



Master of Science  
Physician Assistant Studies

### Professional and Ethical Conduct Guidelines for the Physician Assistant Student

<b>Responsible Party</b>	Pfeiffer University
<b>Minimum Review Frequency</b>	Annual
<b>Associated Forms</b>	None
<b>ARC-PA Associated Standards</b>	N/A
<b>Initial Effective Date</b>	11/19/2021
<b>Last Review Date</b>	11/19/2021
<b>Next Review Date</b>	09/01/2023

#### **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 leadership<sup>1</sup>. 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.”<sup>2</sup> Servant leadership characterized by the highest ethical standards is a foundational principle for all faculty, staff and students of Pfeiffer University.

#### **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. (Appendix) <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. (Appendix) <http://www.pfeiffer.edu/academics/programs/physician-assistant-ms-pas/5474/learning-outcomes>

#### **Unacceptable Behaviors**

Examples of unprofessional behaviors that **will** result in **prompt** referral to the Academic and Professional Performance Committee (APPRC) and **dismissal** from the program:

- Violation of principles related to academic integrity (i.e. evidence of cheating on an assignment or test) and plagiarism as outlined by the Pfeiffer University Honor Code
- Student intoxication or presumed intoxication from alcohol, prescription, or other drugs
- Student communication or interaction that is openly discriminatory, demeaning, or could reasonably be perceived as mentally or physically harmful to others, including but limited to faculty, students, patients, patient’s family or caregivers, and healthcare providers.

\*The program reserves the right to determine the degree of egregiousness of the behavior.

#### **Assessment of Professional Behaviors**

Employing a variety of strategies, assessment and monitoring of professional behaviors occurs on a continual basis during the student’s tenure with the program.

<sup>1</sup> <http://abimfoundation.org/what-we-do/medical-professionalism> (03\_02\_2018)

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



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- Self-Assessment

Self-assessment offers an opportunity for the student to evaluate his/her personal and professional qualities, identifying strengths and areas in need of improvement. Self-Assessment will take place at the end of semester 2 and 4 of the Didactic Phase and (Appendix) Clinical Rotation 6 of the Clinical Phase (Appendix). Assessments may be required more frequently if areas of concern have been identified.

If there are areas of concern the student, with feedback from their academic advisor will formulate an individualized plan of action geared toward positive behavior modification. Plans of action may include but are not limited to referral to appropriate external resources. The student will meet with the academic advisor, the Director of Didactic and/or Clinical Education, and the Program Director to review the plan of action and monitoring strategies. The APPRC will be notified that the student has entered into an individualized plan of action regarding professional behavior.

If behavior (s) persist or worsen the student will be referred to the APPRC for a formal review which may result in the student's dismissal from the program.

- Academic Advisor Assessment

At the end of semester 2 and 4 of the Didactic Phase and Clinical Rotation 6 of the Clinical Phase of the program, each student's professional behavior will be evaluated by their assigned academic advisor (Appendix). The advisor will take in consideration any concerns reported by instructors or course directors. The advisors will meet with each student and review the academic advisor professionalism review form. If there are areas of concern the student, with feedback from their academic advisor will formulate an individualized plan of action geared toward positive behavior modification. Plans of action may include but are not limited to referral to appropriate external resources. The student will meet with the academic advisor, the Director of Didactic and/or Clinical Education, and the Program Director to review the plan of action and monitoring strategies. The Academic and Professional Performance Committee (APPRC) will be notified that the student has entered into an individualized plan of action regarding professional behavior.

If behavior (s) persist or worsen the student will be referred to the APPRC for a formal review which may result in the student's dismissal from the program.

- Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee Assessment

The Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee (APPRC) will evaluate each student's professional behavior at the completion of the Didactic Phase of the program (Appendix), and Clinical Rotation 6 (Appendix). If there are areas of concern the student will be placed on Professionalism Probation. With feedback from their academic advisor, the student will formulate an individualized plan of action geared toward positive behavior modification. Plans of action may include but are not limited to referral to appropriate external resources. The student will meet with the academic advisor, the Director of Didactic and/or Clinical Education, and the



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Program Director to review the plan of action and monitoring strategies. Professionalism Probation status will be removed once the student demonstrates the desired behavior modification.

If behavior (s) persist or worsen the APPRC will reconvene and review of all related documentation. This review may result in the student's dismissal from the program.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed at the annual program retreat.