

# Physician Assistant Student Handbook

August 2024

This PA Student handbook describes the standard operating procedures, guidelines, and policies of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies (PADP). All students are expected to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. ECU and the ECU PA Program reserves the right to amend this handbook and will notify students via email should a change be made.

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# **SECTION ONE**

Dear Pirate PA,

On behalf of the faculty and staff at ECU, we want to welcome you to the PA program as you join your colleagues on this next journey of your life.

These next years will become pivotal as you transform into a PA who will make differences in the lives of the patients you will serve.

We believe that the experiences at ECU will help you become an exceptional PA by acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and ethics to provide excellent health care. Through the expertise of faculty and assistance of staff, you will receive an education that prioritizes your success. Using variable learning styles and experiences, the ECU curriculum will lead to your ability to: critically think, skillfully engage, and problem solve to provide patient-centered care.

We attain our outcomes including academic excellence, compassionate care, and servitude using the highest ethical standards. As a foundation of your education, and as part of skills for your career path, you also learn patient care in interprofessional teams to provide high quality care.

Welcome aboard Pirate PA!! We look forward to helping you attain success as a Physician Assistant.



Jane Trapp MEd. PA-C

Interim Program Director

## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook has been prepared to orient you to current standard operating procedures, guidelines, and resources relevant to your participation in the professional phase of the East Carolina University (ECU) Department of Physician Assistant Studies (PADP) program. It is designed to be your guide through the twenty-seven months of the ECU PA Program. Please do not file and forget it. If you have any questions about the program's standard operating procedures, refer to the handbook first. You will also be introduced to your student rights and to our expectations concerning your professional development.

We hope this handbook will be useful to you. Please feel free to contact the PA Department Chair or your PA Program faculty advisor if you have any questions.

## **EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT**

To be a national model for student success, public service, and regional transformation:

- Uses innovative learning strategies and delivery methods to maximize access.
- Prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and values to succeed in a global, multicultural society.
- Develops tomorrow's leaders to serve and inspire positive change.
- Discovers new knowledge and innovations to support a thriving future for eastern North Carolina and beyond.
- Transforms health care, promotes wellness, and reduces health disparities; and
- Improves quality of life through cultural enrichment, academics, the arts, and athletics.

[Link](#)

## **COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES MISSION STATEMENT**

To improve the quality of health through leadership, excellence, and innovation in the delivery of progressive baccalaureate, master's, doctoral, and continuing education programs, providing professional and clinical services and conducting basic, clinical, and applied research.

[Link](#)

## **PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM STATEMENTS**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies is to prepare physician assistant graduates through educational and clinical experiences to improve the health and well-being of patients while increasing access to primary medical care in eastern North Carolina and the state. We seek to achieve this mission in an educational community where faculty, staff, clinical instructors, students, and other health care providers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, cooperation, compassion, and commitment.

### **Vision Statement**

The vision of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies is to offer our students educational and experiential opportunities that will allow them to exceed national standards of medical competence as graduates. Our students will develop the professional discernment and understanding needed to facilitate their ability to merge technology and compassionate care throughout their careers as physician assistants.

### **Educational Philosophy Statement**

We are dedicated to providing the highest quality education and instruction possible by immersing faculty and students in an environment that cultivates a sense of academic, professional, and service excellence. We respond to suggestions for modification and enrichment of the program from all who participate in the educational process because we view learning as a reciprocal and collegial interaction.

### **Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

We promote and celebrate diversity and inclusion as core values of the ECU PA Program. We strive to matriculate students of diverse backgrounds that are representative of the patient populations physician assistants serve. We empower ECU PA students to promote inclusive healthcare literacy, wellness, and reduction in healthcare disparities in patient populations.

[Link](#)

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

The Program Goals-support the Mission and Vision of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies and are inherently associated with the Mission and Vision of the College of Allied Health and ECU.

Our goals are to educate future physician assistants who:

1. Possess the appropriate knowledge, skills, and mindset to succeed in clinical practice.
2. Are from North Carolina and have a desire to practice in and serve the communities of rural and/or medically underserved North Carolina.
3. Are called to serve in primary care, providing patient-centered comprehensive care to those patient populations (family medicine, general internal medicine, geriatrics, and/or general pediatrics).
4. Represent the community we serve.
5. To learn more about our goals, benchmarks, and evidence of how we meet our program goals visit our [website](#)

## **ECU PA PROGRAM COMPETENCIES**

ECU PA defines our competencies as the medical knowledge, interpersonal, clinical, and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required for PA practice.

The faculty have developed the PA curriculum to prepare our students to meet our program competencies upon completion of our program. To graduate all students must pass a summative examination that demonstrates adequate mastery of the knowledge and skill necessary to meet our competencies.



### **Medical Knowledge (K)**

1. Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of established and evolving medical science to include instruction in basic sciences and clinical medicine covering all organ systems.
2. Graduates will apply evidence-based medical knowledge to provide patient-centered care that is compassionate and appropriate for the treatment of health and behavioral problems and the promotion of health.

### **Clinical Reasoning and Problem Solving (CR/PS)**

3. Graduates will be able to develop a plan to manage acute and chronic conditions considering the resources available and the values and ethics of the patient, including cultural sensitivity, disability status, and social determinants of health.

### **Clinical and Technical Skills (CTS)**

4. Graduates should be able to perform clinical and technical skills to provide adequate patient care across the lifespan, including prenatal, infant, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.
  - Elicit an appropriate medical history and perform the associated physical examination.
  - Formulate and prioritize a differential diagnosis based on the clinical presentation.
  - Select and interpret common diagnostic studies based on the clinical presentation.
  - Generate a reasonable plan of patient management.
  - Educate patients and families regarding options and care.
  - Perform basic procedure skills for the practice of primary care.

### **Interpersonal Skills (IPS)**

5. Graduates will recognize the larger system of health care and demonstrate utilization of resources to provide optimal care by applying communication skills that result in effective collaboration with colleagues, patients, and families.
6. Graduates will demonstrate cultural sensitivity and consider the individual needs of patients when making treatment decisions.

### **Professional Behaviors (P)**

7. Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of health systems science, to include the business of healthcare, patient safety, quality improvement, and risk management.
8. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to evaluate care provided to patients using principles of integrity, ethical decision making, and the incorporation of scientific evidence. They will also improve patient care through habits of self-directed reflection, evaluation, and life-long learning (Evidence-based medicine, health systems science).
9. Graduates will demonstrate professional conduct, self-awareness, and resilience.

# **SECTION TWO**

## Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Curriculum

### Didactic Curriculum

<u>Fall I (16 Weeks)</u>	<u>SCH*</u>
Clinical Gross Anatomy	PADP 6030 5
History and Physical Exam I	PADP 6200 2
Human Physiology	PADP 6040 4
Introduction to Clinical Medicine	PADP 6050 3
Pharm. And Pharmacotherapeutics I	PADP 6510 1
Principles of Professional Practice I	PADP 6001 1
<b>Total SCH</b>	<b>16</b>
<u>Spring (16 Weeks)</u>	
Clinical Medicine I	PADP 6150 5
Diagnostic Methods I	PADP 6010 3
History and Physical Exam II	PADP 6210 3
Pharm. And Pharmacotherapeutics II	PADP 6520 3
Principles of Professional Practice II	PADP 6002 2
<b>Total SCH</b>	<b>16</b>
<u>Summer (11 Weeks)</u>	
Clinical Medicine II	PADP 6250 4
Diagnostic Methods II	PADP 6020 3
History and Physical Exam III	PADP 6220 3
Pharm. And Pharmacotherapeutics III	PADP 6530 1
Principles of Professional Practice III	PADP 6003 1
<b>Total SCH</b>	<b>12</b>
<u>Fall II (16 Weeks)</u>	
Behavioral Med. And Psychosocial Issues	PADP 6800 2
Introduction to Clinical Practice	PADP 6690 6
Surgery and EM Skills	PADP 6650 4
Evidenced Based Medicine	PADP 6640 2
Principles of Professional Practice IV	PADP 6004 1
<b>Total SCH</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Didactic Total</b>	<b>59</b>

\*SCH=Semester Credit Hour

## Clinical Curriculum

<u>Spring II, Summer II, Fall III</u>		<u>SCH</u>	
Behavioral Medicine Clinical Practicum	PADP 6310	4	4 weeks
Internal Medicine Clinical Practicum I	PADP 6335	4	4 weeks
Internal Medicine Clinical Practicum II	PADP 6336	4	4 weeks
Family Medicine Clinical Practicum I	PADP 6325	4	4 weeks
Family Medicine Clinical Practicum II	PADP 6326	4	4 weeks
General Surgery Clinical Practicum	PADP 6340	4	4 weeks
Emergency Medicine Clinical Practicum	PADP 6350	4	4 weeks
Pediatrics Clinical Practicum	PADP 6360	4	4 weeks
Women's Health and Prenatal Care Clinical Practicum	PADP 6370	4	4 weeks
Geriatrics Clinical Practicum	PADP 6380	4	4 weeks
International Medical Clinical Practicum (or additional elective)	PADP 6390	2	4 weeks
PA Studies Clinical Practicum	PADP 6395	2	4 weeks
Bridges to Professional Practice I	PADP 6501	1	Spring CY
Bridge to Professional Practice II	PADP 6502	1	Fall CY
<b>Total SCH</b>		<b>46</b>	
<b>Total Weeks</b>		<b>48</b>	
<b>Total Program SCH</b>		<b>105</b>	

*All students will have the opportunity to do 2 elective rotations (PADP 6395). Students in good standing may have the opportunity to complete 1 program designated international elective (PADP 6390).*

Course descriptions may be found in the online program brochure and in the Graduate [School catalog](#).

## PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

East Carolina University  
College of Allied Health Sciences  
Dept. of Physician Assistant Studies  
4310 Health Sciences Building  
Mail Stop 668  
Greenville, NC 27858-4353  
Phone: 252-744-1100, 252-744-6271 (alternate)  
Fax: 252-744-1110

### PROGRAM FACULTY/STAFF DIRECTORY

Audrey Eaves MS, PA-C Faculty/Director of Admissions <a href="mailto:Eavesa16@ecu.edu">Eavesa16@ecu.edu</a>	Cathy Holder, BA Grants Program Coordinator <a href="mailto:holderc20@ecu.edu">holderc20@ecu.edu</a>	Tina Seemann MHS, PA-C Faculty/Associate Director of Didactic Education <a href="mailto:seemant16@ecu.edu">seemant16@ecu.edu</a>
Robert Dichiera, DSc. PA-C, AT-R Faculty <a href="mailto:Dichierar24@ecu.edu">Dichierar24@ecu.edu</a>	Kelley Hulihan MS, RPA-C Faculty/Director of Clinical Education <a href="mailto:hulihank19@ecu.edu">hulihank19@ecu.edu</a>	Alexendra Stang MD Medical Director <a href="mailto:stanga@ecu.edu">stanga@ecu.edu</a>
Jennifer Emberger, MD Medical Director <a href="mailto:embergerj@ecu.edu">embergerj@ecu.edu</a>	Melissa Lara MPAS, PA-C Faculty/ Clinical Coordinator laram24@ecu.edu	Jane Trapp MEd., PA-C Faculty/Interim Program Director <a href="mailto:trappj@ecu.edu">trappj@ecu.edu</a>
Colleen Grimone MPAS, PA-C Faculty <a href="mailto:grimonec23@ecu.edu">grimonec23@ecu.edu</a>	Carey McDonald MBA Administrative Clinical Coordinator <a href="mailto:mcdonaldc@ecu.edu">mcdonaldc@ecu.edu</a>	Jessica Veale MS PA-C Faculty <a href="mailto:vealej20@ecu.edu">vealej20@ecu.edu</a>
Jordan Griffin DMSc, PA-C Faculty/Coordinator of Data <a href="mailto:sturgillj22@ecu.edu">sturgillj22@ecu.edu</a>	Michael Schwartz PharmD Faculty/Adjunct BSOM Infectious Disease <a href="mailto:schwartzm18@ecu.edu">schwartzm18@ecu.edu</a>	McKeziona Williams Administrative Support <a href="mailto:Williamsmc22@ecu.edu">Williamsmc22@ecu.edu</a>

### TECHNICAL STANDARDS

A student admitted into the East Carolina Physician Assistant Program must meet basic and essential requirements that are necessary for securing employment and effectively serving as a physician assistant. The technical standards each student must master include cognitive, physical, and behavioral characteristics. Accommodations for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis, but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. All students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The following skills are required, with or without accommodation:

Critical Thinking. The ability to solve problems, a skill that is critical to the practice of medicine. This skill requires the intellectual abilities of measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis.

Communication Skills. A candidate should be able to speak, hear, and observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written forms.

Visual Ability. Candidates must be able to observe a patient accurately, both at a distance and close at hand. This ability requires the functional use of vision.

Hearing and Tactile Abilities. Candidates should have sufficient motor and auditory function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and performance of other diagnostic techniques.

Mobility and Fine Motor Skills. A candidate should be able to execute movements reasonably required to move from area to area, maneuver in confined spaces, calibrate and use large and small equipment, position and move patients, and provide patients with general care and emergency treatment.

Interpersonal Abilities. A candidate for the PA program must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities; the exercise of good judgment; the prompt completion of all responsibilities required for the diagnosis and care of patients; and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, families, and colleagues.

Resilience. PA program candidates should be able to cope despite setbacks, barriers, or limited resources. Candidates should also be able to use self-reflection, observation, and feedback to adapt to changing academic and clinical situations.

### **Demands and Performance Requirements**

Outlined below are examples of the demands and performance requirements expected of the ECU PA student, with or without accommodation.

#### *Mental Demands:*

The ECU PA student must possess the ability to:

1. Process, retain, comprehend, integrate, analyze, synthesize, and apply a large volume of data related to the art and science of medicine, including legal, ethical, and moral concepts.
2. Be present during long hours in the following settings: classrooms, laboratories, clinical, and self-directed study situations, and environments.
3. Respond appropriately and in a timely manner (if applicable) to feedback and provide feedback for others.
4. Effectively communicate through written and verbal communication.
5. Participate in educational activities that include examinations, demonstrations, simulations, presentations, written communication skills development, and frequent and exacting evaluations.
6. Demonstrate the ability to gather patient data, perform a physical examination, conduct patient assessment and evaluation, formulate a treatment plan, and perform patient education.
7. Demonstrate resiliency, adaptability, and flexibility.

*Physical Demands:*

The ECU PA student must possess:

1. Full range and control of body motion, including assisting patient movement, manual and finger dexterity, and hand-eye coordination.
2. Adequate visual and hearing sensory ability to function as a student while in school and provide medical care to patients as a graduate.
3. Physical capacity to stand and walk for extended hospital and clinic visits and during frequent and prolonged patient and professional interactions.
4. Physical capacity to sit for extended periods during classroom and laboratory experiences.
5. Capability to work in physically and mentally stressful situations with long and irregular hours and with exposure to communicable diseases and body fluids.
6. The ability to be present for long hours in the following settings: classrooms, laboratories, clinical, and self-directed study situations, and environments.

*Working Conditions:*

The ECU PA student must be able to:

8. Work in clinical and classroom environments with possible exposure to communicable diseases, toxic substances, ionizing radiation, medicinal preparations, hostile individuals, and other conditions common to medical and surgical environments.
9. Interact with a diverse patient population of all ages with a range of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions.

**ASSISTANCE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Department for Disability Support Services (DSS) is responsible for ensuring that individuals have equal access to programs, services, and activities of the University. In order to receive accommodations at ECU, students must self-identify to DSS and engage in the interactive process.

East Carolina University Department for Disability Support Services (DSS)

Director – Paul Harwell  
Main Office  
Suite 109 Mendenhall  
252.737.1025  
[DSSdept@ecu.edu](mailto:DSSdept@ecu.edu)

Health Sciences Testing Center  
HSSC 220/222  
252.737.1035  
[DSSTesting@ecu.edu](mailto:DSSTesting@ecu.edu)

**Requesting ADA accommodations:**

A student must apply and be accepted for admission to East Carolina University through regular admissions standard operating procedures in the Graduate School.

- a) Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must comply with the policies of the Department for Disability Support Services (DSS).
- b) Students must complete the Request for Accommodations Form and follow the process as documented on the ECU DSS webpage <https://accessibility.ecu.edu/students/request-accommodations/>
- c) Once accommodations have been assigned by DSS, students must use the Clockwork Web portal to preregister for their exams if accommodations regarding testing parameters are granted.
- d) Students may only sign up for accommodations in the Clockwork Web portal for the current semester. Subsequent semesters must be updated through DSS.



# SECTION THREE

## ECU Table of Contacts and Website Information

<b><u>Counseling Services</u></b>	
<p>Graduate professional education can be quite stressful! Many students seek help with stress management, anxiety, time management, test anxiety, etc. Please do not hesitate to take advantage of the <i>confidential</i> counseling services available here at ECU.</p>	
<p><b><u>Navigate Counseling Clinic</u></b></p> <p>CAHS Department of Addictions and Rehabilitation Studies 4410 Health Sciences Building <a href="https://dars.ecu.edu/navigate/">https://dars.ecu.edu/navigate/</a></p> <p>The Navigate Clinic offers a variety of services to our students, free of charge, and right in our Health Sciences Building. This clinic operates MWF 9:00-1:00 <i>year-round</i>. Contact them for more information. <i>All services are confidential.</i></p>	<p>744-0328</p>
<p><b><u>Center for Counseling and Student Development</u></b></p> <p>Main Campus: 137 Umstead Building <a href="https://counselingcenter.ecu.edu/">https://counselingcenter.ecu.edu/</a></p> <p>The Counseling Center offers individual counseling services to all enrolled students at ECU, free of charge. Crisis counseling is also available at this same number. <i>All services are confidential.</i></p>	<p>328-6661</p> <p>Press 2 if after hours</p>
<b><u>Academic Services</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Dowdy Student Stores</u></b></p> <p>ECU Student Center (main campus) for textbooks <a href="https://ecu.bncollege.com/">https://ecu.bncollege.com/</a> Satellite store in Health Sciences Student Center carries lab coats, scrubs, and other supplies.</p>	<p>328-6731</p>
<p><b><u>The Graduate School</u></b></p> <p>131 Ragsdale Building <a href="https://gradschool.ecu.edu/">https://gradschool.ecu.edu/</a></p> <p>Manages admissions, readmission, changing of programs, adding a certificate, exceptions to academic policy, information on satisfactory academic progress, probation and dismissal policy, grievance, and appeal procedures.</p>	<p>328-6012</p>
<p><b><u>ITCS (Information Technology and Computing Services)</u></b></p> <p><a href="https://itcs.ecu.edu/">https://itcs.ecu.edu/</a></p>	<p>328-9866</p>

<p>The ITCS help desk assists students, faculty, and staff with their technology needs.</p> <p>ITCS provides IT help as well as help with services such as Canvas, One Stop, Banner, E-Mail, Pirate ID, password resets, the new mobile application and more!</p> <p><u>Walk-in Office: Laupus Library Room 1500</u>  Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  Weekends 10:00 am – 5:00 pm</p> <p><u>IT Help desk by phone</u>  Monday – Thursday 7:30 am – 8:00 pm  Friday 7:30 am – 5:00 pm  Sat/Sun 10:00 am – 5:00 pm</p>	
<p><u>Office of The Registrar</u></p> <p><a href="https://registrar.ecu.edu/?msclkid=a0e49c6bb6a711ecbfd55fbc748a4e49">https://registrar.ecu.edu/?msclkid=a0e49c6bb6a711ecbfd55fbc748a4e49</a></p> <p>Provides registration information and assistance, course drops, and withdrawal, grades, transcript services, enrollment verification, graduation.</p>	<p>328-6747</p>
<p><u>The University Writing Center</u></p> <p>Main Office: Joyner Library, First Floor  Satellite Offices: Laupus Library Room 2514</p> <p><a href="https://writing.ecu.edu/uwc/?msclkid=c20cde6bb6a711ec9086e72c73418a39">https://writing.ecu.edu/uwc/?msclkid=c20cde6bb6a711ec9086e72c73418a39</a></p> <p>Provides assistance with basic writing skills and offers consultations for specific writing assignments.</p>	<p>328-2820</p>
<p><u>Laupus Library</u></p> <p><a href="https://hsl.ecu.edu/?msclkid=1ed2729cb6a811ec97761eb0a7f84654">https://hsl.ecu.edu/?msclkid=1ed2729cb6a811ec97761eb0a7f84654</a></p>	<p>744-2219</p>
<p><b><u>Financial Services</u></b></p>	
<p><u>Cashier's Office</u>  G120 Old Cafeteria Complex</p> <p><a href="https://financialservices.ecu.edu/cashiers-office/">https://financialservices.ecu.edu/cashiers-office/</a></p> <p>The primary purpose of this office is the billing, receiving, and the financial record keeping of student tuition, fees, and related charges.</p>	<p>737-6886</p>

<p><u>Office of Student Financial Aid</u></p> <p><u>Health Sciences Campus</u> 1868 Health Science Drive, Room 122 PA students can email Ms. <a href="#">Deana Summerlin</a>. Students are encouraged to obtain financial aid, if needed, rather than seek employment during their professional education.</p> <p>Should a student require supplementary financial aid in addition to what they have been allotted due to expenses related to their education including, but not limited to, housing and transportation, additional funds may be requested by contacting Ms. Deana Summerlin.</p> <p><a href="https://financialaid.ecu.edu/">https://financialaid.ecu.edu/</a></p> <p>Administers federal, state, and institutional aid.</p> <p>Can schedule appointment online to speak with financial aid counselor. <a href="https://financialaid.ecu.edu/contact-us/">https://financialaid.ecu.edu/contact-us/</a></p>	<p>328-6610</p>
<p><u>Residency for Tuition Purposes</u></p> <p>Graduate School – 131 Ragsdale Hall</p> <p><a href="https://gradschool.ecu.edu/residency/">https://gradschool.ecu.edu/residency/</a></p> <p>Information on state statutes governing residency classification for tuition purposes.</p>	<p>328-6012</p>
<p><b><u>Health Services</u></b></p>	
<p><u>Student Health Services</u> 237 Health Science Student Center</p> <p><a href="https://studenthealth.ecu.edu/?msclkid=44d2cad3b6a811ec8fe01ee9a854bf71">https://studenthealth.ecu.edu/?msclkid=44d2cad3b6a811ec8fe01ee9a854bf71</a></p> <p>Provide high quality primary health care services which are accessible and cost-effective to eligible members of the University Community</p> <p>24-hour nurse line available</p>	<p>328-6841</p>
<p><u>Health Sciences Campus Student Center</u> <u>Recreation &amp; Wellness</u> 1868 Health Science Dr</p> <p><a href="https://studentcenters.ecu.edu/health-sciences-campus-student-center/">https://studentcenters.ecu.edu/health-sciences-campus-student-center/</a></p> <p>Campus Recreation &amp; Wellness at Health Science Student Center offers 25,000 square footage of recreation and fitness space. The two-story open concept facility that can accommodate a variety of athletic activities, lectures, banquets, and other events.</p>	<p>744-1070</p>

<p><u>Disability Support Services</u> 138 Slay Building</p> <p><a href="https://accessibility.ecu.edu/students/">https://accessibility.ecu.edu/students/</a> Provides accommodations and services for individuals with disabilities.</p>	737-1016
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<b><u>Other Support Services</u></b>	
<p><u>Career Services</u> HSC Student Center, Room 221</p> <p><a href="https://career.ecu.edu/?msclkid=6b15d468b6a811ec8e6304b83474ab6c">https://career.ecu.edu/?msclkid=6b15d468b6a811ec8e6304b83474ab6c</a> ECU Career Services helps students understand how to manage their careers and how to effectively market themselves in whatever endeavor they may choose. Services available to students include career exploration through assessments, resume, cover letter, personal statement and CV assistance, interview preparation, job and internship search strategies, networking with professionals, and workshops to develop professional skills.</p>	328-6050
<p><u>Financial Wellness Hub</u></p> <p><a href="https://studentaffairs.ecu.edu/financialwellness/">https://studentaffairs.ecu.edu/financialwellness/</a> ECU Financial Wellness Hub provides financial education, coaching, and resources to students In order to make better decisions, foster better relationships, and to build better communities.</p>	328-5048
<p><u>Student Veteran Services</u></p> <p><a href="https://studentveterans.ecu.edu/">https://studentveterans.ecu.edu/</a> Facilitates transition from the military to university life. Provides accurate and timely information to navigate Federal VA benefits and the resources available on campus and within the community.</p>	737 - 6542
<p><u>LGBTQ Resource Office</u></p> <p><a href="https://lgbtg.ecu.edu/">https://lgbtg.ecu.edu/</a> Provides support and a sense of community for students and alumni of all sexualorientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.</p>	737-2514
<p><u>Parking and Transportation</u></p> <p><a href="https://parking.ecu.edu/?msclkid=78302045b6a911ecbe7512d2054b00bf">https://parking.ecu.edu/?msclkid=78302045b6a911ecbe7512d2054b00bf</a> Health Sciences Campus Student Center, Room 220 Vehicle registration and parking permits are completed via Pirate Port</p>	744-1054

Provides guidance and assistance to the campus community, visitors, and guests on all parking-related issues. Promotes compliance with the University's parking regulations through education in a general understanding of its parking system.	
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**EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL**  
**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

**Fair Practices:** All aspects of ECU and PADP are accurately reflected in brochures, bulletins, catalogs, handbooks, manuals, other forms of information, and advertising published by or endorsed by ECU and PADP. East Carolina University is committed to equality of opportunity and does not discriminate against applicants, students, or employees based on race, religion, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disability. All standard operating procedures concerning equal opportunity/affirmative action, sexual harassment, discrimination, and conflicts of interest are found in:

- [The ECU Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [2024 – 2025 Graduate Catalog site](#)
- [ECU Graduate School Homepage](#)
- [ECU Graduate School Academic Regulations](#)

Students have certain rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

[ECU's policies and procedures related](#) to FERPA

You are responsible for the following ECU and Graduate School standard operating procedures. Information for each of the following topics can be found by clicking on the links below:

**Equal Opportunity and Title IX**

Title IX- no person shall be excluded from participation in or discriminated against on the basis of sex in programs or activities at educational institutions that receive federal financial assistance.

Title IX includes acts of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating and domestic violence, and stalking.

[ECU Title IX Policies and Procedures](#)

[Report Concerns](#)

## **Important Graduate School Policies**

[Readmission and Withdraw](#)

[Probation and Termination](#)

[Grading System](#)

[Appeals Procedure](#)

[Academic Integrity](#) (Part VI, Section I and II, p. 2)

[Improper Relationships between Students and Employees](#) (Part XII)

Registration at ECU implies the student's acceptance of the published academic regulations and all other rules found in any official publication or announcement. It is important to note that these regulations stipulate that non-sanctioned use of artificial intelligence, software piracy, and copyright violations are not tolerated and will result in adverse actions up to and including dismissal from the program and the University.

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCES**

### **Grievance by University Employee**

A grievance against a university official arises when a student believes he or she has been subjected to inappropriate behavior by a department, office, or university representative (faculty or staff) acting within their role and duty.

A grievance of personal misconduct by a faculty member or other university employee arises when a student believes he or she is the subject of inappropriate behavior outside of the employee's role and duties within the University.

Any student who wishes to learn more about the University's Grievance policy or file a report should visit the following website: <https://deanofstudents.ecu.edu/home/complaints-grievances/>

## **VIOLATIONS OF THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Violations of the Student Code of Conduct**

All ECU PA students are expected to abide by the [Student Code of Conduct](#). The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities ("OSRR") administers the Student Conduct Process. Any student who wishes to file a report should visit the following website: <https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?EastCarolinaUniv>

## EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

### Address/Telephone Changes

It is the responsibility of each student to maintain a current local address, telephone number, and assigned **East Carolina email address** with the PA Program, the College of Allied Health Sciences, and the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs. Please notify the program immediately if changes occur in any of the following:

- Legal name
- Home address
- Cell phone number
- Person to contact in case of emergency.
- Medical insurance information

Students should provide the Registrar's office with the address of choice to receive notice of grades, semester bills, and all other correspondence sent by this office and the Cashier's office. A change of name [Name Change](#)/or [Address change](#) can be followed through these directions.

PADP will not be held responsible for consequences incurred due to address changes that are not reported.

### Appearance and Dress

During the didactic year, students will spend most of their time in a classroom or laboratory environment with limited patient contact. Members of the faculty have the authority and responsibility to maintain professional standards of student dress and grooming within classrooms, practicum sites, offices, and other areas of public presentations. Students may wear **navy scrubs** in the classroom if desired. Extremely casual or unprofessional attire as determined by the faculty should be avoided. Well-groomed hair and beards are acceptable during the didactic phase. Students may also wear jeans, dress pants, shorts of modest length, skirts, etc. No low-cut or revealing tops, clothes that expose undergarments, halter tops, bikini tops or bottoms are allowed in the classroom, clinics, or hospitals. No caps or hats will be worn in the classrooms or professional sites.

Professional attire, as outlined below, is required for special guest presentations, seminars, patient interviews, simulated patient encounters (OSCE/CSE), or any clinical or classroom-related coursework off campus. As healthcare professionals, students should understand the importance of being neatly dressed and well-groomed. There will be no chewing gum or tobacco products in the professional setting.

In all portions of training with patient contact or in a health care setting, the following dress code will apply:

Women: Should wear a dress, skirt, or pants with a shirt and short, white student jacket. No low-cut or revealing tops, clothes that expose undergarments, halter tops, or bikini tops or bottoms are not allowed in the classroom, clinics, hospitals, or labs. The white jacket must have the ECU PA Program emblem sewn onto the left breast pocket of the white laboratory coat and the student's name tag clearly visible and labeled "Physician Assistant Student." Pertinent hospital (or clinic) ID may be required. Students should also wear closed-toe and closed-heel shoes while in the hospital/clinic setting. Exposed body piercings other than in the ear lobes are not allowed. Extra-



large hoop earrings are not allowed. Body art, including tattoos, must be covered. Fingernails must be clean and trimmed so as not to extend past the tip of the finger.

Men: Should wear dress pants with a polo or button-down shirt and a short, white student jacket. No low-cut or revealing tops, clothes that expose undergarments, are allowed in the classroom, clinics, hospitals, or labs. The jacket must have the ECU PA Program emblem sewn onto the left breast pocket of the white laboratory coat and the student's name tag clearly visible and labeled, "Physician Assistant Student." Pertinent hospital (or clinic) ID may be required. Students must also wear closed-toe and closed-heel shoes while in the hospital/clinic setting. Exposed body piercings other than in the ear lobes are not allowed. Body art, including tattoos, must be covered. Fingernails must be clean and trimmed so as not to extend past the tip of the finger.

There are several departments and/or clinical practice sites which may prohibit facial hair. Some departments of surgery and/or surgical practices, for example, stipulate that facial hair is not allowed in the operating rooms and that all exposed hair must be kept trimmed. Male students should be prepared to shave prior to entering any clinical surgical practicums. Fingernail polish is also unacceptable in surgical suites. The wearing of jewelry, perfume, and cologne is prohibited.

Any time surgical scrubs are required in a professional setting, they must be a navy blue, matching set. They must be clean and in good condition. Students may embroider their scrubs with their name, PA Student, and ECU PA Program. When on supervised clinical practicum experiences, separate institutions may have their own standard operating procedures regarding scrubs which the student will follow.

Appropriate attire in the physical examination lab will be: (a) Men – tee shirts and shorts, and (b) Women – sport bras or tank tops and shorts. Please refrain from wearing bikini tops or bottoms.

In some circumstances (i.e.). (Pulmonology lab, Abdominal, Rectal exam) students will be informed that their fingernails must be cut short. Students who fail to cut their nails will be reviewed by the SPC and may be given a professionalism warning. Students on rotations should not have long or "fake" nails. Spreading of infections has been identified as a result. Students who consistently disregard the dress and grooming policies above may be put on professional warning or probation.

### **Attendance and Tardiness**

Students are expected to be available for program-related events between **8:00 AM to 5:00 PM** Monday through Friday, even if there are no regularly scheduled classes. Students are also required to attend all classes scheduled after 5 PM should the need arise. Regular and prompt attendance at classes, laboratory sessions, scheduled conferences with faculty or advisors, and supervised clinical practicum experiences is expected of all students unless otherwise noted. A tremendous amount of didactic material is covered in each scheduled class. Due to the sequential and experiential nature of the curriculum, knowledge gained in every class is vital for subsequent learning. Commitment to professional education implies each student's commitment to punctual and regular class attendance. In the event of an absence, students **are required** to ask permission (if not emergent) from the course director(s) by writing (email) in advance or as soon as possible if an emergent situation precludes informing in advance. All missed assignments must be made up as determined by the course director(s). Students are responsible for reading each syllabus and understanding the course-specific attendance requirements.

Should the curriculum be delivered in a virtual format, any required attendance at live learning sessions will be communicated to students via the syllabus and/or announcements via email or Canvas.

The following includes (but is not limited to) examples for an excused absence:

7. a) personal illness (a signed note from a health care provider may be required).
- b) Illness of a first-degree relative (a signed note from a health care provider may be required).
- c) Death in the immediate family (documentation by a signed note or obituary notice may be required).
- D) Military deployment or call to active duty in times of a national disaster or declared emergency.
- e) Jury Duty (official notification may be required)

Unexcused absence, frequent tardiness, or absenteeism is unprofessional. This behavior is unacceptable and could result in warning or probation for unprofessional behavior. Persistent tardiness or absenteeism while on probation for unprofessional behavior will be considered grounds for dismissal.

For any absence greater than five business days in any given semester, the student should contact their faculty advisor promptly.

In cases where an absence of more than five days is related to a University excused absence (such as but not limited to court subpoena, death of an immediate family member, extreme personal emergency, hospitalization, military service, religious accommodation, short-term illness or other medical conditions/events, disability, pregnancy and parenting) students should keep in close contact with their faculty advisor and contact the [Office of the Dean of Students website](#) to schedule an appointment in order to obtain an excused absence. Due to accreditation standards, students who miss more than 5 days of class are subject to an SPC meeting (in most cases) and those missing significant educational time (as determined by the SPC) may be required to restart the PA program regardless of Dean of Students determinations.

### **BLS/ACLS Certification**

The Physician Assistant Program mandates that all students be certified in Basic Life Support. Re-certification ***must*** be maintained throughout the complete course of the Program. All students are required to provide the Program with a copy of the Basic Life Support (BLS) card upon enrollment and all recertification paperwork as applicable. Only American Heart Association for Healthcare Providers will be accepted. ACLS certification is a requirement for completion of PADP 6650 Surgery and Emergency Skills.

### **Email access and monitoring.**

Due to most university communications occurring via email, students are expected to check their ECU email addresses ***at least*** once every 24 hours Monday-Friday.

### **Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screening**

Due to federal, state, and local institutional regulations, The ECU PA Program requires criminal background checks and must be completed by August 1<sup>st</sup>. During the clinical year, individual rotation sites may require drug screening. Students are responsible for paying the cost of criminal background checks and drug screening which is done through Castle Branch. Students are also responsible for being knowledgeable about the content of this standard operating procedure and for any expenses incurred. If you have any questions regarding Castle Branch, please contact [Mr. Williams](#).

### **Grading**

All courses presented in the didactic and clinical phases of the professional curriculum of the ECU PA Program will be subject to the following grading scale:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

F = 69% or Below

For the duration of any semester, all numerical grades earned by a student for any course requirements such as tests, quizzes, assignments, or final exams will be recorded in Canvas. Final grades will be rounded to the nearest tenth (ex. 87.51 will be rounded to 88, 89.49 will be rounded to 89). If questions are discarded from an exam, quiz, or a final, the number of discarded questions (whether answered correctly or incorrectly by a student) may be deducted from the total number of questions given; that number will become the denominator of the ratio for the grade. The numerator of the ratio will be the number of correct answers for the questions excluding the discarded questions (whether answered correctly or incorrectly by a student). The ratio of the two figures will be the student's numerical grade.

### **Incomplete Grade**

The grade of "I" may be given for one of two reasons. The first occurs when the course has not been completed (example: a clinical course still in progress at the end of a semester). These grades will most often be resolved within one semester. Otherwise, the grade of "I" may be given for a deficiency in the quantity of work done in a course, as opposed to quality of work done in a course. In this case, a grade of "I" may only be awarded in extenuating circumstances. A student must have completed a substantial proportion of the course work and be passing the class. The grade is considered temporary. "I" grades must be resolved within one calendar year, or a grade of "F" will be automatically assigned; instructors have the prerogative to require a shorter period of time to complete the remaining requirements. No student will be allowed to graduate with an incomplete on his or her record. No exceptions to this policy will be granted.

### **Health Screening and Immunization Requirements** *(Effective August 15, 2024)*

Report of Health History is required for enrollment to East Carolina University.

ECU immunization requirements can be found at <https://studenthealth.ecu.edu/enrollment-requirements/>.

The ECU Program requires the following:

- DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis), DtaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Acellular Pertussis), Td (Tetanus, Diphtheria), Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria Pertussis): 3 doses of tetanus/diphtheria toxoid of which one must have been within the past 10 years.
- Completion of polio series
- Measles (2 doses or positive titer)
- Mumps (2 doses or positive titer)
- Rubella (2 doses or positive titer)
- Varicella (2 doses or positive titer)
- Hepatitis B (HBV) Series or Hcpilisav-B (2 doses 4 weeks apart) + Hepatitis antibody test (anti-Hbs) 1-2 mos following Hcpilisav- B dose or # 3 of Engerix-B.

In addition to the ECU-required vaccines above, all students enrolled in the PA program must also have the following per CDC guidelines for [healthcare workers](#) unless they have a \*medical or religious exemption (see ECU PA web site).

- [Tuberculosis Screening](#) (Tuberculosis skin test): Initial test must be 2 step PPD and each following PPD annually with the most recently completed within the previous 6 months of 1<sup>st</sup> day of class. Also accepts the QuantiFERON Gold TB blood test.
- Influenza – each fall

Highly recommended and may be required by one of more clinical sites. See Covid guidelines on [ECU PA](#)

- COVID-19 Vaccinations & Boosters per [CDC recommendations](#)

\* Contact program director for more information if needed.

The immunization requirements for clinical students are set by our clinical rotation sites. All students must comply with the program and clinical rotation site immunization policies at which they are assigned in order to successfully complete the program.

PADP must have documentation of completion of all immunizations and titers if applicable no later than August 1<sup>st</sup>, prior to the fall semester of matriculation. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the applicant's removal from the Program and an alternate to be selected. Physician assistant students must maintain current TB screening and remain in full compliance with the immunization policy reviewed above. A copy of immunization records for students will be stored in the Castle Branch ([www.CastleBranch.com](http://www.CastleBranch.com)) database. It is the responsibility of the student to keep their immunization record up to date; failure to do so may result in delayed graduation.

For students completing a supervised clinical practicum experience in a country other than the United States, all immunizations as recommended for that specific country by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) must be obtained prior to leaving for the practicum. A list of immunizations recommended by the CDC can be found on the CDC travel website <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Documentation must be provided to the clinical coordinator prior to leaving for the practicum. A failure to provide required documentation will result in a cancellation of the practicum.

### **Health Insurance and Health Care**

Students are required to maintain personal health insurance throughout the Physician Assistant Program. Documentation of insurance coverage must be submitted to the program at the beginning of the professional phase of the program. Documentation must be current; therefore, any changes in insurance coverage must be submitted to the Program immediately. Personal health insurance may be obtained through the university at: <https://studenthealth.ecu.edu/ship/>

Students are eligible for health care by appointment or on an urgent care basis at ECU Student Health Services as a part of their general university fees. The costs of services of off-campus providers and at agencies other than Student Health Services are not included in the ECU health fee. A medical record is maintained by Student Health Services for each student. Medical records are available only to the professional staff of Student Health Services and are considered confidential and privileged. Records are retained five years after the student leaves the university and subsequently are destroyed. PA Department faculty, the Program Director and Medical Directors do not and by accreditation standards, cannot provide health care, including immunizations, to PA students except in emergent cases.

For students completing a second-year rotation in a country other than the United States, additional international health insurance and evacuation insurance must be obtained prior to leaving for the clerkship. This insurance can be obtained through the ECU Office of Global Affairs (International Insurance). This is a requirement of East Carolina University and failure to comply will result in a cancellation of the rotation.

### **HIPAA and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Precautions**

Students are required to successfully complete the initial training for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) during the first didactic semester. Students must also repeat and successfully complete this training prior to entering the clinical year of education. The training is free of charge. It is the students' responsibility to print and maintain a hard copy of the completion certificate and provide the program with a copy. Be advised that students not begin supervised clinical practicum experiences without timely and appropriate documentation of these trainings.

Working in a clinical setting can expose the student to a wide variety of health risks and infectious disease. Health care professionals and students can also function as vectors carrying infectious illnesses to patients who are already ill and sometimes immune-compromised. Safety of the student, patients, and other health care providers is critical to the health and well-being of all. Health care practitioners can reasonably anticipate that they will have contact with blood and/or other potentially infectious materials. Thus, the requirement that all students will complete OSHA training and must be compliant with OSHA and universal precaution requirements including the use of gloves, care of sharp objects, use of eyewear, protective clothing, and other precautionary measures.

Failure to complete, update and maintain these training as required will result in the student not starting a rotation or immediate removal from the scheduled rotation site. Noncompliance may result in additional clinical time required to make up missed time and may delay graduation.

## Library Resources

### Joyner Library

The main (east) campus library at ECU is Joyner Library. This facility contains over one million bound volumes, more than one million pieces of microfilm, and 5,668 serial titles. Access to information resources is provided by CD-ROM and on-line services located in the reference department, and the newspaper files on microfilm are extensive and serve as an important library resource.

### Laupus Health Sciences Library

The Laupus Health Sciences library provides health sciences information, resources, and services for eastern North Carolina with a primary focus on colleges and schools within the Division of Health Sciences. It serves as the primary information resource facility for the university's health sciences programs, and supports the clinical, research, and instructional activities of the College of Allied Health Sciences, College of Nursing, the Brody School of Medicine, and the School of Dental Medicine. Several medical texts used in the didactic phase of the ECU PA Program are available through the Laupus Library at no additional costs to the student. In addition to online (free) texts, Laupus Library also offers an "ask a librarian" live-chat service and offers study space available by reservation for groups.

For hours of operation – <https://lib.ecu.edu/hours/laupus>

The ECU Laupus Library offers expansive resources to assist with searching evidenced-based databases, writing, literature reviews, and searching techniques and assistance through medical campus librarians. Information specifically directed for PA students can be found at:

<https://libguides.ecu.edu/physicianassistant>

The Liaison Librarian for the PA program is Jeff Coghill [coghillj@ecu.edu](mailto:coghillj@ecu.edu). Feel free to contact him if you have questions related to the Health Sciences Library.

### Needle Stick/Bodily Fluids Exposures

If an exposure occurs during the didactic year, the student should instantly clean the affected area and immediately report the exposure to the faculty member instructing the lab/activity.

If an exposure occurs during the clinical year, the supervising physician or supervisor must be notified **IMMEDIATELY**. Students must also notify the Director of Clinical Education/Clinical Coordinator within 2 hours of the exposure.

Prompt initiation of Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) in high-risk exposures is critical for averting! HIV infection.

All expenses for care and potential treatment are the responsibility of the student. **Clinical sites are under no obligation to provide the student with free medical care.** For more information, please see the BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN on page 58-59 of this handbook.

## **Professional Policy/Behaviors**

### **Rationale**

The East Carolina Physician Assistant Studies Program (ECUPA) highly values professionalism as a core competency in the practice of medicine. ECUPA expects learners to demonstrate the highest level of professional and personal behavior, to conduct themselves honorably and responsibly, and to model and encourage professional behavior within the community. ECUPA has a duty to encourage professional behavior and the development of a strong professional identity, to identify unprofessional behavior, to educate and nurture students to ensure their professional performance and success, and, when necessary, to address unprofessional or inappropriate behavior.

### **Scope**

The procedures adopted by this policy are designed to accomplish three primary policy goals: (1) to address unprofessional conduct early, promptly, and effectively; (2) to provide a primary mechanism to monitor unprofessional conduct to promote early intervention; and (3) to educate students and improve their professional identity and professional interactions with others.

This policy is limited to professional conduct after matriculation at ECUPA.

### **Policy**

All professionalism concerns should be reported to faculty within ECUPA, who will oversee a single, unified longitudinal record of all professionalism issues raised, whether those issues are resolved by informal one-on-one counseling, by the Student Progress Committee (SPC) or by the program director.

Unprofessional Conduct – Conduct which violates the community standards of ECUPA, include but are not limited to the following:

### **General Behaviors**

- Acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
- Lying or misrepresentation.
- Communicating in writing, via email, or in person in an unprofessional manner, including failing to timely respond to requests for information from ECUPA faculty and staff.
- Verbal and/or physical abuse, threats, intimidation, (either by phone or in person), harassment, coercion and/or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person.
- Excessive and distracting cell phone usage during small group meetings, clinical rounds, or other settings.
- Repeated failure to prepare for, engage in, or participate in clinical rounds, small group, or team-based learning (TBL) situations, or other settings in which participation is integral to the educational experience.

- Disorderly, lewd or indecent conduct; or conduct or disruptive language directed toward and offensive to a member of or a visitor to the community.
- Breach of peace; or aiding, abetting or procuring another person to breach the peace on ECU premises or at functions sponsored by, or participated in by, ECUPA.
  - Audio or video taping of another without consent or the taking of pictures without consent which would cause injury or distress.
    - Failure to comply with directions of ECU Security, ECU Security personnel or law enforcement officers acting in performance of their duties.
    - Unauthorized possession, duplication, or use of keys to any ECU premises or unauthorized entry to or use of ECU premises.
    - Violation of published ECU policies, rules, or regulations.
    - Furnishing false information to any ECUPA official, faculty member or office with intent to deceive.
    - Forging, altering, or misusing any ECUPA document, record, or instrument of identification.
    - Disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings, or other ECUPA activities.
    - Posting of confidential faculty, staff, student or patient information on personal websites or blogs.
    - Attempted or actual theft or receipt of stolen property and/or damage to property of the ECUPA community or other personal or public property.

Failing to:

- Dress professionally by adhering to the ECUPA dress code.
- Maintain composure and professional demeanor, as appropriate.
- Conduct themselves in a trustworthy manner.
- Inform attending physicians/course directors/clerkship directors or others of anything that would interfere with the performance of their duties.
- Complete responsibilities, whether clinical or academic, in a timely manner.
- Be accepting of teaching, guidance, or feedback.
- Respond to emails. Students are expected to check email no less than once every 24 hours.

Theft or other abuse of computer time, including but not limited to:

- unauthorized entry into a file, to use, read or change the contents, or for any other purpose.
- unauthorized transfer of a file.
- unauthorized use of another individual's identification and password.
- use of computing facilities to interfere with the work of another student, faculty member or ECU official.
- use of computing facilities to send obscene or abusive messages.
- use of computing facilities to interfere with normal operation of the ECU computing system.
- any other violation of the University Student and Employee Computer Use Regulations.

#### Clinical Behaviors

- Refusing to admit errors in patient care, failing to seek guidance when needed in the performance of one's clinical duties, and failing to adhere to the highest ethical standards.



- Being rude or disrespectful to patients, team members, and others.
- Being habitually tardy to classes, clerkships, rotations, or other mandatory activities.
- Showing lack of respect for patient confidentiality and privacy, particularly regarding HIPAA-protected information.
- Failing to complete patient notes or other care-related responsibilities in a timely and thorough manner.
- Failing to complete assignments on time.
- Failing to complete credentialing for individual rotation sights on time.
- Failing to accept rotation assignments.
- Not following time policy for clinical rotations.
- Providing false information to preceptors regarding study time, reading days, etc.
- Failure to engage for call back days. If virtual, student needs to have camera on, be in a low distraction environment, be engaged in the activity, and present themselves professionally.

### Regulated Behaviors

- Violation of any law or regulation, state or federal.
- Illegal use, possession, manufacture, sale, or distribution of narcotic or other controlled substances.
- Independently writing and signing a prescription for any medication without a medical license or without authorization.
- Illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, other weapons, or dangerous chemicals on ECU premises.

### ECUPA students are expected to:

- Exhibit appropriate sympathy/ empathy, respect, discipline, honesty, and integrity.
- Work effectively with others in a team environment.
- Be attentive and appropriately prepared for class.
- Follow direction.
- Address crisis or emergency in a composed manner.
- Exhibit a high level of maturity and self-control, even in highly stressful situations or in difficult circumstances.
- Exemplify the utmost professionalism.
- Treat all patients, faculty, staff, and healthcare workers with respect.
- Address concerns in a professional and respectful manner.
- Demonstrate self-directed learning.
- Be sensitive to diverse populations including those of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation.
- Students at clinical sights must always work under the supervision of a preceptor.
- Students must be flexible with changes in scheduling during didactic and clinical phases of program.
- Students shall not appear at the University or clinical rotations under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The ECUPA Program will document any professionalism concern or violation in writing in the student's permanent record.

1. Professionalism concerns are managed based on the level of severity of the violation. This may include a one-on-one discussion with faculty, issuance of a Professionalism Warning or placement of a student on Professionalism Probation, all of which will be documented in the student's record. Depending on the severity of the infraction, a student may be subject to further disciplinary action as determined by the Student Progress Committee, which may include, but is not limited to, corrective and/or disciplinary action, warning, probation, or dismissal.
2. After the second incident of unprofessional behavior: The student will automatically be referred to the Student Progress Committee. The SPC will meet to determine a course of action for the behavior that can include, but is not limited to, corrective and/or disciplinary action, warning, probation, or dismissal.

Issuance of a Professionalism Warning or Professionalism Probation does not expire at the end of a semester. A student placed on professional probation will remain on Warning/Probation until graduation.

Future employers and state licensing boards may ask for information regarding professionalism of a student after they have graduated. It is the responsibility of ECUPA to disclose this information.

### **Professional Behavior – Salutation Policy**

In all professional settings, PA program faculty and staff are to be addressed by their appropriate professional titles (Dr., Professor, Ms., or Mr., as indicated by each faculty).

### **Program Academic Advising**

At the beginning of the program, each student will be assigned a program faculty advisor. The objective of academic advising is to foster the students' professional, academic and clinical development. All students are assigned an academic advisor. During the first semester of the program, the advisor will meet with advisees to inform them of the advising process, and then again at the end of the semester. General advisement, especially early on, typically includes transitioning to adult learning and identifying differences between undergraduate and graduate education. Student specific advisement topics may include discussion of progress in courses, study habits, time management, test taking skills and other topics that may pertain to each student. Identified concerns are critical to identify early in order to proactively assist students maximize success to progress throughout the curriculum.

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings at least once a semester, students are encouraged to meet with their advisor more frequently if they are having academic challenges. It is the student's responsibility to schedule meetings with their advisor. Faculty may not provide medical care or medical advice to students, therefore other support services will be recommended for matters regarding a student's physical, psychological, and emotional health.

The faculty will record notes from each advising session to include major topic areas discussed, deficiencies noted, and description of the action plan devised to assist the student in meeting desired outcomes. These notes will then be placed in the student record.

It is each student’s responsibility to email his or her advisor no later than midterm of each fall and spring semester during the didactic curriculum to set up a mid-term meeting. Documentation of the encounter (see form below) will be placed in the student’s file within one week of the encounter. Additional meetings with a student’s program faculty advisor or other faculty member will be scheduled on an as-needed basis.

<b>Didactic Professionalism Form</b>			
Student:			
Semester/yr:			
	Meets	NI (Needs Improvement)	Comments
Professional conduct (integrity, ethical principles, attire)			
Roles/Responsibilities (dependable, accepts own imperfections)			
Interpersonal Communication (respect, composure, sensitivity to others)			
Others (resiliency, self-directed learning, self-confidence)			
Other comments:			

**Professional Liability**

Professional liability is provided for all students while enrolled in the Program by the office of the Dean of Allied Health Sciences.

**Refund and Withdrawal Policy**

A student who officially withdraws from the East Carolina University College of Health Sciences during an academic year may be entitled to a refund of tuition and fees in proportion to the length of time between the first-class day of each semester and the date of official withdrawal in accordance with the published schedule. Further information can be obtained through the Cashier’s Office at:

<https://financialservices.ecu.edu/refund-and-withdrawal-policy/>

**Scholarships**

Scholarship information is available online at [scholarships](#) and through the Office of Financial Aid at 252-328-6610. Further information about PA program-specific scholarships will be available each spring through Office of Financial Aid and through CAHS email.

**Student Identification**

ECU PA students will be clearly identified to distinguish them from physicians, medical students, and other health professions' students and graduates. Physician assistant students will wear short, white student coats with a name tag attached above the left breast pocket. The name tag will clearly state the student's name followed by "PA-S" with an underlying title of "Physician Assistant Student." There will be no other identifying names or titles. Pertinent hospital or clinic name tags may be necessary. Students will be required to sew onto the left breast pocket of their white laboratory coat an ECU PA Program cloth patch and may embroider their name and PA-S designation on their jacket and/or scrubs.

### **Student Policy – Other**

Students are not permitted to work for the program.

Students are not permitted to substitute for as function as instructional faculty in any format.

Students are not permitted to substitute for or function as clinical or administrative staff.

### **Student Records**

PA students will be able to view their test scores, assignments, and course grades on Canvas for each course in which they are registered for that semester. Canvas only allows access for students to see their own scores.

Records for each student enrolled in the ECU PA Program will be retained by the Department for five years after graduation. The ECU Registrar permanently retains student transcripts. Student files are locked in secured areas or stored in password-protected applications meeting ECU's regulatory requirements. Only faculty, staff, and ancillary support personnel who have met regulatory requirements have access to student files.

### **Student Society**

All students are considered members of the ECU PA Program Student Society (ECUPASS). The faculty encourages each student to become an active student member of both the American Academy of Physician Associates ([AAPA](#)) and the North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants ([NCAPA](#))

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition rates are reviewed and set annually by the North Carolina legislature. The university's Board of Trustees approves fees with final approval pending the Board of Governors of the Greater University of North Carolina System review. Figures are based on **approved** rates for each year. Information on current tuition and fees may be obtained through on the [Financial Services website](#).

Students will also find estimated tuition and fees related to the PA program at: <https://pa.ecu.edu/cost-tuition/>

### **University Property**

A signed waiver will be required for any ECU property issued or borrowed and must be returned at the request of the program. You are responsible for paying for any lost or damaged items.

# **SECTION FOUR**

## **PA PROGRAM ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES**

The didactic and experiential content in PA education can be very sensitive, personal, and sometimes disturbing in nature. Students are reminded that the purpose of the PA Program professional curriculum is to prepare individuals to provide physician-supervised, primary health care to all persons in all environments without regard to the student's personal beliefs and biases.

In addition to the general academic regulations policies and procedures as stated in the [East Carolina University Graduate Catalog](#), the following standard operating procedures pertain to all required courses taken by students enrolled in the ECU Physician Assistant Program.

### **ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS AND TESTING POLICIES**

#### **Reading Assignments**

A syllabus containing but not limited to items such as course goals, course learning objectives, instructional objectives and, an outline for each course and each class session will be provided. Required assignments will appear in the syllabus. Access to the required textbooks is mandatory. Ancillary texts are not mandatory, but such references help the student when further reading is necessary for complete understanding of subjects and material discussed. If you purchased a text, we strongly recommend you keep the text after a course because it may be used in other didactic courses. Furthermore, many will be used as required texts for supervised clinical practicum experiences.

#### **Examinations**

Examinations will vary with each course taught throughout the didactic and clinical phases of the Program. Test items will come from the objectives, lectures, and reading assignments for each course. Questions may be taken directly from lecture material not necessarily found in the text and from the assigned reading not covered in class. Typically, 1 to 1½ minutes will be allowed for each test question. If a student believes that he or she needs more time on examinations, they must provide documentation from the Department for Disability Support Services PRIOR to faculty granting any examination time extension.

We understand that events of great personal importance occur while in school. However, due to exam integrity, fairness to fellow classmates, and the faculty effort required to create and administer exams outside of regularly scheduled times, examinations **must** be taken on the scheduled day and time. No changes will be made for exam dates and times for personal reasons (weddings, family trips, special events, extracurricular activities, etc.), and no exceptions are rare relating to this policy.

#### **Examination Protocol**

The following are procedures that will be followed during the administration of examinations:

1. Students are required to be present for all scheduled examination.
2. Food and eating are not allowed during the examination period or in the testing space.
3. All backpacks and personal items will be placed against the walls of the classroom.
4. No cell phones or other technology like device (e.g., iPad, smart watch, tablet, etc.) are permitted in the testing environment, including in the possession of a student.
5. No communication is allowed between students during exams.

6. An answer sheet will be provided at the beginning of exams to document your answers and use as a scratch sheet. This must be turned into the faculty/proctor at the conclusion of the exam.
7. All exam material must be returned to the faculty/proctor before leaving the room.
8. Once the exam has begun, the proctor will not answer any questions relating to exam questions; students should remain in their seats until they have finished the examination.
9. Students may be excused during the examination one at a time to use the rest room if an exam is given over more than 60 minutes.
10. A student who arrives late to an examination will not be given additional time to complete the exam. If a student arrives 15 or more minutes late from the exam start time, it will be the prerogative of the course director to determine if the student will be permitted to take the exam or whether the exam will be rescheduled for that student. If the exam is rescheduled, the exam will cover the same subject material as covered by the original examination, however the exam may be in a different format than the original examination. Furthermore, any student arriving after other students have completed the exam and left the testing area will not be allowed to start the examination. Students receiving testing accommodations must present to the PA program or designated testing center 15 minutes before the exam start time to prepare and start the exam at the same time as students in the classroom.
11. A student unable to attend a scheduled examination for any reason must immediately notify the course director (in person or e-mail) as soon as possible prior to the start of the exam. The course director will determine whether the student will be permitted to make up the missed examination. A medical health provider note for an absence due to illness is required.
12. If the student is granted a make-up examination, the date and time will be determined by the course director. Students missing an exam must contact the course director to discuss the scheduling of the examination upon their return to campus. Although make-up examinations test the same subject material as covered by the original examination, they may be in a different format than the original examination.
13. Failure to make up the examination within the specified time will result in a grade of "zero" for that examination.
14. If a student fails to appear for an examination and fails to notify the course coordinator prior to the exam, formal documentation will be placed in the student file. In addition, the student will receive a grade of zero for the exam and no make-up exam will be offered. Such behavior is considered unprofessional and may result in disciplinary action.
15. All examinations will remain in possession of the Program. No student is permitted to retain a copy of an examination or quiz or parts thereof.
16. Failure to adhere to the above examination procedures may result in a professionalism violation and disciplinary action.

### **Final Examination Protocol**

Final examinations will be held at the close of each term in all courses. Attendance is required as there will be no deviation from the determined schedule of examinations. A student who is absent from a final examination without an excused absence may be given a grade of “F” in the course.

An excused absence for final exams will be made only with the approval of the course director in cases of emergencies or extenuating circumstance. In such circumstances the course director will forward a written request to the Office of the Registrar, setting forth the nature of the emergency. The student will be given an incomplete (I) for the course. The time and date of the administration of the examination will be determined by the course director and in accordance with university policy.

### **Exam Review Policy**

Test grades will be posted on Canvas, generally **within two regular business days**. In-class exam reviews may be provided by the course instructor. These post-exam reviews will be conducted at a time and place set by the course instructor and generally within 1 week of exam administration. The post-test reviews are provided as a learning tool to help students identify content areas where they have deficiencies and should not be used as a forum to dispute or raise questions about exam items.

#### *Questions Pertaining to Exam Items*

In the event a student has a question or concern regarding an examination question, the student will address this issue in writing within two business days after the in-class exam review.

The student’s question or concern must address a specific issue regarding the examination question, such as having multiple correct answers, having no correct answers, etc. An explanation in support of the student’s argument should be made using supporting documents, such as assigned readings or lecture slides. The course instructor will consider the student’s challenge and respond in writing (email is acceptable) within five business days after receiving the challenge as to their decision.

### **End of Course and End of Rotation Evaluations**

To evaluate our curriculum and remain in compliance with SACS and ARC-PA standards, each student is required to complete a course or rotation evaluation at the end of every didactic course and clinical rotation. The evaluations are mandatory, anonymous, and confidential. The course director or preceptor will not discuss them with the students, and there will be no retaliation against students for being fair and honest in their assessments. Student evaluations are crucial sources of data for the improvement of our curriculum and maintenance of accreditation. In a generation with prolific social media, the ability to post derogatory comments online is commonly encountered. In the setting of student evaluations this practice should be avoided; it is extremely important that students are professional when providing comments on faculty evaluations. Please do not post unprofessional derogatory or hurtful comments. Rather focus your comments on your honest impressions and offer solutions for improvement to courses or faculty.

### **Student Responsibilities**

It is essential to professional development that students adopt and exhibit a self-directed responsibility for the mastery of knowledge and skills. It is the student’s sole responsibility to maintain the required academic standards and to initiate the appropriate actions needed to resolve deficiencies in any area. Students who have been made aware of a deficiency should contact the course director and their faculty advisors as soon as possible to solicit their help and recommendations for improvement.



Students who have personal, ethical, or religious constraints against being involved in certain medical procedures or tasks must inform their faculty advisors and the chair at the beginning of the professional curriculum and these must be noted in the students' files. The students should also remind the clinical coordinators of any concerns prior to the scheduling of supervised clinical practicum experiences; however, a student may be assigned to a clinical site where the procedure in question is performed. The student will not be forced to participate in the procedure, but the student will be required to complete the rotation at the scheduled site. Students **will not** be excused from didactic lectures because of personal, ethical, or religious prohibitions. The material must be taught and learned as part of the body of current medical knowledge. Students will not be excused from entire clinical practicum experiences (e.g., excused from a women's health practicum) due to personal, ethical, or religious constraints.

As stated in your pre-orientation letter, most testing is completed by computer and all course material is posted on Canvas, a web-based learning system. A laptop (not a tablet) is required by the program. Your computer must have an integrated or free-standing webcam and microphone that will effectively allow participation in live teleconference (Webex or Microsoft Teams) meetings when necessary.

In addition to your laptop computer, you will also be required to have a cell phone with video capabilities. The phone must be capable of sustained video use (2 hr. or more) and downloading of applications such as Webex or Microsoft Teams. You will need to secure adequate internet access and speed to participate in live Webex meetings, download and upload large video files, and participate in proctored testing should the need arise.

**Students should arrive to all tests or exams with a functioning laptop and an updated version of Responds testing software.** The laptop should be fully charged and contain the **most current version of Respondus**. It is the student's responsibility to be prepared for testing. Failure to do so may result in a professionalism violation.

### **PROGRAM AND GRADUATE SCHOOL BASIS FOR SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STATUS**

To progress in the program, students must meet the ECU PA program academic outcome expectations. Satisfactory academic progress must be evident and demonstrated by students to continue in the program as described in this handbook. In addition, PA students are also required to meet the academic standards of the Graduate School.

1. To remain in good academic standing, graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. Students who fail to remain in good academic standing in accordance with the 3.0 GPA standard, will be placed on academic probation by the Graduate School, during which time they will have an opportunity to correct their academic deficiencies. The probationary period will last for the term(s) in which the next nine credit hours are attempted. Enrollment in the Graduate School will be automatically terminated for students who fail to correct their academic deficiencies by the end of the probationary period. Graduate students will be subject to immediate dismissal once it becomes mathematically impossible to achieve an overall cumulative GPA of 3.00 by the end of the remaining probationary period.

8. Per the [Academic Eligibility Standards](#) in the Graduate Catalog, “The students’ advisor or graduate advisory committees may render judgments as to whether satisfactory progress is being made toward the degree, taking into account all aspects of academic performance and promise, not necessarily course work alone. A positive judgment is required to remain in good academic standing. For students involved in research-oriented programs, the student’s department and individual advisory committee are responsible for evaluating the student’s skills with respect to performing quality research. Failure to meet programmatic/departmental standards may result in program termination.”
3. In the didactic year any student who earns one course grade of “C” will meet with their faculty advisor or the Associate Director of Didactic Education and be given an academic warning which will be recorded in their student record; any students who earns a second grade of “C” will be required to meet with the SPC and be put on academic probation; any student who earns a third course grades of “C” will be required to meet with the SPC and will be dismissed.
4. A student who earns more than two final practicum grades of “C” in the clinical stage of training will be dismissed.
5. Any student who earns more than three exam grades less than 69.5% in the Core Courses (*see page 35*) will be dismissed.
6. Any student with a final course or SCPE grade less than 69.5% will be dismissed.
7. To progress to the clinical phase of the program, students MUST complete the PACKRAT I with an adequate score (*see #9 below*). Students must also pass all academic courses in the didactic phase. To complete the program requirements in the clinical year all students MUST complete PACKRAT II with an adequate score (refer to SCPE manual), pass all the parts of the mid-year OSCE, pass all parts of the summative exams, and submit an adequate evidence-based assignment.
8. To be retained in the program all students must demonstrate professional conduct, performance, and progress as specified in the Code of Conduct/Professional Promise outlined in this handbook, the [Academic Integrity policy](#), and the East Carolina University’s [Student Code of Conduct](#).
9. To be retained in the program, students must abide by all the policies and procedures reviewed in this manual and by East Carolina University.
10. Based upon a rigorous statistical analysis, students with a PACKRAT I scores less than 135 and a score less than or equal the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile respective to their cohort are at risk for poor performance on the PANCE. Therefore, these students will be required to review their PACKRAT I performance under the supervision of their faculty advisor before they can progress to the clinical year of education. This will include but is not limited to writing an adequate reflective statement and creating a

satisfactory NCCPA blueprint-based outline of the content areas specialties that fell below the National Performance Average

Students may appeal dismissal decisions by following the process outlined in the Graduate School Appeals Procedure [Probation and Termination](#).

If a student's professional curriculum is discontinued for any reason other than approved deceleration, there will be no re-entry into the Program other than to reapply through CASPA.

### **EXAM REMEDIATION AND REVIEW POLICY**

#### **Core courses included in the PA programs exam remediation and review policy include:**

##### Fall One

PADP 6050 Introduction to Clinical Medicine  
PADP 6200 History and Physical Exam I  
PADP 6510 Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics I

##### Spring

PADP 6150 Clinical Medicine I  
PADP 6010 Diagnostic Methods I  
PADP 6210 History and Physical Exam II  
PADP 6520 Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics II

##### Summer

PADP 6250 Clinical Medicine II  
PADP 6020 Diagnostic Methods II  
PADP 6220 History and Physical Exam III  
PADP 6530 Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics III

##### Fall Two

PADP 6690 Introduction to Clinical Practice  
PADP 6650 Surgery and EM Skills

##### **Review**

If a student scores between 70-74% on a Core Course exam or OSCE/CSE, they are required to contact the **course director** within five business days of exam release to review the exam with the course director. If the student does not contact the course director within this timeframe the course director will contact the student to set up an exam review. Students who fail to contact the course director within five business days about an exam score between 70-74% will also be contacted by their faculty advisor for not meeting the program's professionalism expectations.

## **Remediation**

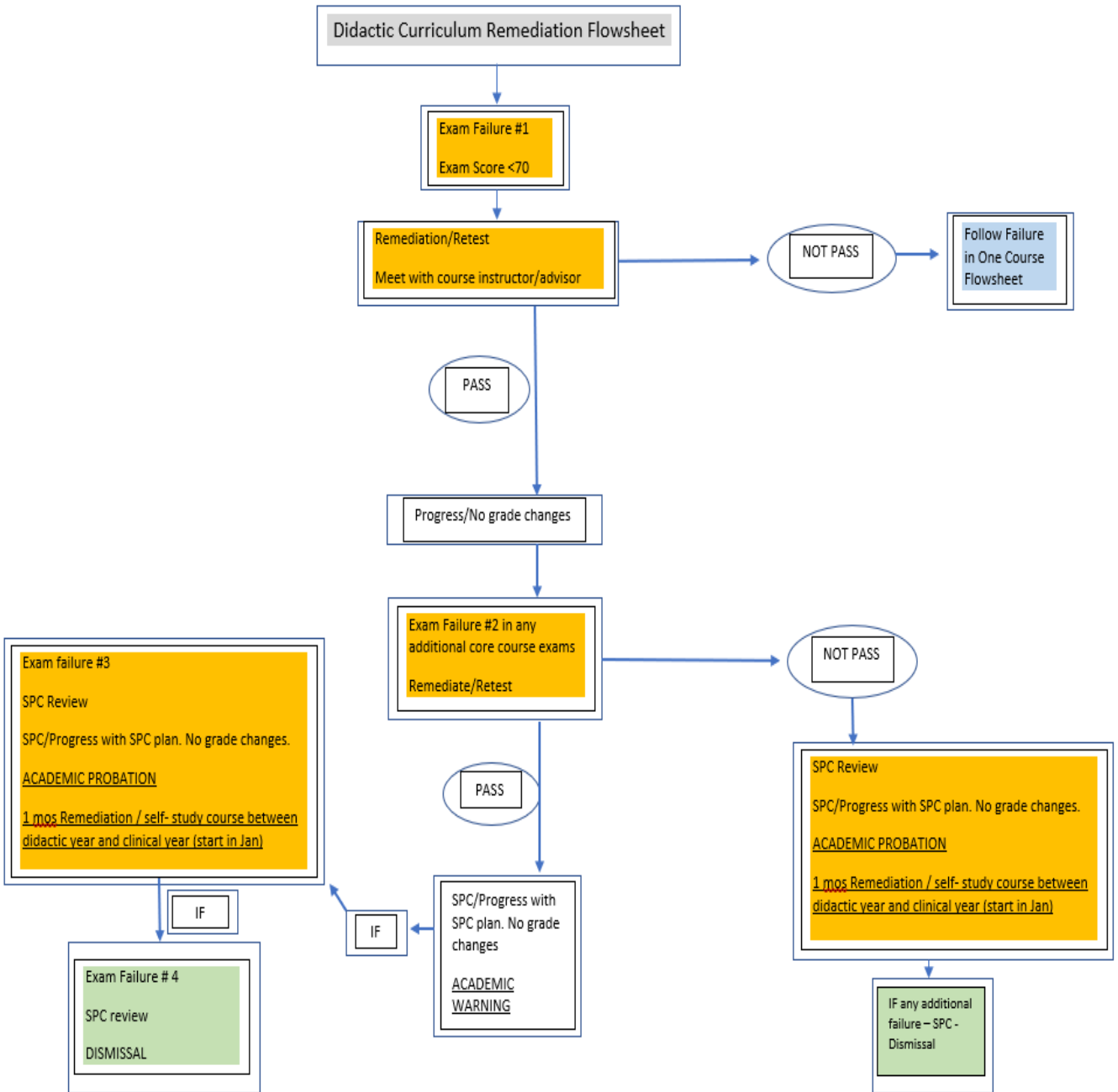
Exam failure is defined as a score less than C (< 69.5%).

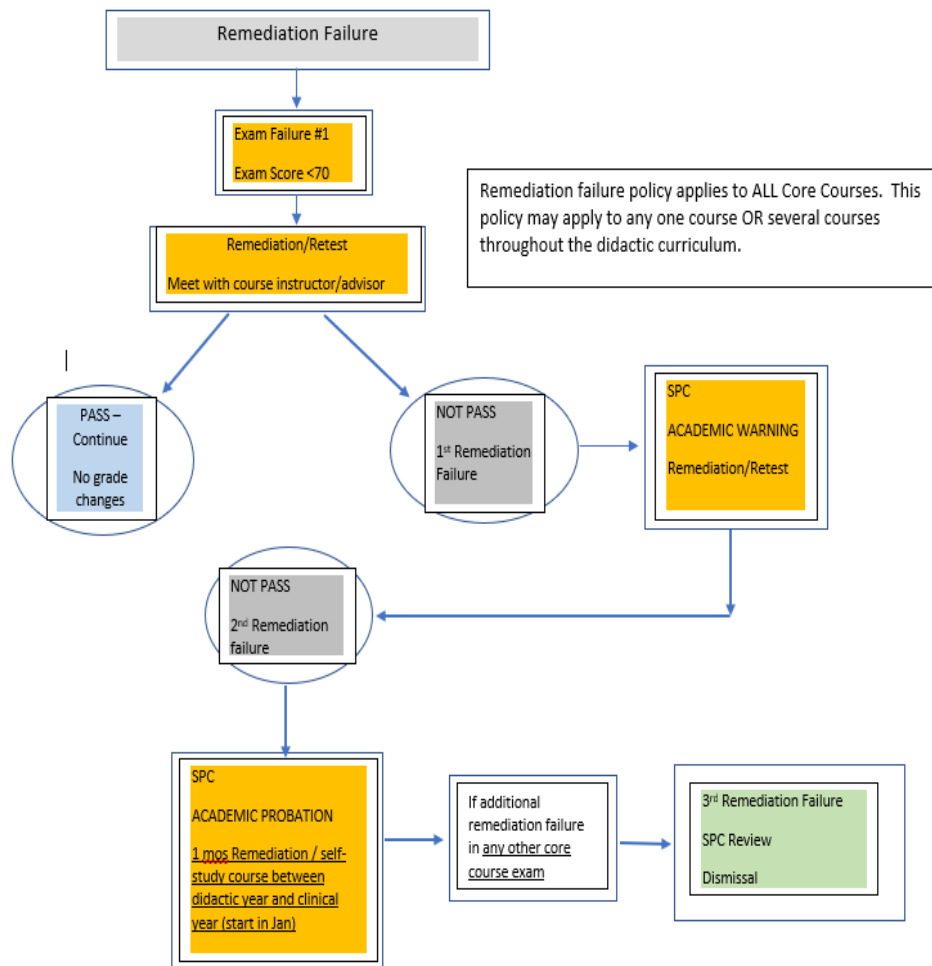
This policy applies to all the exams and assessments specified above in the didactic Core Courses (1<sup>st</sup> four semesters).

- First exam failure → remediation → remediation successful → progress
- Second exam failure → remediation → remediation successful → required Student Progress Committee (SPC) meeting → progress on academic warning with a recommended remedial plan provided by SPC.
- Third exam failure → remediation → remediation successful → required SPC meeting → progress on academic probation with a 1-month remediation/self-study course between didactic year and clinical year based on remedial plan provided by SPC.
- Fourth exam failure → If a student fails a fourth exam within the first four semesters of the program the student is subject to dismissal. In such a case, the SPC will meet with the student to allow them to discuss any extenuating circumstances, review the students record, and send a recommendation letter with rational and justification to the program director within ten working days of the fourth exam failure.

## **Retaking a failed remediation exam policy**

- Passing a remediation exam is defined as obtaining a score of 74.5% or better on retesting; however, the original grade they obtained by the student on the assessment will remain unchanged. Students may only fail two remediation exams in the first four semesters of the program. If a student fails a third remediation exam, they will be subject to dismissal.
- Third remediation exam failure – If a student fails a third remediation exam within the first four semesters of the program the student is subject to dismissal. In such a case, the SPC will meet with the student to allow them to discuss any extenuating circumstances, review the students record, and send a recommendation letter with rational and justification to the Program Director within ten working days of the third remediation exam failure.





1. Rounding to the one decimal place i.e., 69.51 =70, 69.49= 69 (see page 26)
- 2 SPC will assign additional remedial plans which might include but not limited to, items such as: retesting, counseling, depending on student inclination – testing accommodations, more frequent meetings with faculty advisor and course director.
- 3 Remediation – The ECU PA program defines remediation as the process of addressing deficiencies in a student’s knowledge and skills, such that the correction of these deficiencies is measurable and can be documented. Remediation of a failed assessment involves identifying the area(s) in which a student performed below expectations on, then creating an individualized plan of study and assessment so that the student demonstrates an acceptable fund of knowledge in the area(s) of concern. Examples are but not limited to re-test, repeating OSCE or ICP case, written assignment, oral challenge...). The course director will attest to adequate remediation by documenting such in the student’s file and must include evidence of the student completed instrument or process used to determine correction of noted deficiencies. In most cases, remediation will be completed by the end of the term in which the assessment was failed.

4 Core courses taught by PA faculty apply to the PA Program review and remediation policy.

**ECU PA PROGRAM ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS**

ECU PA Program Progression	
<p>Recognizing that upon graduation, physician assistant students will be eligible for licensing by a medical board and will be required to assume responsibility for the life and welfare of other human beings, the ECU PA program expects every student to demonstrate a level of competence and a pattern of behavior that is consistent with these professional responsibilities.</p> <p>Implicit in the promotion and graduation of each student from the program is the faculty’s endorsement that the student has demonstrated competence, behavior, and judgment deserving of public trust. Per the <u>Academic Eligibility Standards</u> in the Graduate Catalog, “The students’ advisor or graduate advisory committees may render judgments as to whether satisfactory progress is being made toward the degree, taking into account all aspects of academic performance and promise, not necessarily course work alone. A positive judgment is required to remain in good academic standing. For students involved in research-oriented programs, the student’s department and individual advisory committee are responsible for evaluating the student’s skills with respect to performing quality research. Failure to meet programmatic/departmental standards may result in program termination.”</p>	
Semester to Semester Progression during Didactic Curriculum	
1.	Completed all courses with a grade of 70 or better.
2.	Earn no more than two course grades of “C.”
3.	Receive no more than three exam grades less than C in Core Courses any semester.
4.	Successfully completed remediation in all core content in specified time period.
5.	Be in good professional standing and have no significant unresolved professional issues (complete remediation in specified period if warranted by SPC/faculty).
6.	All immunizations up to date as required by the Program.
Didactic Year to Clinical Year Progression	
1.	Earn no more than two final grades of C during didactic phase.
2.	Be in good academic standing with an overall GPA $\geq$ 3.0 with no other academic performance concerns per the Graduate School Policy under Academic Eligibility Standards
3.	Update required immunizations prior to the start of clinical year.
4.	Be in good professional standing and have no significant unresolved professional issues (complete remediation in specified period if warranted by SPC/faculty).
5.	Complete the PACKRAT I exam.

6.	Successfully review a PACKRAT I score of < 135 and ≤ the 10 <sup>th</sup> percentile respective to the cohort.
7.	If required, successfully completed remediation of all core content in the specified time-period.
8.	Provide proof of satisfactory completion of and current certification in BLS/ACLS, infection control, HIPAA, and OSHA regulations.
9.	Abided by all PADP standard operating procedures.
<b>Graduation from the Program</b>	
1.	Completed all courses with a grade of 70 or better within four academic years.
2.	Be in good academic standing as evidenced by 1) Didactic- no more than three exam grades less than C in core courses and no more than two course grades of C, 2) Met the requirements of academic successful progression per the SCPE manual 3) Have no other academic concerns per the Graduate School Policy under Academic Eligibility Standards.
3.	Maintain an overall GPA of ≥ 3.0.
4.	Abided by all PADP standard operating procedures.
5.	Completed remediation of all core content as required.
6.	Adequate performance on PACKRAT II and EOC exam (see SCPE manual).
7.	Completed all clinical year courses with satisfactory preceptor evaluation and end of rotation exam scores.
8.	Successfully completed (see SCPE manual) the PA program summative evaluation (CSEs/OSCE's, End of Curriculum Examination, and practical exam).
9.	Provide an evidence-based presentation and/or quality written paper related to a topic of interest identified in the clinical year.
10.	Complete all graduation requirements required by the university (academic, graduate, and financial). NOTE: this includes "applying" for graduation through Degree Works.
11.	Be in good professional standing and have no significant unresolved professional issues (complete remediation in specified period if warranted by SPC/faculty)
12.	Demonstrated competence in all required procedural skills

### **DECCELERATION / WITHDRAWAL**

#### **Deceleration Policy**

Deceleration is defined as the loss of a student from the initial cohort, but who remains matriculated in the physician assistant program. Generally, deceleration occurs due to an unexpected catastrophic event that makes it impossible to continue in the program for a period of time. A student who wishes to decelerate due to an unexpected catastrophic event should do so in writing within, ten working days of their last date of attendance, to the program director who will respond to their request within ten working days. Deceleration may also be recommended by the SPC due to academic or professional considerations.

Any student who does not meet the Graduate School/Department of PA Studies academic eligibility standards will be referred to the Student Progress Committee that will make a recommendation for dismissal or deceleration to the program director based on the individual circumstances involved with each student.



If a student is granted deceleration, they must successfully complete a specific plan developed by the Student Progression Committee within a specified time period, or they will be subject to dismissal.

### **Academic Appeals Process**

A student must try to resolve grade disputes with the course director and participating course faculty. Grade disputes that are not resolved with the course director will be brought to the attention of the department chair who may elect to conduct an informal inquiry. Clearly, grade decisions remain within the jurisdiction and rights of the course director.

Decisions for probation and/or dismissal from the ECU PA Program follow the criteria presented in the ECU Graduate School Catalog and the PA Handbook. Students wishing to appeal a course grade, probation, or dismissal should follow the graduate school policy on the [graduate school appeals process](#) and/or [Academic Eligibility Standards](#).

### **Withdrawal and Readmission**

Any student desiring to withdraw from, or withdraw from and later apply for readmission to, the ECU PA Program must follow the standard operating procedures for [withdrawal and readmission](#).

The student must first contact their advisor and if the student wants to proceed with withdrawal, must meet with the department chair and present a letter of withdrawal to the department chair prior to initiating any standard operating procedures with the graduate school. If the student has been aware financial aid, they must communicate their intentions to the [Office of Student Financial Aid](#).

### **Medical Withdrawal Policy**

Discussions with PA program faculty regarding medical withdrawal options are encouraged for students with unexpected circumstances that affect their ability to maintain the cognitive and technical skill necessary for program completion. Faculty advisors, the Director of Didactic Education/Associate Director of Didactic Education (didactic phase) or the Director of Clinical Education/Clinical Coordinator (clinical phase) should be contacted to discuss situations in which students feel they may not be able to meet those standards, even if temporarily. Examples: Students who have traumatic injuries or unexpected surgeries, students who develop a cancer requiring surgery and/or other treatments. **Seeking assistance from the Department does not equate to withdrawal but rather allows communication and support between both faculty and student. The discussion also allows the didactic and clinical team to be better prepared.**

Students seeking medical withdrawal must follow the applicable policies and procedures specified by the Office of the Dean of Students <https://deanofstudents.ecu.edu/home/withdrawals/> . If a medical leave is granted by the university, students who are able, must meet with the Student Progress Committee (SPC) in order to determine their standing in the PA program, which may range from requiring reapplication and starting anew.

## **STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE**

### **Student Progress Committee (SPC)**

The Student Progress Committee (SPC) of the ECU Department of PA Studies is comprised of faculty members from the PA Program and may include representatives from other programs and/or support services at the University. The committee is chaired by a member of the faculty as determined by the department chair. The committee will generally include the student's academic advisor, the course director for the course in

which the student is struggling, and another member of the PA faculty. A non-PA program individual(s) may join the committee upon request from the department chair.

The charge of the SPC is to evaluate a student's progress and consider recommendations made by the student's instructor, evaluator, advisor, or clinical preceptor and to make appropriate recommendations pertaining to that progress. The committee will convene on an *ad hoc* basis at any time to address specific student progress and at the end of each semester if needed. The SPC may review student records and discuss student records with appropriate faculty members and/or preceptors in determining an appropriate course of action for students experiencing academic and/or professional conduct difficulties in the program. The SPC may choose to meet with individual students. The committee can recommend remedial or corrective actions, counseling, probation, or dismissal. They can also recommend repeating supervised clinical practicum experiences (SCPEs) and/or course work, including deceleration. Recommendations will be made on an individual basis after considering pertinent information in each case. The committee's recommendation will be submitted to the department chair who reviews the recommendation and the student file, then issues a letter of the final decision to the student regarding their status in the program.

The following list, though not all inclusive, are reasons that the SPC may be called to evaluate a student in the program:

- Any student who fails to meet the performance criteria set forth in this manual, syllabi and/or professionalism standards throughout the didactic and clinical curriculum.
- Inadequate performance despite repeated efforts towards reassessment.
- More than one course grade of C during the didactic curriculum with GPA >3.0.
- Patterns of low scores on exams, OSCE's, lab quizzes, competencies.
- Overall didactic performance concerns prior to transition to clinical year.
- Professional misconduct, behavior and/or attitude inconsistent with the PA Profession.
- Failure to abide by any of the program policies/procedures found in any of the PA Student Handbooks and manuals (including Clinical year).
- Verbal or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptors or designees indicating that a student is not adhering to site regulations, site schedule, ethical standards of conduct, limitations of student role, or that the student is not progressing academically or not demonstrating proficiency to a level that it may jeopardize patient safety.

*It is important to remember that some aspects of knowledge integration and clinical judgment cannot be adequately evaluated by examinations alone. Observations from academic and/or clinical faculty are crucial for evaluating these critical skills.*

### **Responsibilities**

Each student will be considered individually with emphasis on competence. The SPC may recommend continued pursuit of studies for any student who is justifiably assumed capable of completing the PA program requirements within the program time limits. The faculty will review the progress of all students at least once yearly and will recommend:

- Promotion of a student from one year of study to the next.

- Certification that a student has met all program goals and outcomes needed to meet graduation requirements.

### **Clinical Experiences outside the Professional Curriculum**

The Department Chair must approve any clinical experiences or patient contact not scheduled by the PA Program. Unapproved clinical experiences or patient contact in which students represent themselves as enrolled in the ECU PA Program without Department Chair approval may result in disciplinary action.

### **Removal of Elected and Appointed Leaders**

Candidates for elected and appointed leadership positions are in good standing at the time of election or appointment. Once elected or appointed, all students holding leadership positions must remain “a student in good standing.” Good standing will be determined by the Student Progress Committee (SPC).

The SPC may remove a Class Officer for students given professional and/or academic warning or probation. The SPC may also remove a Class Officer should they fail more than one exam in any semester or should their GPA in any semester fall below a 3.0.

### **Clinical Courses**

Please refer to SCPE manual for policies related to the clinical year.

### **Clinical Year Policies**

Refer to the SCPE Manual for matters related to the clinical year.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **Definitions of Academic Integrity Violations**

An academic integrity violation (AIV) is defined as any activity that exhibits dishonesty in the educational process or that compromises the academic honor of the university. Examples of AIVs include, but are not limited to, the following:

2. **Cheating**: Unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to copying from another student’s paper or receiving unauthorized assistance during a quiz or examination; using books, notes, or other devices when these are not authorized; improperly obtaining tests or examinations. collaborating on academic work without authorization and/or without truthful disclosure of the extent of that collaboration; allowing or directing a substitute to take an examination.
3. **Plagiarism**: Copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting the same as one’s own original work. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: submitting a paper that has been purchased or downloaded from an essay-writing service; directly quoting, word for word, from any source, including online sources, without indicating that the material comes directly from that source, omitting a citation to a source when paraphrasing or summarizing another’s work; submitting a paper written by another person as one’s own work.

4. Falsification/Fabrication: The statement of any untruth, either spoken or written, regarding any circumstances related to academic work. This includes any untrue statements made with regard to a suspected AIV. Examples of falsification/fabrication include, but are not limited to making up data, research results, experimental procedures, internship, or practicum experiences, or otherwise claiming academic-related experience that one has not actually had, inventing or submitting deceptive citations for the sources of one's information; submitting a false excuse for an absence from class or other academic obligation.

5. Multiple submission: The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work for credit more than once without authorization from the faculty member who receives the later submission. Examples of multiple submission include, but are not limited to submitting the same essay for credit in two courses without first receiving written permission; making minor revisions to an assignment that has already received credit in a course and submitting it in another class as if it was new work.

6. Violation assistance: Knowingly helping or attempting to help someone else in an act that constitutes an AIV. Examples of violation assistance include, but are not limited to knowingly allowing another to copy answers during an examination or quiz, distributing test questions or examination materials without permission from the faculty member teaching the course; writing an essay, or substantial portions thereof, for another student to submit as his or her own work, taking an examination or test for another student; distributing information involving clinical simulation and skills assessments.

7. Violation attempts: Attempting any act that, if completed, would constitute an AIV as defined herein. In other words, it does not matter if a student succeeds in carrying out any of the above violations, the fact that a violation was attempted is itself a violation of academic integrity.

#### Responsibilities of Students:

ECU students are responsible for promoting academic integrity in the ECU community by upholding it in their own work and by reporting any suspected violations. A student knowing of circumstances in which an AIV may have occurred (or is likely to occur) should bring this knowledge to the attention of a faculty member or OSRR.

ECU students are responsible for understanding what plagiarism is, learning the recognized techniques of proper attribution of sources used in the preparation of written work, and identifying allowable resource materials or aids to be used during examination or in completion of any graded work. Students should seek clarification from faculty if it is not clear whether a certain action would violate this Academic Integrity Policy.

ECU students are responsible for complying with faculty classroom procedures designed to reduce the possibility of cheating—such as removing unauthorized materials or aids from the classroom and protecting one's own examination paper from the view of others.

ECU students are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of examinations by divulging no information concerning an examination, directly or indirectly, to another student.

ECU students are responsible for reporting any instance in which reasonable grounds exist to

believe that a student has given or received unauthorized aid in graded work or in other respects committed an AIV. Such report should be made to the OSRR, the Office of the Dean of Students (DOS), or other appropriate instructor or official of their college or school.

ECU students are responsible for cooperating with the OSRR in the investigation and hearing of any incident of alleged violation, including providing testimony when called upon.

Any student observed or suspected of being in violation of academic integrity will be subject to the university's Academic Integrity policy as well as the Department of Physician Assistant Studies' Academic and Professional Code of Conduct.

During the clinical phase of the program, advanced software and cameras will be used for monitoring academic integrity during exams. Proctoring via WebEx and/or Microsoft Teams may be performed by Department faculty and/or staff and these sessions may be recorded. These recordings can and will be reviewed if there is suspicion of a breach of integrity.

## **TECHNOLOGY/MEDIA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

### **Purpose**

The purpose for this standard operating procedure is to ensure that students, faculty, and staff are aware of the current standard operating procedures and support that will be offered by the department regarding computers, network, media, and internet resources offered through the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### **Computers**

The [current computer configuration recommended](#) by the department will be the only computer supported by the university's computer center. If you choose not to purchase the required computer, it is your responsibility to obtain help from outside resources. For information on all the information and technology services that are supplied through ECU, it is best to start [ECU Student Technology Quick Links](#)

### **Computer Standard Operating Procedure**

Any violations related to the computer standard operating procedure as outlined in the ECU policies and procedures, which are found at <http://www.ecu.edu/PRR/08/05/04/>, will be subject to university and Department of PA Studies Academic Integrity policy.

### **Email Address Recognition**

The university provides email accounts to students. This email account is where all official correspondence from the department will be sent. Check it frequently. If you have difficulties with your email account or password, complete self-service reset through Portal Maintenance [ECU Maintenance](#), submit a help ticket, or call the university Help Desk at 252-328-9866 to have your password reset.

### **PA Program Policy related to the use of artificial intelligence (AI).**

AI tools should not be used in the completion of assignments unless an instructor for a given course specifically authorizes their use. Some instructors may approve of using generative AI tools in the academic setting for specific goals. However, these tools should be used only with the explicit and clear permission of each individual instructor, and then only in the ways allowed by the instructor.

### **Software**

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies utilizes several software packages from different vendors; however, only approved hardware and software will be supported. Below is a link of supported hardware and software that will be used during the program. The department reserves the right to make modifications to this list as seen fit. Email notifications will be sent to students, staff, and faculty of the program if any changes occur, and when updates are available along with a location of where to obtain the updates.

[Software](#)

### **Wireless Local Area Network**

Information regarding wireless access, via EDUroam can be found [Here](#)

### **Web Resources**

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies maintains two forms of web resources which are the only authorized web sites of the Department: [Canvas](#) and the [PA Studies Web page](#).

These two resources are monitored on a constant basis to make sure they are reliable and contain accurate information. These sites are for academic use only.

Material gained from [Canvas](#) shall not be distributed outside the PA program without expressed written consent of the copyright holder.

## **PA PROGRAM LABORATORY POLICY**

### **Physical Examination and Teaching Laboratory Use**

No student(s) will occupy the PE Lab, (room 4335) without faculty permission. This room will be unlocked for a scheduled lab, practical, or class only by the course director or by a faculty member who will remain and supervise the students. Manikins and models will not be touched without prior faculty permission. All scheduled labs, practicals, or classes are mandatory unless otherwise noted by the course director, and students will attend and remain until released by the course director. No food or drinks are to be consumed in the lab. There will be no loitering in the hall outside these rooms. Loud talking or boisterous activity in the hall outside classrooms is disrespectful to other students and faculty. Students should either remain quiet or move to non-teaching areas during breaks or between classes. Following lab, students should return the exam tables and chairs to the pre-lab setting.

## **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

### **Student Employment and Instruction**

Part-time employment by PA students at ECU is ***strongly*** discouraged. The following rules apply to PA students who wish to work during their training:

1. Any part-time employment **must be reported in writing** to the department chair and approved before employment begins.
2. Working students must comply with the ECU PA Program's academic schedule.
3. Any student unable to maintain adequate academic standing will be asked to terminate his/her employment. Students who fail to terminate employment upon request are subject to dismissal.
4. PA students are not allowed to work for the PA Program.

5. PA students may not be used to substitute for didactic or clinical faculty, or administrative staff.
6. Students **will not** be allowed to work during the clinical year due to time requirements at the rotation sites.
7. Students will not provide instruction in course or lab while matriculated in the PA Program.

## **GRADUATION OPERATING PROCEDURES**

### **Graduation Standard Operating Procedures**

Upon successful completion of all academic and clinical requirements of East Carolina University, students will receive a Master of Science degree in Physician Assistant Studies. Upon graduation, students will be eligible to sit for the PANCE administered by the NCCPA and to apply for licensure. However, graduation does not necessarily imply credentialing, a license to practice, or employment as a PA. All states, including North Carolina, have additional components to their application process to be completed before a graduate PA can practice.

The following must be completed to prepare for graduation:

1. Application for Graduation must be completed online using [Pirate Port](#) at least one semester prior to completing the requirements of the degree.
2. [Licensure](#) – Students must register and pass the PANCE prior to receiving a license to practice in North Carolina. Please do not ask for a Program Completion Verification Form for the State of NC. For all students who have reported their intent to practice in NC (survey collected in November) and completed all program requirements this form will be sent to the North Carolina Medical Board. This form is generally sent on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday after the White Coat Ceremony. If you have any questions about your Program Completion Verification Form, please email Ms. Carey McDonald.

North Carolina Medical Board (NCMB)  
P.O. Box 20007  
Raleigh, NC 27619  
Phone (919) 828-1212 / Fax: (919) 828-1295  
<http://www.ncmedboard.org/>

**Remember:** It is each student's responsibility, and NOT the responsibility of the Department of PA Studies, to complete licensure requirements. Students should begin the licensure application process **at least 3 months** prior to their anticipated graduation.

3. Permanent Address - It is essential that you leave your permanent address, telephone number, and email address with the PADP prior to leaving campus so you can receive important information and can be contacted if any problems might arise with any of the above standard operating procedures.
4. Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination – For information about certification or the NCCPA, you may contact:

National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)  
12000 Findley Road  
Suite 100  
John's Creek, GA 30097-1409  
(678)-417-8100  
<http://www.nccpa.net>

## **SECURITY AND SAFETY**

### **Building Safety and Security**

**Building Hours:** The Health Sciences Building on the West Campus is open during the following hours:

<b>CAHS (Effective 8/1/24)</b>	<b>Mon - Fri</b>
1 Card Access Only (Morning)*	6:00a - 7:30a
Open To All (No 1 Card Required)	7:30a - 5:30p
1 Card Access Only (Evening)*	5:30p - 8:00p

\*Anyone with a valid 1 Card (faculty, staff, and students) can access the building during these hours. No approved security is required.

### **ECU 1 Card**

The ECU 1 Card is the official photo identification card for East Carolina University. It allows access to campus activities and events. You will be able to access the OSCE center and may need to show your 1 Card to stay in the building after hours. Please check the web site for 1 Card office hours, as their hours may vary. <https://1card.ecu.edu/?msclkid=a1d397b7b6a511ec81fcfabfb72569b4>

**Safety and Security:** Students who believe they have witnessed suspicious activity should immediately inform PADP faculty/staff, who will promptly investigate the situation, and/or immediately report such to campus security (252-328-6787) or the police (911). If a faculty member is not available, students may use one of the emergency call boxes located immediately in the parking lot. The blue light located at the top of the structure identifies the call box.

Students are encouraged to download [LiveSafe safety app](#) which allows communication between users and campus safety and anonymously reports concerns through various formats.

### **Emergency Standard Operating Procedures**

The ECU [Emergency Policy and Procedures Manual](#), a brochure describing university standard operating procedures for emergency situations

Fire drills are conducted regularly by the ECU Office of Environmental Health and Safety. When the fire alarm is heard, all students and personnel should leave their respective areas immediately, close all doors upon exiting, and evacuate to a safe distance from the building, which is designated as the east parking lot near the duck pond. Students should then immediately report to PADP faculty/staff upon reaching the east parking lot near the duck pond so that faculty/staff can account for their safety. Students, faculty, and staff



should remain outside the building until otherwise instructed by personnel from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

Notices regarding university operating hours and building closings for severe weather are posted on the ANNOUNCE listing on the ECU email system and at: <http://www.ecu.edu/alert/>.

In case of tornado or hurricane, students, faculty, and staff should proceed to interior areas where there are no windows. In case of fire, vacate the building according to posted fire escape routes or follow the stair exit signs. Do not use the elevators in case of fire.

### **CPR Assistance**

Most PA Faculty are certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and able to assist in an emergency.

First Aid Supplies – A first aid kit is available in the PADP office.

Some points of importance in times of emergency:

1. In case of any emergency requiring evacuation of the building, each instructor is responsible for the evacuation of the students in that classroom.
2. The PA Department evacuation assembly area is on the east side of the parking lot adjacent to the duck pond. If that is not available, the secondary assembly area is the parking lot directly across the street from Laupus Library (faculty lot). Designated faculty or staff will be available to take attendance of all faculty, staff, and students in our department. Do not leave assembly area without notifying responsible parties.
3. While evacuating, move expeditiously, but do not run. Help disabled personnel during the evacuation. If you cannot get them out of the building, move them to a fire-resistant area, such as a stairwell, and notify ECU police or firefighters on the scene.
4. Know where the nearest stairs are at all times (from your office, your classroom, restrooms, library, etc.). The evacuation floor plans are posted throughout the building. Do not use the elevators in the case of a fire or other emergency that might compromise elevator functioning.
5. In the presence of smoke, the clearest air is close to the floor – thus, it is best to get down and crawl. Walking in smoke can cause you to pass out or get lost. In poor visibility, it is advisable to hold on to the persons ahead and behind you to keep people from becoming lost.
6. If for any reason you are unable to evacuate, close all doors, seal all cracks with cloth or other suitable material, and signal for help by hanging an object out the window.

Emergency numbers: 911 or 252- 328-6787 – to report the nature of emergency, your name, and your location.

## **BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN**

### **Exposure to Bodily Fluids**

Exposure to blood, body fluid, serum, or unfixed tissue by needle stick, cut, or splash onto mucous membrane or non-intact skin needs to be evaluated immediately at the facility in which you are working. If the student is working at another hospital outside ECU Health, follow the standard operating procedures for exposure as detailed at the facility where you are working in addition to contacting Student Health Services (252-328-6317) and the PA Program immediately. You may be given post-exposure prophylaxis depending on risk assessment.

The following is a condensed procedure listing to be followed by students who suffer exposure to possible blood borne pathogen by needle stick, cut, or splash onto mucous membrane or non-intact skin.

### **ECU Students**

#### **Student Exposure at BSOM:**

1. Report incident to faculty/supervisor and program director.
2. Complete Non-Patient Incident Report.
3. Report exposure to Prospective Health <https://prospective-health.ecu.edu/>
  - a. Prospective Health will investigate source patient.
  - b. Student evaluation, treatment, and follow-ups at Student Health Services.

#### **Student exposure at other ECU Health Science Center facility:**

1. Report incident to faculty preceptor and program director.
2. Faculty preceptor will contact Prospective Health for assistance in completing source patient evaluation.
3. Faculty preceptor will refer the student-to-Student Health Services for evaluation, treatment, and follow-up.

#### **Student exposure at other ECU facility:**

1. Student will report exposure to ECU faculty preceptor or supervisor.
2. Faculty preceptor or supervisor will perform the source patient evaluation and may contact Prospective Health for advice.
3. Faculty preceptor or supervisor will refer the student-to-Student Health Services for evaluation, treatment, and follow-up.

#### **Student exposure ECU Health Medical Center and affiliated practices:**

1. Student will report exposure to faculty preceptor and program director.
2. Student will report exposure to ECU Health Occupational Health at 252-847-4386
3. Faculty preceptor will refer student to Student Health Services for evaluation, treatment, and follow-up.

#### **Student exposure at other facility:**

1. Student will report exposure to faculty preceptor on site and clinical coordinator.
2. Student will complete facility incident report.
3. Faculty preceptor will evaluate source patient.
4. Faculty preceptor will refer student for evaluation to the following:
  - a. Student Health Services if student returns to Greenville daily; or occupational health at the current facility if the student cannot return to Greenville.

- b. Student surveillance would continue at Student Health Services upon the student's return to campus if treatment initiated at the local facility.
- c. Unless covered by the clinical facility per ECU legal agreement, all expenses for the exposed student's medical care and treatment are the responsibility of the student.

**Other Student Issues:**

- 1. If the exposure may adversely affect the academic or curricular performance of the student, the Program Director should be notified by the healthcare provider caring for the student (with the student's consent).
- 2. Student evaluation or treatment at Student Health Services may result in charges not covered by student fees. Charges for these services should be submitted to the student's health insurance for coverage.

# **SECTION FIVE**

## **COMPETENCIES FOR THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSION**

As future physician assistants, it is important to be knowledgeable about important documents related to scope, practice and expectations of physician assistants as defined by our professional organizations and governmental bodies. The competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession are one such document which all practicing PAs should be familiar with. [Competencies for the Physician Associate Profession](#)

*(Adopted 2005, reaffirmed 2010, 2018, amended 2013, 2021)*

### **Introduction**

This document defines the specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that physician assistants (PAs) in all clinical specialties and settings in the United States should be able to demonstrate throughout their careers. This set of competencies is designed to serve as a roadmap for the individual PA, for teams of clinicians, for healthcare systems, and other organizations committed to promoting the development and maintenance of professional competencies among PAs. While some competencies are acquired during the PA education program, others are developed and mastered as PAs progress through their careers. The PA professional competencies include seven competency domains that capture the breadth and complexity of modern PA practice. These are:

- (1) knowledge for practice
- (2) interpersonal and communication skills
- (3) person-centered care
- (4) interprofessional collaboration
- (5) professionalism and ethics
- (6) practice-based learning and quality improvement
- (7) society and population health.

The PA competencies reflect the well-documented need for medical practice to focus on surveillance, patient education, prevention, and population health. These revised competencies reflect the growing autonomy of PA decision-making within a team-based framework and the need for the additional skills in leadership and advocacy. As PAs develop greater competency throughout their careers, they determine their level of understanding and confidence in addressing patients' health needs, identify knowledge and skills that they need to develop, and then work to acquire further knowledge and skills in these areas. This is a lifelong process that requires discipline, self-evaluation, and commitment to learning throughout a PA's professional career.

### **1. Knowledge for Practice**

Demonstrate knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care. PAs should be able to:

- 1.1 Demonstrate investigative and critical thinking in clinical situations.
- 1.2 Access and interpret current and credible sources of medical information.
- 1.3 Apply principles of epidemiology to identify health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources, and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for individuals and populations.
- 1.4 Discern among acute, chronic, and emergent disease states.
- 1.5 Apply principles of clinical sciences to diagnose disease and utilize therapeutic decision-making, clinical problem-solving, and other evidence-based practice skills.

- 1.6 Adhere to standards of care, and to relevant laws, policies, and regulations that govern the delivery of care in the United States.
- 1.7 Consider cost-effectiveness when allocating resources for individual patient or population-based care.
- 1.8 Work effectively and efficiently in various healthcare delivery settings and systems relevant to the PA's clinical specialty.
- 1.9 Identify and address social determinants that affect access to care and deliver high quality care in a value-based system.
- 1.10 Participate in surveillance of community resources to determine if they are adequate to sustain and improve health.
- 1.11 Utilize technological advancements that decrease costs, improve quality, and increase access to healthcare.

## **2. Interpersonal and Communication Skills**

Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals. PAs should be able to:

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

## **3. Person-centered Care**

Provide person-centered care that includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management and healthcare that is evidence-based, supports patient safety, and advances health equity.

PAs should be able to:

- 3.1 Gather accurate and essential information about patients through history taking, physical examination, and diagnostic testing.
- 3.2 Elicit and acknowledge the story of the individual and apply the context of the individual's life to their care, such as environmental and cultural influences.
- 3.3 Interpret data based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and clinical judgment to make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions.
- 3.4 Develop, implement, and monitor effectiveness of patient management plans.
- 3.5 Maintain proficiency to perform safely all medical, diagnostic, and surgical procedures considered essential for the practice specialty.

- 3.6 Counsel, educate, and empower patients and their families to participate in their care and enable shared decision-making.
- 3.7 Refer patients appropriately, ensure continuity of care throughout transitions between providers or settings, and follow up on patient progress and outcomes.
- 3.8 Provide healthcare services to patients, families, and communities to prevent health problems and to maintain health.

#### **4. Interprofessional Collaboration**

Demonstrate the ability to engage with a variety of other healthcare professionals in a manner that optimizes safe, effective, patient- and population-centered care. PAs should be able to:

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

#### **5. Professionalism and Ethics**

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

PAs should be able to:

- 5.1 Adhere to standards of care in the role of the PA in the healthcare team.
- 5.2 Demonstrate compassion, integrity, and respect for others.
- 5.3 Demonstrate responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest.
- 5.4 Show accountability to patients, society, and the PA profession.
- 5.5 Demonstrate cultural humility and responsiveness to a diverse patient populations, including diversity in sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, and abilities.
- 5.6 Show commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of care, confidentiality, patient autonomy, informed consent, business practices, and compliance with relevant laws, policies, and regulations.
- 5.7 Demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning and education of students and other healthcare professionals.
- 5.8 Demonstrate commitment to personal wellness and self-care that supports the provision of quality patient care.
- 5.9 Exercise good judgment and fiscal responsibility when utilizing resources.
- 5.10 Demonstrate flexibility and professional civility when adapting to change.
- 5.11 Implement leadership practices and principles.
- 5.12 Demonstrate effective advocacy for the PA profession in the workplace and in policymaking processes.

#### **6. Practice-based Learning and Quality Improvement**

Demonstrate the ability to learn and implement quality improvement practices by engaging in critical analysis of one's own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information

resources for the purposes of self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and practice improvement.

PAs should be able to:

- 6.1 Exhibit self-awareness to identify strengths, address deficiencies, and recognize limits in knowledge and expertise.
- 6.2 Identify, analyze, and adopt new knowledge, guidelines, standards, technologies, products, or services that have been demonstrated to improve outcomes.
- 6.3 Identify improvement goals and perform learning activities that address gaps in knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- 6.4 Use practice performance data and metrics to identify areas for improvement.
- 6.5 Develop a professional and organizational capacity for ongoing quality improvement.
- 6.6 Analyze the use and allocation of resources to ensure the practice of cost-effective healthcare while maintaining quality of care.
- 6.7 Understand of how practice decisions impact the finances of their organizations, while keeping the patient's needs foremost.
- 6.8 Advocate for administrative systems that capture the productivity and value of PA practice.

## **7. Society and Population Health**

Recognize and understand the influences of the ecosystem of person, family, population, environment, and policy on the health of patients and integrate knowledge of these determinants of health into patient care decisions.

PAs should be able to:

- 7.1 Apply principles of social-behavioral sciences by assessing the impact of psychosocial and cultural influences on health, disease, care seeking, and compliance.
- 7.2 Recognize the influence of genetic, socioeconomic, environmental, and other determinants on the health of the individual and community.
- 7.3 Improve the health of patient populations.
- 7.4 Demonstrate accountability, responsibility, and leadership for removing barriers to health.



## **ECU PA PROGRAM CLINICAL AND TECHNICAL SKILL PROFICIENCIES**

At a minimum upon graduation, all PA students will demonstrate adequate performance of the following clinical and technical skills as determined by any of the following: check off sheet, preceptor evaluation, summative station, OSCE/CSE, competency, faculty attestation, or other assessment tool determined by the program.

### Procedures and Skills

- Pre-Surgery Aseptic Technique
- Local Anesthesia
- Wound Closure (suture/staple)
- Suture/Staple Removal
- Incision & Drainage
- Wound Cleaning & Dressing
- Joint/Limb Immobilization
- Foley Catheter Insertion
- Pap test or Vaginal Swab
- Pelvic Exam
- Fetal Heart Sounds
- Fundal Height
- Ooscopic Exam
- Ophthalmoscopic Exam
- Neurologic Exam
- Child Exam
- Adolescent Exam
- Rectal Exam
- Basic EKG Interpretation
- Intramuscular Injection
- IV Insertion
- Immunizations (PEDS VS. ADULT)
- BEERS list review

### Laboratory Interpretations

- CBC w/diff
- CMP
- Urinalysis/Urine Dipstick
- Spirometry/PFT (\*RT)

### Radiographic Interpretations

- CXR
- KUB
- Bone film (peds/adults)

**HANDBOOK RECEIPT**

I have received instructions regarding the online copy of the Student Handbook for the Physician Assistant Studies Program. I understand that I am responsible for the information contained in this Handbook, and I will abide by the standard operating procedures as stated in this Handbook. I also understand that, at any time, the Physician Assistant Studies Program may change a standard operating procedure, and that I will be responsible for any changes. I also acknowledge that this Handbook not only contains information that is helpful to me as a new student in the East Carolina University Physician Assistant Studies Program but also contains information about graduation, licensure, and certification. Therefore, since this Handbook may be the only source of such information and will be referred to by the faculty of the Physician Assistant Studies Program, I will keep this Handbook available for use throughout my education in this professional program.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

## **TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

A student admitted into the East Carolina Physician Assistant Program must meet basic and essential requirements that are necessary for obtaining employment and performing as a physician assistant. The technical standards each student must master include cognitive, physical, and behavioral characteristics. Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis, but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. All students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The following skills are required, with or without accommodation:

**Critical Thinking.** The ability to solve problems, a skill that is critical to the practice of medicine, requires the intellectual abilities of measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis.

**Communication Skills.** A candidate should be able to speak, hear, and observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written forms.

**Visual Ability.** Candidates must be able to observe a patient accurately, both at a distance and close at hand. This ability requires the functional use of vision.

**Hearing and Tactile Abilities.** Candidates should have sufficient motor and auditory function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and performance of other diagnostic techniques.

**Mobility and Fine Motor Skills.** A candidate should be able to execute movements reasonably required to move from area to area, maneuver in confined spaces, calibrate and use large and small equipment, position and move patients, and provide patients with general care and emergency treatment.

**Interpersonal Abilities.** A candidate for the PA program must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities; the exercise of good judgment; the prompt completion of all responsibilities required for the diagnosis and care of patients; and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, families, and colleagues.

**Resilience.** PA program candidates should be able to cope despite setbacks, barriers, or limited resources. Candidates should also have the ability to use self-reflection, observation, and feedback to adapt to changing academic and clinical situations.

I meet the Technical Standards described above.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The ECU PA Program will not tolerate **any** form of cheating or dishonesty inside or outside the classroom. While the following is by no means exhaustive, an academic integrity violation could include one or more of the following:

Cheating – Unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage of any form of academic work. This includes copying from another student’s paper, computer screen or receiving unauthorized assistance during a quiz or examination. Using books, notes, smart phones, or other devices when these are not authorized; improperly obtaining tests or examinations; collaborating on academic work without authorization and/or without truthful disclosure of the extent of that collaboration.

Plagiarizing – Copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting the same as one’s own original work.

Falsification/Fabrication – The statement of any untruth, either spoken or written, regarding any circumstances related to academic work. This includes any untrue statements made regarding a suspected academic integrity violation.

Violation assistance – knowingly helping or attempting to help someone else in an act that constitutes an academic integrity violation. Examples of this include knowingly allowing another to copy answers during an examination or quiz, distributing test question, OSCE case information or examination material without permission from the faculty member teaching the course.

Violation attempts – Attempting any act that, if completed, would constitute an academic integrity violation as defined herein. In other words, it does not matter if a student succeeds in carrying out any of the above violations – the fact that a violation was attempted is itself a violation of academic integrity.

For a more specific definition of academic integrity violations, please refer to university’s Academic Integrity Policy at: [Academic Integrity](#) Section II pages 12-24 Anyone who violates academic integrity will be subject to the East Carolina University Code of Student Conduct and Policies on Academic Integrity in the PA Handbook.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed this statement on academic honesty, and that I understand the terms outlined herein.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**NCCPA AND AAPA PERSONAL INFORMATION RELEASE FORM**

I authorize the East Carolina University Department of Physician Assistant Studies to release to The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants my social security number, name, date of birth, gender, address, email address, graduation date, or other information that they may require to ensure my eligibility to take the PANCE.

I authorize the East Carolina University Department of Physician Assistant Studies to release to the American Academy of Physician Assistants my name, date of birth, gender, address, email address, graduation date, or other information that they may require, excluding social security number, to ensure my eligibility to be a member of the SAAAPA or a future member of the AAPA.

**Exclusions:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE ON CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS AND DRUG SCREENING ON STUDENTS FOR CLINICAL FIELD SITE PLACEMENT**

**ECU COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES**

Due to certain federal, state, or local regulations that now require students to provide criminal background checks and, in some cases, drug screenings to prospective clinical sites, the following standard operating procedure is being established for students in the College of Allied Health Sciences.

It is a student's responsibility, when applying for placement in a clinical site associated with the completion of degree requirements, to obtain and provide required reports/copies of the requested criminal background checks and/or drug screens to the appropriate official(s) at the prospective clinical site for review and consideration in determining acceptance for the clinical site experience placement. Students are responsible for arranging, paying for, and submitting the required documentation to any and all clinical sites that are being considered for placement. Academic Departments, the College of Allied Health Sciences, the Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University are not responsible for arranging, paying for, or submitting the required reports, or determining the student's eligibility for placement at the clinical site as a result of the contents of the required reports. Academic Departments, the College of Allied Health Sciences, the Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University are not responsible or liable for a clinical site not accepting a student based on the contents of the required reports. Furthermore, the aforementioned entities will not intervene in any way should this occur. Decisions by clinical sites are final and have no reflection on or responsibility to the student's academic department.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVELING TO CLINICAL SITES OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES**

For students completing a supervised clinical practicum experience in a country other than the United States, all immunizations as recommended for that specific country by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) must be obtained prior to leaving for the practicum. A list of immunizations recommended by the CDC can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>. Documentation must be provided to the clinical coordinator prior to leaving for the practicum. Students must register with ECU Global Affairs <https://global-affairs.ecu.edu/register-your-travel/> and follow the procedures that are required. Failure to provide required documentation will result in a cancellation of the practicum.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE REGARDING STUDENT INSURANCE COVERAGE  
FOR EXPOSURE TO BLOOD AND OTHER POTENTIALLY INFECTIOUS MATERIALS**

**ECU COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES**

Due to the potential for student exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials during educational and clinical experiences, it is the student's sole responsibility to pay for the total costs of screening, diagnosis, short and long-term treatment, and disability compensation arising from all forms of exposure to infectious materials. As a result, students are required to provide for their own medical and disability insurance procedures that will cover screening, diagnosis, treatment, and short and long-term disability compensation resulting from any such exposure. Any screening, treatment, or disability maintenance costs not covered will be the sole responsibility of the student. All covered, uncovered, or related costs are not the responsibility of the student's academic department, College of Allied Health Sciences, Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



**RELEASE OF IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION AND TB TEST RESULTS**

I authorize the East Carolina University Department of Physician Assistant Studies to release my personal information regarding immunization status and TB test results to preceptors, hospitals, or other institutions that require that information to allow me to function in the role as a PA student in their areas of authority.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

**VIDEO CONSENT AND RELEASE**

In consideration of being permitted to participate in video recordings at East Carolina University ("ECU"), I hereby grant to ECU the absolute and irrevocable right and unrestricted permission in respect of my name, photographic portraits or pictures, likeness, voice, or any or all of them, or in which I may be included with others, to copyright the same, in ECU's own name or otherwise to use, re-use, publish, and re-publish the same in whole or in part, individually, or in any and all media now or hereafter known, and for any purpose whatsoever for illustration, promotion, art, editorial, advertising, or any other purpose whatsoever without restriction as an alternation.

In consideration of being permitted to participate in video recordings, I hereby release and discharge ECU from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of my photograph, name, likeness, or voice including without limitation any and all claims for libel or invasion of privacy with my participation in video recordings.

I fully understand that my participation in video recordings is completely voluntary, and this confirms that I am of full age and have the right to contract in my own name. This acknowledges that I have read the foregoing and fully understand the contents thereof. This release shall be binding upon heirs, my legal representatives, assigns, and me.

In witness thereof, I have caused this Consent and Release to be executed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

Witness:

Participant:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

## PROFESSIONALISM IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION

The Physician Assistant Student:

**Scholarship & Commitment to Learning:** Is punctual; attends classes, clinics, or other required events; seeks additional knowledge and skills; seeks feedback; is willing to assist other learners; is self-aware of areas of needed improvement.

**Accountability & Initiative:** Is flexible, delegates effectively, accepts personal responsibility for mistakes, asks for help when needed, and discloses medical error when appropriate.

**Self-Care & Self-Growth:** Maintains personal health and hygiene; cares for self; seeks advice, counsel, or tutoring when needed; avoids harmful behaviors.

**Responsibility & Sense of Duty:** Completes assigned duties, sets, and achieves realistic goals, follows standard operating procedures, responds promptly when called, is detail-oriented, places patient needs first.

**Compassion & Respect for Others:** Is considerate and cooperative, displays empathy and respect for others, is respectful of different socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural traditions, respects authority.

**Integrity & Trustworthiness:** Displays honesty and forthrightness, adheres to ethical standards, is truthful in all communications, and maintains confidentiality, reports inappropriate behavior by colleagues.

**Teamwork & Professional Demeanor:** Works well with others, maintains composure in difficult circumstances, inspires trust, avoids inappropriate remarks, adheres to local dress codes, treats faculty and fellow students with dignity.

**Concern for the Welfare of Patients:** Treats patients and families with dignity, respects patient privacy and cultural values, and maintains accurate information in patient records, advocates for patients.

(Adapted from the ECU Brody School of Medicine, *Professionalism in Medical Education*.)

I acknowledge that I have reviewed this statement on Professionalism, and that I understand the terms outlined herein.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**COVID-19 PROTECTIONS, CONSIDERATIONS, and RELEASE**

I understand that full Covid vaccination is strongly recommended and according to the CDC our best weapon against the virus.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**