosis, patient education and follow-up of emergent and non-emergent disorders encountered in primary care across the lifespan. The course utilizes a systems approach and is delivered through a combination of traditional lectures and team-based learning (TBL) sessions. The topics are synchronized with and correlative to topics in Pathophysiology of Disease II, Pharmacology II, Physical Diagnosis II and Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics II. Organ systems covered in Clinical Medicine II include Hematology/Oncology (Liquid Malignancies), Gastroenterology, Urology/Nephrology, Endocrinology, Rheumatology, Psychiatry, Neurology, and Oncology Medicine. At the end of each organ system, students will engage in critical thinking and integration of clinical concepts exercises through team-based learning.

PAS 614 Pharmacology II

2 Credits

This course is designed to prepare the student for the clinical study of therapeutics by providing knowledge of the way drugs modify biological function. It includes a systematic study of the effects of drugs on different organ systems and disease processes, the mechanisms by which drugs produce their therapeutic and toxic effects, and the factors influencing their absorption, distribution and biological actions. The course consists of a combination of lectures and team-based learning (TBL) sessions. The topics are synchronized with and correlative to topics in Clinical Medicine II, Pathophysiology of Disease II and Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics II.

PAS 616 Physical Diagnosis II

4 Credits

This is a course where the student develops a systems-based approach to performing a full physical examination and critical thinking skills enabling them to formulate differential diagnoses and treatment plans. The course content has been synchronized and integrated with correlative content in Pathophysiology of Disease II, Clinical Pharmacology II, Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics II and Clinical Medicine I to maximize student learning.

Students will receive instruction through lectures and actively participate in labs where they interact with, interview and examine standardized patients. Students are primarily assessed by Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE); where they will interview and examine a standardized patient then document and present their findings to course instructors.

PAS 618 Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics II

2 Credits

This course is the second of a two-part series where the student receives instruction in medical laboratory and radiographic studies used in the diagnosis and management of common disorders of the major body systems. It also provides the rationale for the selection, utilization and interpretation of clinical laboratory, imaging and other diagnostic tests used to evaluate each system's principal functions. The topics are synchronized with and correlative to topics in Clinical Medicine II, Pathophysiology of Disease II and Pharmacology II

PAS 620 Evidence Based Medicine II**2 Credits**

This is the second course of a three-part series where the basic principles of utilizing research evidence in clinical practice are expounded on. Course I focused on developing efficient strategies for searching and using available databases to access evidence-based journals and medical literature. Students also acquired the skill of formulating an answerable research question. Course II will provide students with the requisite knowledge and skills to appropriately interpret and critically appraise research studies of intervention, harm, diagnosis and prognosis in an efficient manner. After appraising the study students will be able to determine if the information is valid and how it will affect the care of the patient. Course III will offer instruction on medical writing as students start to develop the foundation of their graduate research project.

PAS 624 Cultural Issues in Healthcare**1 Credit**

This course enhances the understanding of culture and its relationship to health, health disparities, disease incidence and prevalence for specific communities and/or ethnic groups. It will also explore historical factors that might shape the health behaviors, beliefs, folk practices, ethnopharmacology, and communication practices of specific communities. Students will be challenged to discover the effect of bias and stereotyping on the delivery of healthcare. Upon completion of this course, the student will develop an understanding and value the importance of providing culturally competent healthcare.

PAS 625 Interprofessional Seminar III: Ethics and Values**NC**

Physician Assistants must successfully function in a health care environment that effectively utilizes the resources and knowledge offered by each member of the healthcare team in the delivery of patient-centered care. Successful interprofessional collaborative practice results in an improvement in quality, reduction in cost, optimization of efficiency; ultimately achieving the best possible patient outcomes. These seminars will provide the Physician Assistant student opportunities to apply the principles of inter-professional collaborative practice to clinical scenarios while interacting with students from other healthcare disciplines such as nursing, health and exercise science, occupational therapy, marriage and family therapy and health administration.

Semester IV**PAS 612 Clinical Medicine III****6 Credits**

This course integrates the epidemiology, risk factors (including genetics, as applicable), pathophysiology, signs and symptoms, history and physical findings, laboratory and diagnostic tests, differential diagnosis, therapeutic management, possible complications, prevention measures, prognosis, patient education and follow-up of emergent and non-emergent disorders encountered across the lifespan in primary care. Students will apply knowledge obtained in Clinical Medicine I and II to specific populations and clinical situations. It is delivered through a combination of traditional lectures and team-based learning (TBL) sessions. Topics covered in Clinical Medicine III include Surgery, Geriatrics, Pediatrics, Infectious Disease Part II, and Emergency Medicine. Throughout each module students will engage in critical thinking and integration of clinical concepts exercises through team-based learning.

PAS 626 Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics**2 Credits**

This course provides the opportunity to acquire advanced knowledge and skills in the therapeutic use of pharmacologic agents. The pharmacologic treatment of complex health problems will be explored. It is designed to facilitate the process of teambuilding by making basic knowledge in pharmacology “come alive” in structured case studies. Thus, the didactic lecture material taught in Pharmacology I and Pharmacology II will be expanded, reinforced, and made practical through the team-based learning method. Additionally, students will administer medications using patient simulators and will observe the clinical response

PAS 627 Clinical Skills and Procedures**4 Credits**

This course is designed to introduce students to essential procedures and skills necessary for primary care practice such as phlebotomy; injection techniques; splinting; suturing and more. Students will participate in Advanced Cardiac Life Support and Pediatric Advanced Life Support Certification training during this course. Students will demonstrate competence through written and practical evaluations.

PAS 628 Behavioral Medicine**2 Credits**

Behavioral Medicine is a course that aims to develop and integrate behavioral, psychosocial, and biomedical science knowledge and techniques relevant to the understanding of health and illness, and the application of this knowledge and these techniques to prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation across the lifespan. It includes the following topics as they pertain to human behavior: children and adolescent health, aging, chronic pain, death, dying and loss, domestic violence, eating disorders, environmental health, human sexuality, HIV/AIDS, obesity, public health, quality of life, rehabilitation, sexually transmitted diseases, stress, substance abuse (alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs) and women's health.

PAS 621 Evidence Based Medicine III**2 Credits**

This is the second course of a three-part series where the basic principles of utilizing research evidence in clinical practice are expounded on. Course I focused on developing efficient strategies for searching and using available databases to access evidence-based journals and medical literature. Students also acquired the skill of formulating an answerable research question. Course II will provide students with the requisite knowledge and skills to appropriately interpret and critically appraise research studies of intervention, harm, diagnosis and prognosis in an efficient manner. After appraising the study students will be able to determine if the information is valid and how it will affect the care of the patient. Course III will offer instruction on medical writing as students start to develop the foundation of their graduate research project.

PAS 629 Ethics, Law and Social Justice in Medicine**1 Credit**

This is a highly interactive course where principles of ethics and the law are discussed followed by case simulations that illustrate where social determinants of health (i.e. access to justice), ethics and the law intersect. Students will explore their roles and responsibilities as healthcare providers and discover how interdisciplinary collaboration is key for effective advocacy and changes in health policy that address health disparities and social injustice.

PAS 630 Interprofessional Seminar IV: Teams and Teamwork

NC

Physician Assistants must successfully function in a health care environment that effectively utilizes the resources and knowledge offered by each member of the healthcare team in the delivery of patient-centered care. Successful interprofessional practice results in an improvement in quality, reduction in cost, optimization of efficiency; ultimately achieving the best possible patient outcomes. This seminar series will provide the Physician Assistant student opportunities to apply the principles of inter-professional practice to clinical scenarios while interacting with students from other healthcare disciplines. The seminars will be conducted over two days and will focus on the four inter-professional collaborative practice competency domains: Roles and Responsibilities, Interprofessional Communication, Teams and Teamwork, and Ethics and Values.

Technical Standards (A3.15e)

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) Program is committed to complying with Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and PL 101-336, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and also ascertains that the following minimum technical standards must be present in the prospective candidates.

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program has determined technical standards that are essential for successful progression and completion of all aspects of the curriculum, as well as entry into the profession. These Technical Standards are required for admission and must be maintained throughout the student's enrollment in the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program. In the event a student is unable to fulfill these Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, the student will be subject to dismissal.

Candidates must have somatic sensation and the functional use of the senses of vision and hearing. Candidates' and students' diagnostic skills will also be lessened without the functional use of the senses of equilibrium, smell, and taste. Additionally, they must have sufficient exteroceptive sense (touch, pain and temperature), sufficient proprioceptive sense (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory) and sufficient motor function to permit them to carry out the activities described in the section above. They must be able to consistently, quickly, and accurately integrate all information received by whatever sense(s) are employed, and they must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data.

Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in these areas, but a candidate should be able to perform them in a reasonably independent manner. The use of a trained intermediary would mean that a student's judgment must be mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation. Therefore, third parties cannot be used to assist students in accomplishing curricular requirements in the five skill areas specified below. Reasonable accommodations can be made for documented disabilities.

- **Observation**
 - Candidates and students must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand.
 - Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing, smell, and somatic sensation.

- **Communication**
 - Candidates and students must be able to speak, hear and observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications.
 - Candidates and students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients.
 - Candidates and students must be able to communicate (verbal, nonverbal, and written) effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the healthcare team.
 - Candidates and students must possess reading skills at a level to be able to independently accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients.

- **Motor Coordination and Function**
 - Candidates and students should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers.
 - Candidates and students should be able to do basic laboratory tests, carry out diagnostic procedures and read EKGs and X-rays.
 - Candidates and students should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients.
 - Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of Physician Assistants are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers.
 - Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

- **Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities**
 - Candidates and students must exhibit the following intellectual abilities:
 - Measurement
 - Calculation
 - Reasoning
 - Analysis
 - Synthesis
 - Comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships
 - The above listed abilities are necessary skills in order to perform problem-solving tasks quickly and efficiently.

- **Behavioral and Social Attributes**
 - Candidates and students must possess the behavioral emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients.
 - Candidates and students must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively when under stress.
 - Candidates and students must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.
 - Candidates and students must demonstrate empathy, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, motivation, and the ability to interact with people at all levels in a culturally diverse society.

Special Accommodations

Section 504: Pfeiffer University does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants who are handicapped. This policy is in keeping with Section 504, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. For assistance in arranging reasonable accommodations for undergraduate classes in Misenheimer, students should contact Dr. Jim Gulledge at 980-621-2532 or jim.gulledge@pfeiffer.edu. For all other undergraduate and graduate classes, students should contact Dr. Chip Palmer at 704-463-3367 or chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu.

Documentation of recommended accommodations provided must be submitted to the Director of Learning and Academic Success prior to or on the first day of class. In cases where this does not occur the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program requires notification at least 5 days prior to an examination in order to review and institute appropriate accommodations.

Cost of Attendance (A3.14f)

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees for the Pfeiffer University MS PAS program is one comprehensive fee. The comprehensive fee is determined annually and may change somewhat from year to year. Therefore, the figures cited here should be used for estimation purposes only. The comprehensive fee does not include books or course-specific fees. Changes to the tuition and fees listed here will be updated on this page in a timely manner.

The total estimated tuition and fees for the 27-month program for Academic Year 2020-2022 (class entering in January 2022) is **\$99,094**.

The chart below provides an outline for the estimated cost of attendance including books, housing, transportation, etc. broken down by semester.

COMPREHENSIVE FEE (TUITION AND FEES): Spring 2020 Cohort							
	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022
Tuition	\$ 11,871	\$ 11,871	\$ 11,871	\$ 11,871	\$ 11,871	\$ 11,871	\$ 11,871
Fees	\$ 1,714	\$ 1,714	\$ 1,714	\$ 1,714	\$ 1,714	\$ 1,714	\$ 1,714
Clinical Support Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Comprehensive Program Tuition and Fees	\$ 13,585	\$ 13,585	\$ 13,585	\$ 13,585	\$ 15,085	\$ 15,085	\$ 15,085
TOTAL							\$ 99,595
EXPENSES							
Room & Board (depends on your living arrangements)	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00
Transportation	\$ 976.00	\$ 976.00	\$ 976.00	\$ 976.00	\$ 1,080.00	\$ 1,080.00	\$ 1,080.00
Books	\$ 888.80	\$ 838.93	\$ 706.99	\$ 613.00	\$ 42.07	\$ 42.07	\$ 42.08
Equipment	\$ 675.45						
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 1,000.00						
Health Insurance	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00
TOTAL Expenses	\$ 10,065	\$ 8,340	\$ 8,208	\$ 8,114	\$ 7,647	\$ 7,647	\$ 7,647

COMPREHENSIVE FEE (TUITION AND FEES): Spring 2021 Cohort							
	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Tuition	12,049	12,049	12,049	12,049	12,049	12,049	12,049
Orientation Fee	\$ 500						
Fees	1,714	1,714	1,714	1,714	1,714	1,714	1,714
Clinical Support Fees	-	-	-	-	1,500	1,500	1,500
Comprehensive Program Tuition and Fees	14,263	13,763	13,763	13,763	15,263	15,263	15,263
TOTAL							\$ 101,341
EXPENSES							
Room & Board (depends on your living arrangements)	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 5,900.00

Transportation	\$ 976.00	\$ 976.00	\$ 976.00	\$ 976.00	\$ 1,080.00	\$ 1,080.00	\$ 1,080.00
Books	\$ 888.80	\$ 838.93	\$ 706.99	\$ 613.00	\$ 42.07	\$ 42.07	\$ 42.08
Equipment	\$ 675.45						
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 1,000.00						
Health Insurance	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 625.00
TOTAL Expenses	\$ 10,065	\$ 8,340	\$ 8,208	\$ 8,114	\$ 7,647	\$ 7,647	\$ 7,647

Refund Policy

If a student withdraws or is separated from the Pfeiffer University MS PAS program for any reason other than a disability once the semester has started, a credit for fees charged is given on the following basis:

Days Attended	Refund Rate
Day 0-Day5	90%
Day 6-Day 10	60%
After Day 10	0%

Refunds and Financial Aid

Federal regulations governing Title IV financial aid programs require that the Office of Financial Aid determine the amount of the refund that must be paid back to the financial aid programs if the student received aid for educational expenses. Therefore, some or all of a student's credit may be allocated to financial aid programs and not refunded to the student. For more information please contact the Office of Financial Aid at financial.aid@pfeiffer.edu

- **Please note:** No considerations will be given after Day 10.

Physician Assistant Professional Oath

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

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

These duties are pledged with sincerity and upon my honor.

Professionalism (C3.02)

Definition

Medical Professionalism is defined as the daily expression of the desire to serve people and society as a whole by providing quality health care to those in need; this definition aligns with the principle of servant leadership². As stated by Robert Greenleaf, “The servant leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first.”³ Servant leadership characterized by the highest ethical standards is a foundational principle for all faculty, staff and students of Pfeiffer University.

As future medical professionals, students are expected to possess and maintain the level of professionalism that is required of licensed medical professionals. The general public holds medical professionals to a higher ethical and professional standard than that of the lay public and trusts them with their medical care which is confidential and highly personal. It is important that students behave in a way that maintains that trust. Unprofessionalism not only has implications towards the general public’s perception of this PA program, but the PA profession in general as well. Ultimately, PA students should strive to be able to provide ethical and professional care to the patients they serve.

Expected Behaviors

All currently enrolled students of the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Program are expected to demonstrate at all times behaviors consistent with the:

- *Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant*, published by the American Academy of Physician Assistants. <https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf>
- Established learning outcomes and expected competencies regarding Professionalism and Leadership in Health Advocacy and Social Justice. <http://www.pfeiffer.edu/academics/programs/physician-assistant-ms-pas/5474/learning-outcomes>

² <http://abimfoundation.org/what-we-do/medical-professionalism> (03_02_2018)

³ <https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/> (03_-2_2018)

Unacceptable Behaviors

Examples of unprofessional behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Excessive absences or tardiness (unexcused or unexcused) as defined elsewhere in this handbook. Students are expected to participate in all instructional activities.
- Lack of engagement and/or participation in the classroom or any academic/instructional activity. This includes, but is not limited to, ignoring or not responding to verbal or written instructions or notifications from the program.
- Disruptive behavior in the classroom, which includes, but is not limited to, failure to meaningfully contribute to group work in a way that is equivalent to the work other students are doing in that group
- Violation of principles related to academic integrity and/or plagiarism as outlined by the Pfeiffer University Honor Code
- Use of inappropriate communication, either verbally or in writing, with anyone to include yelling/screaming, swearing/curse words, derogatory language, or language that could be interpreted as threatening, demeaning, or intimidating.
- Student intoxication with alcohol, prescription, or any illicit drug(s) or substance(s)
- Violation of dress code
- Destruction, misuse, or abuse of Program and/or University equipment and/or supplies, which includes but is not limited to using these materials in a way that is not their intended purpose and/or approved by faculty, in a way that may damage these materials or affect their ability to function correctly or removing them from their facility for any use outside of University property unless otherwise designated by program faculty.

Students should understand this is not an exhaustive list and it is ultimately up to the discretion of the APPRC to determine what constitutes unprofessional behavior and what constitutes appropriate disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

Communication

All students are assigned a Pfeiffer University email account at the time of admission to the program. It is mandatory that students check their Pfeiffer University e-mail account daily (including weekends). The Pfeiffer University e-mail is considered the official University email and the only account that the MS PAS Program uses to communicate with currently enrolled students. Likewise, students should only use their Pfeiffer University e-mail account for email correspondence with the program as this prevents identification problems related to outside email. Faculty and staff will not respond to students who utilize outside email addresses. The MS PAS program faculty and staff use e-mail as an important means for distributing information. The MS PAS program is not responsible if a student has inaccurate or missing information due to failure to routinely check, read and clear his/her e-mail account. Students are responsible for promptly reaching out to the Pfeiffer IT department if they have technical difficulties with their Pfeiffer University e-mail account.

Students are expected to adhere to professional communication with program faculty and staff both in-person and in writing, including email. Students should direct any questions they have about what constitutes professional communication to Dr. Chip Palmer, Director of Learning and Academic Success

Students should refrain from texting with program and clinical faculty whenever possible and this form of communication should remain strictly professional and related directly to educational content/activities. Students should refrain from consorting with program faculty outside of the

educational setting unless specifically for the purpose of attending a program-sponsored event.

Requirement to Report Criminal Incident

Students are required to inform their Faculty Advisor and/or the Program Director of any interaction with the police resulting in an arrest or being brought before the criminal justice system within fifteen (15) days of the incident. This requirement is independent of whether or not there is a conviction involved. Failure to report any incident will result in a referral to the Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee (APPRC) for unprofessional behavior. Disciplinary actions may include dismissal from the MS PAS Program.

Criminal Background Checks/ Drug Screening

If a felony conviction occurs between the date of submission of the CASPA application and matriculation into the PA Program, the specific details including: (1) date of charge(s), (2) type of offense, and (3) disposition of the case, must be reported to the Program Director's office immediately.

Any felony convictions that occur subsequent to matriculation or at any time during your enrollment in the program must also be reported immediately providing the aforementioned information.

Failure to comply will be grounds for dismissal from the MS PAS Program.

By accepting admission to the program, a student agrees to submit to national criminal background checks, as well as drug screening; and pay any associated expenses

Medical Records and Patient Confidentiality

Patient confidentiality is a cornerstone in Physician Assistant practice and essential for establishing and maintaining the patient-provider relationship built on trust.

MS PAS students are privileged to learn information that patients share only with healthcare professionals and be present in very personal moments of patients' lives. Patients, in turn, trust that MS PAS students will preserve their confidentiality; as a key component of medical professionalism, MS PAS students must honor this trust. Students are not to discuss a patient in any manner or situation that would reveal any information about that patient to any person not directly involved in the patient's health care. Students must refrain from discussing patients in public places, (i.e. cafeterias, elevators, etc.) where conversations may be overheard. Students should remind those who may be inappropriately discussing patient information, about patient confidentiality.

Students will adhere to ethical principles and use practical reasoning when dealing with patients at all times. No student should medically treat other MS PAS students, friends, or family members while a student is in the MS PAS Program.

All students will receive formal instruction on and must follow the Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) rules when participating in clinical activities at affiliated hospitals and clinics; HIPAA compliance includes maintaining the confidentiality of paper and electronic health records. When violations of HIPAA by a student are identified by a hospital, clinic, physician's office, etc., the violation will be reviewed by the APPRC. Disciplinary actions may include remediation and/or sanctions, including the possibility of dismissal from the program.

Dress Code

Student professional dress and conduct should, at all times, reflect the dignity and standards of the medical profession. It is important that physician assistant students dress in a manner that is respectful to their professors, classmates, patients, interprofessional and administrative colleagues. The MS-PAS program has the authority to determine dress code requirements for students admitted to the program. Students in violation of any of the above dress codes may be asked to change into appropriate attire. Violations may result in the referral of the student to the APPRC for disciplinary action.

The required attire is “business casual” unless otherwise specified by the faculty instructor for specific purposes such as lab or Physical Diagnosis courses. Short sleeves are permitted, but not t-shirts or tank tops. No clothing should be unprofessionally revealing regardless of student gender. The neckline of tops should not extend below the collar bones and should not reveal the abdomen when sitting or standing. Pants/skirts should not be shorter than knee length. Jeans are not permitted. Closed-toed shoes are required. Undergarments should not be visible, except for the unique circumstance of the Physical Diagnosis course where sports bras may be required by the course director. Students should display their Pfeiffer University student badge at all times. Students should consult their Faculty Advisor if they have questions about the dress code.

Students should avoid the use of fragrances, as patients, classmates and instructors may have allergies or sensitivities.

Social Media and the Medical Professional

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies supports the American Medical Association’s (AMA) opinion titled “Professionalism in the Use of Social Media”. The opinion has been quoted below with modifications to align with physician assistant education and practice. The original opinion is available at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/resources/doc/code-medical-ethics/9124a.pdf>

The Internet has created the ability for physician assistant (PA) students and PAs to easily communicate and share information with millions of people. Participating in social networking and other similar Internet opportunities can support a PAs personal expression, enable individual PAs to have a professional presence online, foster collegiality and camaraderie within the profession, and provide an opportunity to widely disseminate public health messages and other health communications. Social networks, blogs, and other forms of communication online also create new challenges to the patient-provider relationship. PA students should weigh a number of considerations when maintaining a presence online:

- PA students should be cognizant of standards of patient privacy and confidentiality that must be maintained in all environments, including online, and must refrain from posting identifiable patient information online. Students must NOT text, email, post on social media, or discuss with anyone potentially identifiable patient information which includes but is not limited to, photographs of patients (even if the patient's face is not visible).
- When using the Internet for social networking, PA students should use privacy settings to safeguard personal information and content to the extent possible but should realize that privacy settings are not absolute and that once on the Internet, content is likely there

permanently. Thus, PA students should routinely monitor their own Internet presence to ensure that the personal and professional information on their own sites and, to the extent possible, content posted about them by others, is accurate and appropriate.

- PA students should NOT interact with patients on the Internet. If a situation occurs where a student unknowingly interacts with a patient on the Internet while they are a student, they should report this to the program immediately for guidance.
- To maintain appropriate professional boundaries PAs should separate personal and professional content online.
- When PA students see content posted by colleagues that appears unprofessional, they have a responsibility to bring that content to the attention of the individual, so that he or she can remove it and/or take other appropriate actions. If the behavior significantly violates professional norms and the individual does not take appropriate action to resolve the situation, the PA student should report the matter to the appropriate authorities.
- PA students must recognize that actions online and posted content may negatively affect their reputations among patients and colleagues, may have consequences for their medical careers (particularly for PA students) and can undermine public trust in the medical profession.

Program-Specific Social Media Expectations

Pfeiffer University PA students and faculty should understand and adhere to the following guidelines and professional considerations when engaging in social media networking:

- Pfeiffer University PA Faculty and Staff members are not permitted to extend or accept “friend requests” to/from students.
- Classroom time should be respected. Students should not engage in social networking during instructional activities.
- The integrity of the coursework of the Pfeiffer University PA program, student, and classroom should be protected. Students should not share questions or answers to assessments, exams, or quizzes via social media.
- Patient privacy must be protected. HIPAA laws apply to all social networking sites. Students must NOT text, email, post on social media, or discuss anyone potentially identifiable patient information which includes but is not limited to, photographs of patients (even if the patient's face is not visible).
- Students should ensure accuracy regarding statements made about the Pfeiffer University PA program and its community members. Students should not provide false, intentionally inaccurate, or inflammatory comments.
- All laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material must be followed.
- Students should recognize that one’s professional reputation can be affected through social networking and therefore be judicious when posting content.

Student Employment (A3.04, A3.05, A3.14h)

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program does not require enrolled students to be employed by the program and strongly discourages any form of employment during their tenure with the program. There will be no exceptions or accommodations granted to didactic coursework, scheduling of classes, labs, exams, assessments, special assignments, community service work, or other assignments due to employment. Employment of any kind (paid/volunteer) during the program will not be accepted to excuse absence from scheduled learning activities, justify poor performance, or be considered as extenuating circumstances when assessing the students' academic and professional progress.

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program does not permit matriculated students to substitute for or function as instructional faculty; nor are they allowed to work (paid or voluntary) for the program in any capacity.

Students who are active duty military and have questions regarding any military requirements that might interfere with the MS PAS program responsibilities should reach out to the Veterans Service Officer (VSO) in the Pfeiffer University Registrar's Office. Please see Veteran Assistance Benefits section of <https://www.pfeiffer.edu/admissions/scholarships/>

Any violations to any component of this policy will result in referral to the Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee.

Technological Requirements

Students are required to have the following during the entire duration of the program:

- Laptop computer with Internet connection
- 24/7 access to Blackboard, online instructional content, Pfeiffer University email, and any software minimum standards as determined by the Pfeiffer University IT Department.

Not having the computer, internet connection, and/or software to be able to access and submit assessments and instructional material is not an excuse for not submitting work by scheduled due dates. Students are expected to back up their saved work onto a hard-drive, flash-drive, and/or cloud-based service so that in the case of a computer, internet, and/or software failure they do not lose essential instructional material(s). Students are responsible for ensuring that they can meet the minimum technical and technological standards for the program at all times.

Academic Standards (A3.17a)

Overview

One of the overarching goals of the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) is to educate servant leaders who will successfully demonstrate entry-level mastery of the Competencies of Physician Assistant Practice. To ensure that students are successfully achieving the expected competencies; they will be formally and frequently evaluated using a variety of assessment tools.

The program has developed this policy to provide appropriate guidance and feedback to those students who struggle to meet established instructional objectives and expected competencies. This policy guides administrative decisions and procedures regarding student progress, remediation and deceleration. All academic plans concerning student progress, remediation and deceleration will be individualized and implemented when deficiencies are identified.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Score	Pass/Fail	GPA
A	89.5-100	High Pass (HP)	4.0
B	79.5-89.4	Pass (P)	3.0
C	69.5-79.4	Low Pass (LP)	2.0
Fail	≤ 69.4	Fail (F)	0

Note that grades will be rounded from the first decimal only. Therefore, a score of 69.5 will round up to a 70; however, a 69.4 would not.

Extra credit

Students should not expect to receive extra credit on graded assessments, nor should they request extra credit to replace or improve a failing grade for any summative assessment or course. It is up to the discretion of the course director to determine if any extra credit is allowed.

Progression in the Program (A3.17c)

Progression and continuance in the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS are not only based on scholastic achievement, but also professional performance and the ability to meet all requirements of the program. All students must meet all the following requirements as they progress through the program:

- Successfully complete all examinations (written, practical, oral, simulation, and/or OSCEs) with a 70.0% or higher
- Successfully complete each required course with a grade of 70% or higher.
- Maintain a semester GPA of 3.0 by the end of each semester.
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 by the end of each semester.
- Comply with program standards of conduct and guidelines for ethical conduct and professional behavior
 - It is ultimately up to the discretion of the APPRC to determine what constitutes unprofessional behavior and what constitutes appropriate disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis

Progression from the Didactic Phase to the Clinical Phase (A3.17c)

Didactic Summative Evaluation

In order to progress to the clinical phase of the program, the student must pass each element of the Didactic Summative Evaluation (DSE) with a 70%. The DSE is a program designed assessment that will be administered approximately two weeks before the end of the didactic phase of the program, and will consist of the following:

- Approximately 200 question multiple-choice question examination which follows the PANCE topic and task blueprint
- Perform one complete history and physical examination with a written submission
- Perform one focused OSLER with a written SOAP note
 - Focused History
 - Focused Physical Examination
 - Order and interpret diagnostic studies
 - Differential Diagnosis
 - Treatment plan
 - Follow-up and or referral

Remediation of the Didactic Summative Evaluation (A3.17f)

If a student fails to score a 70% in any element of the DSE:

- The student should email the Director of Learning and Academic Success and their faculty advisor to set up a meeting to review areas of weakness and deficiency
- An individualized Academic Plan will be formulated which may include
 - A re-evaluation within one week of the time the DSE was originally administered
 - Failure to score a 70% in the second DSE the student will be referred to the APPRC to determine the appropriate steps moving forward.

Degree Completion (A3.17c)

All students must:

- Successfully complete each required course with a final grade of 70% or higher and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 at all times
- Complete all required instructional and program materials as required in the course syllabi and course instructor/director
- Successful completion of the Graduate Research Project
- Complete the Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Test (PACKRAT) for self-assessment only
- Comply with program standards of conduct and guidelines for ethical and professional conduct
- Successfully complete each element of the Summative Evaluation with a grade of 70% or higher
- Complete the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants Board Review Course

Time to Completion (A3.17b)

Currently enrolled MS-PAS students are expected to complete all curricular components in twenty-seven consecutive months, and in the prescribed sequence.

General Considerations

All students in the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program will, at all times, possess one of four states of academic standing:

- Good Academic Standing
- Academic Assistance Plan
- Academic Probation
- Academic Dismissal

Definitions

Good Academic Standing

Student meets all of the following:

- The student has successfully passed all assessments with no failing grades
- All students will meet with their assigned academic advisor at the midpoint of each semester.
- The student has successfully passed all courses with a grade of 80% or greater
- All students will meet with their assigned academic advisor at the midpoint of each semester.
- The student maintains a semester GPA of 3.0 as well as an overall GPA of 3.0 at all times
- The student meets ethical and professional conduct guidelines
- The student meets attendance and participation guidelines

Academic Assistance Plan

Student meets any of the following:

- Student scores less than 79.4% on any summative assessment in Clinical Medicine I, II, or III or more than 3 summative assessments within any other course within any semester
- Student scores between 70-79.4% overall in any course within Clinical Medicine I, II, or III or in any other course during a semester
- Student fails to meet ethical and/or professional conduct guidelines at any time
- Student fails to meet attendance and/or participate guidelines at any time
- The student fails to meet with their assigned academic advisor at the midpoint of each semester
- Any other criteria deemed appropriate by the program on a case-by-case basis

Strategy:

- Referral to the Director of Learning and Academic Success for the formulation of an individualized academic plan
 - Components of an individualized academic plan:
 - A written document that outlines what criteria the student meets for an Academic Assistance Plan, how the student could meet program requirements, and the timeline for which the student has to meet those requirements.
 - The plan should also explain what the consequences are if the student does not meet all of the requirements in the specified time frame, including the consequences of failing any assessment that is allowed to be remediated
 - The plan should be signed and dated by the student acknowledging their understanding of the academic plan and potential consequences as outlined in that plan.

- Mandatory review of material using Rosh Review
- Referral to and required meeting with course tutor(s)
- Mandatory regular meetings with Academic Advisor and/or the Director of Learning and Academic Success
- Students who satisfactorily complete requirements for their individualized academic plan will be eligible to return to Good Academic Standing.
- Any student who meets any of the criteria for an Academic Assistance Plan more than once at any time during the program, or who fails to meet all of the requirements on their individualized academic plan, will be evaluated by the APPRC for possible Academic Probation.

Academic Probation

Student meets any of the following:

- If a student fails a course, but then subsequently passes the remediation that student will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one semester
- The student fails to maintain a semester GPA of 3.0 for each semester
- The student fails to maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 at all times
- Student requires repeated meetings with faculty due to concerns regarding academic integrity, academic or professional ethics, or professionalism
- Any other criteria deemed appropriate by the program on a case-by-case basis

Strategy:

- Meet all of the requirements listed in the Strategy section of the Academic Assistance Plan
- Email sent to the Director of Didactic Education
- Email sent to the student to notify them they are eligible for Academic Probation and give them the opportunity to meet with APPRC if they choose to do so. If the student chooses this option, they should notify the program in writing within 3 business days of their notification so that arrangements can be made.
- Referral to APPRC who should meet to discuss the concerns regarding the conditions for which the student is eligible for Academic Probation.
- The APPRC should review the student's individualized academic plan and approve or amend any components and then vote to approve, amend, or change the student's academic standing to Academic Probation status.
- Students who satisfactorily complete requirements for their individualized academic plan will be eligible to return to Good Academic Standing unless the APPRC makes another recommendation as part of their review of the student's individualized Academic Plan
- Any student who meets any of the criteria for an Academic Probation more than once a semester or more than twice during an academic year, or who fail to meet all the requirements on their individualized academic plan as part of their Academic Probation, will be evaluated by APPRC for possible Academic Dismissal

Academic Dismissal (A3.17e)

Student meets any of the following:

- Student fails any course (defined as a final grade less than 70%) within any semester of the program
- The student fails to maintain a semester and overall GPA of 3.0 for consecutive semesters.
- Any student who meets any of the criteria for an Academic Probation more than once a semester or more than twice during an academic year, or who fail to meet all of the requirements on their individualized academic plan as part of their Academic Probation, will be evaluated by APPRC for possible Academic Dismissal
- Any other criteria deemed appropriate by the program on a case-by-case basis

Strategy

- Referral to Director of Learning and Academic Success for the formulation of an individualized academic plan
- Email sent to the Director of Didactic Education as well as the Program Director
- Email sent to the student to notify them they are eligible for Academic Dismissal and give them the opportunity to meet with APPRC if the student chooses to do so. If the student chooses this option, they should notify the program in writing within the subsequent 3 business days of their notification so that arrangements can be made.
- Referral to APPRC who should meet to discuss the concerns regarding the conditions for which the student is eligible for Academic Dismissal.
- The APPRC will review the student's specific criteria for meeting Academic Dismissal and make a written recommendation to the Program Director regarding progression to Academic Dismissal.
- The Program Director will then approve, amend, or revoke the APPRC's recommendation Academic Dismissal and notify the Dean of the Division of Applied Health Sciences as well as the student, in writing.
 - Once notified, the student may appeal the decision of the Program Director if they feel their due process has been violated based on the contents of this handbook. If they choose to appeal, they should do so formally, in writing, within 3 days of receipt of notification of the motion of dismissal, otherwise, the process will move forward, and the student forfeits the right to an appeal of the Program Director's decision. The student should refer to the Academic Appeals section of this handbook for further information regarding this process.
 - Once notified, the Deal of the Division of Applied Health Sciences will have 7 business days to review the student's criteria for meeting Academic Dismissal, documentation from the APPRC for the basis of their recommendation for Academic Dismissal and consider if the student's due process was violated based on the contents of this handbook.
 - If no violation is found, then the decision to proceed with Academic Dismissal is confirmed. The Dean's decision is final and cannot be appealed by the student.
 - If a violation in due process is found, the Dean must recommend the next steps, which could include, but is not limited to, deferral to the Provost.
 - If a student who is dismissed has continued interest in the program, they must re-apply and go through the entire admissions process

Academic Remediation (A3.17f)

A score of <70% on any assessment is considered a failing grade for the assessment.

As part of an Academic Plan, students will be given the opportunity to remediate up to one assessment per course and up to three assessments overall in the didactic phase of the program. Students cannot remediate more than one assessment per course OR more than three assessments total in the didactic phase of the program. Students must complete the remediation assessment in a way that demonstrates competency in the tested material. In all cases of remediation, the student will be given an assessment that is graded on a pass/fail basis. A student must score 70% or higher to pass. A score of less than 70% is considered a failure of the remediation assessment.

The remediation grade does not replace the original grade, except in the specific situation of a Clinical Medicine course block/module that only has one Exam grade for the entire block/module. In this situation, the remediation grade is averaged with the original grade to form a new final grade for that assessment. Students who do not pass the remediation attempt fail the course and are subject to procedures outlined elsewhere for this specific situation. A student who passes the remediation attempt must still meet the other requirements previously listed in this handbook in order to progress in the program.

Clinical Medicine I, II, III (A3.17f)

Clinical Medicine I, II, and III are divided into modules, each module functions as its own “course” with specific instructional objectives, learning outcomes and expected competencies. Students must pass each module with a minimum score of 70%. ***Failure of a module after remediation is a failure of the course, regardless of the composite grade for the course.***

If a student fails a Clinical Medicine I, II, or III module

- The student, Course Director, Director of Learning and Academic Success, and the Director of Didactic Education should all be notified in writing.
- An individualized remediation plan will be made by the Director of Learning and Academic Success and the Director of Didactic Education consisting of select review material and a content-specific assessment from Rosh Review to be completed within two weeks of the original assessment or no later than the last day of the semester
- The student will be required to demonstrate competence (by achieving a score of 70% or higher) in the area(s) assessed by the Rosh Review assessment
- Students are only allowed to be re-evaluated for grade improvement one time per Clinical Medicine I, II, or III blocks, per semester and no more than 3 times per academic year.
- If the student fails to achieve a score of 70% or higher on the re-assessment, the student has failed the module and therefore failed the course regardless of the composite grade for the course
- ***Failure of Clinical Medicine I, II or III will result in an automatic referral to APPRC for consideration for Academic Dismissal***

Summary of the Remediation Policy for Didactic Courses (Except Clinical Medicine I, II and III)

Good Academic Standing	Strategy	Duration of Academic Standing
<p>Student meets ALL of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has successfully passed all assessments with no failing grades • All students will meet with their assigned academic advisor at the midpoint of each semester. • The student has successfully passed all courses with a grade of 80% or greater • All students will meet with their assigned academic advisor at the midpoint of each semester. • The student maintains a semester GPA of 3.0 as well as an overall GPA of 3.0 at all times • The student meets ethical and professional conduct guidelines • The student meets attendance and participation guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No remediation required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
<p>Academic Assistance Plan</p> <p>Student meets ANY of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student scores less than 79.4% on any summative assessment in Clinical Medicine I, II, or III or more than 3 summative assessments within any other course within any semester • Student scores between 70-79.4% overall in any course within Clinical Medicine I, II, or III or in any other course during a semester • Student fails to meet ethical and/or professional conduct guidelines at any time • Student fails to meet attendance and/or participate guidelines at any time • The student fails to meet with their assigned academic advisor at the midpoint of each semester • Any other criteria deemed appropriate by the program on a case-by-case basis 	<p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to the Director of Learning and Academic Success for the formulation of an individualized academic plan • Mandatory review of material using Rosh Review • Referral to and required meeting with course tutor(s) • Mandatory regular meetings with Academic Advisor and/or the Director of Learning and Academic Success 	<p>Duration of Academic Standing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who satisfactorily complete requirements for their individualized academic plan will be eligible to return to Good Academic Standing. • Any student who meets any of the criteria for an Academic Assistance Plan more than once at any time during the program, or who fails to meet all of the requirements on their individualized academic plan, will be evaluated by the APPRC for possible Academic Probation.
<p>Academic Probation</p> <p>Student meets ANY of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a student fails a course, but then subsequently passes the remediation that student will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one semester • The student fails to maintain a semester GPA of 3.0 for each semester • The student fails to maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 at all times • Student requires repeated meetings with faculty due to concerns regarding academic integrity, academic or professional ethics, or professionalism • Any other criteria deemed appropriate by the program on a case-by-case basis 	<p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet all of the requirements listed in the Strategy section of the Academic Assistance Plan • Email sent to the Director of Didactic Education • Email sent to the student to notify them they are eligible for Academic Probation and give them the opportunity to meet with APPRC if they choose to do so. If the student chooses this option, they should notify the program in writing within 3 business days of their notification so that arrangements can be made. • Referral to APPRC who should meet to discuss the concerns regarding the conditions for which the student is eligible for Academic Probation. • The APPRC should review the student's individualized academic plan and approve or amend any components and then vote to approve, amend, or change the student's academic standing to Academic Probation status. 	<p>Duration of Academic Standing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who satisfactorily complete requirements for their individualized academic plan will be eligible to return to Good Academic Standing unless the APPRC makes another recommendation as part of their review of the student's individualized Academic Plan • Any student who meets any of the criteria for an Academic Probation more than once a semester or more than twice during an academic year, or who fail to meet all the requirements on their individualized academic plan as part of their Academic Probation, will be evaluated by APPRC for possible Academic Dismissal

Academic Dismissal	Strategy	Duration of Academic Standing
<p>Student meets ANY of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student fails any course (defined as a final grade less than 70%) within any semester of the program • The student fails to maintain a semester and overall GPA of 3.0 for consecutive semesters. • Any student who meets any of the criteria for an Academic Probation more than once a semester or more than twice during an academic year, or who fail to meet all of the requirements on their individualized academic plan as part of their Academic Probation, will be evaluated by APPRC for possible Academic Dismissal • Any other criteria deemed appropriate by the program on a case-by-case basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Director of Learning and Academic Success for the formulation of an individualized academic plan • Email sent to the Director of Didactic Education as well as the Program Director • Email sent to the student to notify them they are eligible for Academic Dismissal and give them the opportunity to meet with APPRC if the student chooses to do so. If the student chooses this option, they should notify the program in writing within the subsequent 3 business days of their notification so that arrangements can be made. • Referral to APPRC who should meet to discuss the concerns regarding the conditions for which the student is eligible for Academic Dismissal. • The APPRC will review the student's specific criteria for meeting Academic Dismissal and make a written recommendation to the Program Director regarding progression to Academic Dismissal. • The Program Director will then approve, amend, or revoke the APPRC's recommendation Academic Dismissal and notify the Dean of the Division of Applied Health Sciences as well as the student, in writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is continued interest in the program; the student must re-apply and go through the entire admissions process.

Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee (APPRC)

Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies has established a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of any physician assistant student who does not meet the established standards of academic and professional performance. The process is generally positive in approach and committed to supporting students in the successful completion of the course study required by the program. Elements essential to the effectiveness of the process include but are not limited to: timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the physician assistant student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal if they feel their due process has been violated based on the guidelines included in this handbook.

The Academic Performance and Professionalism Review Committee (APPRC) is charged with the responsibility of systematically reviewing the academic performance (didactic and clinical phases) and professional behaviors of each physician assistant student, in order to make appropriate recommendations to the Program Director regarding graduation, progression, remediation, academic probation, dismissal and readmission. The committee, in consultation with course directors, will also participate directly in the placement of students on probation and in the design remediation for deficiencies.

Additionally, the APPRC serves to ensure that the policies outlined in all program policy manuals (including this document) are applied in a fair and equitable manner to all students. However, claims of discrimination, including retaliation, and sexual harassment should be submitted to the Pfeiffer University Office of Academic Affairs by the student.

Composition

The APPRC will be comprised of the following:

Voting Members (by appointment)

- Medical Director of the MS-PAS program
- Two Principal Faculty of the MS-PAS program
- One Instructional Faculty (didactic phase)

Ex-officio (Non-voting) Members (by invitation)

- Institutional representatives that may provide support and insight as to the student's performance and intentional or unintentional results of committee actions (i.e. course directors, registrar, financial aid, university legal counsel)

All members are appointed by the Program Director. The Medical Director will serve as chair of the committee at all times.

Continuity

The MS-PAS program has an appointed APPRC for each cohort of students. The committee is identified by the anticipated graduation year of the entering cohort (i.e. APPRC Class of 2022). This provides the committee greater insight into the abilities of the students as they progress through the prescribed course of study.

Requirements for Quorum and Adoptive Action for the Committee

- A quorum for any regular or called meeting of the committee shall be defined as more than half of the voting members.
- All actions of the committee require a simple majority vote of those voting members in attendance.
- In extenuating circumstances only, a voting member who is unable to attend an APPRC meeting or who must recuse themselves from voting may delegate a proxy from among the non-voting members. If the committee chair is unable to attend, he/she will designate an acting chair for that meeting only.

Confidentiality

All deliberations and proceedings of the APPRC are confidential. Except as specified in this policy, the meetings are closed to persons other than individuals specifically authorized by the Program Director. Faculty must be apprised of the confidential nature of the information.

Evaluation Process

Ongoing Review

- End of Semester
 - The APPRC will meet following the completion of each semester to review the academic progress of each student. The committee will verify and validate that students are achieving the learning outcomes and expected competencies and will move on to the next semester based on Student Progression Reports prepared by the Directors of Didactic and Clinical Education. The committee, in consultation with the Directors of Didactic and Clinical Education, will review recommended action plans for students whose academic or professional performance warrants intervention.
- Progression from Didactic to Clinical Phase
 - The APPRC will meet following the completion of the didactic phase to review the academic progress of each student and determine progression to the clinical phase. The committee will verify and validate that students have demonstrated the learning outcomes and expected competencies based on Student Progression Reports prepared by the Directors of Didactic and Clinical Education. The committee, in consultation with

the Directors of Didactic and Clinical Education, will review recommended action plans for students whose academic or professional performance warrants intervention.

- Graduation
 - The APPRC will meet following the completion of the clinical phase and the summative evaluation to verify and validate successful completion of all components of the program and recommend a student for graduation. The committee will confirm that students have demonstrated the learning outcomes and expected competencies based on Student Progression Reports prepared by the Directors of Didactic and Clinical Education. The committee, in consultation with the Directors of Didactic and Clinical Education, will review recommended action plans for students whose academic or professional performance warrants intervention.

Episodic Review

- The program has developed a policy for progression and remediation to provide appropriate guidance and feedback to those students who struggle to meet established instructional objectives and expected competencies. This policy guides administrative decisions and procedures regarding student progress and remediation. All academic plans concerning student progress and remediation will be individualized and implemented when deficiencies are identified.
- The APPRC will utilize the Student Academic Progress Report with recommendations submitted by the Directors of Didactic and Clinical Education. Students who may have a potential impending committee action are to be notified in writing (e-mail) by the APPRC. Students will be given the opportunity to provide additional information either prior to the meeting or meet with the APPRC at the scheduled meeting. APPRC meetings are scheduled 5 to 15 business days following the notification to students facing action, in order to provide adequate time for the student to prepare for the meeting, while also ensuring that recommendations are made in a timely manner.

Evaluation Process

The APPRC will use the following process for evaluation:

- Each student is considered individually with emphasis upon quality of performance
- The APPRC shall review the academic performance (didactic and clinical phases) and professionalism of each physician assistant student facing potential committee action, recommendations made by the Directors of Didactic or Clinical Education, and any additional information provided by other parties (i.e., course directors, administrative support staff or students).
- The APPRC shall make recommendations regarding advancement, graduation, monitoring status, probation, dismissal, remediation, leaves of absence, and re-enrollment.
- The committee will review the performance of students in academic difficulty, those students demonstrating a potential for being in academic difficulty, and those students who have

exhibited unprofessional behavior or non-compliance with other standards of performance, as identified by the program faculty.

- The APPRC may recommend an improvement plan, may develop more comprehensive longer-term remedial plans for those students having difficulty, or implement appropriate disciplinary action, possibly including dismissal from the educational program.
- Special meetings of the APPRC may be called when reports of unprofessional behavior or other serious concerns regarding a student's academic performance. After review, a student will receive written notification of the complaint/incident and that it has been referred to the APPRC. The APPRC may recommend an improvement plan, may develop more comprehensive longer-term remedial plans for those students having difficulty, or implement appropriate disciplinary action, possibly including dismissal from the educational program.
- The committee chair will notify the program director of the committee's recommendation regarding potential action plans for ratification.
- The committee chair will notify each student of the committee's recommendation regarding potential actions and provide the student with an opportunity to appeal that recommendation if they desire.
- The dean has final authority regarding an appropriate course of action for each student.

Hearings and Appeals

Hearing Procedure

Information Gathering

In the event that a matter is referred to the APPRC for evaluation and recommendation, the APPRC has the authority to gather information concerning the matter to assist with its deliberation and evaluation of the matter in the context of the student's academic performance and overall professionalism. The APPRC may convene meetings for any purpose including assisting with preparation for the APPRC hearing.

Meeting with Student and Confidentiality

All student meetings are conducted in private. During the meeting with the student, the student is advised of the information that forms the basis of the inquiry or allegation; the student then has an opportunity to respond to the information presented. The student may have an individual present to provide support and advice; however, that individual may only advise the student and may not address the APPRC member(s) directly or examine or cross-examine witnesses. The student does not have the right to be represented by an attorney, and no attorney shall be permitted to attend the meeting on the student's behalf or in any other capacity. The APPRC allows witnesses to the incident, if any, to present pertinent information at the meeting with the student. The chair has the authority to exclude witnesses who provide redundant or duplicative information. Character witnesses shall not be permitted to testify at hearings. If witnesses make presentations at any hearing, the student shall be entitled to pose relevant questions to such witnesses. The APPRC considers the information it has gathered and any additional information provided by the student and makes written findings of fact and recommendations based upon its assessment of the information presented. Such findings and recommendations shall be provided to the program director within 7 business days of the conclusion of the hearing.

Quorum and Voting

A quorum consists of at least three voting members of the APPRC. A recommendation is adopted when approved by a simple majority of the members present. A recommendation to expel a student from the MS PAS program must be approved by three-fifths of the entire APPRC.

Record of Hearing

Written decisions serve as the official records of a hearing.

MS PAS Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee Recommendations.

The APPRC makes one or more of the following recommendations regarding the disposition of a matter of professional fitness considered by the Committee:

- Find that the matter does not warrant action;
- Issue a written reprimand or warning;
- Allow the student to repeat or otherwise remediate academic deficiencies;
- Refer the student for counseling or psychological evaluation;
- Place the student on probation with such conditions as deemed appropriate;
- Dismiss the student from the program.
- Other: as determined by the APPRC

The APPRC may recommend to the program director removal of a student's probation once the student has fulfilled the conditions of probation.

Responsibilities of the Program Director

The APPRC's recommended action steps are reviewed by the program director for, among other things, logistical viability (faculty workload, support services, etc.). The program director either accepts, amends, or rejects the plan. The APPRC findings and recommendations with modifications, if any, are sent to the affected student within 5 business days of the program director's receipt of the APPRC's written report notifying the student of the proposed findings and recommendations. A student may schedule an appointment with the program director to discuss the proposed findings and recommendations prior to the program director making them final. The appointment must be requested in writing and received by the program director no more than 3 business days after the student receives written notification of the proposed findings and recommendations by the APPRC. If a meeting is requested, it should take place promptly. Within 5 days of the meeting between the program director and the affected student or within 7 days of notice to the student, if no meeting is requested, the program director finalizes the written findings and recommendations and provides notice to the student of the same and forwards the written findings and recommendations to the Dean of the Division of Applied Health Sciences for review. The Dean reviews the findings and recommendations and affirms or amends the findings and recommendations. Once the Dean has affirmed or amended the program director's findings and recommendations, the student is notified by the program director.

Student Appeals

A decision of the Dean of the Division of Applied Health Sciences may be appealed by the student if the student feels there has been a violation of the student's due process based on the contents of this handbook.

The appeal must be in writing, specify in detail the alleged procedural impropriety, and must be filed in the Office of the Provost within 7 calendar days of the date of receipt of the Dean's decision. The provost, or a designee, shall review the appeal and the record of the formal hearing and issue a decision.

The decision of the Office of the Provost is final agency action.

Students may not appeal a decision more than once. While students may be allowed to continue participating in program activities during the appeals process, but in some cases, including but not limited to, allegations of harassment, assault, drug or substance abuse, or other situations deemed by the APPRC as potentially harmful or other students, faculty, or patients, the student may not be allowed to physically participate until the appeals process has been completed. They may be required to participate in other learning formats such as a virtual or asynchronous format. This may result in a delay in graduation and potential for incurring additional fees for additional academic coursework.

Referrals for Counseling (A3.10)

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) program considers the wellness of its students of utmost importance. Therefore, the program has developed the following policy in order to address students facing personal issues that may impact their progress in the program

An appropriate and timely referral to the Academic and Professional Review Committee (APPRC) as soon as the MS-PAS program director, medical director, principal and/or instructional faculty have knowledge of a student facing personal issues that may impact their progress in the program. The APPRC may recommend a student to receive professional care for a variety of problems (e.g. emotional, addictive or psychiatric disorders).

The program has partnered with Monarch Behavioral Health Services located at 350 Pee Dee Ave., Ste. A, Albemarle, NC 28001 who has agreed to provide behavioral health services regardless of the student's insurance status.

If a student is directed to seek these services, the student has a choice of choosing resources recommended by the university or other resources arranged by the student her/himself.

Verification that the student has received these services may be required. In addition, the APPRC may require that the student have his/her counselor/physician submit information and/or recommendation to the committee chair relating to the student's academic program. If a student is directed to arrange for such services, but does not do so, the APPRC may reevaluate the student for possible violation of professional standards.

Grade Appeal (3.17d)

If a student believes an error has been made regarding a course grade, he/she should contact in writing the faculty/course director within 2 business days after the grade is posted, to set up a meeting to discuss the grade. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate that the appeal has merit therefore, the student should bring to the meeting any evidence that the grade was assigned erroneously.

At the meeting, the professor will:

- Review the evidence the student has submitted
- Present any of the student's work that remains in the Course Director's possession (e.g., papers, examinations, etc.)
- Explain how the student's grade was determined based on the guidelines presented at the beginning of the

- course and in the course syllabus
- Recalculate the numerical computation of the grade to determine if there has been a clerical error

After the meeting, the decision whether to change the grade must be documented in writing (email will suffice) and if a grade change is warranted after final grades have been submitted to the Registrar, the faculty course director should notify the Program Director, Academic Director, and also the Registrar all in writing so that correct procedures can be followed for a formal grade change. If the student wishes to continue the appeal following this meeting, he or she must file a written appeal with the Program Director within 3 days of the meeting. If the Program Director is the professor involved, the written appeal will go to the Dean of Applied Health Sciences. The student will submit to the Program Director the Student Grade Appeal Statement Form together with copies of the course syllabus, tests, assessment, and papers in the student's possession. The Program Director will notify the Course Director, and the professor will file the Course Director Grade Appeal Statement Form with the Program Director within one week together with copies of the syllabus, assessment, and any of the student's work that remains in the Course Director's possession. The Program Director, following consultation with the Dean, will render a decision in writing regarding the grade appeal within one week.

All decisions regarding course grade appeals made by the Dean of Applied Health Sciences are considered final.

Exam Policies

Testing Software

- Most courses within the PAS curriculum utilize computerized testing. Prior to the start of an exam, students will be instructed on software installation and testing procedures. Students are responsible for maintaining the required testing software.

Exam Question Timing

- The NCCPA has established a standard time of one minute per multiple choice question (MCQ) on the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE).
- To help students prepare to perform within this time limit, program faculty have adopted one minute per MCQ as our standard.
- The minimum, average time per MCQ may decrease as shown below to prepare students to perform under these constraints.
- Didactic courses:
 - Semester 1: 90 seconds per item
 - Semester 2: 90 seconds per item
 - Semester 3: 75 seconds per item
 - Semester 4: 75 seconds per item
- Clinical courses:
 - Semesters 5-7: 60 seconds per item
- Special accommodations:
 - The Director of Learning and Academic Success determines appropriate accommodations for students who meet the criteria for special accommodations.

Seated Testing Procedures

- Students should be respectful of each other and reduce distractions in the room as much as possible.
- All students are expected to be seated, quiet, and ready to log in at the appointed exam start time.

- Students may be required to use a sign-in sheet during scheduled exams to document they were present and arrived on time.
- **Students should not take exams outside of a proctored setting unless given expressed, written, permission from the course instructor prior to the date of the exam.**
- Students should keep all study materials hidden away in preparation for entering the room
- Students should not bring personal items, including all electronic devices other than the testing computer/laptop, into the exam area. Students may bring one writing utensil such as a pencil or pen.
- Students should not wear hats/hoodies/obstructive headwear during the exam unless otherwise permitted to observe religious practices
- Students should not have food or drink available on the table or eaten during the exam; if needed for medical reasons it must be hidden away until needed
- Students should not leave the proctored environment until their exam is complete. If an emergency occurs during the exam, they should notify the exam proctor immediately.
- Answering student questions during the exam will be at the discretion of the proctor. Students should not leave the proctored setting to go ask faculty members questions about the exam.
- Students are not permitted to photograph, record or copy exam questions for any purpose at any time.
- Scratch paper, if allowed, will be provided by the proctor and will be collected at the end of the exam prior to the student leaving the proctored setting. If students have questions for faculty about a test question during an exam, they may write them on this sheet and when the proctor collects it, it will be given to the faculty member.
- If the student's computer or exam software "freezes" during the upload/submission of answers, the student should notify the proctor.
- **Prior to leaving the exam room, each student is required to show the proctor evidence of exam upload/submission. Students should never leave a proctored testing setting with testing material still open on their computer or in any format that could be reviewed or retrieved later by the student.**
- Once finished with the exam, each student should quietly exit the exam room in a manner to prevent distractions.
- Students will refrain from collecting in areas near the testing room as the noise is distracting to those still taking the test.
- Students may return to the exam room once instructed to do so by the exam proctor or PA faculty
- Students shall not discuss or share exam contents until they are certain all students have taken the exam and the exam scores have been released
- Students shall not discuss or share exam contents with students outside their cohort.
- Faculty will not discuss exam results until all students have taken the exam
- Discussing exam questions/answers with students or giving exam feedback ("exam review") will be at the discretion of the course instructor.

Online Testing Procedures

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

is allowed by the course director.

- Audio and video monitoring by the exam proctor may be recorded.
- Students are not permitted to communicate with others in any format while taking an exam.
- Students are not permitted to photograph, record or copy exam questions for any purpose
- **Students should not take exams remotely unless specifically instructed to do so in writing by the program**

OSCE Testing Procedures

- Audio and video monitoring by the exam proctor may be recorded.
- On the day of an examination, students are expected to be at the appointed station five minutes prior to the scheduled start time for the examination.
- Study materials and personal belongings are to be stored outside of the station where the examination is occurring (i.e. the student locker or other personal space).
- Food or beverages will not be permitted at the stations
- Scratch paper, if allowed, will be provided by the proctor and will be collected at the end of the session prior to the student leaving the proctored setting.
- Prior to leaving the exam room, each student may be required to submit any OSCE materials to the exam proctor
- Once finished with the exam, each student should quietly collect their belongings and exit the exam room in a manner to prevent distractions.
- Students will refrain from collecting in areas near the testing room as the noise is distracting to those still taking the test.
- Students serving as pretend patients during a graded OSCE session should refrain from giving verbal or non-verbal prompts, hints, cues, or clues to students who are being graded.
- Students shall not discuss or share exam contents until they are certain all students have taken the exam and the exam scores have been released
- Students shall not discuss or share exam contents with students outside their cohort.
- Faculty will not discuss exam results until all students have taken the exam
- Discussing exam questions/answers with students or giving exam feedback (“exam review”) will be at the discretion of the proctor/instructor.

Attendance

Due to the intense rigor and rapid pace of the program, attendance for all classes, labs and curriculum-related activities is mandatory. Students are expected to be on time for class and should plan their schedules accordingly. Medical and personal appointments should be scheduled on evenings or weekends, as much as possible, must be approved by the program to be considered excused absences.

Late electronic assignments or assessments are never accepted unless explicitly permitted by the course instructor in writing prior to the due date. Students are encouraged and expected to keep up with the course schedule of due dates, manage their time wisely, back up their computer files to an external source to avoid losing them, and submit assessments early to avoid unforeseen circumstances that could lead to a delay in submitting assessments. Lack of internet access is not an acceptable excuse for late assignments. Scheduled medical procedures/appointments are also not an acceptable excuse for late assignments.

Students who are missing more than 10% of assessments per course for any reason should be referred to

the Director of Learning and Academic Success and will be subject to review by APPRC. Students who are late to, or absent from, more than 10% of scheduled program activities should be referred to the Director of Learning and Academic Success and will be subject to review by APPRC.

If a student arrives late for an examination, the examination will commence upon his/her arrival. However, no allowances for extra time will be given. The student who is tardy will still be required to end the examination within the same timeframe time as the rest of the class. Tardiness is considered unprofessional behavior and will result in a referral to the APPRC.

Requests for excused absences must be submitted in writing to the Director of Learning and Academic Success, Director of Didactic Education, and Course Director using the program's "Didactic Phase Absence Request Form" prior to the absence. All absences due to illness, accident or other unexpected personal or family events must be reported in writing to the Director of Didactic Education, the Course Director, and the Director of Learning and Academic Success as soon as the student is aware that he/she may miss class time. All other absences that are not pre-approved by the Director of Learning and Academic Success, Director of Didactic Education and Course Director will be considered unexcused. Requests for social events (early start to a vacation, family reunion, weddings, etc.) will not be granted. Only urgent medical or emergent absences will be excused on exam days. It is up to the program to determine if the absence is considered excused or unexcused and if a make-up exam will be granted. Unexcused absences for examinations will result in a grade of zero for the examination and referral to the Director of Learning and Academic Success as well as APPRC.

Professional Activities

Absence from instructional activities during a PA educational conference (e.g., AAPA, NCAPA) for the purpose of conference attendance may be permitted with the advanced written permission of the Director of Didactic Education in consultation with the Program Director and Director of Learning and Academic Success. The student is still responsible for ensuring that completion of instructional activities and requirements are not compromised by conference attendance.

Students who are active-duty military and have questions regarding any military requirements that might interfere with the MS PAS program attendance should contact the Director of Learning and Academic Success and also contact the Veterans Service Officer (VSO) in the Pfeiffer University Registrar's Office. Please see Veteran Assistance Benefits section of <https://www.pfeiffer.edu/admissions/scholarships/>

Religious Observances

All students, faculty, and staff at Pfeiffer University have a right to expect that the University will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices and beliefs. The University, through its faculty, will make every attempt to schedule required classes and examinations in view of customarily observed religious holidays of those religious groups or communities comprising the University's constituency.

No student shall be compelled to attend class or sit for an examination at a day or time prohibited by his or her religious belief. Students are expected to attend all sessions at assigned times unless granted an excused absence by the Course Director.

Students are expected to notify the Course Directors if they intend to be absent for any lecture, PBL, and/or lab session, in accordance with this policy, prior to the scheduled religious holiday. Students absent for religious reasons will be given reasonable opportunities to make up any work missed. Any student who believes that he or she has been treated unfairly with regard to the above should contact the Pfeiffer University Office of Academic Affairs.

Leave of Absence

Definition

A Leave of Absence is defined as a temporary break in a student's attendance of five (5) days or longer.

Guidelines for Leave of Absence

In the event of a serious medical condition (including psychiatric illness), familial or personal circumstances that significantly impact the student's progress in the MS PAS program; a leave of absence may be requested by the student. All requests must be made in writing to the Director of Learning and Academic Success and the Program Director.

The MS PAS program reserves the right to determine the conditions for re-entry after any leave of absence. Coursework, exams, and clinical experiences missed during any leave must be made up within a time frame agreed upon by the APPRC, Director of Learning and Academic Success, and the Program Director before the student may continue in the program in good standing. Additional tuition may be required to complete the program after re-entry.

Voluntary

- Voluntary Leaves of Absence must be for a specified period of time with an expected date of re-enrollment.
- A student in good academic standing, without deficiencies, may request a Leave of Absence for a fixed period of time as a result of a health problem or other personal circumstances that may impact the student's academic performance.
- The student must submit the request in writing to the Director of Learning and Academic Success

Involuntary

- The APPRC may require that a student be placed on a Leave of Absence if the student is deemed capable of completing the MS PAS program within the allotted time limits of the MS PAS program, but has current non-academic problems that make ongoing enrollment detrimental to the student's best interest.

- If the student disagrees with the recommendation, the procedure for an appeal may be initiated by the student (see Appeals Process section elsewhere in this Handbook).

All decisions regarding leave of absence (voluntary or involuntary) are made by the APPRC, Program Director, and in consultation with the Dean of the Division of Applied Health Sciences.

Petition for Readmission Following Leave of Absence

- Readmission into the program following a leave of absence is not guaranteed.
- The student must notify the Program Director and the Director of Learning and Academic Success of intent to resume enrollment in writing at least one month prior to returning to the MS PAS Program.
- Requests for reinstatement must be made in writing. The student must present evidence that the problem leading to the leave of absence has been resolved such that success in this program will follow if the student is reinstated. Reinstatement is also dependent on the availability of clinical training sites.
- Students who are on a Leave of Absence specified by the APPRC must fulfill all requirements specified in their letter from the APPRC prior to returning to the MS PAS Program.
- Students placed on Leave of Absence may maintain such status for a maximum of one (1) year. In order to return to enrollment, the student must petition the APPRC within the time period allowed. The APPRC will consider petitions for readmission regardless of the reason enrollment was discontinued. When petitioning to the APPRC, the student must submit the information that will support that return to enrollment is justified. This is required regardless of the reason for leave.
- Petitions for readmission may be considered at any regular or called meeting of the APPRC. The time of readmission will be based upon that which is deemed most appropriate to the student's status and scheduled by the APPRC.
- Students may be required to repeat parts of the curriculum that have previously been successfully completed.
- Readmission may be denied if all available seats are filled, even if the student meets all other qualifications for admission.

Withdrawal (A3.17e)

Withdrawal from the Pfeiffer University MS PAS program should only be considered after a judicious and thorough assessment of the academic, financial, and personal impacts of such action. Prior to requesting an official withdrawal from the program, students should discuss options with their faculty advisor and the program director.

Students may withdraw from the MS PAS program at their discretion, and at any time. Unless a leave of absence is requested and granted (see Leave of Absence Policy), withdrawal from any individual course will not allow a student to progress in the program and therefore constitutes withdrawal from the entire program. There is no "partial withdrawal" or "part-time" status in the MS PAS program.

Process:

- Official Withdrawal
 - The student must submit a withdrawal letter in writing to their faculty advisor, the Program Director, the Dean of the Division of Applied Health Sciences, and the office of the Registrar.

- The student must complete all required forms as per the Withdrawal Policy stated in the Pfeiffer University Graduate Catalog
- Unofficial Withdrawal
 - Students will be considered as having withdrawn from the program and the university after two consecutive weeks of unexplained absence and/or academic inactivity.

Student Grievances and Allegations of Harassment (A3.17g)

In compliance with federal and state laws, it is the policy of Pfeiffer University to prohibit unlawful harassment and sexual misconduct by any person and in any form.

For more information regarding the Pfeiffer University's Student Grievance and Allegations of Harassment Policy

Title IX <http://www.pfeiffer.edu/pfeiffer-university-title-ix-policy>

Policy

Policies and Procedures for Processing Student Grievances and Allegations of Harassment¹ Policy In compliance with federal and state laws, it is the policy of Pfeiffer University to prohibit unlawful harassment and sexual misconduct by any person and in any form. TITLE IX Pfeiffer University is committed to providing equal access to its educational programs, activities, and facilities to all otherwise qualified students without discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other category protected by applicable state or federal law. An equal opportunity employer, Pfeiffer affirms its commitment to nondiscrimination in its employment policies and practices. In compliance with Title IX (20 U.S.C Sec. 1681 et seq.) Pfeiffer University prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. For student-related disability discrimination concerns, contact the disability services coordinator, 704-463-3366. For all other concerns, including any arising under Title IX, contact the director of human resources, who is also Pfeiffer's Title IX Coordinator, 704-463-3067.

For more information regarding the Pfeiffer University's Student Grievance (Complaints) Policy, please see: <http://www.pfeiffer.edu/pfeiffer-policies>

Military Veterans

Students who have questions regarding their military/veteran status should contact the Veterans Service Officer (VSO) in the Pfeiffer University Registrar's Office. Please see Veteran Assistance Benefits section of <https://www.pfeiffer.edu/admissions/scholarships/>

Pregnancy

In the event of pregnancy:

- The student should notify the Director of Learning and Academic Success in writing
- Time and assignments missed due to pregnancy must be made up and will delay graduation.
- All requirements must be completed successfully in order to graduate.

Health Requirements (A3.07, A3.19b, A3.21)

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) program considers the health, safety and welfare of its faculty, student body, staff and the community we serve of utmost importance. Therefore, based on the [Centers for Disease Control Recommended Vaccines for Healthcare Workers](#) most recent guidelines; the program has developed the following policy in order to safeguard the wellbeing of all.

Required Drug Screen

- All students who have been offered conditional acceptance must successfully pass an initial chain of custody drug screen.
- All matriculated students must complete and successfully pass a second chain of custody drug screen upon completion of the didactic phase prior to entering the clinical phase of the program.
- Additional chain of custody drug screens and "for cause" testing for any student suspected of being under the influence of unlawful drugs or alcohol during their course of study remains at the discretion of affiliated hospitals or clinics and/or the PU MS-PAS program.
- A student may be prevented from progressing in the program's didactic phase, being promoted to the clinical phase of the program, or being recommended for graduation if the student fails a chain of custody drug screen. Therefore, the PU MS-PAS program reserves the right to withdraw offers of conditional acceptance if the candidate fails the initial chain of custody drug screen.

Required Physical Examination

- A comprehensive physical examination by a licensed medical provider (DO, MD, PA or NP) must be completed indicating that the conditionally accepted applicant is appropriately screened for TB, current on all immunization requirements, and has been medically cleared for admission. The Student Health Packet includes instructions and the following forms:
 - Medical History
 - Physical Examination
 - Immunization Verification*
 - Health Attestation Form
 - Chain of Custody Drug screen
 - All students must have a second physical examination conducted by a licensed medical provider (DO, MD, PA, or NP) prior to starting the clinical phase of the program indicating that the conditionally accepted applicant is appropriately screened for TB, current on all immunization requirements, and has been medically cleared for admission.

Immunizations

Immunization requirements are based on the most current standards set by the Center for Disease Control(CDC) for Health Professionals.

All students must complete the following requirements prior to matriculation:

- **Coronavirus vaccination:**
 - Students are expected to follow Pfeiffer University guidelines regarding vaccination against COVID-19. Requests for medical or religious exceptions to the University policy may be directed to the Medical Director for consideration by an established University committee.

Granting of an exemption does not guarantee that future clinical rotation sites will concur with the exemption and allow unvaccinated students to rotate at their facilities.

- **Tuberculosis (TB) Screening:**
 - The student must submit documentation of ONE of the following:
 - Results of NEGATIVE “Two-Step” TB Skin Testing (TST/PPD)
 - This screening requires 2 separate TB skin tests administered at least one week apart but within 12 months of each other.
 - The last TST must be within 6 months of your start date.
 - Lab Copy showing a “NEGATIVE” Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) blood test (QFT or T-Spot) within 6 months of start date (accepted in lieu of the “Two-Step” TST).
 - Individuals with a history of a POSITIVE TB skin test or IGRA blood test must submit both of the following:
 - Verification of a NEGATIVE Chest X-ray within 12 months of start date and
 - A current NEGATIVE Screening Questionnaire
- **Rubella (German Measles):**
 - Serologic documentation of a positive Rubella immune titer OR immunization with at least one dose of live Rubella or MMR vaccine after 12 months of age.
- **Measles (Rubeola):**
 - Serologic documentation of a positive Rubeola immune titer OR immunization with two doses of live Rubeola or MMR vaccine administered after 12 months of age and separated by 28 days or more
- **Mumps:**
 - Serologic documentation of a positive Mumps immune titer OR immunization with at least two doses of live Mumps or MMR vaccine after 12 months of age.
- **Varicella (Chicken Pox):**
 - Serologic documentation of a positive Varicella titer OR two Varicella immunizations (given 4 to 8 weeks apart).
 - This requirement is satisfied only by a positive titer or the vaccine series.
- **Hepatitis B “Positive” Quantitative Surface Antibody Titer (Blood Test):**
 - Serologic documentation of a Positive (QUANTITATIVE) Hepatitis B surface antibody titer that verifies IMMUNITY to the Hepatitis B Virus.
 - The TITER is required in addition to the completion of the vaccination series.
 - The results should be reported as “POSITIVE” or as a number.
 - “REACTIVE” results will NOT be accepted.
- **Adacel™ Or Boostrix® Vaccine Booster:**
 - Documentation of an Adult TETANUS/diphtheria/acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine booster is required.
 - Tdap was licensed in June 2005 for use as a single dose booster vaccination (i.e. not for subsequent booster doses).
 - The current CDC recommendation states “Healthcare personnel, regardless of age,

should receive a single dose of Tdap as soon as feasible if they have not previously received Tdap and regardless of the time since last Td dose”.

- **Meningococcal Vaccination:**
 - Documentation of immunization with one dose of Meningococcal vaccine after 16th birthday

All matriculated students MUST present evidence of the following on an annual basis during their tenure with the program:

- **TB screening**
- **Influenza vaccine**

Students are financially responsible for the cost of all health care services they may require while enrolled in the program, including any health care services required as a result of their participation in scheduled program activities (e.g. TB testing, immunizations, treatment of injuries, pathogen exposure evaluation and treatment). Students are also required to sign a Health Screening and Immunization Information Release Form.

Noncompliance with any component of this policy will result in withholding the student from progressing in the program, withdrawal from classes without credit and a referral to the Academic and Professionalism Performance Review Committee.

No one from the MS PAS program has access to the student’s health record. These are maintained by the university in a secured electronic depository.

The MS PAS program will maintain the health attestation form confirming that the student has met institution and program health screening requirements, immunization records, and tuberculosis screening of all matriculated students through a HIPPA compliant, secure cloud-based management system. These records will be reviewed by the Medical Director and the Admissions Support Coordinator upon acceptance into the program and annually thereafter throughout the student’s tenure with the program. The Medical Director will also continuously review the Centers for Disease Control Recommended Vaccines for Healthcare Workers guidelines and recommendations for updates.

Guidelines for Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards (A3.08)

Infectious/Communicable Disease Training and Post-Exposure

In order to minimize the risk of contracting any infection in the course of their academic activities, students must follow the Universal Blood and Body Fluid Precautions developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Instruction regarding environmental hazards and infectious exposures is provided during the didactic phase of the program and reviewed prior to entering the clinical phase of the program. Upon completion of the module, students are expected to consistently and appropriately implement Universal Precautions and other appropriate safety measures thereafter. It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with the policies and procedures for employing these precautions at each of the clinical sites to which the student is assigned. All students will participate in the clinical affiliation requirements for safety and quality assurance compliance at the direction of the clinical affiliation personnel.

Guidelines for Student Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards Blood and body fluid exposure (HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C)

An “exposure incident” refers to a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that result from the performance of a student’s clinical duties. Should a patient’s blood or body fluid come into contact with a student or if a patient comes in contact with the blood or body fluid of a student, the student should seek medical treatment IMMEDIATELY and follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Decontamination of the exposed site – vigorous flushing of mucous membranes, eyes, and/or thoroughhand washing.
2. Immediately report the incident to appropriate course instructor and follow established protocol for the course.
3. If there is no established protocol, seek treatment at the nearest Emergency Department.
4. Seek medical attention to ensure appropriate medical care relating to the exposure is provided.
 - a. This should occur within 2 hours for a known HIV-infected source and 4-6 hours for all other exposures.
 - b. The appropriate initial site to seek medical attention varies based on the clinical site where the incident occurred. It could be an Occupational Health or Emergency Department at the institution, or you may need to find the nearest Emergency Department. Students should review site-specific exposure protocols.
 - c. Management may include confidential testing of the patient and the student for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV and other infectious agents.
 - d. In the event that additional follow-up medical care is necessary, students will need to refer to site specific protocol to discover whether this will continue to be provided by the initial site or if the student should arrange follow-up with their own health care provider.
5. Report the event via e-mail to the Director of Didactic Education or the Program Director within 24 hours of the event.
6. Please refer to the *Updated U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines for the Management of Occupational Exposures to HBV, HCV, and HIV and Recommendations for Postexposure Prophylaxis*
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5011a1.htm>

Financial Responsibility

All students are required to carry medical insurance to cover the expense of such an unlikely event and provide coverage for the laboratory testing and treatments that may be required. Costs not covered by insurance are the responsibility of the student.

Effects of Exposure/Illness/Injury on Student Learning Activities

Students may not be able to return to instructional activities and/or meet the required technical standards due to the effects of exposure to infectious and environmental agents. In such a case the Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee will review the case and make recommendations regarding the student’s academic standing.

Provision of Health Services (A3.09)

The Program Director, Medical Director and the Faculty of the program will not participate as health care providers for students in the program. Students should refrain from seeking medical care or advice from program faculty or clinical preceptors and avoid attempting to establish a provider-patient relationship with program faculty or clinical preceptors. In life-threatening situations, faculty may provide emergent stabilizing medical care while awaiting 911 response by emergency medical personnel but once they arrive, faculty should then immediately transfer over care as soon as it is safe to do so. Students in need of medical care may seek care at Carolinas Health System/Albemarle Urgent Care 703 Leonard Avenue Albemarle, NC 28001 (704) 550-0050, which is open Sunday through Saturday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Proof of insurance must be presented. In the event of an illness or injury requiring emergency treatment students may visit Stanly Regional Medical Center Emergency Department 301 Yadkin Street Albemarle, NC 28001 (704) 984-4000.

Closing of Campus (including Inclement Weather)

The Pfeiffer University President shall determine whether the condition is such a nature as to require cancellation of classes and/or closure of the University. Examples of events that may prompt such a decision include severe weather, natural disasters, an act of terrorism, workplace violence, or significant utility outages. The LiveSafe system provides student notifications for these events. Students should also check their Pfeiffer University student email accounts.

The MS PAS Program Director will contact the students regarding the closure of campus for these or other events. If students are unsure if the campus is closed, they should reach out to the Director of Didactic Education or the Program Director.

Academic Calendar

Academic Calendar 2021-2023	
January 4 th – 8 th , 2021	Orientation
January 11 th , 2021	First day of Class – Semester I
January 18 th , 2021	Martin Luther King, Jr Holiday (no classes)
February 25 th – 28 th , 2021	Spring Break
April 2 nd , 2021	Good Friday (no classes)
April 23 rd , 2021	Last Day of Class – Semester I
April 25 th – May 1 st , 2021	Break
May 3 rd , 2021	First Day of Class – Semester II
May 31 st , 2021	Memorial Day Holiday (no classes)
July 2 nd – 5 th , 2021	July 4 th Holiday (no classes)
August 27 th , 2021	Last Day of Class – Semester II
August 29 th – September 4 th , 2021	Break
September 6 th , 2021	Labor Day Holiday (no classes)
September 7 th , 2021	First Day of Class – Semester III
November 25 th – 26 th , 2021	Thanksgiving Holiday (no classes)
December 17 th , 2021	Last Day of Class – Semester III
December 19 th , 2021 – January 2, 2022	Christmas Holiday/Winter Break (no classes)
January 3 rd , 2022	First Day of Class – Semester IV
January 17 th , 2022	Martin Luther King, Jr Holiday (no classes)
February 24 th – February 8 th , 2022	Spring Break
April 15 th , 2022	Good Friday (no classes)
April 22 nd , 2022	Last Day of Class – Semester IV
April 24 th – May 1 nd , 2022	Break

SCPE	First Day	Last Day	EOR Days
1	May 2 nd , 2022	May 31 st , 2022	June 1 st , 2 nd , & 3 rd
2	June 6 th , 2022	July 5 th , 2022	July 6 th , 7 th , & 8 th
3	July 11 th , 2022	August 9 th , 2022	August 10 th , 11 th , & 12 th
4	August 15 th , 2022	September 13 th , 2022	September 14 th , 15 th , & 16 th
5	September 19 th , 2022	October 18 th , 2022	October 19 th , 20 th , & 21 st
6	October 24 th , 2022	November 29 th , 2022	November 30 th December 1 st , & 2 nd
IPE Clinical Simulation Seminar		December 5 th - 9 th , 2022	
Graduate Thesis Advisor/Committee Meetings		December 12 th -16 th , 2022	
Winter Break		December 18 th , 2022-January 1 st , 2023	
7	January 2 nd , 2023	January 31 st , 2023	February 1 st , 2 nd , & 3 rd
8	February 6 th , 2023	March 7 th , 2023	
Summative Evaluation		March 8 th , 9 th , & 10 th	
9	March 13 th , 2023	April 11 th , 2023	April 12 th , 13 th , & 14 th
Graduate Research Project Presentations and Board Review		April 17 th , 2023	May 5 th , 2023