Pfeiffer University

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Revised November 2026

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Welcome

Welcome to the Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) program! This program will be intellectually challenging and foster your spirit of inquiry while preparing you to become a competent physician assistant.

We are 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***.

Purpose of this Handbook

The Student Handbook is provided to orient you to current policies, procedures, guidelines, and resources relevant to your participation in the Pfeiffer University Physician Assistant Studies Program. These policies align with Pfeiffer University's policies and apply to all enrolled students. Please read this handbook carefully, as its contents govern your enrollment in the Physician Assistant (PA) Program for the duration of the program.

You will be required to sign a statement verifying that you have read and understood its contents before beginning the program. Your signature will indicate that you agree to abide by the guidelines presented. A copy of the signature page will be placed in your permanent student folder.

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.

Updates to policies, procedures, schedules, and other aspects of the program will be shared with you in writing, generally via email and/or announcements on the learning management system (LMS). Amendments to this handbook, when instituted, are binding, just as if they were presented in the initial publication. Updates or amendments to this manual will be announced in writing and will require documented student acknowledgment.

We hope this manual will be useful to you. Please feel free to contact the Program Director or your faculty advisor if you have any questions.

Accreditation Statement

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) has granted **Accreditation-Continued** status to the **Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program** sponsored by **Pfeiffer University**. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA *Standards*.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be **October 2034**. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation *Standards* and ARC-PA policy.

The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-pfeiffer-university/

Mission

MISSION

Provide a supportive learning environment for students, with an emphasis on rural medicine, that graduates physician assistants who will prepared to provide patient-centered healthcare.

Program Description

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) program is a 28-month continuous program committed to creating an academic experience known for its excellence in PA education, scholarly activity, and servant leadership.

Students will be assessed frequently throughout the program and are expected to acquire competency in medical knowledge, clinical and technical skills, interpersonal and communication skills, clinical thinking and problem solving, and professionalism. A full description of these competencies can be found in Appendix A. The program learning outcomes (PLOs), Appendix B, support the acquisition of program competencies. Students will be assessed 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, research projects, and more. Feedback will be provided following the assessments.

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

DIDACTIC PHASE

The program begins with a 16-month didactic phase which includes instruction in the biomedical and clinical sciences, clinical research design, medical writing, evidence-based medicine, and legal and ethical issues in medicine. Instruction in professionalism and patient safety 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, and teamwork through creative and innovative active learning strategies such as interdisciplinary team-based and simulation learning. During this phase you will participate in interprofessional experiences alongside other Pfeiffer health professions students. Appendix C outlines the didactic phase course sequence.

CLINICAL PHASE

The clinical phase is a 12-month experiential learning phase where you will engage in over 1800 hours of supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs). There are eight core SCPEs- Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Women's Health, Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Behavioral and Mental Health, Orthopedics and one elective SCPE. Each SCPE is five weeks in duration. At the end of each SCPE, you will return to campus and participate in a two-day End of Rotation (EOR) seminar. EOR activities include an end of SCPE examination, case presentations, a rotation specific OSCE, and other learning activities focused on clinical and professional practice topics. Appendix C lists the clinical year courses.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

For course descriptions, please refer to the graduate catalog.

Technical Standards

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 may be subject to dismissal.

The technical standards can be found here.

Cost of Attendance (A3.11f)

Tuition and fees can be found here.

Refund Policy (A1.02h)

Please see pages 10-12 of the Pfeiffer University graduate catalog for a description of the Pfeiffer University refund policy.

Student Employment (A3.14i)

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program ***strongly discourages*** students from being employed during their tenure with the program. There will be no exceptions or accommodations granted to didactic or clinical course work, scheduling of classes, labs, exams, special assignments, community service work, or supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE) assignments due to employment.

Employment of any kind (paid/volunteer) during the program will not be accepted to excuse an absence from scheduled learning activities, justify poor performance, or be considered as an extenuating circumstance when assessing the student's 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.

During SCPEs, students may not substitute for clinical or administrative staff and must ensure all services provided to patients are supervised. The student must contact the Clinical Team immediately if asked to function as clinical or administrative staff. Students must not accept compensation for any services provided during SCPEs.

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

Student Identification (A3.04)

Pfeiffer University identification badges are issued to all students upon matriculation. These identification badges as well as a short white lab coat with the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program seal patch on the left sleeve and the student's name embroidered on the left chest, above the pocket, must be worn at all times during SCPEs unless expressly stated by the preceptor or by policy (e.g. operating room). This requirement clearly distinguishes them from physicians, medical students and other health profession students and graduates.

Students may be required to wear an additional site-specific security identification badge at clinical sites. The clinical site(s) will make arrangements for the student to attain an identification badge during orientation prior to beginning the SCPE. This badge is to be worn in addition to the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program identification badge.

Physician Assistant students must always and only identify themselves as "physician assistant students" to faculty, patients, clinical site staff, and never present themselves as physicians, residents, medical students, or graduate physician assistants. While enrolled the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS program, students may not use previously earned titles (i.e. RN, MD, DO, EMT, Ph.D., Dr. etc.) for identification purposes.

Solicitation of Clinical Sites (A3.08)

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) Program is committed to the continuous development of supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE) sites. The evaluation, selection, and eventual approval of a SCPE site is a rigorous process; this is to ensure that the SCPE site provides sufficient clinical experience to facilitate the achievement of the clinical rotation's instructional objectives, learning outcomes and expected competencies. The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program requires current, formal, finalized, and fully executed affiliation agreements between all SCPE sites and Pfeiffer University. These agreements are legal documents that address academic, physical, clinical, and liability issues.

The process of attaining SCPE sites is solely the responsibility of the program. Students or their agents are not allowed to negotiate an affiliation with a SCPE site. If a student becomes aware of a potential preceptor, a SCPE Request Form must be submitted to the Clinical Team. **Students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors.** The evaluation process to determine if the prospective SCPE site is suitable for educational purposes and meets all academic, physical, and clinical standards will be conducted by the Clinical Team and approved by the Program Director.

Professionalism and Expected Behaviors (B2.19c)

PROFESSIONALISM

Servant leadership characterized by the highest ethical standards is a foundational principle for all faculty, staff, and students at 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

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

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

- Excessive absences or tardiness. 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 (https://www.pfeiffer.edu/policies-procedures/policies/#:~:text=Honor%20Code,and%20promoted%20by%20Pfeiffer%20University)
- Use of inappropriate communication, either verbally or in writing, with anyone to include yelling/screaming, derogatory language, or language that could be interpreted as threatening, demeaning, or intimidating.
- Student intoxication with alcohol while participating in didactic instruction, clinical instruction or University sponsored activity or student intoxication with prescription or recreational/illicit drug(s) or substance(s) at any time.
- Violation of the 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 Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee (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. Check your 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. 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 and read their 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. If there is any question about what constitutes professional communication, please reach out to your faculty advisor.

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 university, graduate school, or 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 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 and Screening

Because they are required by some of the PA Program's clinical affiliates, national security and criminal background checks are required for all physician assistant students. The student is required to submit to a background check prior to matriculation and again before the start of the clinical phase of the program. Some clinical affiliates may request a repeat background check and/or a more substantial background check prior to accepting a student at a clinical site. In addition, drug and alcohol screenings (initial and random screenings) may be required at the discretion of the clinical affiliates prior to accepting a student at a clinical site and during the clinical rotation period at the site. The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program, with its obligation to protect the public, may, at its discretion, mandate drug and alcohol testing of its students in any phase of the PA training program.

Any felony convictions that occur after matriculation or at any time during your enrollment in the program must also be reported immediately providing the specific details including: (1) date of charge(s), (2) type of offense, and (3) disposition of the case to the Program Director's office immediately. Failure to comply will be grounds for dismissal from the MS-PAS Program. A felony conviction that may prohibit state or federal licensing may result in dismissal from the program.

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

Medical Records and Patient Confidentiality (B2.18)

Patient confidentiality is a cornerstone of Physician Assistant practice and is essential for establishing and maintaining the patient-provider relationship.

Students are honored 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 students will preserve their confidentiality; as a key component of medical professionalism, 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 during all patient encounters. Students should not treat or participate in the treatment of other PA program students, friends, or family members.

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; HIPAA compliance includes maintaining the confidentiality of paper and electronic health records. When violations of HIPAA by a student are identified by a clinical site, the violation will be reviewed by the APPRC. Disciplinary actions may include remediation and/or sanctions, including the possibility of dismissal from the program. The clinical site where the HIPAA breach occurred may also review the violation and sanction the student. If the student is removed from the clinical site for a HIPAA violation, this will impact student progression in the program and may result in a delayed graduation or dismissal from the program. Depending on the severity of the HIPAA breach, criminal and/or civil penalties may apply.

Dress Code

Student professional dress and conduct should always 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 Program has the authority to determine dress code requirements for students admitted to the program. Students in violation of the dress code may be asked to change into appropriate attire. Violations may result in the referral of the student to the APPRC for disciplinary action.

DIDACTIC PHASE

Students are expected to dress professionally in "business casual" attire when attending class and/or campus activities. This includes slacks, khakis, dress shirts, polo shirts, sweaters, blouses, skirts, or dresses. Skirts should not be more than 1 inch above the knee. Business casual does not include jeans, t-shirts, gym clothes, sweatpants, shorts, cut-off tops, hoodies, tank tops, halter tops, off the shoulder or strapless tops or clothing with rips/tears. No hats.

Students may wear scrubs of a particular brand and color purchased through First Uniform or provided to you by the program. These pre-selected options will be available for purchase year-round via a weblink provided by the program. There will be a "Pfeiffer University Physician Assistant Program" logo on the left chest of the scrub tops so that students may wear these scrubs in the clinical year if acceptable by the clinical site. Students should wear Pfeiffer University scrubs and white coat during the didactic phase on days when lab portions of courses are being conducted.

Social Media and the Medical Professional

The Pfeiffer University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program supports the American Medical Association's (AMA) opinion titled "Physicians' Use of Social Media for Product Promotion and Compensation". The opinion has been quoted below with modifications to align with physician assistant education and practice. The original opinion is available at https://code-medical-ethics.ama-assn.org/ethics-opinions/physicians-use-social-media-product-promotion-and-compensation

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/she/they 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 any 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 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.

Technology Requirements

Pfeiffer University places a strong emphasis on electronic coursework, and it is essential for all students to fulfill technical competencies to meet graduation requirements. A significant portion of coursework is conducted online, often involving team collaborations, and requiring student mobility. Consequently, having a suitable laptop computer is crucial for academic success at Pfeiffer.

To ensure a smooth learning experience, the University highly recommends that all students invest in a laptop computer and Internet connectivity that meet the minimum requirements detailed below. Furthermore, it is mandatory for any student enrolling in an online class to possess a laptop computer and Internet connectivity that meet these minimum standards.

Windows Systems	Macintosh Systems
Operating System: Windows 11 (64-bit)	Operating System: macOS Sonoma (14) or later
Processor: Intel Core i5 (12 Gen or newer) or AMD Ryzen 5 (5000 series or newer)	Processor: Apple M1 chip or newer (M2/M3 recommended)
Memory: 16 GB RAM minimum	Memory:16 GB RAM minimum
Storage: 512 GB SSD (Solid State Drive recommended)	Storage: 512 GB SSD (Solid State Drive recommended)
Graphics: integrated graphics are sufficient for general use; a discrete GPU is recommended for media-intensive majors	
Battery Life: 8+ hours recommended	Battery Life: 10+ hours recommended
Google Systems, like Chromebooks, are not supported as they do not meet the minimum requirements to provide a reliable digital learning and collaboration experience for online coursework.	

Pfeiffer University operates its network infrastructure using Microsoft's Active Directory system. It's important to note that while certain services are offered specifically for Windows users, they may not be fully available or compatible with Macintosh users. Pfeiffer provides Microsoft 365 Education Suite to all active students, including email, word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, and cloud storage.

Student responsibility includes ensuring the installation of appropriate security software. Windows users generally receive adequate software from Microsoft as part of their operating system. On the other hand, Macintosh users are advised to explore commercially available security products designed specifically for Mac systems.

Having broadband Internet access is essential for all Pfeiffer students. Non-residential and online students are required to coordinate with a local Internet Service Provider (ISP) to obtain the necessary service. Conversely, residential students enjoy the convenience of broadband connectivity already provided in their residence halls and other campus locations. Furthermore, wireless access is available in numerous campus areas for students to utilize.

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 (A3.14a)

OVERVIEW

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 including remediation and remediation outcomes. When required, student success plans and remediation will be student specific and implemented when required to ensure student mastery of required curricular components, competencies, PLOs, and course learning outcomes (CLOs).

GRADING SCALE

GRADE	STANDARD	RANGE	GPA
A	Superior	94-100	4.0
A-	Excellent	90-93.99	3.7
B+	Very Good	86-89.99	3.3
B	Good	80-85.99	3.0
C	Below Average	70-79.99	2.0
F	Failure	<69.99	0.0
AW	*Failure*		
I	*Incomplete*		

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.

ACADEMIC STANDING (A3.14a)

Please see page 27 of the graduate catalog.
(https://www.pfeiffer.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/26-27-Grad-Catalog-Revised-FINAL-v2-1.pdf)

Good Academic Standing

Students must earn a 2.75 GPA at the end of the first didactic semester and have an overall 3.0 GPA at the end of the second didactic semester and beyond to be in good academic standing.

Academic Warning

Students are placed on academic warning if:

- GPA <2.75 upon completion of Didactic Semester 1
- Cumulative GPA <3.0 upon completion of each subsequent Didactic Semester
- Failure of a single course in a semester with successful remediation

A student can bypass Academic Warning and be placed on Academic Probation in a single semester if two of the above events (including failure of 2 courses with successful remediation) occur in the same semester.

Academic Probation

Students are placed on academic probation if:

- Currently or previously placed on Academic Warning:
    - Cumulative GPA <3.0 upon completion of each Didactic Semester (2-4)
      OR
    - Failure of a course with successful remediation

Academic probation status will be reported on the student's transcript. Students on academic probation status will be immediately suspended from financial assistance including student loans. A student may appeal this suspension by following the steps under the Academic and Financial Appeals section of the graduate catalog (page 28 and 29).

Academic Dismissal

- The following will result in a recommendation for dismissal:
    - Failure of three courses
    - Earn a grade of 'F' by the failure of a course, with subsequent failure of a retest after remediation
    - Failure to earn a minimum of a 3.0 Cumulative GPA at the end of the didactic phase

Dismissal from the program will be reflected on the academic transcript.

Academic Suspension

Academic suspension does not apply to the Physician Assistant program. Students will not be able to complete the program within the allotted timeframe if placed on academic suspension.

PROGRESSION IN THE PROGRAM (A3.14b)

Requirements for Progression to the Clinical Phase

To progress from the didactic phase to the clinical phase students must:

- successfully pass each course in the didactic phase;
- have no unresolved/unremediated violations of program policies, rules, regulations and procedures (i.e., professionalism issues);
- earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher; and
- complete the year 1 Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge and Rating and Assessment (PACKRAT) for self-assessment.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION (A3.14b)

Progression and continuation in the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program are based on scholastic achievement and professional performance. Students must meet the following requirements for graduation:

- complete each required course/clinical rotation (SCPE) with a grade of 70%/C or higher and earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and earn/maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0;
- complete all instructional requirements as outlined in the course syllabi;
- complete the year 2 Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge and Rating and Assessment (PACKRAT) for self-assessment;
- comply with program standards of conduct and guidelines for ethical and professional conduct;
- pass each element of the Summative Evaluation; and
- actively participate in and complete all requirements of a PANCE preparatory review.

TIME TO COMPLETION (A3.14b)

Physician Assistant students are expected to complete all didactic curricular components in fifteen (15) consecutive months and in the prescribed sequence.

DECELERATION (A3.14d)

Didactic phase courses are only given once per year and all didactic phase courses must be completed prior to entry to the clinical year, thus there is no deceleration offered in the didactic phase of training. See the clinical year addendum for the leave of absence policy in the clinical year.

REMEDIATION (A3.14c)

Exam or Assignment Remediation

A student is required to remediate each exam or assignment failure to ensure that they demonstrate competency. The student will be given a remediation activity. The activity may include an essay, short answer, case studies, labeling, fill-in-the-blank, or other item types. A score of 70% or greater on the activity indicates that the student has met the instructional objectives and course learning outcomes covered in the original exam or assignment and has passed the remediation. The activity must be the student's original work (no copy and paste, no plagiarism) and must be completed within 10 days of being assigned.

If the student fails the remediation activity, they will have 2 additional days to revise the activity and resubmit.

If the student fails to submit their initial remediation activity on time or fails the revision, then the student will be referred to the Student Success Committee.

"Bridge to Mastery" Assignment

A student is required to complete an assignment for each exam where they score between 70 and 79.99%, a low pass exam score. The assignment may include an essay, short answer, case studies, labeling, fill-in-the-blank, or other item types. Successful completion of the assignment indicates that the student has mastered the instructional objectives and course learning outcomes. The activity must be the student's original work (no copy and paste, no plagiarism) and must be completed within 10 days of being assigned.

Course Remediation-Didactic Phase

A student is permitted up to 2 course remediations which are prompted by course failure.

Courses with exams:

If a student fails a didactic year course, a grade of "I" (Incomplete) will be submitted until remediation and retesting is complete. The student will be given a remediation activity. The activity may include an essay, short answer, case studies, labeling, fill-in-the-blank, or other item types. Following the remediation activity, the student will take a 100-question course specific cumulative multiple-choice exam. The time allotted for each exam question will match the time allotted for the semester in which the course was originally taught. The re-testing of a failed course will occur before the end of the second week after final exam week.

A score of 70% or greater on the exam indicates that the student has met the instructional objectives and course learning outcomes covered in the course and has passed the remediation and subsequently passed the course. The student will earn a grade of "C" for that course.

Scoring less than 70% on a course remediation exam (failing course grade) will result in an "F" for the course. The student will be referred to the APPRC with a recommendation for program dismissal.

Students may successfully remediate up to 2 failed courses during the didactic phase. A third course failure results in an "F" for the course and remediation is not permitted. A third course failure results in a referral to the APPRC and a recommendation for program dismissal.

Courses without Exams:

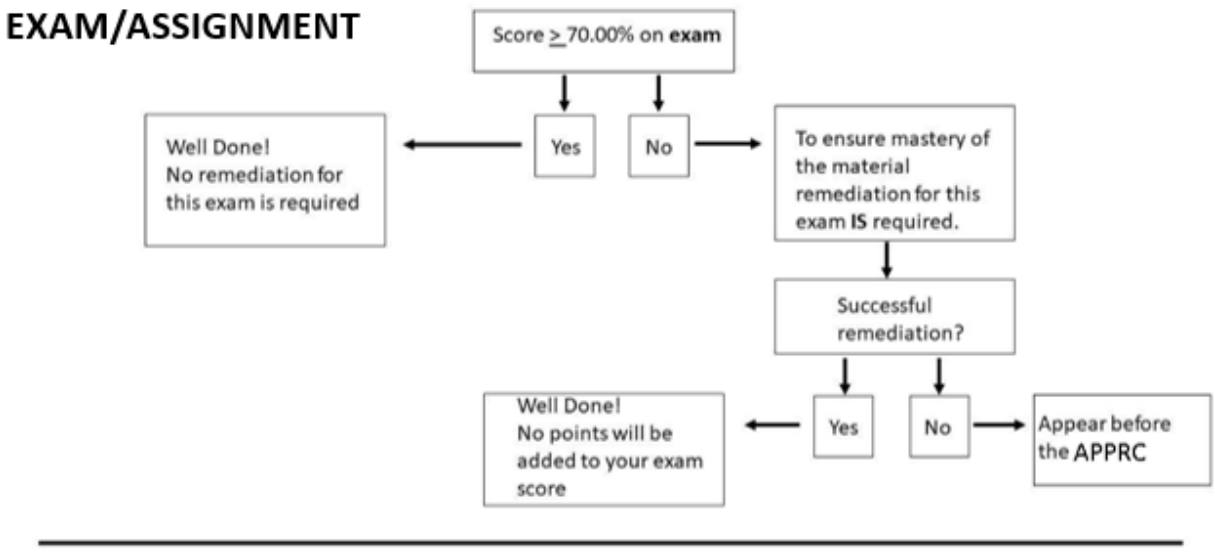
For courses that do not have exams, a mandatory remediation activity will be given by the course instructor. The activity must be completed by the student using sources approved by the course instructor. The activity must be the student's original work (no copy and paste, no plagiarism) and must be completed before the end of the second week after final exam week.

The activity will be graded by the course instructor and one additional program faculty member. A score of 70% or greater on the activity indicates that the student has met the instructional objectives and course learning outcomes covered in the course and has passed the remediation and subsequently passed the course. The student will earn a grade of "C" for that course.

Scoring less than 70% on a course remediation activity (failing course grade) will result in an "F" for the course. The student will be referred to the APPRC with a recommendation for program dismissal.

Students may successfully remediate up to 2 failed courses during the didactic phase. A third course failure results in an "F" for the course and remediation is not permitted. A third course failure results in a referral to the APPRC and a recommendation for program dismissal.

Please see the section on Academic Standing on page 19 for information on academic warning, probation, and dismissal.



Academic Dismissal (A3.14f)

Students will be recommended for dismissal for the following reasons:

- course failure followed by an unsuccessful course retest regardless of overall GPA;
- failure of a third course in the didactic year regardless of overall GPA;
- failure to be in good academic standing for three consecutive semesters;
- failure to obtain a 3.0 GPA by the end of the didactic phase of the program; a student may be dismissed at the end of the third didactic semester if they have a GPA for which there is no reasonable expectation of recovery to good academic standing (3.0 GPA) by the end of the didactic phase (fourth didactic semester); and
- failure to maintain ethical conduct and standards and to adhere to program and University policies;

Students who are dismissed from the program for academic or disciplinary reasons are not permitted to reenter the program and are not eligible for readmission should they reapply. Dismissal from the program will be reflected on the academic transcript.

Academic Appeals (A3.14h)

COURSE GRADE APPEALS

Should a student need to appeal a final course grade, the student should follow the process outlined in the graduate catalog on page 30 (https://www.pfeiffer.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/26-27-Grad-Catalog-Revised-FINAL-v2-1.pdf). Given the course load and demand of the PA program, an appeal for grade changes should be submitted within 5 business days of notification of final exam results. During the appeal process, the program director may request an additional review by the Academic and Professional Performance Review Committee (APPRC).

INDIVIDUAL EXAM/ASSIGNMENT GRADE APPEALS

For examination question appeals or appeals on other assignment grades, students have up to 5 days after the administration of the examination or 5 days after an assignment grade is posted to initiate and appeal to the instructor via email. For an examination or quiz question appeal, the student should use the examination question appeal form. For other assignments no specific form is required. The instructor will determine if the appeal/point addition is warranted and notify the student of the result. If the student wishes to appeal the course instructor's decision, the student must file an appeal via email within 2 days of the instructor response. Exam question appeal forms can be found on BlackBoard.

Withdrawals (A3.14e)

WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSES

The Pfeiffer University Physician Assistant Studies Program should be completed in sequence over the course of 28 months and the didactic phase must be completed over the course of 16 months. As there is no deceleration available in the didactic year, a student may not withdraw from a single or multiple courses and remain in the program. Thus, a student wishing to withdraw from a course during the didactic phase, must withdraw from the program.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM/UNIVERSITY

Students who withdraw from the program/University for any reason should request a meeting with their academic advisor to discuss their intent to withdraw prior to withdrawing, submit a written statement to the PA program director withdrawing from the program, and follow any additional steps outlined in the withdrawal procedures in the graduate program catalogue. Prior to withdrawal

the student should also consult the Financial Aid Office and VA coordinator, if applicable. It is the student's responsibility to notify the registrar, business office and financial aid about withdrawal from the University and determine financial implications for withdrawing.

Students who need to withdraw from the program for medical reasons may seek to reenter the program at a later date. Students withdrawing in the didactic year will restart with a new cohort if approved. No advanced placement will be given. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the program reserves the right to deny the request to reenter.

Student Success/Student Success Committee

The Pfeiffer University PA Program faculty and staff are invested in student success. Students are encouraged to meet with their instructors and/or faculty advisor early in the course or semester if they find themselves struggling within a course(s). The Director of Student Support and Academic Success, the Pfeiffer University Wick Sharp Student Success Center and the Pfeiffer University PA Program Student Success Committee are all available to help you on your journey.

The purpose of the Student Success Committee is to identify and assist those students who may require additional academic support as early as possible. A student who when deemed by faculty may require additional support may be referred to the Student Success Committee.

A student may be referred to the Student Success Committee if a student:

- earns a grade below 80% for 2 or more exams in one semester;
- earns a final course grade of 'C' in two or more courses in one semester;
- has an overall GPA less than 3.0 after the initial didactic semester;
- fails a course (first course failure) and passes the remediation examination;
- fails a PAEA End-of-rotation exam initial and retest examination;
- based on program calculations, is predicted to not pass the PANCE as a first-time exam taker
- Students may also self-refer to the committee.

This committee is non-punitive and designed solely to assist students. It allows faculty to intervene early to provide academic support and/or recommendations for additional assistance. Being referred to the student success committee is not punitive and does not appear on the academic record. A student advisement form will be completed and signed by attendees, including the concerned student, and placed into the student's electronic file.

Timely Referral for Counseling (A3.07)

Appropriate and timely referral will be made as soon as the PA program director, medical director, principal and/or instructional faculty have knowledge of a student facing personal issues that may impact his/her/their progress in the program. ***Students have university-provided Student Counseling Services and Student Health Services on the Misenheimer campus during the Spring and Fall semesters. Online counseling services are available year-round.***
If a student is referred to seek these services, the student has a choice of choosing resources offered by the university or other resources arranged by the student.

If a student chooses not to seek services, the APPRC may meet and provide the student with additional encouragement and recommendations.

Students may also self-refer to counseling. University health and counseling resources can be found at https://www.pfeiffer.edu/student-life/campus-life/health-and-counseling/.

Class Policies

ATTENDANCE

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program is an intense academic experience, and to give you the best chance at succeeding, attendance is mandatory. There may be classes and activities scheduled in the evening and on weekends. You are expected and required to attend all scheduled learning events.

We recognize PA students are adults, and that there may be other demands on your time, so you are given one excused day (8 hours) of absence per didactic semester. Excused absence days do not accumulate semester to semester. Absences should be cleared with the Director of Didactic Education by submitting the Didactic Absence Request Form (located on Blackboard) to the Program Support Coordinator before your absence. The absence should not be scheduled on days when examinations are being given or when unique training opportunities are scheduled.

Students should notify all instructors of courses that are missed via email. All absences due to illness, accident, or other unexpected personal or family events must be reported in writing to the Director of Didactic Education as soon as possible. The clinical year addendum will address absences in the clinical year.

All other absences that are not pre-approved will be considered unexcused. Once the 8-hour per semester request has been used, further requests for social events (early start to a vacation, family reunion, weddings, etc.) will not be granted. When students exceed the allowable absence hours, the program may require documentation from a healthcare provider for any additional illness-related absences. Failure to provide requested documentation may result in the absence being classified as unexcused and referral to the APPRC. Only urgent medical or emergent absences will be excused on exam days. It is up to the program to determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused and whether a make-up exam will be granted. Unexcused absences for examinations will result in a grade of zero (0%) for the examination and referral to the Director of Didactic Education and possibly the APPRC.

Attendance and on-time class arrival (be in your seat no later than five minutes before class start time) are required to remain in good standing in this program. Students with multiple unexcused absences or tardies may be referred to the 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 or Clinical Education, in consultation with the Program Director. The student is still responsible for ensuring that completion of instructional activities and requirements are not compromised by conference attendance.

Students who currently serving in the military and have questions regarding any military requirements that might interfere with the PA Program attendance should contact their advisor and also the Veterans Service Officer (VSO) in the Pfeiffer University Registrar's Office (https://www.pfeiffer.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/veteran-and-military-graduate/).

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 their religious belief. Students are expected to attend all sessions at assigned times unless granted an excused absence by the Director of Didactic Education.

Students are expected to notify faculty if they intend to be absent for any scheduled class sessions prior to the scheduled religious holiday. Students absent for religious reasons will be given reasonable opportunities to make up any work missed.

Assessment Procedures

A grade of 70% is required to pass a course in the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program. Exam questions will be taken from the material presented in the learning objectives listed in the syllabus, lectures, and from required/assigned readings.

Most courses within the PA program utilize computerized testing. Prior to the first exam students will be instructed on software installation and testing procedures. Students are responsible for maintaining the required testing software, their login information, and a computer that meets the minimum system requirements.

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, the Pfeiffer University program faculty have adopted a uniform time per MCQ question allotment which decreases each semester until one minute per question is standard.

Time is allotted as follows:

- Semester 1: 90 seconds per item
- Semester 2: 75 seconds per item
- Semester 3: 60 seconds per item
- Semester 4: 60 seconds per item
- Semesters 5-7: 60 seconds per item

Special accommodations: In accordance with federal law and Pfeiffer University policy, resources are provided for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy. For assistance in arranging reasonable academic accommodations, students should contact Accessibility Services (Dr. Chip Palmer at 704-463-3367 or chip.palmer@pfeiffer.edu).

EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

On the day of an examination, students are expected to be at the program no less than ten minutes before the scheduled start time for the examination. Food or beverages will not be permitted at the stations unless required for medical purposes.

Students will be provided a whiteboard and marker that will be collected by the proctor at the end of the examination. Study materials and personal belongings are to be stored outside of the classroom where the examination is occurring (i.e., the student locker or other personal space). Restroom breaks during the examination will require checking out and then back in with the exam proctor.

Other procedures:

- Students should be respectful of each other and reduce distractions in the room as much as possible.
- Students will 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 express, written, permission from the course instructor prior to the date of the exam.**
- Students should not bring personal items, including all electronic devices other than the testing computer/laptop, into the exam area.
- Students should not wear hats/hoodies/obstructive headwear during the exam unless otherwise permitted in observance of religious practices.
- 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 regarding exam content is not allowed during the exam. Questions regarding technology issues may be answered (i.e., software issues). Students may 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.
- A white board and dry erase marker 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 later discussed with the course 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 should refrain from discussing the exam contents.
- 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.

OBJECTIVE STRUCTURED CLINICAL EXAMINATION (OSCE) PROCEDURES

- Audio and video recording of the examination may occur.
- On the day of an examination, students are expected to be at the appointed testing location at least five minutes prior to the scheduled start time for the examination.
- Study materials and personal belongings are to be stored outside of where the examination is occurring (i.e. the student locker or other personal space).
- Food or beverages will not be permitted in the exam rooms.
- Scratch paper may be provided by the proctor and 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 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.
- 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 unless a debrief is scheduled as part of the OSCE.
- Discussing exam questions/answers with students or giving exam feedback ("exam review") will be at the discretion of the proctor/instructor.

MAKE UP PROCEDURES

Students are expected to take all examinations at the time they are administered. In the event of an excused absence that has been discussed in advance with course faculty, a make-up examination may be possible. The make-up examination will be scheduled as close to the original examination date and time as possible. Unexcused absences from an examination will result in a score of 0% (zero). If a student arrives late for an examination, the examination will commence upon his/her arrival. However, no allowances for extra time will normally be given. The tardy student will still be required to end the examination within the same timeframe as the rest of the class. Tardiness is considered unprofessional behavior.

Student Grievances and Allegations of Harassment or Mistreatment (A1.02g)

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, 704-463-3367.

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 and Allegations of Harassment Policy, please see: https://www.pfeiffer.edu/policies-procedures/title-ix/.

Health Requirements (A3.09a)

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, is 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

IMMUNIZATIONS

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

https://www.pfeiffer.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/A3.09a-Health-screening-and-immunization-policy-2.pdf

No one from the PA Program has access to the student's health record. These are maintained by the University in a secured electronic depository. 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 (A3.05)

INFECTIOUS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASE TRAINING

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

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 thorough hand 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.

5. 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.
6. Report the event via e-mail to the Director of Didactic Education (didactic phase) or the Director of Clinical Education (clinical phase) within 24 hours of the event.

Please refer to the Updated 2025 US Public Health Service Guidelines for the Management of Occupational Exposures to Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Recommendations for Post-exposure Prophylaxis in Healthcare Settings https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/183609.

OTHER EXPOSURES, ILLNESS OR INJURY

For student and patient safety, students who have been exposed to a contagious disease (other than those by blood or body fluid exposure) or are ill with symptoms of infectious diseases may need to avoid contact with patients. In such cases, or in the event of an injury, a healthcare provider should evaluate the student to determine the need for treatment and clearance for patient care. Students must notify and work with the site preceptor to determine whether the student is to be evaluated by the site occupational health provider or their own health care provider. Students needing evaluation for an exposure under this section of the policy must report such instances to the Director of Clinical Education or the Program Director within 24 hours of the event. In the event that the student will miss clinic days, the student should proceed with notifications as required in the absence policy.

MEDICAL FOLLOW UP AND CLEARANCE TO RETURN TO CLINICAL ACTIVITIES

Initial and subsequent care and follow-up activities including recommendations related to counseling, prophylactic/treatment regimens, and continued or restricted practice activities following a student's exposure incident/illness/injury will be determined by the student's health care provider (in collaboration with the student) and other appropriate health care professionals. If the student is going to miss 5 or more days, then the student must obtain a medical attestation form from their healthcare provider upon return to clinic, clearing the student for participation in patient care.

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

Depending on the exposure, 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 (APPRC) will review the case and make recommendations regarding the student's academic standing.

Provision of Health Services (A3.06)

The Program Director, Medical Director, and faculty of the program will not participate as healthcare providers for students in the program, except in emergency situations.

In the event of an illness or injury requiring emergency treatment, students may call 911 or visit the Emergency Department. The closest emergency department is the Atrium Health Stanly Emergency Department.

The nearest places for students to seek care are:

- Atrium Health Systems/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.
- Atrium Health Stanly Emergency Department 301 Yadkin Street Albemarle, NC, 28001 (980) 323-4000.
- Pfeiffer University Student Health Service Stokes Student Center Misenheimer, NC 28109.

Safety and Security

The safety and security of students, faculty and staff is of utmost concern to the University and the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program.

Students who have witnessed any suspicious or unsafe activity should immediately inform PA program faculty/staff and/or the police.

TO CONTACT POLICE:

Emergencies: For emergencies while on the Center for Health Science campus and all rotation sites, contact **9-1-1** immediately.

While on the Center for Health Science campus: You may also dial (704) 984-9500 for non-emergency police.

ESCORTS:

The Albemarle Police Department provides escorts 24 hours a day year-round. To request an escort, dial 704-984-9500. Be sure to give the officer a phone number so he/she can notify you in case of an emergency in progress that might delay the response.

LIVESAFE APP

Pfeiffer University utilizes the LiveSafe app, a mobile safety communications platform and enables users to provide actionable crowdsourced intelligence gathering for security officials and offers immediate emergency information for students, faculty, and staff. Download the LiveSafe app in App Store or Google Play Store.

The LiveSafe app has resources for:

- Reporting Tips - See something out of place? Chat with security and help maintain a safe area.
- Emergency - Get help immediately; LiveSafe can use one's location to dispatch support (Options for 911 and to call or message the Pfeiffer police).
- SafeRide - Request a security official to escort you to your destination.
- SafeWalk - Virtually walk family, friends and colleagues home or to another destination by monitoring their location on a real-time map.

University Weather and Emergency notifications are also placed through the app.

GENERAL SAFETY

1. Don't walk alone. Call for an escort or walk with a classmate.
2. If you observe or hear anything strange, contact the police department immediately.
3. If you observe a strange vehicle on campus or at a clinical site, write down the description of the vehicle and its license plate number and contact the police department immediately.
4. Avoid remaining in a building alone. Invite a friend to keep you company if you realize that everyone else has left the building.
5. If you are being harassed by anyone, get to a phone. If during the day, go to the closest office and contact the police department.
6. Stay in well-lit areas when walking at night.
7. When walking off campus, always walk with a friend.
8. Never walk off campus after dark.
9. Do not use athletic fields on the Misenheimer campus after dark; this is prohibited.
10. When walking to your vehicle or hall, have your keys in hand.

SEVERE WEATHER AND OTHER CAMPUS CLOSURES

Didactic phase and clinical phase students within 60 miles of the Center for the Health Sciences.

If the University President (or designee) determines that classes are to be cancelled and/or the University closed due to inclement weather, the following steps shall be implemented for courses and rotations by the program:

If the Center for Health Science campus has closed (communicated via LiveSafe or email), there will be no course activities that day for didactic year students.

Suspension of clinical activities occurs as follows:

1. If notification occurs by 5:30 a.m. students are excused from clinical duties. Students must notify the preceptor at their clinical site that they are not to attend the clinical rotation according to the University Inclement Weather policy.
2. If notification occurs during the day or before 3:00 p.m. for evening events and classes, students should be excused immediately from clinical duties to return home safely.

In all cases, the student must keep the preceptor informed of their absence due to campus closures.

Clinical phase students > 60 miles from the Center for the Health Sciences

The program does not expect students to put themselves in dangerous situations. If a student feels as though road conditions are too hazardous for driving, then he/she/they should report the absence to the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) and clinical preceptor. If a clinical preceptor cancels a clinic day due to inclement weather, the time does not need to be made up but needs to be reported to the DCE. Students should strive to meet the minimum requirements for the rotation. If this is not possible, the student should immediately contact the DCE to discuss options.

NON-INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSURE OF THE CAMPUS

Should campus be closed for reasons other than inclement weather, clinical phase students are expected to attend the day's clinical rotation. Should the campus closure be of such a nature that students may be negatively affected (emotionally, physically, etc.), the program will alert students not to attend the clinical rotation.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual assault and sexual harassment are very serious crimes that should not go unreported. If you do not report it to the police department, be sure to report it to someone of authority on campus.

For additional information on sexual assault reporting and reporting of other crimes and incidents, please see the Pfeiffer University Campus Safety webpage.

CLINICAL SITE SAFETY

The clinical year of the Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program occurs off campus at healthcare facilities that have been reviewed and vetted by Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program personnel. During the site recruitment process and during site visits the clinical team evaluates the following criteria:

1. Site has and enforces employee policy on harassment;
2. Site has a protocol for provider and staff safety;
3. Site has protocol for infectious disease exposure (e.g., needle sticks);
4. On-site medications are stored in a locked area/cabinet;
5. Site has adequate access to sharps containers that are secure and not overflowing;
6. Site has fire alarms and extinguisher(s) that are functional and clearly identified;
7. Site has fire exit(s) clearly marked;
8. Site's aisles and doorways are free from obstructions;
9. Site appears clean;
10. Outside grounds of site, including parking area, are well lit; and
11. Overall, site appears to present a safe environment and atmosphere for students.

Sites are not used if they do not provide a safe atmosphere for students.

While on clinical rotations all students should become familiar with the clinical site security policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are specific to the site and should be followed for any site-specific occurrences.

INCIDENT REPORTING (OTHER THAN BLOOD AND BODY FLUID EXPOSURE)

Incidents involving students may occur on or off-campus while fulfilling the requirements of the physician assistant program. These incidents must be documented for the protection and safety of all students, faculty, staff, members of the healthcare team, patients, and/or patient's caregivers. In the event of any incident where any student is harmed in any way, the student must promptly notify the Pfeiffer University PA Program as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

If a student is at a supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE) site, they should immediately inform the clinical preceptor and follow the SCPE site protocols for incident reporting. The student must also promptly notify the Pfeiffer University PA Program Director and the Director of Clinical Education.

All students must complete the Pfeiffer University PA Program Student Incident Report (found in BlackBoard) in the event of any incident.

It is important to note that throughout their tenure at Pfeiffer University, students will engage in off-campus activities and must comply with program safety policies outlined in the Student and Clinical Handbooks. During travel to and from campus for program-sanctioned experiences, including clinical rotations (SCPE), students are responsible for their own safety.

Appendix A: Program Competencies

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program has adopted the following competencies:

- Medical Knowledge
- Clinical and Technical Skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
- Professional Behaviors

[1] Competencies for the Physician Associate Profession. American Academy of Physician Associates. Accessed January 19, 2024. https://www.aapa.org/career-central/employer-resources/employing-a-pa/competencies-physician-associate-profession/

Appendix B: Program Learning Outcomes

The Pfeiffer University MS-PAS Program has defined the following Program Learning Outcomes to augment the Program Competencies and guide the acquisition knowledge in the preparation and education of competent and compassionate PAs.

Learning Outcomes	Description	Competency
PLO1	Apply core knowledge of biomedical and clinical sciences across the lifespan.	Medical Knowledge
PLO2	Apply core knowledge of biomedical and clinical sciences to the practice of medicine.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical and Technical Skills, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO3	Accurately obtain and document complete and problem-focused medical histories.	Medical Knowledge, Interpersonal Skills, Clinical and Technical Skills
PLO4	Appropriately perform complete and problem-focused physical exams.	Medical Knowledge, Interpersonal Skills, Clinical and Technical Skills, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO5	Appropriately select and interpret laboratory and diagnostic studies utilized in general practice.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical and Technical Skills, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO6	Accurately generate differential diagnoses through investigative and critical thinking.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO7	Differentiate acute and emergent conditions from routine, preventative, and chronic encounters.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical and Technical Skills, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO8	Formulate appropriate pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment plans, including appropriate referrals and patient education for acute and chronic conditions.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical and Technical Skills, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO9	Provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance.	Interpersonal Skills, Medical Knowledge, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO10	Incorporate ethical principles into the provision of care.	Interpersonal Skills, Professional Behaviors
PLO11	Consider an individual's unique identity and determinants of health during encounters with patients, family members, and coworkers.	Interpersonal Skills, Professional Behaviors
PLO12	Appraise literature and apply principles of evidence-based medicine to patient care.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO13	Collaborate with members of the interprofessional healthcare team to provide patient-centered care.	Interpersonal Skills, Professional Behaviors
PLO14	Communicate effectively with patients, families, communities, and other healthcare professionals.	Interpersonal Skills, Professional Behaviors
PLO15	Apply knowledge of the business of healthcare to individual patient care needs.	Medical Knowledge, Professional Behaviors, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities
PLO16	Recognize external and internal factors and other determinants of health that may impact differences in a patient's access to healthcare.	Interpersonal Skills, Professional Behaviors
PLO17	Perform procedures utilized in general practice.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical and Technical Skills
PLO18	Promote a safe environment for patient care that incorporates prevention of medical errors.	Medical Knowledge, Clinical and Technical Skills, Professional Behaviors

Appendix C: Program Course Listing by Semester

DIDACTIC PHASE COURSE SEQUENCE

Semester 1 - Spring		
Course #	**Course Name**	**SH**
PAS 600	Clinical Anatomy and Introduction to Diagnostic Imaging (with lab)	5
PAS 601	Medical Physiology	2
PAS 603	Essentials of Medical Genetics	1
PAS 605	The Physician Assistant: Delivering Healthcare in America and Beyond	1
PAS 606	Epidemiology and Biostatistics: An Introduction to Clinical Research	1
PAS 633	Pharmacotherapeutics I	2
PAS 622	Public Health: Principles, Policy, and Advocacy	1
PAS 640	Dermatology	1
PAS 676	History, Physical, and Documentation I (with lab)	2
PAS 642	Ophthalmology & ENT	2
Total Credits=18 (*10 classes)*		
Semester 2 - Summer		
Course #	**Course Name**	**SH**
PAS 608	Pathophysiology of Disease I	2
PAS 635	Pharmacotherapeutics II	1
PAS 617	Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics I	1
PAS 619	Evidence Based Medicine I	1
PAS 672	Psychiatric & Behavioral Medicine	2
PAS 629	Ethics and Law in Medicine	1
PAS 644	Cardiology / EKG	2
PAS 656	Endocrinology	2
PAS 677	History, Physical, and Documentation II (with lab)	2
PAS 664	Infectious Disease	1
PAS 646	Pulmonology	2
Total Credits=17 (*11 classes)*		

Semester 3 - Fall		
Course #	**Course Name**	**SH**
PAS 609	Pathophysiology of Disease II	1
PAS 618	Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics II	1
PAS 620	Evidence Based Medicine II	1
PAS 627	Clinical Skills and Procedures (with lab)	2
PAS 650	Gastroenterology	2
PAS 678	History, Physical, and Documentation III (with lab)	2
PAS 648	Neurology	2
PAS 674	Orthopedics and Rheumatology	2
PAS 637	Pharmacotherapeutics III	1
PAS 654	Urology / Nephrology	2
PAS 670	Pediatrics	2
Total Credits=18 (*11 classes)*		
Semester 4 - Spring		
Course #	**Course Name**	**SH**
PAS 621	Evidence Based Medicine III	1
PAS 624	Social Factors in Healthcare	1
PAS 639	Pharmacotherapeutics IV	2
PAS 652	Hematology/Oncology	1
PAS 684	Clinical Laboratory and Diagnostics III	1
PAS 682	Clinical Skills and Procedures II (with lab)	2
PAS 662	Emergency Medicine	2
PAS 660	Geriatrics	1
PAS 679	History, Physical, and Documentation IV (with lab)	2
PAS 658	Women's Health	2
PAS 668	Surgery	2
PAS 680	Pathophysiology of Disease III	1
Total Credits=18 (*12 classes)*		

Total credits didactic phase = 71

CLINICAL PHASE COURSES

Semester V Summer, Semester VI Fall, Semester VII Spring		
Course #	**Course Name**	**SH**
PAS 701	Behavioral and Mental Health	5
PAS 702	Emergency Medicine	5
PAS 703	Family Medicine	5
PAS 704	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 (*9 rotations)*		

Total program credits = 116