

# COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSION

## Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

### Department of Physician Assistant Education

#### THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT ROLE

Physician assistants are health care professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision. Within the physician/physician assistant relationship, physician assistants exercise autonomy in medical decision making and provide a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive, and health maintenance services. The clinical role of the physician assistant includes primary and specialty care in medicine and surgical practice settings. Physician assistant practice is centered on patient care and may include educational, research and administrative activity. As part of their comprehensive responsibilities, PAs conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel on preventive health care, assist in surgery, and can write medical orders.

The role of the physician assistant demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills, and the capacity to react to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. An attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient's welfare are essential attributes.

The specific tasks performed by an individual physician assistant cannot be delineated precisely because of variations in practice requirements mandated by geographic, political, economic, and social factors. At a minimum, however, physician assistants are educated in those areas of basic medical science and clinical disciplines and specific problem solving.

Physician assistant practice is characterized by clinical knowledge and skills in areas traditionally defined by family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, surgery, and psychiatry/behavioral medicine.

Physician assistants practice in ambulatory, emergency and long-term settings. Physician assistants provide health care services to diverse patient populations of all ages with a range of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions. They need knowledge and skills which allow them to function effectively in an ever changing health care environment.

Services performed by physician assistants include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Evaluations: eliciting a detailed and accurate history, performing an appropriate physical examination, ordering appropriate diagnostic studies, delineating problems, developing management plans, and recording and presenting data.
2. Diagnostics: ordering, performing and/or interpreting diagnostic studies to identify and follow pathophysiology process.
3. Monitoring: implementing patient management plans, recording progress notes and participating in the process of the continuity of care.
4. Therapeutic: performing therapeutic procedures and managing or assisting in the management of medical and surgical conditions, which may include assisting surgeries in the conduct of operations and taking initiative in performing evaluations and therapeutic procedures in life-threatening procedures.
5. Patient Evaluation: counseling patients regarding issues of health care management to include compliance with prescribed therapeutic regimens, normal growth and development, family planning, and emotional problems of daily living.
6. Referral: facilitating the referral of patients to other health care providers or agencies as appropriate.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Physician Assistant Education supports the University's mission by educating Physician Assistants to deliver high quality, competent and compassionate health care as team members within the health care delivery system.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The Western University of Health Sciences Department of Physician Assistant Education will be nationally respected and recognized as an innovative leader in Physician Assistant education. Our faculty will be leaders in our profession as educators and clinicians. Our faculty will educate a diverse student body, members of which will provide compassionate and comprehensive primary care medicine.

Our students, graduates and faculty will serve in key leadership positions on a local, state and national level, to influence the future of the physician assistant profession, while striving to continue personal and professional development. Physicians and health care delivery teams will seek our graduates. Through these partnerships, comprehensive patient care will be accessible for all populations.

## **ACCREDITATION**

The Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

## **Certification/Licensure**

The written examination for certification as a physician assistant is administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Successful completion requires that the applicant achieve the passing score established by the NCCPA for that examination. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that certification of his or her examination score is received by the Physician Assistant Committee (PAC). The NCCPA phone number 678-417-8100 and their website address is [www.nccpa.net](http://www.nccpa.net). The PAC phone number is 916-561-8780 and their website is [www.pac.ca.gov](http://www.pac.ca.gov).

To practice as a physician assistant in California, one must apply for and receive licensure from the Physician Assistant Committee (PAC) and pass the Physician Assistant National Certification Exam (PANCE). The PAC does not issue interim permits to practice as a physician assistant.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

The primary goal of the Western University Physician Assistant Program is to educate individuals to serve as physician assistants in primary care medicine. PA students are educated to provide health care to all patient populations. PAs work with the direction and supervision of a physician. The education provided by the program will prepare the entry-level graduate with the knowledge skills and attitudes to perform in a primary care setting and function in a variety of roles within numerous clinical settings. Educating individuals to serve as PAs in primary care medicine is founded on the understanding that the broad-based education needed to prepare an individual to serve in a primary care setting is the most effective form of initial preparation. Primary Care education also permits the development of attributes that will serve the graduate in the greatest spectrum of potential employment opportunities.

1. Physician assistant students must demonstrate competency in established and evolving core medical and clinical sciences knowledge with an application to patient care in diverse settings.
2. Physician assistant students must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, families, health care providers, professional associates, and the health care system.
3. Physician assistant students must demonstrate care that is effective, patient-centered, compassionate, timely, efficient, and equitable for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of wellness.
4. Physician assistant students must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.
5. Physician assistant students must be able to critically analyze, evaluate, and improve patient care practices throughout their ongoing education and practice.
6. Physician assistant students must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that is of optimal value.

The program has also incorporated elements of osteopathic philosophy into physician assistant education. These elements include:

- Caring for, and appreciation of, the patient as a whole person.
- Emphasis on those aspects of health education that stress health promotion and disease prevention.

- An appreciation of the role of physical assessment in the diagnosis and management of illness.

The curriculum is designed to accomplish the preceding goals. Students attain these goals as they progress through the curriculum.

## **FUNCTIONS AND TASKS OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT GRADUATES**

### **General Entry-Level Competencies Expected of a Graduate**

The physician assistant will be able to:

- Elicit a comprehensive, accurate history and perform a complete routine physical examination on patients of any age group; elicit a pertinent and accurate history and perform a problem-oriented screening examination in situations requiring an interval evaluation.
- Select, perform and/or interpret the appropriate routine laboratory and diagnostic studies/ procedures for the purpose of completing an adequate data base.
- Identify problems, organize and integrate data, record and present.
- Accurately present an oral case.
- Implement a management plan, including performing or assisting.
- Instruct and counsel patients regarding physical and mental health to include diet, health maintenance, therapy, normal growth and development, family planning, referral and follow-up services.
- Provide life support and emergency evaluation/care in response to life-threatening situations in the absence of a physician and/or other appropriate health professionals.
- Initiate and follow up on appropriate referrals to specialists.

## **PERSONAL COMPETENCIES FOR ADMISSION AND MATRICULATION**

A candidate for admission to the Physician Assistant Program must have the use of certain sensory and motor functions to permit them to carry out the activities described in the sections that follow. Graduation from the program signifies that the individual is prepared for entry into clinical practice or into postgraduate training programs. Therefore, it follows that graduates must have the knowledge and skills needed to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of diagnostic and therapeutic care. The candidate and student must be able consistently, quickly and accurately to integrate all information received by whatever sense(s) are employed. Also, they must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data.

A candidate for the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree ordinarily must have abilities and skills of five varieties including: observation; communication; motor; intellectual, conceptual, integrative and quantitative; and behavioral and social. Where technological assistance is available in the program, it may be permitted as a reasonable accommodation when appropriate. Under all circumstances, a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

**a. Observation:** Candidates and students ordinarily must have sufficient vision to be able to observe demonstrations, experiments and laboratory exercises. They must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand.

**b. Communication:** Candidates and students must be able to communicate with patients and colleagues. They should be able to hear, with or without a reasonable accommodation. Candidates and students must be able to read, write, and speak English.

**c. Motor:** Candidates and students ordinarily should have sufficient motor function such that they are able to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physician assistants are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. These actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

**d. Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis. Problem solving, the critical intellectual skill demanded of a physician assistant, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, candidates and students should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures.

e. Behavioral and Social Abilities: Candidates and students must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of the intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the assessment 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, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities to be assessed during the admissions and educational processes.

The Department of Physician Assistant Education, along with all the other programs at Western University of Health Sciences, shares a commitment to develop creative ways of opening the PA curriculum to competitive, qualified disabled individuals. In doing so, however, the Department of Physician Assistant Education must maintain the integrity of its curriculum and preserve those elements deemed essential to educating candidates to become effective physician assistants.

### **ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Admission to the PA program is on a competitive basis and is open to citizens and permanent residents of the United States. Western University is committed to admitting competitive, qualified disabled individuals. For technical guidelines, please see **Personal Competencies for Admission and Matriculation**.

#### **Application Requirements**

The admissions committee will consider applicants with a minimum of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution or who will complete their bachelor's degree before matriculation. The minimum overall GPA required is 2.7, the minimum science GPA is 2.7, and the prerequisite GPA is 2.7, all on a 4.0 scale. Grades of "C-" in any of the prerequisite courses are not accepted. Candidates should possess the oral and written communication skills necessary to interact with patients and colleagues.

##### 1. Prerequisite Courses:

College English and English Composition\* (6 semester units, a full year sequence)

College Algebra (3 semester units)

Human Anatomy with lab\*\* (3 semester units)

Human Physiology with lab\*\* (3 semester units)

Microbiology with lab (3 semester units)

General or Inorganic Chemistry with lab (6 semester units, a full year sequence)

Psychology (General or Introductory only - 3 semester units)

Sociology (General or Introductory only - 3 semester units)

Humanities (9 semester units)

Introductory Statistics (3 semester units, preferably from the math or statistics department)

Spanish is encouraged to enhance success in the program.

Genetics (3 semester units)

**\*Note:** English prerequisites must be taken from the English department. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are not accepted for the English prerequisites.

**\*\*Note:** Anatomy and physiology must be taken out of the anatomy, physiology, A&P, biology, or zoology departments. If anatomy and physiology are combined, a minimum of five semester units is required.

A seven (7) year time limit is enforced for all science prerequisites and labs (anatomy, physiology, chemistry, microbiology, and genetics).

Advanced placement, transfer of credit, CLEP examination, or credit for experiential learning is not recognized by the program as meeting these prerequisites.

Introductory level courses in the sciences are not acceptable (i.e., courses taken in the sciences for non-science majors).

Prerequisite courses must be transferable. Transferable courses are those designated for baccalaureate credit by the college or university offering the courses.

##### 2. Health Care Experience

Health care experience is not required. However, engagement in extracurricular or community activities that reflect people or service orientation is essential. The extracurricular or community activity does not need to be medical in nature.

### **Application Procedures and Deadlines**

The Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) was created by the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) as a service to applicants and member programs. CASPA will collect one set of materials from each applicant. CASPA will then authenticate, photocopy, and distribute them to each member school an applicant designates. Western University's application deadline to apply to CASPA is November 1 of the year prior to beginning the PA program. Applicants are considered without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or gender.

To request an informational brochure and/or information about the CASPA application, contact the Office of Admissions or the CASPA office at:

Office of Admissions  
Western University of Health Sciences  
309 E. Second Street(617) 612-2080  
Pomona, CA 91766-1854  
(909) 469-5541

CASPA  
<http://www.caspaonline.org>  
(617) 612-2080

A mandatory supplemental application (provided by Western University) will be available on-line to all applicants. However, completion of the supplemental does not ensure that the applicant will meet the minimum requisite of GPA of 2.7 (for all the categories listed above) or that all prerequisite classes will be acceptable. A final evaluation and calculation will be completed upon receipt of your supplemental application. The supplemental application deadline is December 1 of the year prior to which the applicant intends to matriculate in the PA program. The supplemental application consists of forms requesting additional information, one letter of reference, and a personal statement. A non-refundable application fee of \$50 must be submitted with the supplemental application materials. All application materials must be returned as part of one supplemental application packet.

Applicants who have undertaken any coursework outside of the United States must submit their transcripts for evaluation to World Education Services or Josef Silny and Associates. In preparation for CASPA, a course-by-course evaluation is required, and all course work must be designated as undergraduate, graduate, or professional. Western University will only honor evaluations from the above services. The evaluation must be submitted to CASPA.

Once the applicant's file is reviewed, the applicant may be granted an on-campus interview. During the interview process, the applicant meets individually with an interview team, which may consist of the PA Program Director, PA Admissions Committee Chair, PA faculty, Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions, University faculty, students, PA alumni, and community PAs. The interviewers question the applicant regarding academics, personal preparedness and commitment to the PA program and the PA profession. Interviewees are rated on a standard evaluation form relative to each of these variables. After the conclusion of the interviews, the evaluation forms are reviewed by the PA Admissions Committee, which decides to admit, deny admission, or place the applicant on an alternate list. An applicant previously on the alternate list must reapply for admissions into the PA Program. The Western University PA program does not accept transfer students, nor is admission to the program deferrable. Decisions of the Admissions Committee regarding the admission of applicants to the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program are final. Candidates accepted to Western University must have a complete set of official transcripts mailed to the Admissions Office no later than July 1 of the year of matriculation in the PA program. For your information, CASPA retains the original set of transcripts it receives from applicants.

### **Registration**

First year students are required to register by the registration day specified in the University Calendar. Failure to register on that day may be grounds for dismissal. Full tuition and fees and all prior debts must be paid in full on or before registration day each academic year. Matriculation is subject to the satisfactory completion of all academic requirements and payment of all outstanding debts to the University. The receipt of a final transcript(s) from all colleges/universities attended and a physical examination with documentation of required immunizations prior to registration are additional requirements for incoming students. Also, all students must show proof of current health insurance coverage at the time of registration. This coverage must be

maintained or in effect throughout the academic year. If there is no proof of current coverage, a policy provided by the University is available. Attendance at Orientation is mandatory for all incoming first-year students.

### **TUITION AND FEES**

By action of the Board of Trustees, PA tuition and fees for the 2011-2012 academic year (subject to change) are as follows:

\$32,370	Tuition, Annual For PA applicants accepted at Western University, an entrance fee of \$500 payable upon acceptance is applied to tuition.
\$40	Student Body Fee, 1 <sup>st</sup> year. Covers student council expenditures, social activities and public relations
\$20	Student Body Fee, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year

### **Other Fees and Expenses**

\$1900	Required and Recommended Texts
\$45	Uniform Jacket/Patch, Name Badge
\$1200	Diagnostic Equipment Kit
\$60	Criminal Background Investigation (approx.)
\$40	Drug Screen (approx.)
\$30	(per day) Late Registration Fee
\$300	Graduation Fee (assessed on candidates for graduation only)
\$400	(annual) Western University Parking Permit Fee
\$40	Lost Mail Locker Key
\$6	(each) Copy of Official Transcript
\$21	(each) Rush Transcript, First Class Mail
\$25	(each) Rush Transcript, Federal Express
\$10	Lost ID Badge
\$0.25 (replacement cost)	(per page) Copy of Student File Material Breakage Fee

The Department of Physician Assistant Education requires that each PA student purchase a classroom audience response system from the University Bookstore. Individual responders must be registered to only one (1) student. Classroom responders are electronic devices that will be used to enhance interactive learning in classrooms. The device will enable faculty to gauge student understanding of concepts, introduce more innovative teaching and assessment methods, improve student involvement in learning, and facilitate classroom learning to become more dynamic. The responders will also be used to administer and score assessments. Therefore, PA students are also required to bring responders to each class.

### **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Academic Advisement**

Students will be assigned a faculty advisor by the Dean or the Dean's representative upon matriculation. Advisement by faculty should be viewed by the student as a part of the academic process. The student or faculty member may seek a change of advisor/advisee. This request should be made to the Chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Education. It is the student's responsibility to meet periodically with his/her advisor. A student on probation must meet with his/her faculty advisor at least once a month.

#### **Promotion**

A student's progress through the program is based upon successful completion of expected competencies and demonstration of expected professional behaviors and attitudes. At the completion of each phase of the program, before the student is allowed to progress to the next phase, the student's record of achievement is reviewed by the Program Chair and faculty.

The faculty determines if the student has demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be eligible to progress to the next phase.

In special instances, the faculty may be convened at other than the scheduled times to consider cases relating to unusual circumstances, such as probation or dismissal.

Promotion is defined as progression from one academic semester or phase to the next.

- a. A student may not be recommended for progression from one semester or phase to the next with any outstanding grades of “I”, “U” or “NCR” on his/her academic record or with a semester grade point average of 2.75 or less. Grades of “U” or “NCR” must be appropriately remediated before progression to the next semester or phase (see section entitled **Remediation**).
- b. When considering a student for promotion, professional, ethical, and personal conduct may also be taken into consideration (as described under Probation, a-5).
- c. A student will be promoted provided that all legal and financial requirements of the University as stated in the University Catalogue have been satisfied.

### **Graduation**

A student will be recommended for the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Degree provided he/she:

- a. has completed at least two years of the Western University Primary Care PA program.
- b. has been enrolled in the Western University Primary Care PA program during his/her final academic year.
- c. is not on probation and has completed all prescribed academic and clinical requirements with a cumulative grade point average of above 2.75 and has no outstanding grade of “I,” “NCR,” or “U”.
- d. has demonstrated no serious deficiencies in ethical, professional, or personal conduct, as defined in Probation guidelines, which would make it inappropriate to award the degree of Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies.
- e. has complied with all the legal and financial requirements of the University as stated in the University Catalogue.
- f. has attended in person and participated in the Commencement program at which time the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree is conferred, unless special permission is received from the President. If the President grants special permission to be excused from graduation, the graduate may be required to present himself or herself to the Department Chair at a later date in order to take the required oath (if relevant) to receive his or her degree.
- g. is within four (4) clinical rotations of completion of all requirements for graduation to be able to march with his or her class in the graduation ceremony. At the discretion of the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions, an exception may be made for a student with an authorized leave during the Senior year. No student will receive his or her degree until the student has completed all requirements for graduation. Degrees will be dated as appropriate to completion date.

### **Probation**

a. Probation is defined as a period of time specified by the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions during which the student’s progress will be closely monitored by the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee, faculty advisor and the Department Chair. In order to closely monitor 2<sup>nd</sup> year students on probation, the PA program reserves the right to assign their clinical rotations. A student will be recommended for probation and asked to appear at a Student Academic Progress Committee (SAPC) meeting for any of the following reasons:

1. For first year students, achieving a cumulative score of less than 70% in three or more courses at the end of the first nine weeks of the curriculum.
2. Immediately upon receiving a course grade of “U” or “NCR” in any course.
3. A grade point average of 2.75 or less.
4. When directed to repeat a year for academic reasons.
5. Seriously deficient ethical, professional or personal conduct. The Department of Physician Assistant Education Chair may render a written recommendation, or invoke the College Conduct Committee to render a recommendation, to the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions regarding any student whose professional or personal conduct is deemed unsatisfactory. Professional and personal conduct includes, but is not limited to, attendance, cooperation with faculty, interest shown in assigned work, attitude toward fellow students and associates and toward personnel of hospitals, approach to and interaction with patients, as well as personal appearance appropriate to the circumstances.

The terms of probation for ethical, professional, or personal conduct will be specified at the time the student is placed on probation.

- b.** When a student is placed on probation, he/she will be notified in writing by the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions and the reasons will be stated. The written notification will be sent via certified mail, email with receipt confirmation, or hand delivered and acknowledged by signatures of the student and the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions or his/her designee. Copies of the letter will be placed in the student's permanent file and distributed to the Chairman of the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee and the student's faculty advisor. The Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee will ascertain when the terms of the probation have been satisfied and recommend to the Dean that probation can be rescinded.
- c.** A student on probation may not serve as an officer of any official University club or organization and shall not engage in time-consuming extracurricular activities.
- d.** A 1st year student on probation must meet with his/her faculty advisor at least once a month. A 2nd year student on probation must contact his/her Faculty Advisor once a month.
- e.** Students are removed from probation when the following occur:
  - 1. At the end of the first semester of the first year provided that he/she has attained a grade point average of greater than 2.75.
  - 2. After one semester, provided he/she has regained both a semester and cumulative grade point average of greater than 2.75.
  - 3. When all "U" or "NCR" grades have been satisfactorily remediated according to the Remediation section of the Catalog (below).
  - 4. When the specified terms of probation for ethical, professional or personal conduct are met.
  - 5. When 2<sup>nd</sup> year students are on probation for a clinical rotation grade of "U", they will be removed from probation when they have met the terms of their probation.

### **Remediation**

- a.** Every effort will be made to give each student ample opportunity to demonstrate competency in each area of the academic program. However, remediation is to be regarded as a privilege that must be earned by a student through an active participation in the educational program as demonstrated by regular attendance, individual initiative, and utilization of resources available to him/her.
- b.** If a student receives a "U" or "NCR" grade in a course or has a semester grade point average or cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or less, that student will be reviewed by the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee and procedures for remediation by the Physician Assistant faculty will be recommended to the SAPC, who in turn makes a recommendation to the Dean. In reviewing the student's academic deficiencies, the following guidelines shall be used:
  - 1. Educational objectives underlie remedial teaching and evaluation should be the same as the educational objectives that underlie regular courses in the curriculum. Where deemed appropriate, the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee, after consultation with the course instructor and/or Physician Assistant Faculty, may recommend one or a combination of the following options:
    - (a) Take a comprehensive examination (this option is not available if the student's final point score for a course is below 65%).
    - (b) Repeat the course, with or without promotion into the subsequent semester. The student cannot start Phase II (clinical) or Phase III until the grade of "U" has been remediated.
    - (c) Repeat the academic year.
    - (d) Dismissal from the University (see *Dismissal* section for criteria for this option).
  - 2. Students receiving a "U" grade for a clinical rotation education/preceptorship will repeat the entire rotation/preceptorship. The above a-d options do not apply to clinical education. Students will not be allowed to advance to Phase III (Advanced Clinical Preceptorship) until all deficient clinical rotation education grades are completed/remediated. Remediation will delay the student's progress to preceptorship and extend the program completion date.
  - 3. The grade achieved by remediation will be the grade recorded EXCEPT that the highest grade a student may earn by options (a) is a grade of "C" or "CR". The grade achieved by remediation will be recorded on the transcript beneath the original grade.
  - 4. Grades earned during an attempted remediation of a course will be reviewed critically by the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee and the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions. Failure to earn at least a "C" or "CR" grade may result in dismissal from the University or repeating the course.

5. Decisions regarding remediation will be made on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances in each case. The decision will be made by the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions Education, based upon the recommendation of the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee. The Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee will base its recommendation on the student's academic record and considerations after consultation with the Physician Assistant Faculty Student Advisor, course instructor, and the student.

6. Any student who is required to remediate a course will be notified in writing by the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions Education at least two weeks prior to the remediation date (or within two weeks after the close of the academic year in which the student is presently enrolled, whichever comes first). Notification must be by certified mail, email with receipt confirmation, or hand-delivered to the student and must be acknowledged with the signatures of the Dean of the School of Allied Health Professions, or his/her designee, and the student.

c. Students who have been required by the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions to repeat a course(s) due to unsatisfactory grades (GPA) or in cases where there is a satisfactory GPA, but deficiencies are noted which impede promotion, the following criteria must be met to be eligible for financial aid:

1. Full-time attendance recorded
2. Placed on at least one semester probation
3. Must be tested and graded
4. Close monitoring

It is the student's choice if he/she has made satisfactory progress such as GPA, but wants to audit only to strengthen skills, as long as he/she is fully aware he/she will not be eligible to apply for any financial aid. Students will be financially responsible for themselves until promoted by the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions.

### **Remediation: Financial Aid Policy**

If the student, at the end of the academic year, is still considered to be making unsatisfactory progress and must remediate, he/she is removed from the list of Title IV and Title VII financial aid recipients. See the Overview section of the Catalog for further information.

### **Tutorial Assistance Program**

A Tutorial Assistance Program (TAP) has been established to assist students experiencing academic difficulty. Students will be recommended for this program by a faculty advisor or professor. Students may self-identify to TAP to receive assistance. The tutors will be chosen on the recommendation of the faculty in each discipline. Group tutoring is the methodology most used by the TAP department. For assistance, contact the Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Office.

### **Standards of Academic Progress**

Good academic standing implies that a student has not been requested to withdraw and is not under academic probation/suspension.

Academic performance encompasses those areas of knowledge and skills outlined in the section entitled "Program Goals". Students are expected to attain these goals as they progress through the Program.

All grading and evaluation is based on the student's ability to attain the competencies within the objectives outlined for each area of study.

A student whose performance falls below the minimum acceptable standard(s) for any area of study will be notified of such deficiency by the instructor of the course as soon as evidence of such sub-standard performance is available.

The following academic standards apply to students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program. Academic performance is considered sub-standard and unacceptable if any one or more of these standards are not met:

**a. Phase I:**

During Phase I (Didactic Phase), students must earn a minimum grade of "C" or "CR" in each course.

All "U's" and "NCR's" will be remediated (see Remediation Section). If a remediated grade of "C" or "CR" is not earned, the student may be dismissed or be required to repeat the entire course of study.

Students must maintain a GPA of greater than 2.75 during Phase I. In addition, the following applies regarding cumulative GPA:

1. Students whose GPA is 2.75 or less must meet with their mentor at least monthly.
2. Students whose GPA is 2.75 or less are not eligible for further registration unless probationary status is granted by the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions Education.
3. Students will not be allowed to advance to Phase II (clinical education) until all deficient grades are remediated.
4. First year students who receive a "U" or "NCR" in any course may only advance from one semester to the next with special consent from the Chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Education.

**b. Phase II (Didactic and Clinical):**

Didactic: Senior Seminar I, II and III and Applied Clinical Project Courses

1. In Senior Seminar I and II, a grade of "C" or better must be earned. Clinical rotations may be reassigned by the Clinical Education Coordinator to assist the student academically if the student receives a grade of "C" or less.
2. If a student receives a "U" in Senior Seminar I, he/she must repeat the course; however, the student is allowed to progress to Senior Seminar II. If the Student receives a "U" in Senior Seminar II, he/she must repeat the course, and he/she will not be able to advance to Phase III.
3. If a student receives a "U" in Senior Seminar III, he/she must remediate the grade.
4. If a student receives a "NCR" in Applied Clinical Project I, II or III, the grade must be remediated.

**c. Clinical: Clinical Education Phase II and Phase III**

Students' progress through the program is based upon successful completion of expected competencies and demonstration of expected professional behaviors and attitudes. If students fail to meet the pre-designated clinical objectives, their academic achievements will be reviewed by the PA faculty. The faculty and preceptors determine if students have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be eligible for progress to the next phase. Upon eligibility, the faculty recommends advancement to the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee.

If a student receives a grade of "U" in Phase II clinicals, he/she must repeat the rotation before advancing to Phase III. Clinical rotations may be assigned by the Clinical Education Coordinator.

The Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee and the Professional Conduct Committee may be convened to consider cases relating to unusual circumstances.

### **Out-of-Area Clinical Education**

Clinical Education that is greater than 60 miles in any direction from Western University, Pomona Campus, is considered an out-of-area rotation clinical education. Permission for out-of-area rotations is granted by the Clinical Education Coordinators and the PA Faculty.

To participate in out-of-area rotations, students must:

- Have a computer with internet access.
- Exemplify ethical and professional behavior throughout their didactic and clinical rotations phase.
- Have a GPA of 3.0 at the time of rotation scheduling and maintain a semester and cumulative GPA of 3.0 for the entire program.
- Receive a "B" or better on all preceptor assigned grades and maintain a "B" or better in Senior Seminars I, II, and III.
- Have a 3.5 cumulative/semester GPA at the time of clinical education scheduling to participate in out of area rotations during the first and second months and the student will be returning to within the 60 miles radius by the third month of rotations.
- Provide the Clinical Education Coordinators with transportation and room and board for out-of-area site visits.
- Have confirmation of housing and travel arrangements available to the clinical coordinators at the time of scheduling.

The Clinical Education Coordinator has the right to reassign rotations if the preceding criteria are not met.

### **Clinical Rotation Education Assignment**

Clinical rotations will be assigned by the clinical coordinator(s) for students with semester or cumulative GPAs less than 3.0. The clinical coordinator(s) may seek input regarding rotation assignments from the PA faculty and/or chair. The student will meet with the clinical coordinator for their scheduling appointment to discuss the rotation assignments. If a student is successful in raising his or her semester and cumulative GPA to a 3.0 at the end of a semester, the clinical coordinator(s) will attempt to reschedule the rotations(s) if requested by the student, pending site availability. Students requesting to reschedule rotations based upon an improved GPA must follow the procedures outlined in the section entitled **Clinical Rotation Education Assignment Appeal** (below).

### **Clinical Rotation Education Assignment Appeal**

A change in clinical rotation education assignment may be requested in writing by the student for the following reasons:

- a. After completing one week in the rotation, the student deems the rotation is not of high quality.
- b. The student is requesting a change in a clinical rotation assignment for a specific month under a preceptor not affiliated with the PA Program.
- c. The student is being used to substitute for regular clinical or administrative staff.

Completed paperwork requesting an upcoming rotation change must be submitted to the Clinical Education Coordinators 60 days before the rotation is scheduled to begin. The student will be notified of the approval/non-approval of the request within 24 hours.

### **Reassignment of Clinical Rotation Education**

Any student who receives one or more "C's" on a preceptor assigned grade for the clinical rotation or receives a "C" grade in any Senior Seminar Course, may have the remainder of their clinical rotations reassigned by the Clinical Education Coordinators to more closely monitor clinical development and academic performance.

### **Rotational Clinical Education Observation**

Any student who has been "deemed unsafe" may be placed in an observational mode for the remainder of his/her rotation. A student may be placed in observation mode for one month only, then summary suspension may occur. Summary suspension may be implemented instead of observation mode.

### **Personal Appearance**

Personal appearance is extremely important in facilitating acceptance by other health professionals and patients. The poor appearance of one individual is often generalized to the entire profession. Adherence to the following dress code is, therefore, the responsibility of each student while in clinical training.

- a. Physician Assistant Program name tags/badges are to be worn at all times while on campus, and at clinical rotation education sites.
- b. Short white "intern" type jackets are required at all times, beginning with Phase II of the curriculum.
- c. Female students may wear slacks or other appropriate dress. Modesty must be a consideration for necklines and hemlines.
- d. Shirt and tie are considered appropriate dress for male students when they are present in a setting where patient contact can be expected. Students must receive the approval of the supervising practitioner to wear "scrubs" during the rotation. The white coat must be worn over scrubs except while in the surgical suite.
- e. "Blue jeans" are NOT appropriate dress for either male or female students during the clinical phases.
- f. "Tennis Shoes", "Joggers", and other forms of athletic shoes are NOT considered appropriate attire.
- g. Students should consider the image projected to the patient and others with regard to hairstyle and length, beards, mustaches and jewelry.

### **Professional Conduct During Clinical Education**

Professional and personal conduct includes, but is not limited to attendance, cooperation with preceptors, interest shown in assigned work, attitude toward fellow students, associates and personnel of hospitals and approach to and interaction with patients.

- Students will introduce themselves as physician assistant students.

- Students will wear their Western University identifying nametags when in a clinical setting at all times.
- Students will be able to explain what a PA is concisely and confidently to patient(s) and staff.
- Students who introduce themselves as a physician are subject to dismissal from the program.
- Students will not engage in any activity that may be construed as being unethical, immoral or inconsistent with the practice of medicine.

Students breaching the Professional Conduct Policy will go through the following process:

The student will be required to have a student conference with the Department Chair and/or Clinical Education Coordinators. The breach of conduct will be investigated and the student will be notified of the results of the investigation. A verbal warning may be issued and/or a letter of unprofessional conduct may be placed in the student's file. A student may be placed in observational mode by the Department Chair during the investigation, or may request that the student be summarily suspended during the investigation.

### **Academic Warning (Probation)**

The student who demonstrates unacceptable performance in any unit of study during any phase of the program is notified of such performance by the Instructor of the course or Program Chair as soon as it becomes evident. He/she is notified that continued poor academic performance can lead to academic probation and dismissal.

Students whose performance is considered unacceptable as a result of not meeting the Standards of Academic Progress will be placed on probation. The duration and conditions of the probationary period will be recommended to the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions on an individual basis by the Allied Health Student Academic Progress Committee. The Committee may recommend remedial study and/or repetition of a unit of study. This may result in extending the length of the program beyond 24 months. See, also, section on Probation, in the *General Academic Policies and Procedures* section for the University.

### **Attendance/Absences**

Attendance is expected for all lectures, classes, and academic-related activities. The individual faculty members will make their own policy about attendance in their syllabus. It is required that students observe the following policy:

#### **a. Absences**

1. All unanticipated absences due to illness, accident, or other unexpected events must be reported to the program within 24 hours.
2. Absences requested for physician/dentist appointments for student or dependents will be considered only if requested in advance of the appointment. Due to the intense nature of the curriculum, students are strongly encouraged to schedule appointments for evening and Saturday hours to avoid class conflicts.
3. All anticipated absences for any reason, regardless of length, must have the prior approval by the faculty.  
All requests for anticipated absences must be submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed absence. Requests will be considered on an individual basis and written notification of approval or disapproval will be provided to the student within one week of receipt of request.
4. Students in clinical education/preceptorship are responsible for notifying both their supervising physician(s), and the Physician Assistant program, regarding all absences whether anticipated or unanticipated. Prolonged absences require notification each day to preceptors and the program. All time missed on a rotation due to an anticipated or unanticipated absence must be made up.
5. When an absence is the result of a sudden unavoidable circumstance, the program should be notified as soon as possible and provided with an explanation for the absence.
6. Clinical rotation education/preceptorship absences and tardies will be made up at the convenience of the preceptor or the program.
7. Five or more absences from a clinical rotation education can result in any of the following:
  - (a) repeat the entire rotation
  - (b) make up days assigned at the convenience of the preceptor
  - (c) grade of Incomplete assigned

### **Confidentiality of Medical Record and Health History Information**

All data gathered about the patient and his/her illness, including all items within a patient's medical history is privileged information.

- a. Students should not discuss a patient's records in a manner or a situation that would reveal any information about that patient or his/her records to persons not involved in his/her health care.
- b. Charts or contents, e.g., lab reports, etc., are not to be removed from the hospital or clinical setting.

### **Patient Records - Physician Review and Countersignature**

On each clinical rotation education, it is the student's responsibility to insure that ALL patients seen by the student are also seen by the supervising practitioner. The supervising practitioner should also review all student notes written in medical records and countersign these documents. Countersignatures should be obtained before the patient is released on outpatient and inpatient rotations.

Under no circumstances should a student initiate orders for any patient on any clinical educational rotation without immediate physician consultation and countersignature. In addition, under no circumstances should a student sign medical drug orders.

Under no circumstances should a student accept samples from pharmaceutical representatives on behalf of the preceptor or himself.

These guidelines must be strictly adhered to for the student's protection and the protection of the patients seen by students. Violations of these policies are viewed as transgressions in professional and/or academic standards.

Falsifying a patient's exam findings or record is considered a breach of professional conduct.

### **Title Identification/Representation**

Role and title confusion are common problems encountered in dealing with patients, e.g., some patients identify all those wearing short white coats as physicians. Students should be aware of this problem and avoid misrepresentation by politely explaining their role and position.

- a. In professional interactions with patients and others, a student should introduce himself or herself as a "physician assistant student" using the title of Mr. or Miss, Mrs., or Ms.
- b. Students should use the designation, "P.A.-Student" (PA-S), following all notations in charts, records, and other medical forms.

### **Dismissal Recommendations**

A student may be subject to dismissal from the program for substandard academic or professional performance, as follows:

- a. Students who earn two or more unacceptable grades ("U's" or "NCR's") throughout the 24-month program may be dismissed from the program.
- b. Attaining a semester GPA of 2.75 or less for two or more semesters.
- c. Lack of professional attributes considered appropriate for continuance in the program and profession.
- d. Any event that could result in either academic or professional probation for a student currently on academic or professional probation.
- e. Violation of the terms of probation.
- f. Presenting him/herself as a physician.
- g. Failing to complete the PA Program in the maximum 36 months from initial matriculation. Usual program completion is 24 months from initial matriculation.

### **Student Behavior During Examinations**

- a. Students are not to communicate in any way during the examination and are to face the front of the classroom at all times.
- b. During scheduled examination hours, students are highly discouraged from going to the bathroom, but will be allowed to go one at a time. The student will be required to turn in the exam and scantron sheet as he/she goes to the bathroom.
- c. Once a student finishes an exam, the student will turn in the exam and the scantron form to the proctor, and after he/she leaves the examination room, he/she will not be permitted to re-enter the room until the exam is declared over.
- d. All students' belongings, i.e., notebooks, calculators, and headsets, etc., will be kept in front of the room.
- e. Questions will be answered at the discretion of the proctor during the examination period. Students should be permitted to point out typographical or other errors present in the examination to the proctor.
- f. Alternate seating shall be utilized for all examinations unless precluded by space availability.
- g. Students are not to communicate in any way during the examination.

- h.** Students are not to look at any other student's examination paper, and are to face the front of the classroom at all times. All pagers, cellular phones, etc. are to be turned to vibrate mode
- i.** Violations of these examination policies and of Standards of Academic and Social Conduct will be brought before the Student Conduct Committee.
- j.** The course instructor sets the date of assignments, midterms, and final examination. All tests and assignments are to be taken as indicated in the course syllabus. Examination dates can only be changed by the instructor after reviewed and approved by the department chair.

### **Evaluation and Grading**

**a. General:** Competency is expected of all program graduates upon completion of the professional curriculum as defined by the "Program Goals". The curricular components of the program are designed so that students' work toward achievement of these competencies is measured via written and practical examinations and by evaluations of clinical performance and professional development. Specific behavioral objectives have been defined for each curricular component to assist the student and the program faculty in evaluating the degree of attainment of these expected competencies throughout the 24-month curriculum.

**b. Evaluation Methods:** Overall student performance is evaluated using one or a combination of the following methods:

1. **Written examinations:** Written examinations will vary based on the content of the individual course. A combination of single answer multiple choice, matching, True/False, short answer, essay and patient management type questions are used.
2. **Practical or Laboratory Examinations:** In selected courses, students will be observed obtaining histories or performing physical exam components on simulated patients. They may also be asked to "problem solve" based on a patient database. At times, they will be evaluated on their ability to perform laboratory tests.
3. **Student Presentations:** Students may be asked to orally present individual or group projects, patient cases, research papers, etc. These oral presentations may or may not be accompanied by a written report.
4. **Written reports:** At various times, students will be evaluated on written reports of assigned topics, written histories, physicals, discharge summaries, research papers, etc.
5. **Professional Development Assessments:** Assessments of each student's academic, professional and interpersonal growth and development are shared with them on an individual basis periodically during each phase of training.
6. **Clinical Evaluations:** Supervising preceptors are asked to assess the student's level of attainment of competencies related to selected parameters within the domains of knowledge, skills and attitudes, and to evaluate the student's overall performance while on clerkship. Evaluation forms, which incorporate these areas to be evaluated, are utilized.

Students are responsible for securing these evaluations from the supervising preceptor(s) on each rotation and ensuring that they are completed and returned to the program office in a timely fashion. Preceptors are encouraged to discuss the student's performance and progress throughout the rotation with him/her and to discuss the final evaluation prior to completion of the rotation.

Since the clinical evaluation is an essential part of the overall assessment of the student's performance on a given rotation, course grades will not be computed without it. Students who fail to obtain clinical evaluations prior to the end of the respective clinical rotation will be given a grade of incomplete "I" for that clinical course. Courses with incomplete grades must be completed prior to advancing to preceptorship (Phase III).

Clinical evaluation forms become a part of the student's academic profile record. Students are urged to sign each evaluation and are encouraged to sign at the time the evaluation is discussed with the supervising preceptor. Students are provided copies of all their clinical evaluations when these are submitted by the preceptor to the program.

7. **Patient Write-ups:** Students on clinical rotations are required to submit a minimum of one patient write-up each month in the S.O.A.P. format. The chosen case must represent conditions listed in the objectives for each module. The write-ups are due in the PA Program Office on or before the last day of the clinical rotation.

8. **Literature Review:** Students can be requested to review current literature and complete a critique. The critique will be evaluated on content, validity, clarity and clinical relevance.

9. Final Comprehensive Examination: A comprehensive examination is administered during the Senior Seminar III and serves as a summative examination. This examination evaluates the student's accumulated knowledge, skills and attitudes while familiarizing him/her with the format of the certification examination. Like the NCCPA certification examination, this examination consists of a written multiple choice exam including questions on clinical skills competency.

10. Grade Reports: Official grades are turned in to the Registrar from the Dean of Allied Health Professions, at which time the online student records system, BanWeb, is updated. Official grade reports and unofficial transcripts will be available on the BanWeb student records systems throughout the academic year. For more information on how to access the BanWeb student records system, visit the Registrar's website at <http://www.westernu.edu/registrar>.

Due to the nature of the clinical curriculum, i.e., variable duration and sequencing of clinical education courses, course completion dates rarely coincide with traditional grading periods.

In these cases when final grades are not available at grade reporting time beyond the control of the student and/or program, a grade of "M" is submitted to the Registrar in lieu of the course clinical education grade. "M" grades are entered on the grade reports and are converted to student achieved grades at the earliest possible opportunity.

An up-to-date summary of student performance is maintained in the Program Office Files and is available to each student for his/her review.

11. Review of Examinations: Examinations are graded no later than on working week after examination administration, and one examination is kept on file for student review for five (5) working days after the grade has been computed.

12. Grading Scale: Final course grades are given based upon the traditional 4-point letter system, as follows:

Grade		Points
A	90% - 100%	4
B	80% - 89%	3
C	70% - 79%	2
U	Less than 69%	0
CR/NCR		0
I	Incomplete	0
M	Missing	0
W	Withdrawal	0

13. Clinical Rotation Education Grading Criteria: The Clinical Education grade is based on the student's singular performance as assessed by the preceptor, the student's participation and rotation exam.

### **Appealing a Course Grade**

No course grade will be changed unless the instructor or department chair certifies in writing to the Registrar that an error in computing or recording the grade occurred. If the student believes there is just cause to dispute a grade for a course, the procedure is as follows:

Within five (5) days of receipt of the course grade, make an appointment to talk to the course instructor(s) who issued the grade. Upon written request from the student, the course instructor(s) shall review the case with the student and a decision shall be made by the course instructor to affirm or modify the grade. Within ten (10) working days of the student's written request, the course instructor shall notify the student in writing of the decision. A copy of the letter shall be sent to the student and the Department Chair of the PA program.

Within five (5) working days following written notification to the student regarding the instructor's decision, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the PA Department Chairperson. The appeal request must be accompanied by a narrative explaining the basis of the appeal. The narrative should fully explain the student's situation and substantiate the reason(s) for advocating a reversal of the instructor's prior decision. The PA Department Chairperson may grant an appeal only if a claim of (1) bias, (2) the appearance of new material and documentable evidence that was not available at the time of the instructor's decision, or (3) procedural error that unfairly affected the decision-making process is substantiated by the PA Department Chairperson. Upon written request from the student with a valid appeal rationale, the PA Program Chairperson shall review the case and within seven (7) working days shall issue a decision in writing to the student, which may affirm, modify, or reverse the previous action. A copy of that decision will be provided to the instructor. The Chairperson's

decision is final in all course grade appeals (didactic and clinical), except when the Chairperson is also the official instructor of the course in question. In such a case, the student will direct his or her appeal to the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions, following the same guidelines for an appeal to the Chairperson. Also in such a case, the decision of the Dean is final.

The student may remain in class or on clinical rotations pending the outcome of appeals, except in cases of summary suspension or when the Provost/COO or the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions has suspended the student or has otherwise determined that it is inappropriate for the student to remain in class or participate in clinical rotations.

### **Appealing a Clinical Education Grade**

Any student who has a dispute with a grade that was assigned by their clinical preceptor, will utilize the following appeal process:

Contact the Clinical Education Coordinators, and notify them in writing of their concerns in reference to their clinical performance grade.

The Clinical Education Coordinators will contact the preceptor to schedule a meeting to discuss the student's grade. The grade may or may not be re-assigned contingent upon the information that is gathered by the Clinical Education Coordinators. The Clinical Education Coordinator will provide the student with a written decision of the outcome of this review within fourteen (14) working days of the student request. The decision of the Clinical Education Coordinators may be appealed following the procedure for Grade Appeals as described above.

### **Communications: Lockers, e-mail, mail**

**Lockers:** To improve the communication network and to foster student-staff and student-student interchanges, lockers are located in the Health Sciences Center Student Commons. Students are expected to follow the guidelines below in checking their lockers and will be held accountable for absences at activities announced via the locker system. In the event that time constraints necessitate quick dispersal of information, the program will disseminate this information via e-mail or through telephone communication.

- a. Each student will be assigned one locker.
- b. During any portion of the program for which the student is present in the Physician Assistant Program on a daily basis, i.e., lecture series, he/she should check his locker and e-mail daily.
- c. During Phase I of the program, each student should check his/her locker daily and electronic mail once each morning and evening.
- d. During Phase II & III of the program, correspondence from the program will be mailed to the student either traditional mail or electronic mail.
- e. During any portion of the program for which the student is out of town, e.g., remote clinical site, holidays, correspondence from the program will be mailed or electronically mailed to the student.

**Telephone:**

- a. During the course of the program, it is frequently necessary for members of the program staff to contact students regarding scheduling and re-scheduling of classes, meetings, and other program events, etc. Each class is responsible for developing a telephone communication network to include names and home phone numbers for each member of the class. This "chaining" is utilized to communicate last minute changes, announcements, etc. Each student is responsible for advising the program departmental secretary of telephone number changes as soon as they occur.
- b. Use of the program telephones is allowed only in emergency situations or with special permission from the program faculty or staff; students are not to make or receive personal calls on the office telephones.
- c. Pagers and cell phones must be in silent/vibrate mode during all class times and examinations.

**E-mail:**

All students will be assigned an e-mail account by the Office of Student Affairs. The PA program heavily relies on e-mail as a form of communication to students. It is essential for students to check their e-mail accounts daily.

### **Issues/Dispute Resolution Procedure**

When an issue or dispute arises between students, the issue/dispute resolution process starts with communication among the involved students. If a satisfactory resolution is not arrived at that level, the matter should then be addressed with the course instructor or the faculty advisor. If the problem is not resolved at the

faculty advisor/course instructor level, the matter should be brought to the Department Chair, followed by the Dean and then the Provost/COO. If the matter has not been resolved at those levels, the final arbiter is the President.

When an incident arises involving a faculty member, the first step in the issue/dispute resolution process is discussion with the faculty member. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at that level, then the matter should be referred to the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost/COO, in that order. The final arbiter is the President.

When an incident arises involving a staff member, the dispute resolution process begins with the Department Chair, followed by the Dean. The Office of Human Relations is the final arbiter.

Failure to follow this sequence of steps will only serve to delay the appropriate resolution of the issue or dispute as the matter will only be referred back to the correct level in this chain of responsibility.

### **Returning from Leave of Absence While in Phase II or Phase III**

A student returning from a leave of absence of 3 months or more is required to complete one ½ day review session (arranged by the clinical education department). The review session must be completed successfully before continuing with clinical education.

Student must:

- a. Demonstrate proficiency performing
  1. Complete Physical Exam
  2. POP with a SOAP Note
- b. Review the following topics:
  - Universal Precautions
  - Sterile Techniques

A second session may be scheduled if deficiencies are noted by the faculty.

### **Children in the Classroom/Labs**

The PA classroom is an environment for enhanced learning and should be free from unnecessary distraction. For this reason, children are not permitted in the classroom during examinations, no exceptions.

During the Pediatrics Course children will be invited to class to participate in the pediatric workshop.

### **Additional PA Program Education Requirements:**

All students are required to have a computer with internet access. Course assignments will be given that necessitate access to a computer and the Internet.

All students are required to participate as practice partners in physical examinations and clinical skills activities. This role necessitates the modest exposure of certain body parts such as the head, face, neck, torso, and extremities. At no time will breasts or genitalia be exposed or examined. Students are expected to practice exams on other students. Similarly, students are expected to be mock patients receiving physical examinations. The course instructor will randomly assign practice partners. Female/male pairing as practice partners is expected, and such pairings can only be changed in special circumstances as deemed appropriate by the PA Program Chair.

To meet State regulations and hospital accreditation requirements, health care facilities are requiring students to complete criminal background checks and urine drug screenings prior to beginning rotations/clinical experiences. Because of these regulations, designed to assure patient safety, students admitted to the PA program will be required to complete a criminal background check prior to clinical rotations. Certain convictions may prevent students from entering hospital facilities, which may hinder a student's ability to complete the PA Program successfully. If a criminal conviction or other relevant sanction is shown on the background check, hospital facilities have discretion as to whether the individual may enter the clinical facility as a student.

Certain convictions may also prevent students from obtaining licensure as a PA in the State of California or other states. Applicants and current students are advised to check with the appropriate State licensing board to determine whether their backgrounds may be a barrier to future licensing. Procedures for obtaining a background investigation and the costs to the student are available from the PA Clinical Education staff.

### **Student Academic Progress Committee**

- a. The Student Academic Progress Committee is comprised of department chairs and faculty members of the College of Allied Health Professions.

- b. Each year, the Student Academic Progress Committee shall periodically review the academic achievements and the performance of all students. The names and grades of students in academic difficulty shall be made available to the Student Academic Progress Committee by the department chairs and faculty members. Upon request by the Dean, College of Allied Health Professions, the Student Academic Progress Committee will investigate and make recommendations to the Dean regarding allegations of student misconduct.
- c. After reviewing the student's achievement and performance records, the Student Academic Progress Committee may recommend to the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions any of the following courses of action for a student: promotion, probation, remediation, dismissal from the College, psychological and educational assessment and recommendation, or no action.
- d. The Student Academic Progress Committee also has the responsibility of recommending to the faculty, as a whole, the awarding of the Master of Science degree upon satisfactory completion of all requirements for graduation as stated in the University Catalogue.
- e. All recommendations of the Student Academic Progress Committee shall be in writing to the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions, who will make the information available to the student.

### **Student Conduct Committee**

The College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP) Student Conduct Committee (SCC) consists of three elected CAHP faculty members, one appointed faculty member from outside the CAHP, and as ex-officio, non-voting members the Vice President of Student Affairs/designee and the University legal counsel.

Upon accepting admission to the University, each student agrees to abide by basic standards of academic integrity, professional and ethical behavior. The student is responsible to read and abide by the terms of the University Catalog.

The standards for student professional conduct require honesty and accountability in the educational process of professional development. Alleged violation(s) include, but are not limited to academic dishonesty, unprofessional conduct, illegal acts, and failure to comply with University, College and Department regulations.

Upon witnessing or becoming aware of violation(s) of professional conduct, a report will be generated by the witness and turned into the Department Chair. The report will include (1) the name and signature of the individual making the report, (2) the date, time and place of the alleged violation(s), (3) the name of the accused student, and (4) a description of the alleged violation(s). If the conduct involves a particular course or clinical experience, the classroom instructor or clinical instructor/preceptor will apprise the Department Chair of the incident. The Department Chair will meet with the student, the instructor of clinical coordinator, and/or the student's faculty advisor, individually or in a group, to discuss the nature of the alleged violation(s) that have been reported and the actions, if any, that the Department Chair intends to take.

The Department Chair may resolve minor infractions or refer the matter to the Dean. If the Department Chair resolves the matter, the Department chair will give written notification of the violation(s) and its resolution to the involved student, with copies to the SCC and the Dean.

Matters that cannot be resolved at the program level will be referred to the Dean for review. The matter may be resolved by the Dean, or the Dean may refer the case to the SCC for a hearing. The student may accept the Dean's resolution or request a hearing by the SCC. If the Dean resolves the matter, the Dean will provide written notification to the involved student of the violation(s) and its resolution, with copies to the SCC, Department Chair and the student's Faculty Advisor. A copy of the resolution will also be placed in the student's file.

The Dean or the student may request a hearing by the CAHP SCC. Because a violation may have serious consequences (which may include dismissal from the University), the University has implemented procedures intended to insure that the student is provided fair notice of any charges and is afforded a reasonable opportunity to present evidence on his or her behalf. Regardless of who requests the hearing, the Dean will provide written allegations to the SCC, with a copy to the involved student. The SCC will convene a hearing that follows the procedures outlined under University Policy A14.38.0.1), which may be accessed through BanWeb. While pending a resolution and decision by the Dean, the student's academic status will not be altered except for reasons of his/her physical and emotional well-being or for reasons relating to the safety of other students, University personnel, or patients. The University further reserves the right to withhold the awarding of any degree at any time disciplinary charges are pending against a student.

Following the SCC hearing, the final decision will be rendered by the dean, based upon input from the SCC, individual instructors, faculty and other appropriate committees. If the decision involves a change in the student's status to that of academic suspension or dismissal, the student may appeal that decision to the Provost,

following the procedures outlined in the Overview section of the Catalog. If a student is suspended for any reason, all financial aid granted to the student will be held until any appeal process is resolved by reinstatement or dismissal of the student.

Additional information about the University's Standards of Professional Conduct and the hearing and appeal process is contained in the Overview Section of the University catalog. Students may also contact the Vice President for Student Affairs for additional information regarding the appeal process.

## CURRICULUM ORGANIZATION

PREPARATORY PHASE (Optional preparatory course that is not part of the PA curriculum. A separate fee is assessed).

DO 5001 Summer Preparatory Program (0 credits, CR/NCR)

### PHASE I

#### First Semester

Course #	Title	Sem. Hours
PA5005	Medical Terminology	1 (CR/NCR)
PA5010	Structure & Function I	4
PA5020	Clinical Skills I	2
PA5030	Physical Assessment I	3
PA5040	Health Promotion/Disease Prevention I	3
PA5050	Introduction to Adult Medicine I	4
PA5060	Pharmacology and Therapeutics I	3
PA5070	Psychosocial Dynamics	3
PA5100	Pediatrics I	2
PA5170	Pathophysiology I	2
IPE 5000	Patient Centered Cases	1
Total		28

#### Second Semester

Course #	Title	Sem. Hours
PA5011	Structure & Function II	4
PA5021	Clinical Skills II	3
PA5031	Physical Assessment II	3
PA5041	Health Promotion & Disease Prevention II	2
PA5051	Introduction to Adult Medicine II	4
PA5061	Pharmacology and Therapeutics II	3
PA5101	Pediatrics II	2
PA5171	Pathophysiology II	2
HSCI5206	Research Methods II	3
IPE 5100	Patient Centered Cases	1
Total		27

#### Third Semester

Course #	Title	Sem. Hours
PA5110	OB/GYN	3
PA5120	Geriatrics	3
PA5130	Emergency Medicine	3
PA5140	Professional Roles & Responsibilities	2
PA5160	Health Care Delivery System	2
PA5180	Transitional Skills Seminar	1 (CR/NCR)
Total		14

## PHASE II

### Fourth Semester

Course #	Title	Sem. Hours
PA6020	Senior Seminar I	3
###	Clinical Rotations I (4)	12
PA6970	Applied Clinical Project I	1
Total		16

### Fifth Semester

Course #	Title	Sem. Hours
PA6030	Senior Seminar II	3
###	Clinical Rotations (4)	12
PA6980	Applied Clinical Project II	1
Total		16

## PHASE III

### Sixth Semester

Course #	Title	Sem. Hours
PA6040	Senior Seminar III	2
PA####	Clinical Rotations (3)	9
PA6990	Applied Clinical Project III	6
Total		17

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### **DO 5001 Summer Medical Sciences Preparatory Program (0 credit hours, CR/NCR, Optional)**

The Summer Preparatory Program prepares incoming students for the anatomy course and provides an introduction to biochemistry. The anatomy component focuses on the skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular and nervous systems, yet provides a brief overview of other body systems. It is designed for the student without prior coursework in anatomy. Acceptance into this program is at the discretion of the instructor/coordinator. The course is an elective and does not meet any requirements for graduation. A separate tuition of \$500 is charged.

### **PA 5005 Medical Terminology (1 credit hour, CR/NCR)**

This course is designed to provide a framework for building a comprehensive medical vocabulary. The basic techniques of medical word building will be used to enhance appropriate use and spelling of medical terms in oral and written presentations.

### **PA 5010 Structure and Function I (4 credit hours)**

An integration of sciences: anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry as they contribute to the understanding of clinical medicine. This course is correlated to the Introduction to Adult Medicine course.

### **PA 5011 Structure and Function II (4 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5010.

### **PA 5020 Clinical Skills I (2 credit hours)**

This practical course exposes the physician assistant student to basic clinical skills used in the primary care office. Skills include, but are not limited to, venipuncture, universal precautions, suturing, casting and sterile procedures.

### **PA 5021 Clinical Skills II (3 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5020.

**PA 5030 Physical Assessment I (3 credit hours)**

This course is designed to provide students with fundamental cognitive knowledge of interviewing, formulating write-ups and physical assessment techniques. Students also learn how to analysis data and the formulation of a therapeutic plan based on the health history, and physical examination. This course is correlated with the Introduction to Adult Medicine.

**PA 5031 Physical Assessment II (3 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5030.

**PA 5040 Health Promotion and Disease Prevention I (3 credit hours)**

This course stresses the principles of wellness including detailed discussions of nutrition, exercise, alcohol and tobacco as they relate to culturally diverse patient populations.

**PA 5041 Health Promotion and Disease Prevention II (2 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5040.

**PA 5050 Introduction to Adult Medicine I (4 credit hours)**

This course represents an introduction to clinical adult medical and surgical disorders as well as pathophysiology from a primary health care perspective. This course is correlated with structure and function, pharmacology, and physical assessment. It also incorporates signs, symptoms, differential diagnosis, laboratory diagnosis and treatment modalities for selected disciplines.

**PA 5051 Introduction of Adult Medicine II (4 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5050.

**PA 5060 Pharmacology and Therapeutics I (3 credit hours)**

This course stresses the principles of drug action and is correlated with the system orientation of the "Introduction to Adult Medicine." Current aspects of drug therapy are studied with particular emphasis on the activity.

**PA 5061 Pharmacology and Therapeutics II (3 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5060.

**PA 5070 Psychosocial Dynamics (3 credit hours)**

This course provides students with the necessary skills to diagnose and treat common mental health disorders seen in an ambulatory family practice population. It also provides the students with information that enable them to factor "humanity" into their assessment, diagnosis and intervention strategies. The course also includes modules on family structure and functioning, the dynamics of aging, death and dying, and human sexuality.

**PA 5100 Pediatrics I (2 credit hours)**

This course will provide the primary care physician assistant student with an introduction to the basic principles of pediatrics. This pediatric course will provide the students with the basic cognitive skills required to obtain and perform an appropriate newborn, pediatric and adolescent history and physical.

**PA 5101 Pediatrics II (2 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5100.

**PA 5110 Obstetrics/Gynecology (3 credit hours)**

This course is designed to introduce the PA student to the fundamental principles and practice of obstetrics and gynecology and the unique physical and emotional health care needs of female patients. Emphasis will be placed on the pathophysiology, etiology, management and prevention of clinical problems that transpire in a woman's life cycle from infancy through menopause. Students will also learn the essential details of the OB-GYN clinical evaluation and strategies in the diagnosis and treatment of common OB-GYN medical, surgical, and obstetric disorders of women.

**PA 5120 Geriatrics (3 credit hours)**

This course introduces the students to all aspects of geriatrics. The course provides a framework for common geriatric illness, diseases, diagnoses and treatment. It discusses normal and pathologic changes of aging. It explores health care financing for the elderly. Common ethical and legal issues in caring for the elderly are discussed.

**PA 5130 Emergency Medicine (3 credit hours)**

This course emphasizes assessment skills in emergency medicine. It would provide students with an overview of emergency medicine, history and physical examinations. The course will introduce current diagnosis and treatment for commonly encountered medical emergencies. The student should be able to develop a working knowledge and framework for the evaluation and treatment of common medical and surgical procedures.

**PA 5140 Professional Roles and Responsibilities (2 credit hours)**

This course examines the different professional roles that can be assumed by a physician assistant. Also included are discussions of the laws in which PA's are required to follow to practice medicine and the health care delivery system.

**PA 5160 Health Care Delivery Systems (2 credit hours)**

This course will introduce the student to the current models of health care delivery systems utilized within healthcare. It will also identify the roles of a PA within the current health care delivery systems.

**PA 5170 Pathophysiology I (2 credit hours)**

This course is designed to enhance student knowledge in recognizing and identifying pathophysiology states for specific disease processes. This course is correlated with the Introduction to Adult Medicine course.

**PA 5171 Pathophysiology II (2 credit hours)**

Continuation of PA 5170.

**PA 5180 Transitional Skills Seminar (1 credit hour, CR/NCR)**

This course assists the PA students' transition from the classroom to a clinical environment. Students will refine the skills necessary to complete clinical education rotations successfully.

**HSCI 5206 Research Methods II (3 credit hours)**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to a variety of research methodologies. Included will be historical studies, case studies, observational studies, the survey, quasi-experimental designs, and experimental designs. Generalizability issues and validity/reliability issues related to research are presented. HPE 5106 or its equivalent is a prerequisite for this course.

**PA 6020 Senior Seminar I (3 credit hours)**

Senior Seminar consists of a series of examinations and discussions. Clinical skill problems, case presentations, and problem oriented physical examinations are used as teaching tools to help the physician assistant student understand his/her role as a practicing PA.

**PA 6030 Senior Seminar II (3 credit hours)**

Senior Seminar II consists of a series of examinations and discussions. The purpose of the course is to further develop the physician assistant student's clinical skills and test-taking abilities.

**PA 6040 Senior Seminar III (2 credit hours)**

Senior Seminar III consists of a comprehensive examination and a problem oriented physical. The purpose of the course is to further develop the physician assistant students' clinical skills and prepare for the National Certification examination.

**PA 6970 Applied Clinical Project I (1 Credit Hour, CR/NCR)**

Preparation of a clinical project, under the supervision of a member of the PA faculty, that will be completed and presented in PA 6990.

**PA 6980 Applied Clinical Project II (1 Credit Hour, CR/NCR)**

Continuation of PA 6970.

**PA 6990 Applied Clinical Project III (6 credit hours, CR/NCR)**

In this course, the student presents the Clinical Project in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies.

**PA 7010 Family Practice /Common Psychiatry (3 credit hours)**

A clinical rotation that provides students with experience in a primary health care setting and will focus on medical and behavioral/psychiatric problems most commonly encountered by a family practitioner and certified physician assistant. Repeatable to a maximum of 15 credit hours.

**PA 7030 Internal Medicine (3 credit hours)**

A clinical rotation that provides students with the opportunity to diagnose, manage, and treat patients in an in/outpatient setting. The student will participate in the direct care of patients including initial interview, physical examination, hospital rounds, clinical conferences and management decision sessions. Repeatable to a maximum of 12 credit hours.

**PA 7040 Emergency Medicine (3 credit hours)**

Students obtain experience in the management of acute medical and surgical care with an emphasis on the development of skills required to treat life-threatening illness and injury. Repeatable to a maximum of 12 credit hours.

**PA 7060 Pediatrics (3 credit hours)**

Students gain knowledge in the care of infants and children, including an understanding of normal development, and the recognition and management of common childhood illness, immunization updates and patient education opportunities. Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credit hours.

**PA 7070 Obstetrics and Gynecology (3 credit hours)**

Students learn about women's health issues: preventive care, prenatal care and post natal care, current contraceptive technology, and medical therapeutics which aid in the well-being of the female patient. Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credit hours.

**PA 7080 General Surgery I (3 credit hours)**

Students are involved in the direct care of patients undergoing surgery including both pre-surgical evaluation and post-surgical maintenance. Students may select either in-patient or out-patient surgical settings. Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credit hours.

**PA 7130 Geriatrics (3 credit hours)**

Students develop the ability to recognize, diagnose, and treat the most commonly encountered health conditions of a geriatric population. The students will be able to assess and treat chronic medical conditions in various stages of progression.

**PA 7500 Extended Core Selectives (3 credit hours)**

Students can pursue additional experience in a variety of clinical specialties and sub-specialties or they can extend their knowledge by repeating one of the required clinical rotations up to the maximum limits permitted per lettered course. PA 7500 Extended Core Selectives that do not indicate that the course is repeatable can only be repeated with special approval of the Clinical Education Coordinator.

- PA 7500A Orthopedics (Repeatable to a maximum of 9 credit hours)
- PA 7500B Oncology
- PA 7500D Infectious Disease
- PA 7500E Cardiology (Repeatable to a maximum of 9 credit hours)
- PA 7500F Cardiothoracic Surgery
- PA 7500G Urgent Care (Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credit hours)
- PA 7500J Rheumatology
- PA 7500K Endocrinology
- PA 7500L Dermatology (Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credit hours)
- PA 7500M Occupational Medicine
- PA 7500N Trauma Surgery
- PA 7500P Psychiatry (Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credit hours)
- PA 7500Q Otolaryngology
- PA 7500R Community Medicine (Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credit hours)
- PA 7500S Neurology
- PA 7500T Critical Care
- PA 7500Z Other

**IPE 5000 Patient Centered Cases I – An Interprofessional Approach (1 credit hour, CR/NCR)**

This course is offered as part of the College curriculum for all first year entry level health professional students and is a university graduation requirement for all participating colleges. The course is designed to prepare the health care student to practice patient-centered, collaborative care through a team approach. Working in small interprofessional teams, students will explore cases representing conditions across the human lifespan.

**IPE 5100 Patient Centered Cases II– An Interprofessional Approach (1 credit hour, CR/NCR)**

Continuation of IPE 5000.

**HONORS AND AWARDS**

The following are presented at the Graduation Awards Ceremony:

- The President's Society Award
- Joseph and Dorothy Gendron Journalism Award
- Linda Fox Memorial Endowment Fund Award
- Arthur Madorsky, MD Memorial Scholarship Award
- Class Morale Award
- Class Award
- Western University Physician Assistant Service Award
- The Clymer Award for Academic and Professional Excellence
- Dean's Award
- The National Dean's List Nominations
- Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges Nominations
- Alumni Memorial Award
- The Bertha Oliver Memorial Award
- Andrea J. Reina Memorial Award
- Martha Medina Memorial Award
- Blake Award of Academic Excellence

**ACADEMIC CALENDAR**  
2011-2012  
PA PROGRAM

Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2011 Orientation/Registration	Monday, January 16, 2012 Martin Luther King Day - No Classes
Saturday, Aug. 6, 2011 Convocation/White Coat Ceremony	Monday, February 20, 2012 President's Day - No Classes
Monday, August 8, 2011 Classes begin (1st year)	Monday, March 19, 2012 Spring Break Begins – 1 <sup>st</sup> years
Thursday, September 1, 2011 Rotations begin (2nd year)	Monday, March 26, 2012 Classes Resume – 1 <sup>st</sup> years
Monday, September 5, 2011 Labor Day - No 1 <sup>st</sup> year Class	Monday, April 30, 2012 Spring Semester ends – 2 <sup>nd</sup> years
Monday, October 10, 2011 Columbus Day - No Class	Tuesday, May 1, 2012 Summer semester begins – 2 <sup>nd</sup> years
Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2011 Thanksgiving recess – 12 noon	Friday, May 11, 2012 Last Day of Lectures for Spring Semester
Monday, Nov. 28, 2011 Classes Resume	May 14-18, 2012 Spring Semester Finals
Friday, December 9, 2011 Last Day of Lectures for Fall Semester	Thursday, May 17, 2012 Commencement
Dec. 12-16, 2011 Finals Week	Friday, May 18, 2012 Spring Semester ends – 1 <sup>st</sup> years
Friday, December 16, 2011 End of Fall Semester – 1 <sup>st</sup> years	Monday, May 28, 2012 Memorial Day – No Classes
Monday, December 18, 2011 Winter Recess Begins	Monday, June 4, 2012 First Day of the Summer Session -1 <sup>st</sup> years
Friday, December 31, 2011 End of Fall Semester – 2 <sup>nd</sup> years	Wednesday, July 4, 2012 Independence Day observed– No Classes
<b>2012</b>	Mon., Jul. 29-Fri., Aug. 3, 2012 Summer Semester Finals – 1 <sup>st</sup> years
Sunday, January 1, 2012 Spring Semester begins – 2 <sup>nd</sup> years	Tuesday, July 31, 2012 Summer Semester Ends – 2nd years
Monday, January 2, 2012 Classes Resume – 1 <sup>st</sup> years	Friday, Aug. 3, 2012 Last Day of Summer Semester- 1st years

## **THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT OATH**

I pledge to perform the following duties with honesty, integrity, and dedication, remembering always that my primary responsibility is to the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings:

I recognize and promote the value of diversity and I will treat equally all persons who seek my care.

I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and the principle of informed consent.

I will hold in confidence the information shared with me in the course of practicing medicine, except where I am authorized to impart such knowledge.

I will be diligent in understanding both my personal capabilities and my limitations, striving always to improve my practice of medicine.

I will actively seek to expand my intellectual knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medical art and science.

I will work with other members of the health care team to assure compassionate and effective care of patients.

I will uphold and enhance community values and use the knowledge and experience acquired as a PA to contribute to an improved community.

I will respect my professional relationship with the physician and act always with guidance and supervision provided by that physician, except where to do so would cause harm.

I recognize my duty to perpetuate knowledge within the profession.

These duties are pledged with sincerity and on my honor.