

University of Florida
School of Physician Assistant Studies

Academic Manual

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University of Florida
School of Physician Assistant Studies

Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Physician Assistant Studies is to educate students to become physician assistants who will serve the people of Florida and the nation as part of a multidisciplinary healthcare team in a diverse and ever changing healthcare environment.

Vision

The School of Physician Assistant Studies will continue to improve and be recognized as a leader in the education of physician assistants as reflected in our values and goals.

Values

- **Excellence**—in patient care and education, through the use of the latest technology, evidence-based practices, and life-long learning
- **Integrity**—ethical, fairness, honesty, accountability
- **Diversity**—recognizing and respecting each person's individuality
- **Compassion**—to all people, through empathy and self-reflection
- **Service**—to our profession, college, university, community, and nation

Goals

- First-time pass rate of 100% on PANCE
- Graduate 100% of entering matriculates
- Educate and develop a workforce reflective of the diversity of the nation that is prepared to provide competent care across cultures
- Develop and promote the skills necessary for lifelong learning
- Representatives of the School will demonstrate professionalism at all times

School Objectives

The overall objectives of the School of Physician Assistant Studies are:

1. To provide an educational environment which will assure each student an optimal opportunity to acquire the basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively as an assistant to the primary care physician.
2. To encourage the student's appreciation of social and ethical issues influencing modern health care delivery from the biopsychosocial perspective, as well as increasing his/her understanding of the technical aspects of clinical practice.

To achieve these objectives, the School of Physician Assistant Studies strives to train physician assistants who:

1. Have the clinical knowledge and skills necessary to evaluate, diagnose, and manage common acute and chronic primary health care problems in the emergency, ambulatory care, and hospital setting.
2. Have the ability to screen for disease and counsel patients on issues of health promotion and disease prevention.
3. Have the ability to provide psychological support to patients during episodes of illness or emotional crisis.
4. Utilize community health care resources in a cost effective manner.
5. Communicate and work effectively with other members of the healthcare team and the patient's family.

University of Florida
School of Physician Assistant Studies
Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession

Preamble

In 2006, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) initiated an effort to define PA competencies in response to similar efforts being conducted within other health care professions and growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice. The following year, representatives from three other national PA organizations, each bringing a unique perspective and valuable insights, joined NCCPA in that effort. Those organizations were the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the body that accredits PA educational programs; the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP), the membership association for PA educators and program directors; and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the only national membership association representing all PAs.

The resultant document, *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession*, is a foundation from which each of those four organizations, other physician assistant organizations, and individual physician assistants themselves can chart a course for advancing the competencies of the PA profession.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to communicate to the PA profession and the public a set of competencies that all physician assistants regardless of specialty or setting are expected to acquire and maintain throughout their careers. This document serves as a map for the individual PA, the physician-PA team, and organizations that are committed to promoting the development and maintenance of these professional competencies among physician assistants.

The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Professional competencies for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, systems-based practice, as well as an unwavering commitment to continual learning and professional growth, and the physician-PA team, for the benefit of patients and the larger community being served. These competencies are demonstrated within the scope of practice, whether medical or surgical, for each individual physician assistant as that scope is defined by the supervising physician and appropriate to the setting.

¹In 1999, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) endorsed a list of general competencies for medical residents. NCCPA's Eligibility Committee, with substantial input from representatives of AAPA, APAP and ARC-PA, has modified the ACGME's list for physician assistant practice, drawing from several other resources, including the work of Drs. Epstein and Hundert; research conducted by AAPA's EVP/CEO, Dr. Steve Crane; and NCCPA's own examination content blueprint.

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School of Physician Assistant Studies
Physician Assistant Competencies

The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills as well as attitudes, required and provides educational experiences as needed in order for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies.

Medical knowledge

Medical knowledge includes an understanding of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Physician assistants must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In addition, physician assistants are expected to demonstrate an investigatory and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Understand etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical conditions
- Identify signs and symptoms of medical conditions
- Select and interpret appropriate diagnostic or lab studies
- Manage general medical and surgical conditions to include understanding the indications, contraindications, side effects, interactions, and adverse reactions of pharmacologic agents and other relevant treatment modalities
- Identify the appropriate site of care for presenting conditions, including identifying emergent cases and those requiring referral or admission
- Identify appropriate interventions for prevention of conditions
- Identify the appropriate methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual
- Differentiate between the normal and the abnormal in anatomy, physiology, laboratory findings, and other diagnostic data
- Appropriately use history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate a differential diagnosis
- Provide appropriate care to patients with chronic conditions.

Interpersonal & communication skills

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass verbal, nonverbal, and written exchange of information. Physician assistants must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, their patients' families, physicians, professional associates, and the health care system. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- Use effective listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning, and writing skills to elicit and provide information
- Appropriately adapt communication style and messages to the context of the individual patient interaction
- Work effectively with physician and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
- Apply an understanding of human behavior
- Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
- Accurately and adequately document and record information regarding the care process for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.

Patient care

Patient care includes age appropriate assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of wellness. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Work effectively with physicians and other healthcare professionals to provide patient-centered care
- Demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
- Gather essential and accurate information about their patients
- Make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment
- Develop and carry out patient management plans
- Counsel and educate patients and their families
- Competently perform medical and surgical procedures considered essential in the area of practice
- Provide health care services and education aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health.

Professionalism

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. Physician assistants must know their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PAs practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency, or mental illness. Physician assistants must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Physician assistants are expected to demonstrate:

- Understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
- Professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
- Respect, compassion, and integrity
- Responsiveness to the needs of patients and society
- Accountability to patients, society, and the profession
- Commitment to excellence and ongoing professional development
- Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
- Sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' culture, age, gender, and disabilities
- Self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative.

Practice-based learning and improvement

Practice-based learning and improvement includes the processes through which clinicians engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, medical literature, and other information resources for the purpose of self-improvement. Physician assistants must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team
- Locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health problems
- Obtain and apply information about their own population of patients and the larger population from which their patients are drawn
- Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness

- Apply information technology to manage information, access online medical information, and support their own education
- Facilitate the learning of students and/or other healthcare professionals
- Recognize and appropriately address gender, cultural, cognitive, emotional, and other biases; gaps in medical knowledge; and physical limitations in themselves and others.

Systems-based practice

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which healthcare is delivered. Physician assistants must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that is of optimal value. PAs should work to improve the larger health care system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:

- Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
- Effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
- Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
- Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
- Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
- Partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve delivery of health care and patient outcomes
- Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care
- Use information to support patient care decisions and patient education
- Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide more effective, efficient patient care
- Utilize the systems responsible for the appropriate payment of services.

Entrustable Professional Activities for Physician Assistants (EPAPA)

1. Gather a history and perform a physical exam
2. Prioritize a differential diagnosis following a clinical encounter
3. Recommend and interpret common diagnostic and screening tests
4. Formulate and discuss orders and prescriptions
5. Document a clinical encounter in the patient record
6. Provide an oral presentation of a clinical encounter
7. Form clinical questions and retrieve evidence to advance patient care
8. Give and receive a patient hand-off to transition care responsibility
9. Collaborate as a member of an interprofessional team
10. Recognize a patient requiring urgent or emergent care and propose an initial evaluation and management plan
11. Obtain informed consent for tests and procedures
12. Identify system and practice failures and contribute to a culture of safety and improvement

Source: AAMC

University of Florida
School of Physician Assistant Studies
General Academic Objectives

We endorse the NCCPA blueprint. This material can be found at : <http://www.nccpa.net/ExamsContentBlueprint>

Professional Behavioral Objectives

The student should be able to:

1. Articulate the importance and privileged nature of the patient/provider relationship.
2. Discuss the importance of intellectual honesty and truthfulness in carrying out his/her role as a physician assistant.
3. Discuss the physician-dependent nature of the physician assistant's role.
4. Describe the importance of data contained within established medical care records and the value of these records as the best evidence to assure quality of care and facilitate risk management.
5. Explain the importance and practical application of studies in basic sciences to the understanding of specific aspects of and skills used during the physical examination and in the practice of medicine.
6. Describe the importance of the financial costs and potential hazards which might result from indiscriminate or inappropriate ordering of laboratory tests and procedures as important in patient care and the interaction with the patient.
7. Discuss the increased effectiveness of using a multidimensional / interdisciplinary plan in the care of patients.
8. Discuss the importance of diet and nutrition in the overall health of the patient and in disease prevention and overall care of the patient.
9. Explain how lifestyles influence a person's health and identify his/her belief about the responsibility or obligation of a patient to change these behaviors.
10. Discuss how the biopsychosocial impacts of diseases are important to the overall care of the patient.
11. Recognize implicit bias through self-reflection and describe the possible effects of implicit bias on patient care
12. Discuss the role of genetics in disease development. Construct a genogram through a family history to assist in assessing risk for genetic disease.

University of Florida School of Physician Assistant Studies

Policies and Procedures

Code of Conduct

We endorse the NCCPA Code of Conduct for Certified and Certifying Physician Assistants. This can be found at <https://www.nccpa.net/code-of-conduct>

Professional Standards

1. Physician Assistant students, like students in any professional program, are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and personal integrity. Academic achievement alone will not assure successful completion of the School of Physician Assistant Studies. PA students must demonstrate professionalism, maturity, integrity, and those attitudes and behaviors expected of all health professionals.
2. The School of PA Studies expects all PA students to be professional in their dealings with patients, colleagues, faculty, and staff and to exhibit caring and compassionate attitudes. Professional behavior is defined as behavior appropriate to the circumstance. Attitudes or behaviors inconsistent with compassionate care; refusal by or inability of the student to participate constructively in learning or patient care; derogatory attitudes or inappropriate behaviors directed at patient groups, peers, faculty, or staff will not be tolerated by the School of PA Studies.
3. No alcoholic beverages are to be consumed during class hours or on University property at any time unless attending a university-sanctioned function where alcohol is served.
4. Students are reminded that use of illicit drugs is incompatible with the professional role of the physician assistant. Students who use illicit drugs risk dismissal from the School of PA Studies and legal consequences.
5. Students are representatives of the UF School of PA Studies as well as the physician assistant profession as a whole. This should be kept in mind during all interactions with patients, physicians, and other health care personnel in any patient care environment.
6. Employment during enrollment in the School of PA Studies is strongly discouraged. If a student chooses to moonlight, it MUST NOT interfere with academic work.
7. Sexual Harassment:
 - a. In addition to being a violation of state and federal laws, behavior involving unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is incompatible with faculty, staff, and student status in the University of Florida - School of Physician Assistant Studies.
 - b. Dating current teaching faculty (i.e. physicians, residents, teaching assistants, PA faculty, etc.) is highly discouraged. This can be viewed as a form of sexual harassment.
 - c. Further information regarding sexual harassment policies is outlined in the "Sexual Harassment" policy section below.
 - d. Students should contact the School of PA Studies immediately if they have felt as if they have been harassed.
8. Medical Records and Patient Confidentiality
 - a. All data gathered about a patient and his/her medical condition, including verbal communication from a patient, is privileged information. Students are not to discuss a patient in any manner or situation that would reveal any information about that patient to any person not involved in the patient's health care. Refrain from discussing your patients in public places, such as cafeterias and elevators, where your conversations may be overheard. Remind those who may be inappropriately discussing patient information, about patient confidentiality. In Hospital Practicum, discussion about a patient with your resident/fellow is appropriate.
 - b. If you are asked to present information about a patient's condition never discuss patients in a dehumanizing or insensitive manner. You are required by the School of PA Studies to complete HIPAA training.
9. Students will adhere to ethical principles and use practical reasoning when dealing with patients. Refer to the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession Policy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants Adopted May 2000 (see link under code of conduct).
10. No student should medically treat other PA students, friends, or family members while a student in the UF School of Physician Assistant Studies.

Professional Demeanor

1. While you are in patient care areas; the patients, other health professionals and clinical office staff will judge your professionalism by the your grooming and dress, your communication style, your conflict resolution skills, and your work ethic (showing up on time prepared and ready to work). The community of physician assistants and physician assistant employers in the State of Florida is relatively small. Impressions that you make on clinical rotation may influence future employment opportunities and professional licensure. You should all strive to project a positive image of the PA profession and the University of Florida.
2. The School of Physician Assistant Studies expects all students to be professional in their dealings with patients, colleagues, faculty, and staff and to exhibit caring and compassionate attitudes. These and other qualities will be evaluated in the Professionalism Evaluation form by each preceptor during your clinical year rotations. Professional behavior is defined as behavior appropriate to the circumstances. Professional behavior reflects on a student's qualification and potential to become a competent clinician. Attitudes or behaviors inconsistent with compassionate care; refusal by, or inability of, the student to participate constructively in learning or patient care; derogatory attitudes or inappropriate behaviors directed at patients, peers, faculty, preceptors, or staff; misuse of written or electronic patient records (i.e. accession of patient information without valid reason); substance abuse; failure to disclose pertinent information on a criminal background check; or other unprofessional conduct can be grounds for dismissal. Dismissal from the School of Physician Assistant Studies for unprofessional behavior may, subsequently, jeopardize the student's eligibility for admission to any other college in the university.

Examples of standards for professional behavior include, but not limited to the following: accepting personal responsibility for the care of one's patients; demonstrating appropriate truthfulness and honesty with colleagues; communicating an attitude of caring (empathy) in the course of health care delivery; recognizes personal beliefs, prejudices, and limitations; demonstrates respect for patients, families, members of the health care team, and colleagues; demonstrates initiative in patient care and a consistently good work ethic; and respects patient confidentiality at all times in verbal and written communication with others. Inadequate communication and/or failure to respond to communication initiated by the SPAS is also considered unprofessional, and may result in a substantial reduction in professionalism grade on any given rotation.

The conferring of the degree Masters of Physician Assistant Studies certifies that the student is not only competent to undertake the career as a physician assistant but possesses the personal traits essential to the profession as judged by the faculty, preceptors, peers, and colleagues.

3. Students who are in not in adherence with the professional standards set forth by the School will have a hearing of the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee. If the Committee determines that unprofessional behavior was demonstrated by a student, the following steps may be taken: Depending on the severity of the behavior, the student may be warned in writing that the behavior is unacceptable and that if the behavior is continued, it may lead to their dismissal from school. Such a letter will provide examples about what is or what is not acceptable, and may encourage the student to seek professional help from an appropriate resource. The letter may state that counseling, therapy, and anger management sessions may be considered as options. **Some types of behavior may be so egregious as to justify immediate dismissal of a student. Such behavior might include criminal acts or substance abuse.**

If there is a second documented case of unprofessional behavior, the student must appear before the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee and address why he/she should not be dismissed from school. See next section for more information on the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee.

Professional Standards and Promotions Committee

The School of PA Studies faculty, meeting as the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee (PSPC), will evaluate issues of student compliance with School of PA Studies' requirements, policies, and professionalism. The Committee will review the issue of concern and the circumstances surrounding it and may require the student to appear before the Committee to answer questions or address specific academic/professional concerns.

Students may have an advisor in attendance. The advisor cannot address the PSPC but may be consulted by the student. The student will be offered the opportunity to present an opening and closing statement and to take notes during the meeting. Students will be informed of PSPC action within twenty-four hours of the meeting.

The PSPC will then decide on the appropriate action, which may include dismissal from the School of PA Studies.

Promotion, Graduation and Academic Standing

Promotion from the academic to the clinical year and graduation from the School of PA Studies are based on the student's mastery of essential competencies, academic performance as well as readiness to assume a professional role. While grades are important, the decisions for promotion and graduation are based on the composite picture of academic performance as well as professional growth and development. A student may be dismissed from The School of Physician Assistant Studies if they have failed to demonstrate an attitude of professionalism or if the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee do not believe the student is prepared to assume patient care responsibilities.

The following criteria will be used by the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee as the basis for promoting academic year PA students to the clinical year and for recommending clinical PA students for graduation from the School of Physician Assistant Studies. Students who fail to meet all promotion criteria may be either dismissed from the School of Physician Assistant Studies or required to remediate any deficiencies deemed necessary by the Committee.

- Maintain a grade of satisfactory or higher.
- Demonstrate acceptable levels of maturity, integrity, and other attitudes and behaviors normally expected of health care professionals as determined by professionalism evaluations and observations by faculty.

Professionalism is one of the core competencies of a physician assistant considered equally important to the academic development of students and practicing PAs as medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, communication skills, patient care, practice-based learning/improvement and systems-based practice. A student who has failed to demonstrate an attitude of professionalism or is not prepared to assume patient care responsibilities based on faculty and/or Professional Standards and Promotions Committee evaluations, may be dismissed from the School of PA Studies at any time prior to promotion or graduation.

Academic Standards

A student may be placed on probation at any point if the PSPC determines it is necessary. A student may be placed on probation prior to final grades being assigned in any class.

Promotion from the academic to the clinical year and graduation from the School of PA Studies are based on the student's mastery of essential competencies, academic performance as well as readiness to assume a professional role. While grades are important, the decisions for promotion and graduation are based on the composite picture of academic performance as well as professional growth and development. A student may be dismissed from The School of Physician Assistant Studies if they have failed to demonstrate an attitude of professionalism or if the

Professional Standards and Promotions Committee do not believe the student is prepared to assume patient care responsibilities.

Any course grade below satisfactory may be grounds for dismissal for academic reasons, subject to the decision of the School of PA Studies Professional Standards and Promotions Committee. If the PSPC determines the student earning a grade below satisfactory should be given the opportunity to achieve the program's academic standards and be allowed to remain enrolled in the School, the student will be placed on probation at that time and will be required to complete any remedial work prescribed by the faculty. The prescribed remediation may include repeating any or all courses as deemed appropriate by the PSPC to address the student's weaknesses, including those courses which were previously passed. (Students may only be offered the option of remediating an entire year's worth of courses one time.) Remediation may result in the student's delayed graduation depending on the level of remediation and the time frame required for completion. Students will remain on probation until review by the Professional Standards and Promotion Committee determines probationary status is no longer needed based on adequate student performance.

Introduction to Medicine I and II

Failure of 3 exams within a semester or 4 exams within a year is looked upon as a serious deficit of knowledge. A student who receives a grade below 70.00 on more than two section examinations in one semester will be either decelerated or dismissed from the School on academic grounds. A student who receives a grade below 70 on more than three section examinations within the academic year will also be subject to deceleration or dismissal from the School on academic grounds.

Grievance/Appeals Policy

After a decision of the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee has been established, a student has the right to appeal.

1. After the Professional Standards and Promotions Committee makes a decision, the student has the right to appeal. Appeals are made in writing – a personal appearance is made upon request of the person or persons hearing the appeal, and is not automatic.
 - a. Typically, grounds for an appeal include:
 - i. The policies and procedures of the School were not properly applied.
 - ii. The finds of fact were incorrect.
 - iii. The action exceeded the authority of the PSPC.
 - iv. The PSPC demonstrated bias in its action.
 - v. The PSPC considered evidence that should not have been considered, or failed to consider evidence they should have considered.
 - vi. The student requested an accommodation for a disability
 - b. Students may appeal a decision of the PSPC to the Associate Dean/Director of the School of PA Studies in writing within three business days of the decision. Actions by the PSPC and the Associate Dean/Director will be final except in cases of dismissal and suspension.
 - c. In cases of dismissal and suspension actions, the decision may be further appealed to the Senior Associate Dean for Educational Affairs. A committee consisting of the Senior Associate Dean for Educational Affairs (chair), the Associate Dean for Medical Education, and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs will consider the appeal.
 - d. Decisions of this committee will be final.
2. For matters involving a question of academic honesty, if the student and School of PA Studies Director do not agree on an outcome, the student can exercise his/her right to a hearing with the Health Science Center Student Conduct Committee. This will be conducted through Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution in

the Dean of Students office. Please visit <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php> to view a copy of the violations and procedures that will be followed.

Class Attendance Policy

Attendance during physician assistant training is extremely important given the amount of material covered in a short time. Because attendance and participation is very important to your development as a physician assistant, the program requires that students adhere to the attendance policies outlined below. Attendance and punctuality are considered to be an aspect of professionalism.

Attendance

1. Attendance will be taken twice daily.
 - a. All principal faculty members are responsible for taking attendance
2. Any time attendance is taken and a student is not present, it is considered an absence
 - a. Students will only accrue one absence per day
 - b. Recurrent tardiness will be documented and will result in a meeting with the PSPC
3. Any student signing in or recording as or posing as another student risks immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

Absences

1. Students are allowed 2 unexcused days of absences during each of the summer semesters
2. Students are allowed 4 unexcused days of absence during the spring and fall semesters
 - a. Students are responsible for all content during absences
 - b. Any assignments or quizzes or examinations missed during an unexcused absence cannot be made up
3. In the case of a serious medical illness to the student or a member of the student's immediate family, the absence may be excused and not counted towards the cumulative total of absences during that semester. This will require the completion of an absence request form and the completion of this form does not guarantee an excused absence. The Director of Didactic Education will make the initial determination on whether the absence is excused. A student may appeal this decision to the PSPC. Further appeal may be made to the associate dean/director of the School.
 - a. The absence form must be completed and submitted within 24 hours of return to classes whenever possible
 - b. Absences for medical illnesses must be verified by a licensed ARNP, PA, MD, DO, or mental health provider. Verification from a relative, domestic partner, or close friend will not be accepted
 - c. Quizzes, examination, and assignments missed may not be allowed to be made up. Examination may be made up in accordance with existing examination policies.
 - d. The University's definition of immediate family member is defined as the person's spouse, domestic partner, great-grandparent, grandparent, parent, brother, sister, child, grandchild, or the grandparent, parent, brother, sister, child, grandchild, or great-grandchild of the spouse or domestic partner, or the spouse or domestic partner of any of them. This includes individuals for whom the student is the current legal guardian.
4. The School does not need to be notified about non-medical absences on non-mandatory days unless the absence is beyond the maximum allowed number for the semester.
 - a. Absences that are non-medical and beyond the limit for the semester are considered excessive. Students with excessive absences may face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the School, by the PSPC
5. Absence request forms should be submitted to the Director of Didactic Education. Students requesting an absence must notify the course director, as well as any section directors in a courtesy copy

6. Absences will be tracked. If a student exceeds the maximum number of absences for the semester, the following actions will occur:
 - a. For the first violation of the attendance policy (more than the maximum number of allowable absences), the student will meet with their advisor and the chair of the PSPC. The student will be notified they have exceeded the maximum number of allowed absences. A copy of the notification will be placed in the student's file.
 - b. The second violation of the policy will result in the student meeting with the PSPC

Mandatory Attendance Days

1. Mandatory attendance days are days where you must be in attendance due to the nature of the activity. These may include special lectures, state mandated lectures, physical examination training, ACLS training, scheduled examination, male and female genitourinary exams, and other similar meetings. Students will be notified of mandatory days by either the weekly calendar, Piazza, UF email, or other messaging. Missing a mandatory attendance day may result in disciplinary action by the PSPC.
2. Any initial request to excuse an absence on a mandatory attendance day for any reason other than medical or personal emergencies will be denied.
 - a. Denial of a requested excused absence may be appealed to the PSPC.
 - b. Actions by the PSPC on absence requests may be appealed to the associate dean/director

Absence Report Forms

1. An absence report form must be submitted for official university business, medical absences, and each absence beyond the maximum allowed number of absences for the semester
2. An absence report form must be submitted, whenever possible, before the absence, or within 24 hours of returning to class, if the reason for the absence is a medical or personal emergency
3. The absence report form and appeal forms can be located at the end of the manual and on the Canvas site

Leaves of Absence

Any request for an extended leave of absence (one month or more) must be submitted to the Director in writing, including the reason and justification for the request. Requests for leave will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In the case of a medical leave of absence, documentation from a licensed medical provider is required. Medical requests must be verified by an NP, PA, MD, DO, or a mental health provider. Verification from a close relative or domestic partner will not be accepted. An extended absence may require repeating a portion, the entire year, or both years, depending on the individual educational situation. A leave of absence greater than two months may require reapplication to the School of Physician Assistant Studies.

Withdrawal

Students withdrawing from the School should first contact the School of PA Studies. Then the student must submit a withdrawal letter to both the School of PA Studies and the UF Registrar's Office, as well as complete any paperwork needed by either office, and settle any university obligations. UF may refund some portion of the tuition. For details see The University Record (the UF catalog), the section on "Fees and Other Fiscal Information," the "Enrollment and Student Fees," the "Refund of Fees" subsections within it. (Catalogs are available by year online at www.reg.ufl.edu/catalog.html.)

Academic Honesty

The University of Florida expects students to be honest in all of their university coursework. Therefore, students are required to commit themselves to academic honesty by signing the following statement as part of the admissions process.

"I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all of their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty, and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the University."

This statement serves to remind students of the obligations they assume as students at the University of Florida. Matters of pure violations of academic honesty are adjudicated pursuant to University regulations by the Health Science Center Student Conduct Committee.

The university honor code can be found here: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Note: Each student must obtain a "Turning Point" response license. This may be used on a laptop or smartphone. The use of another student's "Turning Point" responseware is considered a violation of the Honor Code and will be referred for disciplinary action. Students can purchase the license at a discounted price directly from Turning Point. Go to <http://store.turningtechnologies.com> and enter code 4ufl.

<https://classrooms.at.ufl.edu/classroom-technology/turningpoint-response-system/>

Disability and Accommodations

The University of Florida is committed to providing academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students should present their accommodation letter to the College of Medicine's ADA Representative, Mr. Jim Gorske (jgorske@ufl.edu), who will distribute the accommodation letter to either the didactic year coordinator or the clinical year coordinator, as well as the testing center. The University encourages students to register with the DRC as soon as they begin the School of Physician Assistant Studies or upon the verification of a disability.

Evaluation of Courses

Course/instructor evaluations are mandated by the State and must be completed within the time limits set by the School. Section and course grades will not be released until these requirements are met. Grades will not be released until 80% of the class has completed the evaluation.

Note: Comments should be made in a constructive manner, focused on improving the quality of the course. Personal attacks are neither useful nor constructive for the educational goals of any section. Please make an appointment with the School Director for any concerns that may come up during a section rather than using the evaluation as a vehicle to express your frustrations.

Testing Policies

1. Students are expected to take course examinations at the designated time.
2. In the event of illness or personal emergency on the day of an examination:
 - a. The student must contact the Director of Didactic Education and the Section Director before the exam, and inform them that the student is unable to take the test.
 - b. A student who has missed an examination because of illness or personal crisis will be expected to take the examination within 48 hours, or during the first day back in class (whichever occurs first).
 - c. If the time period becomes longer than 48 hours, or absence was not approved by the Section Director and Director of Didactic Education in advance, the student's grade for the exam will be no higher than the class average.
 - d. Please refer to the attendance policy for procedures regarding excused absences.
3. Students who have a serious and/or prolonged illness will be reviewed individually and arrangements will be made accordingly.
4. With all courses that are directly conducted by the School of PA Studies, the following guidelines during testing must be followed:
 - a. Students are not permitted to talk once entering any testing facility. Do not communicate with other students in any way during exams or evaluation sessions.
 - b. Students must turn off cell phones and place all personal belongings in the storage bins within the computer testing center. Smartwatches and similar devices are not permitted.
 - c. Once the exam has begun, the proctor will not answer any questions. Students should remain in their seats at all times until they have finished the examination. Students may be excused during the examination one at a time in order to use the restroom.
 - d. The duration of each exam will be determined by the Course Director.
 - e. Testing areas are subject to video monitoring.
 - f. Upon completing and submitting your exam, please leave the testing area.
 - g. Students are not permitted to disseminate exam content after completion of the exam.
 - h. Any questions or discrepancies regarding an exam during the academic year should be addressed in writing, citing the discrepancy and listing references, to the Course Director.
 - i. Any concerns with test integrity should be raised within 72 hours of the examination.

Questions Pertaining to Examination Questions

In the event a student has challenge to an examination question, the student must address this issue in writing to the faculty member administering the examination. The issue must be made within 48 hours of the examination; emails are an acceptable form of communication. Communication through exam comments is not sufficient.

The student's question or concern must address a specific issue regarding the examination question or assignment, such as having multiple correct answers, having no correct answers, topic was not on objectives. An explanation to support the student's argument must be made using supporting documentation referencing assigned readings and objectives from the syllabus. Challenges based on the powerpoints are acceptable, however assigned readings will take preference. The faculty member will consider the student's challenge and will respond in writing (email is acceptable) within 3 days as to their decision regarding the question being challenged.

Instructional Roles

While it is recognized that many students may already possess skills/expertise in a given area taught in the academic year and may, at the request and supervision of the course instructor, help classmates to learn a given skill, at no time will students replace faculty/course instructors. Likewise, in the clinical year students may not be used to substitute for regular clinical or administrative staff.

Course Director Concept

PA faculty members teach a number of the courses in the PA curriculum, depending on their areas of specialty and their academic and professional interests. In addition to PA faculty, the PA courses are also taught by more than 300 physicians and basic science faculty in the College of Medicine who prepare and deliver classroom lectures in their areas of expertise. When a non-PA provides classroom instruction, a PA faculty member serves as Course Director for that course. The Course Director attends the lectures, takes notes, and writes the exam questions directed toward the desired knowledge base of a physician assistant. The Course Director concept ensures that the classroom education and testing provided to PA students remains at the level expected of physician assistants and also ensures continuity of coverage for all evaluation methodologies. Course syllabi and other information will be provided at the start of the course and/or section.

Grading System

The following grading system will generally be used for all courses whose primary responsibility rests with the School of PA Studies, except where explicitly described as different in the individual course syllabus. The Course Director may adjust/curve scores for individual exams or courses when appropriate. However, the grading scale will not be increased.

UF School of PA Studies Grading Policy	
Satisfactory	70 - 100
Unsatisfactory	69 or below

All graded items and final course grades will be calculated using the hundredths decimal place. Final course grades including fractions of 0.50 or higher will be rounded up to the next highest number.

Grade Appeal Policy

After grades have been assigned the student may appeal the grade. Appeals are made in writing and a personal appearance is made only upon request of the person hearing the appeal and is not automatic.

1. The first appeal should be directly to the Course Director. The appeal should include any documentation that explains why the grade should be changed. The documentation must reference the assigned readings.
2. The second line of appeal, which should only be sought if an agreement cannot be made between the Course Director and the student, is to the Associate Dean and Director of the School of PA Studies. The Director may:
 - Affirm the decision of the Course Director
 - Uphold the appeal
 - Return the issue to the Course Director for further consideration.

Student Counselling and Development

Harrell Medical Education Building Room 446
352-273-8383 <http://counseling.med.ufl.edu>

The Office of Student Counseling & Development (OSCD) provides confidential, short-term counseling regarding academic, personal, and career development topics. Additionally, referrals are provided when long-term counseling and/or psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluation is indicated. If concerns arise regarding any form of mistreatment, discrimination, or harassment, students are encouraged to consult the counselor immediately.

To schedule an appointment:

- Email Dr. Vidaurreta (Beverly@ufl.edu) or call 352-273-8383
- Indicate your name, program, available dates/times and preferred meeting location

- Harrell Medical Education Building Office (352-273-8383)

The Office of Student Counseling and Development is located in the HMEB, 4th floor, Suite #466

- Community Health & Family Medicine Office (352-273-5138)

The office is located among the CHFM faculty offices. The waiting area is Suite N1-2 of the Stetson Medical Sciences Building – located near the elevators between Shands food court (Subway, Wendy's) and the Sun Terrace (Chick-fil-A, Einstein)

Additional mental health resources

- UF Counseling & Wellness Center, 392-1575 (If urgent, request the Counselor-on-Call)
- UF Medical Psychology, 265-4357
- UF Outpatient Psychiatry, 265-4357
- UF Psychology Clinic, 265-0294

Emergencies

- 911
- U Matter We Care, 294-CARE (2273)
- Alachua County Crisis Center, 352-264-6789
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 800-273-TALK (8255)

Student Mistreatment

The University of Florida School of Physician Assistant Studies is committed to treating all members of the college community fairly with regard to both personal and professional concerns. The student mistreatment policy ensures that concerns are promptly dealt with and resolutions reached in a fair and just manner. The School's procedures enable students to bring problems to the attention of the administration in a timely manner. The College of Medicine and the School of Physician Assistant Studies forbids any retaliatory action against students who present concerns and complaints in good faith.

A mistreatment grievance is defined as dissatisfaction occurring when a student believes that any decision, act or condition affecting her or him is illegal, unjust or has created unnecessary hardship. Mistreatment grievances may concern, but is not limited to, the following:

- academic problems (excluding grades, except when there is an allegation of illegal discrimination or where a grade penalty has been imposed without proper authority)
- mistreatment by any university employee;
- wrongful assessment of fees

- errors in records and registration
- discrimination in student employment because of race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, or disability.

Mistreatment may take the form of verbal or physical abuse, discrimination for any reason, or a requirement for individual service activity that is independent of requirements for other team members. When such an incident is believed to occur, the student should first discuss the problem with the individual responsible for the perceived negative action or with the Associate Dean for Physician Assistant Studies, Associate Dean for Medical Education, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, or one of the Assistant Deans for Diversity and Health Equity. The individual contacted by the student will then address the concern with the appropriate faculty member who is responsible for the educational activity in which the incident occurred. If the perceived negative action occurred on the Jacksonville Campus, students may also discuss the matter with the Associate Dean for Students Affairs-Jacksonville, who will follow the same plan outlined above. A written record of incidents reported to one of the Associate or Assistant Deans will be maintained by the Associate Dean for Physician Assistant Studies. Once the allegation of mistreatment is elevated beyond the level of the individual responsible for the incident, the reviewing authority should provide a written response to the student within ten business days of being notified of the incident. If the student is not satisfied with the response of the reviewing official, he/she may appeal first to the Senior Associate Dean for Educational Affairs and, subsequently, to the Dean of the College of Medicine.

At any point in the process outlined above, the student also may address his/her concern about mistreatment with the Program Director for Student Counseling and Development. This official may provide counseling to the student but will not be responsible for attempting to redress the grievance.

Student Attire

As members of a profession whose image is very important, students should be aware that many people, rightly or wrongly, judge an entire group by what they consider appropriate appearance. The professional image you project is very important to both the School of PA Studies and the PA profession. Students should bear this in mind when selecting their attire, even for the academic year.

There is a great variety of settings that the Physician Assistant student will find him/herself in during the two years of training at the University of Florida. Each setting will have its own “appropriateness” of dress and the student will have to adjust accordingly. For example, one should wear old clothes and a lab coat during the Gross Anatomy Lab, since they will not be useable after the course.

In general, the clothing policy for the School of PA Studies is as follows:

Classroom Area: Definition of a classroom area: lecture halls and laboratory.

1. All students should have clothes in good condition.

Patient Care Areas: Definition of a patient care area: any area in which patients are examined, evaluated, or rendered care by any means including both inpatient and outpatient settings including the Anaclerio Learning and Assessment Center. Some activities will necessitate variation from this rule.

1. Short, waist-length white coats (consult) are required to be worn during the academic year.
2. Business professional attire is required to be worn at all times. For example, men should wear a dress shirt, dress slacks and shoes. Women should wear a pant suit, dress suit, or blouse and skirt or slacks. Closed toe shoes must be worn at all times.

For all areas: The following items are considered inappropriate at all times:

- Short skirts or dresses
- Tube tops
- Excessive jewelry
- Facial piercings
- Flip flops
- Low cut tops
- Shorts
- Graphic T shirts
- Provocative or obscene tattoos
- Clothing that reveals the midriff
- Spaghetti straps or strapless tops
- Athletic attire including yoga pants
- Scrubs in the classroom (not including cadaver lab)

Gatorlink

All students will be required to obtain and maintain a “GatorLink” account while in the PA Program. All School of PA Studies communications and information will be sent to “GatorLink” addresses only. Use of alternative e-mail addresses (e.g., Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail, etc.) will be limited to the students’ own personal use.

Email Policy

Student communication with the School of Physician Assistant Studies is routinely accomplished via email communications. Students will be expected to check their University of Florida email accounts daily for essential communications. Email responses when necessary are expected in a timely manner. In order to avoid problems with receiving important messages from the School due to exceeding your “Gatorlink” email quota, delete old messages and clear your browser cache on a regular basis. Each student will be responsible for any consequences resulting from the School’s inability to deliver important email due to mismanagement of the email account. Failure to comply with the email policy will reflect poorly on the student’s professional development.

When communicating with the School, it is SPAS policy that only University of Florida email accounts will be recognized for student communication. This is important because e-mails originating from third-party accounts/services, such as Yahoo, Gmail, and others are frequently routed to quarantine folders. In these cases, the recipient may not be notified of the email until a later date when the quarantine folder contents are reviewed. University of Florida policy allows emails to be forwarded to on-campus or alternate e-mail addresses. If a student wishes to use such a service, please assure that when responding to emails the student’s GatorLink email account is displayed as the sender’s identification. If the sender’s identification does not reflect the student’s GatorLink account, it may be sent to a quarantine folder and not responded to within an appropriate timeframe. University of Florida policies pertaining to email forwarding and computing resources, including security and privacy issues, can be found at:

- <http://www.it.ufl.edu/policies/aupolicy.html>
- <http://www.it.ufl.edu/policies/forwarding.html>

Social Networking Policy

The School of Physician Assistant Studies subscribes to the policy pertaining to the use of social networking sites.

The School of PA Studies recognizes that social networking websites and applications, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter, are an important and timely means of communication. However, students and residents who use these websites and other applications must be aware of the critical importance of privatizing their web sites so that only trustworthy “friends” have access to the websites/applications. They must also be aware that posting certain information is illegal. Violation of existing statutes and administrative regulations may expose the offender to criminal and civil liability, and the punishment for violations may include fines and imprisonment. Offenders also may be subject to adverse academic actions that range from a letter of reprimand to probation to dismissal from school or resident training.

The following actions are strictly forbidden:

- In your professional role as a caregiver, you may not present the personal health information of other individuals. Removal of an individual’s name does not constitute proper de-identification of protected health information. Inclusion of data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date of evaluation, or type of treatment or the use of a highly specific medical photograph (such as a before/after photograph of a patient having surgery or a photograph of a patient from one of the medical outreach trips) may still allow the reader to recognize the identity of a specific individual.
- You may not report private (protected) academic information of another student or trainee. Such information might include, but is not limited to: course or clerkship grades, narrative evaluations, examination scores, or adverse academic actions.
- In posting information on social networking sites, you may not present yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for the University of Florida College of Medicine.
- You may not represent yourself as another person, real or fictitious, or otherwise attempt to obscure your identity as a means to circumvent the prohibitions listed above and below.
- You may not utilize websites and/or applications in a manner that interferes with your official work commitments. That is, do not tie up a hospital or clinic computer with personal business when others need access to the computer for patient-related matters. Moreover, do not delay completion of assigned clinical responsibilities in order to engage in social networking.

In addition to the absolute prohibitions listed above, the actions listed below are strongly discouraged. Violations of these suggested guidelines may be considered unprofessional behavior and may be the basis for disciplinary action.

- Display of vulgar language
- Display of language or photographs that imply disrespect for any individual or group because of age, race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.
- Presentation of personal photographs or photographs of others that may reasonably be interpreted as condoning irresponsible use of alcohol, substance abuse, or sexual promiscuity.
- Posting of potentially inflammatory or unflattering material on another individual’s website, e.g. on the “wall” of that individual’s Facebook site.
- Personal friendships between faculty and students through social media.

When using these social networking websites/applications, students and residents are strongly encouraged to use a personal e-mail address, rather than their ufl.edu address, as their primary means of identification. Individuals also should make every effort to present themselves in a mature, responsible, and professional manner. Discourse should always be civil and respectful.

Please be aware that no privatization measure is perfect and that undesignated persons may still gain access to your networking site. A site such as YouTube, of course, is completely open to the public. Future employers (residency or fellowship program directors, department chairs, or private practice partners) often review these network sites when considering potential candidates for employment.

Finally, although once-posted information can be removed from the original social networking site, exported information cannot be recovered. Any digital exposure can “live on” beyond its removal from the original website and continue to circulate in other venues. Therefore, think carefully before you post any information on a website or application. Always be modest, respectful, and professional in your actions.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of UF that sexual harassment will not be tolerated at the university and should not be ignored. It is a violation of federal and state laws and university rules and policy. Sexual harassment is the inappropriate introduction of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where sex would otherwise be irrelevant. See the UF Sexual Harassment web page at <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eo/sexharassment.htm>. In addition, confidential counseling is available from Beverly L. Vidaurreta, Ph.D., Program Director of the College of Medicine office of Student Counseling and Development. Dr. Vidaurreta can be reached at 352-273-8363, or by email at beverly@ufl.edu. If you believe you have been sexually harassed, report it at once to Beverly L. Vidaurreta, Ph.D.

Each student is required to complete with a passing score the Sexual Harassment Prevention Training course once yearly. To take the online sexual harassment prevention training course, log on to the “[myUFL](#)” system and go to > My Self Service > Training and Development > Preventing Sexual Harassment. Certificates of completion should be downloaded and copies placed in each student’s file.

Release of Information / Reference Letters

A. Throughout the course of your studies, the School of PA Studies may have to release information about any student’s academic status to third parties (e.g., information relating to student loan verification, scholarship applications, rotation credentialing, licensure, etc.).

1. If you signed the universal release form at orientation, **then no further releases are usually required.**
2. If release of information is required, the student **MUST** fill out a release of information form prior to the School’s releasing any information.

The School of PA Studies will not release any information without the student’s signed consent in compliance with the Buckley Amendment. The form is available in the office and online at the clinical year website. If the release of information is required and the student has not filled out the universal release form at orientation, then the student must fill out a release of information form prior to the School releasing any information.

Outside Employment

Outside employment is strongly discouraged during enrollment in the School of PA Studies. Students are not permitted to work for the School in any manner, either for pay or volunteer status. The School will not consider any application for employment from any student in the program. Physician assistant education is a full time endeavor. However, while School approval is not required for a student to start work, it is essential that the work must not interfere with the student’s education. If, in the judgment of the faculty, outside employment is diminishing the student’s ability to be an effective learner, the student will be strongly encouraged to reduce or eliminate his/her work.

Advisors

Each student will be assigned to an SPAS faculty advisor and should meet with them as scheduled at least once during each semester or as otherwise needed. This may be done in small group sessions, on an individual basis and/or by appointment during advisor's office hours. Advisor meetings are a mandatory attendance item.

Visiting the School of PA Studies Offices

In order to maintain a professional atmosphere, appointments must be made with a faculty or staff member in advance unless appearing for posted office hours. This will ensure that academic and personal affairs of each student are kept confidential while abiding by federal and state laws. When arriving for appointments, please let the front desk secretary know whom you need to see and he/she will inform the proper person. Appointments can be made at the discretion of the faculty/staff member.

Personal Safety

During orientation and the Summer A semester (just prior to the start of clinical rotations), students are required to attend a briefing by the University Police Department regarding personal safety and security. Students are reminded that they should be aware of their situation and surroundings at all times. Security personnel and local police may be summoned to all sites on campus as needed.

Student Night Time Escort Program (SNAP)

The University Police Department and the Student Government sponsor the Student Night-Time Auxiliary Patrol (SNAP) which is a free door-to-door, night-time campus escort service. SNAP is accessed by calling 392-SNAP about 20 minutes prior to your anticipated departure time. You are encouraged to use this service if you are unable to walk in groups to your cars during night-time hours.

Lockers

Student lockers will be assigned. A fee will be assessed to students in the event of damage to the locker or missing combination locks. Lockers are in a secured area. Anyone found tampering with lockers that are not assigned to the individual is subject to dismissal from the School of PA Studies. The outside surfaces of the lockers are not permitted to be decorated.

Name Changes

Any PA student who changes his/her name while enrolled in the School of PA Studies (i.e., marriage, divorce) is responsible for filing the appropriate forms with the University of Florida requesting a name change. The School of PA Studies will not be responsible for requesting the student's name change. Failure to complete this change may result in grade reports or a degree being withheld by the University of Florida until this process is complete.

Address/ Phone Changes

You may update your current and/or permanent address with UF online at www.isis.ufl.edu. You will need your UFID number and PIN. In addition, you must notify the School of PA Studies office of any address or phone number change.

Financial Aid

Students in the College of Medicine are now able to handle all of their financial aid affairs in the Health Science Center (Room M-128). Ms. Eileen Parris is the Coordinator of Student Financial Aid and can be reached at 273-7939 or at eparris@ufl.edu. She is available for appointments or can be seen on a walk-in basis for counseling, check disbursement, etc. She has a detailed website at www.med.ufl.edu/oea/finaid.

Health and Disability Insurance

The School of Physician Assistant Studies requires all students to be covered by major medical insurance. It is not sufficient for the student to seek care through the Student Health Care Center, for the SHCC can offer only primary outpatient care. Insurance may be acquired through a family major medical policy, through a private insurance agency, or by purchasing the University of Florida Student Government Health Insurance Plan B. It is highly advisable that the insurance plan chosen, offer appropriate, comprehensive coverage throughout the State of Florida and not simply in Gainesville and Alachua County or at a distant city/county/state only. The student should check with his/her insurance company as to the coverage provided for accidental exposure. It is important for students to realize that medical expenses for care provided by Shands Hospitals and hospitals affiliated with the College of Medicine School of Physician Assistant Studies, including laboratory procedures and emergency care, are the responsibility of the student and not the College of Medicine School of Physician Assistant Studies or the University. Any injury or accidental exposure is NOT considered workmen's compensation since the student is not an employee of the site.

The School of Physician Assistant Studies strongly advises all PA students to acquire disability insurance, to provide protection in the event of a long-term illness or injury.

Health and Immunization Requirements

All health and immunization requirements must be up-to-date and documented in the School of PA Studies office. The following are the requirements of the University of Florida and the College of Medicine School of Physician Assistant Studies:

- A. A screening health history form provided by the Student Health Care Center (SHCC).
- B. Proof of current health insurance. Certification of current health insurance is mandatory for each year of enrollment in the School of Physician Assistant Studies (see "Health and Disability Insurance" below).
- C. Proof of two immunizations against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) or laboratory evidence of a positive (immune) titer against each of the three infections. In the absence of proof of either immunization or immunity, students must be immunized at the SHCC or your primary care physician.
- D. Proof of two negative PPD skin test for tuberculosis (by Mantoux) within the past 12 months; and, if positive, proof of a chest x-ray negative for active disease. Additionally, the TB skin test must be repeated in Summer A of the academic year and those who tested positive must complete a TB Surveillance Form.
- E. Documentation of two varicella (chickenpox) immunizations or proof of positive (immune) varicella titer. In the absence of proof of either immunization or immunity, students must be immunized at the SHCC or your primary care physician.
- F. Proof of the three-dose immunization against Hepatitis B or completion of the three-dose immunization series prior to the completion of the Fall semester of the first year. Immunizations can be given at the SHCC. Proof of completion of the Hepatitis B series or a positive (immune) titer must be completed prior to patient contact.
- G. Meningococcal meningitis vaccine- MCV4 (Menactra)- or sign a waiver.
- H. Seasonal Influenza vaccine
- I. Tdap within the past 2 years

Allergy to formaldehyde and/or latex (previous and subsequent to enrollment) must be verified by a physician. The student must give this information to the College of Medicine - Americans with Disabilities (ADA) office in order for protective mask/cartridge charges to be paid. Otherwise, the student will be responsible for the cost.

Remember that, as clinicians, you bear a responsibility to your patients and colleagues to reduce the transmission of disease, especially to the most vulnerable among us. Refusing vaccination, for whatever reason, puts these people at higher risk of nosocomial infection. Students are strongly advised to consider this when making a decision to not vaccinate.

In accordance with Florida Statutes, any student attending a public educational institution may decline any vaccination, based on religious beliefs/personal tenets. A formal UF Beliefs Exemption must be completed, and the student must meet with a registered nurse at the Student Health Care Center Immunization Clinic for counseling and information regarding risks associated with such an exemption. Furthermore, if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs on campus, or at a clinical site, students who have not been vaccinated may be excluded from attending classes or participating in other School activities.

While the Beliefs Exemption applies to Florida public institutions, private hospitals and clinics may not accept students who cannot demonstrate either vaccination against or immunity from communicable diseases.

Student Health/ Risk Management/ Universal Precautions/ Environmental Hazard Exposure

The College of Medicine School of Physician Assistant Studies has a solid, long-standing commitment to protect the health and well-being of students, faculty, staff, patients, and the general public. Students in the School of Physician Assistant Studies are required to show proof of appropriate immunity, or documented immunization, prior to matriculation and prior to the onset of actual patient contact. Ultimately, each student is responsible for his/her health and safety in the clinical/educational setting. Therefore, it is the goal of the School of Physician Assistant Studies that all students learn appropriate policies and procedures to follow in the event that they are injured or potentially exposed to blood-borne pathogens or other communicable diseases, as well as exposure to environmental hazards. During the academic year of training, presentations are given on universal blood and body fluid precautions, infection control, and prevention of the spread of communicable disease. In addition, the Student Advocacy Committee monitors student health policies and procedures, in order to insure compliance with institutional and state health requirements.

Policy for Potential Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens and Communicable Diseases

ACCIDENTAL NEEDLE-STICK/BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS CHECKLIST – FOLLOW ALL 3 STEPS

1. TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO PROTECT YOURSELF!
 - a. *REMOVE YOURSELF* from the site of injury.
 - a. *NOTIFY* your site supervisor of your exposure, and follow local post-exposure protocols, if available.
 - b. *OBTAIN* the name of the source patient, medical record #, room number, and diagnosis. This HIPAA-protected information is necessary to assist the medical provider in determining the potential severity of the exposure.
 - c. *GET TREATMENT ASAP* - Appropriate first aid should be given for the injury and a tetanus booster when indicated. The student should inform the provider that UF physicians follow current CDC guidelines in determining the need for post-exposure HIV prophylaxis. If the provider has questions, he/she could call the SHCC at (352) 392-1161 or the Shands @ UF Emergency Department at (352) 395-0050.
2. WHAT IS YOUR LOCATION
 - a. If within a one-hour radius of Gainesville, use **PROCEDURE A**
 - b. If beyond the one-hour radius from Gainesville, use **PROCEDURE B**.

PROCEDURE A:

Call the UF Student Health Care Center (SHCC) at 352-392-1161 or after-hours at 866-477-6824. A member of the medical staff is available for phone consultation 24-hours a day. The SHCC medical provider will make recommendations for immediate evaluation and care, and will direct you to the closest SHCC facility.

PROCEDURE B:

Call the UF Student Health Care Center (SHCC) at 352-392-1161 or after-hours at 866-477-6824. A member of the medical staff is available for phone consultation 24-hours a day. Seek care at the Emergency Department or Employee Health Clinic at your hospital, or at a nearby hospital emergency center. Subsequently, you should call again to make an appointment at the SHCC for appropriate follow-up care.

3. COMPLETE "REPORT OF ACCIDENTAL EXPOSURE" FORM AND TRANSMIT TO UFSPAS. This document is found on page 38.

Students Ill with Communicable Diseases.

By College of Medicine and Shands Hospital policy, students with communicable diseases or conditions may not be allowed patient contact. This restriction may be necessary to protect the health and safety of UF and Shands patients and staff. Persons with the following medical conditions will not be allowed patient contact without a medical clearance:

- Active chickenpox
- measles
- German measles
- Herpes zoster (shingles)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- Tuberculosis
- Oral herpes with draining lesions
- Group A streptococcal disease (i.e., strep throat) until 24 hours of treatment received
- Diarrhea lasting over three days or accompanied by fever or bloody stools
- Draining or infected skin lesions
- Conjunctivitis
- Influenza

If an ill student is unsure whether he/she should participate in patient care, the student should contact the SHCC clinical staff at (352) 392-1161, or the Student Health @ Shands satellite clinic at (352) 392-0627.

Policies Regarding HIV/AIDS and Other Communicable Diseases.

It is the policy of the University of Florida to assess the needs of students or employees with HIV infection or other communicable diseases on a case-by-case basis. If any such infection occurs in a College of Medicine student, any recommendations made or actions taken by the College of Medicine or the Shands Hospitals will respect the confidentiality and welfare of the student, while also recognizing and responding to issues regarding the welfare of patients, the College of Medicine/ School of PA Studies, and the hospital. The College on a case-by-case basis will evaluate each student's situation. With the permission of the affected student, the Director of the Student Health Care Center (a physician) will assist in the coordination of resources and services.

1. Currently, the UF College of Medicine and the Shands Hospital do not recommend the routine HIV testing of patients, students, or healthcare workers. However, it is certainly prudent for individual healthcare workers, including students, to be aware of their own individual HIV status so that they can take appropriate precautions and measures. With current advances in HIV/AIDS treatment, early intervention can be crucial to maintaining well-being and delaying complications of the illness. If future state or federal legislation were to change guidelines or requirements for HIV testing of healthcare workers or healthcare students, the College of Medicine and Shands Hospitals would comply as required.
2. In the event of a potential blood-borne pathogen exposure in a student, the medical provider will recommend HIV testing as a baseline and also follow-up intervals of 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months. When testing is medically advisable, it is subject to informed consent and results are treated confidentially.
3. The best protection is prevention and adherence to Standard Universal Precautions (see below).

Standard Universal Precautions.

When providing patient care, regardless of the real or perceived communicable disease status of the patient, all students and staff should follow Standard Universal Precautions:

- Wash hands before and after patient contact, according to hospital policy, even if gloves are used.
- Wear gloves when exposure to blood, body fluids, excretions, or secretions is likely.
- Use gloves appropriately according to aseptic and/or sterile techniques, and change gloves between patients.
- Wear gowns/aprons when soiling of clothing with blood or body fluids is likely.
- Wear masks, face shields, and eye protection when aerosolization of blood or body fluids may occur.
- Dispose of sharps in designated rigid sharps containers. Never recap by hand.
- Dispose of waste saturated with blood or body fluids in designated red-bag trash containers.

Environmental Hazards/Hazardous Waste.

If exposure to environmental hazards of any kind occurs (either on campus or on clinical rotation), follow all appropriate reporting instructions at your clinical site (if on clinical rotations) and in all cases, the exposure should be reported immediately to the School. If deemed necessary, students should present for medical care at an appropriate facility.

Hazardous Substances Personal Contamination Procedures Checklist

IF YOU, OR ANOTHER ARE EXPOSED TO A HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE:

Do what is necessary to protect life. Remain calm.

1. The MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) will contain special first aid information.
2. Do not move an injured person unless they are in further danger.
3. Get medical attention and decontamination advice promptly by dialing:
 - a. 911
 - b. 800-222-1222 (Nationwide number to poison control center)
4. For specific instruction regarding personal contamination, contact your rotation supervisor at the site.
5. After following instructions of emergency resources (911 and/or Poison Control), the student should notify his/her rotation supervisor and the UF Student Health Care Center (352-392-1161), and then seek care at the Emergency Department or Employee Health Clinic at his/her hospital, or at a nearby hospital emergency center. Subsequently, the student should call to make an appointment at the SHCC @ Shands or the main SHCC @ the Infirmary Building for appropriate follow-up care.

6. Notify the School of Physician Assistant Studies via email. Complete the "Report of Accidental Exposure" form, and image/FAX it to the School as soon as practicable.

Criminal Background Checks/ Drug Screening

1. If a felony conviction occurs between the date of submission of the CASPA application and matriculation into the School of PA Studies, the specific details including: (1) date of charge(s), (2) type of offense and (3) disposition of the case must be reported to the School Director's office immediately. Any felony convictions that occur subsequent to matriculation or at any time during your enrollment in the School must also be reported immediately providing the same information as previously enumerated. Failure to comply will be grounds for dismissal from the School of Physician Assistant Studies.

2. During the clinical phase of the School of Physician Assistant Studies, students will be required to undergo one or more national criminal background checks, which may include fingerprinting. Although the costs of the initial background check and drug screening are currently included in the financial aid package, some clinical sites used by the School of PA Studies may require additional background checks, fingerprinting, and/or drug screening for students to have practice opportunities at those institutions. The student may be responsible for these costs.

3. A criminal record or failure to pass a drug screen may impede clinical training and may negatively affect a student's status in the School of PA Studies. By accepting admission to the School, a student agrees to submit to national criminal background checks as well as drug screening and to pay any associated expenses.

PACKRAT Exam

Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) will be taken during each year of the two year program. Students may be required to pay for the cost of the test at some future date without formal announcement. However, at the present time, the School covers the expense of the examination. The School of has received authorization to make an individual copy of each student's performance on the PACKRAT examination as a measure their clinical knowledge base during his/her training. This information may be used to make decisions affecting promotion, clinical rotations, graduation or remediation. The School will maintain the scores in the same confidential manner as with other academic performance information.

Additional Requirements

Every student will be required to have a laptop computer that meets the specifications outlined by the College of Medicine. In order to take advantage of educational opportunities as they present themselves throughout the course of your education, there may be additional experiences required of all students such as extra classroom sessions, online course modules, turning point clickers, etc.

Computer Requirements- UF Policy for Students

1. The following is the College of Medicine policy (modified) on the student computer requirements:
<http://osa.med.ufl.edu/files/2016/07/Mandatory-Laptop-Requirement.pdf>
2. Access to and on-going use of a computer is required for all students to complete their degree programs successfully. The University of Florida expects each student, as well as each student new to the university, to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to his or her degree program. Competency in the basic use of a computer is a requirement. Class assignments may require use of a computer, academic advising and registration can be done by computer, and official university correspondence is sent via e-mail. While the university offers limited access to computers through its computer labs, most students will be expected to purchase or lease a computer that is capable of dial-up or network connection to the Internet, graphical access to the World Wide Web, and productivity functions such as word processing and spreadsheet calculation.
3. The School of Physician Assistant Studies requires students to have laptops for classroom use and recommends a computer no older than 2 years. The College of Medicine does not endorse a specific operating system or computer brand. This requirement focuses on function and current open standards. Students should have a current, fully-patched operating system.
4. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their computer is functional especially during testing situations. Students may not be able to take the exam or quiz should their computer not be in working order.
5. Ipads may be used in the classroom but will not be sufficient for testing.
6. **Apple computer products are not supported by the Technology help desk.**

University of Florida School of Physician Assistant Studies
Graduate Curriculum (Effective Summer B 2011)

Academic Year			Semester Hours
Semester I (Summer B)	PAS 5022C	Gross and Radiographic Anatomy for PAs	4
	PAS 5003C	Medical Communications for PAs	2
Semester II (Fall)	PAS 5005	Behavioral and Community Medicine I for PAs	1
	PAS 5025	Human Physiology for PAs	4
	PAS 5010	Introduction to Medicine I for PAs	6
	PAS 5026	Pharmacotherapeutics for PAs	4
	PAS 5000C	Physical Diagnosis for PAs	2
Semester III (Spring)	PAS 5009	Behavioral and Community Medicine II for PAs	1
	PAS 5004	Clinical Problem Solving/Differential Diagnosis for PAs	1
	PAS 5007C	Clinical Procedures for PAs	1
	PAS 5027C	Electrocardiographic Interpretation for PAs/ACLS	1
	PAS 5020	Introduction to Medicine II for PAs	6
	PAS 5001C	Patient Evaluation and Hospital Practicum for PAs	2
Semester IV (Summer A)	PAS 5008C	Advanced Clinical Practicum for PAs	2
	PAS 5013	Evidence-Based Medicine for PAs	3
Total Credits Academic Year			40

Clinical Year

Semester V (Summer B)		Two Rotations (2x3 semester hours)	6
	PAS 5930	Special Topics	1
Semester VI (Fall)		Four Rotations	12
	PAS 5930	Special Topics	1
Semester VII (Spring)		Four Rotations	12
	PAS 5930	Special Topics	1
Semester VIII (Summer A)		Two Rotations	6
	PAS 5930	Special Topics	1
Total Credits Clinical Year			40

Rotation Requirements:

PAS 5600	Emergency Medicine	PAS 5300	Pediatrics
PAS 5200	General Surgery	PAS 5400	*Primary Care I
PAS 5701	Critical Care Medicine	PAS 5401	*Primary Care II
PAS 5100	Internal Medicine	PAS 5125	Psychiatry
PAS (varies)	Internal Medicine Selective	PAS (varies)	Elective
PAS 5510	Women's Health	PAS (varies)	Elective

*A minimum of one rotation in any of these areas must be in a rural location and one of the Primary Care rotations must be in Family Medicine.

Total Program Credits	80
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Medical Equipment

Medical equipment will be required during your training in the School of Physician Assistant Studies. Medical equipment will be utilized during the Physical Diagnosis course in the Fall semester, the Hospital Practicum course in Spring semester, all clinical rotations, and in your practice after graduation.

The School of PA Studies faculty does not make specific recommendations regarding vendors but can answer questions about the required equipment. A list of suggested equipment is provided on the following page. Substantial group discounts are often available from vendors. Your class will have the opportunity to take advantage of group pricing by coordinating their equipment order with the 2nd year class to acquire equipment at the lowest cost to each student.

Local Suppliers of Medical Equipment and Supplies:

University Medical Bookstore
Health Science Center
University of Florida
Phone: 392-3478

Websites for Medical Equipment and Supplies:

Amazon- amazon.com
Allheart - : <http://www.allheart.com/littmannscopes.html>
Steeles - http://www.steeles.com/catalog/cata_stetho.html
Medisave USA - <http://www.medisave.net/services.php>

The University of Florida School of PA Studies requires one of the following stethoscope(s)*:

3M™ Littmann Classic II S.E. Stethoscope
3M™ Littmann Cardiology III Stethoscope
MDF MD One Epoch Titanium Stethoscope
MDF ProCardial C3 Stethoscope

**Accommodations will be made on a case by case basis for those with documented disabilities.*

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
SCHOOL OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES
MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LIST**

Item	Approximate Price
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Required items

One of the following stethoscopes:

Littmann Classic II SE Stethoscope	75.00
Littmann Cardiology III Stethoscope (must remove pediatric diaphragm and convert to a bell)	150.00
MDF MD One Epoch Titanium Stethoscope	80.00
MDF ProCardial C3 Stethoscope	165.00

Reflex (percussion) hammer	5.00
Tuning fork (128 Hz)	10.00
Tuning fork (512 Hz)	10.00
Tape measure (cm & inches)	5.00
Rosenbaum Pocket Screener (near vision screening card)	4.00
Pen light	5.00

Estimated cost for required items	\$115-190
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Recommended items

One of the following diagnostic sets:

Welch Allyn Standard Diagnostic Set – Model 97200	540.00
Welch Allyn Student Diagnostic Set- Model STU-151	265.00

Estimated cost for recommended items	\$265-540
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Optional items

Sphygmomanometer	40
Medical bag	30-100

Estimated cost for optional items	\$125
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**University of Florida
School of Physician Assistant Studies
Additional Costs**

	<u>Didactic Year</u>	<u>Clinical Year</u>
<u>Tuition & Fees</u>		
Florida Resident	\$27,200	\$27,200
Non-Florida Resident	\$60,599	\$27,200 \$60,599
<u>Books and Supplies</u>	\$ 2,950	\$ 2,445
<u>Lodging and Utilities</u>	\$ 8,350	\$ 9,200
<u>Food</u>	\$ 5,580	\$ 5,580
<u>Clothing Maintenance</u>	\$ 1,750	\$ 1,750
<u>Personal/Insurance</u>	\$ 2,860	\$ 2,700
<u>Transportation</u>	\$ 3,750**	\$ 3,750
<u>Professional Fees</u>	\$ 200	\$ 500***
<u>Required Medical Equipment</u>	\$ 665	\$ 125
TOTAL		
Florida Resident	\$48,390	\$48,630
Non-Florida Resident	\$81,727	\$81,967

*Assumes that the appropriate documentation is secured and presented to the Office of the Registrar to obtain residency in the State of Florida. This is not guaranteed. The final decision as to residency status is made by the department of the registrar on campus. See [here](#) and here for more information on residency reclassification.

**Public transportation is free for students. The \$3400 figure represents the estimated cost for operating an automobile.

***Includes cost of PANCE (\$450) and drug screening, fingerprinting costs

Costs of attendance budgets include only those expenses associated with the student. Living expenses for spouse and/or other dependents are not recognized as part of the student's standard costs of attendance.

Other expenses not directly essential to a student's education or living expenses are the sole responsibility of the student. Examples of this include, but not limited to, attendance at conferences, membership in specialty professional organizations, and optional medical databases or resources.

NOTE: The costs represent estimates and are based on the costs available at the time of compilation. These figures are subject to change. Additionally these figures may not be the same as what is projected in your loans.

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
SCHOOL OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES**

Report of Accidental Exposure

Student Name: _____, PAS II

Rotation Month/Dates: _____ Rotation Discipline: _____

Name of Site: _____

Supervising Preceptor: _____

Date and Time of Exposure (As precise as possible): _____

Type of Exposure: _____

NOTIFICATIONS (Note date / time / person contacted)

Rotation site's contact person (immediate): _____

PA Program (within 24 hours): _____

Narrative description of exposure incident, inclusive of precautions taken (i.e., gloves, gowning, eye protection, cleanup, etc.) and extent of patient contact. Continue on back of form if needed:

Was treatment initiated? YES / NO / NA

If YES, list medications or prophylaxis given (amount/duration): _____

If NO, did student deny treatment? YES / NO List reason: _____

If exposure incident (i.e., Tuberculosis) is student cleared for clinical rotation? YES / NO

Student MUST provide documentation of clearance to School

I have reviewed and understand the clinical year manual's universal precaution / exposure incident policy.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Fax this form within 24 hours to the SPAS Program office- (352) 294-8167.

**University of Florida
School of Physician Assistant Studies
Academic Year Absence Request and Reporting Form**

- The School of PA Studies requires an absence request form for any absence occurring on a mandatory attendance day or for any absence beyond 2 days in a Summer semester or 4 days in Fall or Spring semester as per the attendance policy as documented on pages 15-16 of your academic manual.
- Forms should be submitted to the Director of Didactic Education. **Electronic copies are requested.**
- You will be notified in writing of the decision of the request in writing, typically via email.
- An absence report form must be submitted prior to the absence, if possible, or within 24 hours of returning to class.
- Please notify the School of PA Studies as soon as you know of any potential absences.

1. To be completed by the student.

Student's Name: _____

Date(s) of Absence: _____

Date requested: _____

Mandatory day?

Any request to excuse an absence on a mandatory attendance day for any reason other than medical or personal emergencies will be denied. An appeal may be made using section 3 of this form. If you know that this absence will be denied, you can fill out the appeal form at the time of request.

List of educational activities missed or will be missed:

Reason for Absence:

Student Signature: _____ **Date** _____

2. School of PA Studies Decision:

Absence request approved. Conditions (as appropriate):

Absence request not approved. Explanation (as appropriate):

Director of Didactic Education Signature _____ **Date** _____

The student has the option to appeal the decision made by the School of PA Studies.
In this case, the student's appeal will be taken before the PSPC for a decision.

3. Appeals. To be completed by the student. Please print or type.

Reason for appeal:

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

4. School of PA Studies Decision for the appeal:

- Appeal granted by the School of PA Studies. Conditions (as appropriate):

- Appeal not granted by the School of PA Studies. Explanation (as appropriate):

Date of Discussion by the PSPC _____

Decision of the PSPC _____

Signature of the chair of the PSPC _____