

College of Saint Mary



Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program Student Handbook 2018-2019

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Purpose of the Student Handbook

The *Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook* provides information to orient students to current policies, procedures, and regulations relevant to participation in the professional Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program at College of Saint Mary. Students are accountable and responsible for all information contained in this handbook. In addition to the policies and procedures noted in this handbook, students are also accountable and responsible for all the information contained in the *College of Saint Mary Student Handbook* found online at and available at http://www.csm.edu/sites/default/files/Student_Handbook_2017-2018-3.pdf

Change Notice

The Physician Assistant Studies Program reserves the right to make changes in policies, procedures, and regulations following the publication of this handbook. Notice of changes, revisions, and additions to the handbook will be distributed to each student in writing by the Director of the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

Teaching out Currently Matriculated Students

College of Saint Mary (CSM) is committed to the academic success of all students. However, should the program lose accreditation or if there is a voluntary decision to close the program, the CSM Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program is responsible for developing a plan for teaching out currently matriculated students. The plan may include matriculating out the remaining students at College of Saint Mary or assisting the students in obtaining matriculation at another accredited institution.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM

Mission and Values

College of Saint Mary is a Catholic institution providing access to education for women in an environment that calls forth potential and fosters leadership. Consistent with the works, values, and aspirations of the Sisters of Mercy, this mission inspires us to:

Excellence

We share a passionate commitment to Mission that drives us to achieve academic distinction, foster leadership and nurture the love of lifelong learning.

Service

Our culture is characterized by our commitment to servant leadership and social responsibility where we strive to understand and attend to the needs of our community in a spirit of mutuality, addressing the concerns of our times.

Dignity

Our profound respect for all creation calls us to honor the sacredness of one another, care for the earth and recognize the presence of God in all things.

Compassion

In solidarity, we extend our spirit of mercy in all relationships, caring for the joys and sorrows, hopes and dreams of others.

Inclusivity

Our welcoming and hospitable environment reflects a diverse collegial community that honors all cultures and care for the global community.

Integrity

We uphold the trust people place in us by demonstrating wholeness of character, stewarding the gifts we have been given and caring for the well-being of our body, mind, and spirit.

Physician Assistant Studies Program Mission Statement

The mission of the College of Saint Mary Physician Assistant Studies Program is to establish an educational environment fostering academic excellence and leadership, which prepares students to become competent Physician Assistants who possess the knowledge, compassion, and clinical skills necessary to provide high quality medical care to all patient populations, including those that are underserved.

Program Goals

- Provide evidence-based medical education that prepares students to practice in diverse settings throughout Nebraska
- Be effective members of the healthcare team in an interprofessional healthcare environment
- Maintain 100% job placement of recent graduates actively seeking employment
- Foster a culture of service and compassion and to provide for the underserved of our community
- Provide the support and opportunities necessary for each student to be successful in the program
- Collaborate with College of Saint Mary pre-PA enrollment counselors and faculty to ensure the recruitment and development of highly qualified, compassionate, and caring applicants to the Physician Assistant Studies Program

Graduate Functions & Tasks/Expected Outcomes

The student's acquisition of medical knowledge and skills in the program will be based on the biopsychosocial model of care. This model requires knowledge and analysis of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of health and illness and the scientific and compassionate application to human structure, function, and behavior. It also requires knowledge of the contextual and underlying factors including current medical practice concepts, clinical research in medicine and its application to clinical decision making, medical delivery and payment systems, effective utilization of communication, the values and ethics of professionalism, and self-assessment activities for continuous self-improvement and improvement of patient care. This model of care is consistent with the mission and goals of the program.

The student learning outcomes for the program are guided by the *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession*. This document defines the knowledge, skills, and professional attributes necessary for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate. This document was developed through a collaborative effort of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the Accreditation Review Commission on Education of Physician Assistants (ARC-PA), the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). The complete document can be found in Appendix II.

The CSM PA Program's education goals are to develop physician assistants who have the necessary knowledge and skill set to competently practice medicine. The program provides the training to meet the objectives and achieve the stated outcomes. To ensure the program has accomplished these goals, students will undergo multiple evaluation methods to confirm they are competent in the following areas:

Medical Knowledge

- Describe the normal structure and function of the body and each major organ system, and understand mechanisms responsible for maintaining the body's homeostasis
- Demonstrate knowledge of the various causes of disease states including genetic, developmental, metabolic, autoimmune, neoplastic, degenerative, and traumatic and the methods the body's functions may be altered
- Recognize the clinical presentation of the common or life-threatening diseases and injuries, and understand the principles of treatment and clinical management
- Describe the most commonly used diagnostic and laboratory studies used in primary care
- Understand the epidemiology of common illnesses within a defined population, and the systematic approaches useful in reducing the incidence and prevalence of those diseases
- Determine by clinical reasoning, a differential diagnosis for common clinical conditions

- Recognize patients with life-threatening conditions and describe appropriate initial therapies
- Determine appropriate management strategies for patients with common acute and chronic conditions, and those needing short and long-term rehabilitation and end-of-life care

Patient Care

- Obtain an accurate medical history for patients across the lifespan and include issues related to gender, socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic factors
- Perform a physical examination that encompasses all body systems
- Perform routine technical procedures include, but not limited to: venipuncture, intravenous catheterization, nasogastric tube insertion, suturing, insertion of Foley catheter, injections, basic and advance life cardiac life support, and other office-based procedures and diagnostic tests
- Identify the principles of health maintenance and disease prevention
- Discuss the nonclinical influence on poor health including the economic, psychological, social, and cultural factors that contribute to the development and/or prolongation of illness

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

- Communicate effectively with patients, their families, colleagues, and other staff
- Understand the importance of proper documentation and utilize effective written and oral skills to elicit and deliver information
- Understand verbal and nonverbal communication during patient encounters and understand how these interplay with cultural, ethnic, and gender influences
- Demonstrate emotional stability and the ability to adapt to situations of uncertainty or anxiety
- Maintain professional relationships with patients

Professionalism

- Understand the role of the physician assistant as part of the health care team and develop familiarity with regulatory and legal requirements
- Describe ethical and moral aspects of clinical practice
- Understand and respect the roles of other health care providers and know when to collaborate with others when promoting the health of patients
- Exhibit tolerance towards the beliefs and values of patients and colleagues and avoid bias
- Demonstrate reliability, dependability, and intellectual curiosity
- Demonstrate ability to consistently carry out the duties of a PA with honesty, personal integrity, and self-discipline
- Understand when to seek help to address any academic, personal, or interpersonal problems
- Demonstrate a commitment to excellence and on-going professional development

Practice-based Learning and Improvement

- Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities with other members of the health care team
- Demonstrate skills to research and retrieve studies from the medical literature and perform an appraisal to use the data to solve clinical problems and make appropriate patient-care decisions
- Recognize limitations through self-reflection and openness to feedback with a commitment to life-long learning

Systems Based Practice

- Demonstrate knowledge of the various approaches to the organization, financing, and delivery of healthcare
- Demonstrate how to practice cost-effective healthcare and understand how to practice good stewardship of healthcare services
- Identify the situations, circumstances, and actions that contribute to medical errors

Technical Skills and Procedures

By completion of the program, each student will have been taught in the didactic phase, or have performed or observed during the clinical phase, the following technical skills and procedures:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive physical examination• Casting• Splinting• Intravenous access• Venipuncture• Arterial puncture• Injections – intramuscular, intradermal, and subcutaneous• Suturing – wound closure• Surgical knot tying• Wound care• Skin biopsies – punch, shave, elliptical• Urinary catheterizations• Nasogastric intubation• Endotracheal intubation• IV medication administration• Sterile technique• Administration of local anesthesia• Digital nerve blocks• Culture collection – blood, sputum, urine• Performance of urinalysis, wet mount, and KOH prep• Collection and interpretation of rapid strep and influenza• Eye irrigation• Epistaxis management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lumbar puncture• Cerumen removal• Pap smear• Colposcopy• Isolation procedures• Arthrocentesis• Dislocation reduction• Incision and drainage• Skin stapling/removal• Central line placement• IUD insertion/removal• Joint aspiration/injection• Cryotherapy• Burn treatment• Chest tubes• Epidurals• Anoscopy• Operating room – surgical scrubbing, gowning/gloving, sterile field, surgical instruments• Foreign body removal – eye, ear, nose, skin• BLS/ACLS/PALS• Management of emergent situations: Cardiac arrest, Trauma, Anaphylaxis, Respiratory distress
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Technical Standards

College of Saint Mary's Master of Science of Physician Assistant Studies Program is committed to the development of providers who deliver high quality patient care with compassion and respect. In addition to academic standards, students must be able to meet required technical standards for admission, progression, and graduation from the program. A student must have adequate ability and skills in the following areas: observation; communication; sensory and motor function; intellectual, conceptual, integrative, and quantitative ability; and behavioral and social attributes.

Students must attest to their ability to meet these standards with or without reasonable accommodations. See Appendix III.

General Abilities: The student must possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, taste, and smell in order to integrate, analyze, and synthesize information in an accurate manner. The student must also have the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, position equilibrium, and movement that are important to the student's ability to gather significant information necessary to effectively assess patients.

Observation: The student must be able to observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to chemical, biological, anatomic and physiologic sciences, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms. Students must be able to observe demonstrations in the classroom including films, powerpoint presentations, and other forms of visual presentation. The student must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand.

Communication: The student must communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally to elicit information from patients and others. They must be able to describe changes in mood, activity, posture, and perceive non-verbal communications. Each student must have the ability to read and write, comprehend and speak the English language to facilitate communication with patients, family members, and other professionals in healthcare settings. Communication includes speech, writing, reading, interpreting tables, figures, graphs, and computer literacy.

Sensory and Motor Function: The student must be able to perform gross and fine motor movements with sufficient coordination needed to perform physical examinations utilizing the techniques of inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A student must develop the psychomotor skills reasonably needed to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medication, management and operation of diagnostic and therapeutic medical equipment utilized in the general and emergent care of patients required in practice as a physician assistant. The student must be able to maintain consciousness and equilibrium; have sufficient levels of postural control, neuromuscular control, and eye-to-hand coordination; and to possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, and physical exertion required for satisfactory performance in the clinical and classroom settings.

Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities: The student must be able to develop and refine problem-solving skills that are crucial to practice as a physician assistant. Problem solving involves the abilities to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures; to measure, calculate reason, analyze, and synthesize objective and subjective; and to make decisions that reflect sound clinical judgment. A student must be able to read and comprehend medical literature, as well as have the ability to incorporate new information from a variety of sources to formulate diagnoses and develop a therapeutic plan.

Behavioral and Social Attributes: A student must possess the emotional health required for full use of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment and the prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom setting as well as in the clinical environment. The development of mature, sensitive, effective and professional relationships with patients and members of the health care team is essential. Students must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Flexibility, compassion, integrity, effective interpersonal skills, and concern for others are personal qualities that are desired in a health professional.

The Physician Assistant Studies Program Faculty will consider for admission applicants who have the ability to demonstrate the technical standards of the profession as noted in this document. The PA program must ensure the health, safety, and security of all patients. Eligibility to enter or continue in the program will be based on academic progress as well as physical and emotional capacities to perform the essential functions necessary to meet the requirements of the program's curriculum and become an effective practitioner.

Faculty Advising System

All students in the PA Program are assigned a faculty advisor for the student's entire enrollment. The main responsibilities of the faculty advisor are:

1. To be an advocate for the student throughout the student's enrollment.
2. To oversee and monitor the student's progress through the program and assist the student to maintain satisfactory progress through the program.
3. To be available for academic advising and consultation throughout the student's enrollment in the program.
4. To advise the student about the CSM campus resources and assistance for non-academic problems or concerns.
5. To consult with the student about any program requirements, policies, expectations or concerns that may impact the professional development or academic progress of the student.

At the beginning of the first semester of program enrollment, the student is expected to make an appointment with his/her advisor for an introductory (get acquainted) session. At that time, advisors will let students know their office hours, schedules, and the preferred ways to contact them throughout the year. Advisors will also inform the student about the program's expectations concerning academic progress, professional behavior, and development throughout the student's enrollment. Faculty advisors may be consulted for any reason of the student's choosing. Faculty advisors are considered advocates for the students they are assigned and have the students' best interests and welfare as their first responsibility. Students are encouraged to get to know their faculty advisor well in order to establish a positive rapport for effective collaboration.

There are two areas of particular importance regarding academic advising that are emphasized by the program: academic progress and professionalism. With regard to academic progress, students are expected to consult with their advisors at the first indication of any academic difficulty such as a low or failing grade, difficulty mastering class material, or concerns with a class or course. Emotional, social, circumstantial or other personal problems may also be impediments to academic progress and can be addressed by faculty advisors or any member of the faculty with whom the student feels comfortable. Students should know that faculty advisors are obligated to contact students for consultation in any circumstance where satisfactory academic progress may be in question. All faculty advisors want to ensure that their advisees maintain good academic standing throughout the entire enrollment in the program.

Regarding the second area, professionalism, students will be evaluated by the faculty at the end of every semester on their professional behaviors by means of the Professionalism Evaluation form. Advisors will consult with the student about the evaluation in order to promote and foster the student's professional development. Should there occur an event necessitating an "Unsatisfactory" rating on the Professionalism Evaluation form at any point in the student's enrollment, the student will be contacted by his/her advisor for consultation and remedial action. Professionalism and its development as the student progresses through the program is a primary value for every faculty advisor. Should a student obtain an "unsatisfactory" rating, he/she will be placed on academic probation as noted in the progression standards.

Curriculum Design

The Master of Science of Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) Program is 24 months in length consisting of a 12-month didactic component followed by 12-month supervised clinical clerkship component. The didactic phase is comprised of classroom instruction in advanced basic sciences, clinical skills, clinical medicine, pharmacology, behavioral medicine, ethics, and research. No advanced standing is allowed in the program, regardless of previous graduate work in healthcare. All incoming students must complete the entire PA curriculum. In general, classes are held Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The clinical phase of the program consists of 12 months of supervised clinical clerkships. Most clerkships are 4 weeks in length with some exceptions. There are required clerkships to include Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Women's Health, Behavioral Health, Emergency Medicine, and General Surgery. In addition to the required clerkships, students will choose electives to complete the clinical phase of the program. Some rotations will require students to work on the weekends and evenings. Students are required to be available as instructed by their preceptors. Several times throughout the clinical phase, students will return to campus for end-of-rotation exams as well as other educational sessions. A separate handbook will be distributed during the clinical year orientation detailing specifics for the clinical year.

CSM PA Program Curriculum Didactic Year

FALL Semester	Hrs	SPRING Semester	Hrs	SUMMER Semester	Hrs
Clinical Anatomy	5	Clinical Medicine I	8	Clinical Medicine II	8
Physiology	5	Pharmacology I	3	Pharmacology II	3
Medical Pathology	5	Communication I	2	Communication II	1
Immunology	3	Neuroanatomy	2	Behavioral Medicine	4
Professional Practice	1	Clinical Lab Science	2	Clinical Skills II	1
		Healthcare Systems	1	Ethics	1
		Clinical Skills I	2	Research	1
	19		20		19

Clinical Year

Clinical Rotations	Hrs
Family Practice Rotation 1	4
Family Practice Rotation2	4
Internal Medicine Rotation	4
Pediatric Rotation	4
Women's Health Rotation	4
Emergency Medicine Rotation	4
Behavioral Health Rotation	4
General Surgery Rotation	4
Elective Rotation 1	4
Elective Rotation 2	4
Elective Rotation 3	4
Elective Rotation 4	4
	48

Total Program Credit Hours: 106
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Course Descriptions

PAS 500 Clinical Anatomy (5 cr)

This intense course covers advanced study of the structure and development of the human body. Structural features are studied by gross dissection, demonstration, and cross section, and radiology. Embryology lectures provide an understanding of the development of definitive anatomical structures. Emphasis is placed on structure and the relationship of anatomic configuration to diagnosis clinical problems. The format of the course includes lectures, laboratories, and demonstrations. Student evaluation is accomplished through written and practical examinations.

PAS 502 Physiology (5 cr)

This course will cover, at an advanced level, the fundamental principles of physiology. The course will cover cell physiology, neurophysiology, musculoskeletal system physiology, renal physiology, respiratory physiology, gastrointestinal physiology, endocrinology, and reproductive physiology.

PAS 504 Medical Pathology (5 cr)

This course will examine the underlying biochemical, cellular, and physiological changes which occur in human disease. Emphasis will be placed on the most common conditions. This course integrates general pathology and laboratory medicine to prepare the student for the clinical medicine course.

PAS 506 Immunology/Hematology (3 cr)

A study of normal immune system function (both acquired and innate), normal hematological function and common diseases and derangements of both.

PAS 508 Professional Practice (1 cr)

This course will introduce the students to the physician assistant profession. Students will gain an understanding of professionalism and the role of the physician assistant. In addition, students will also learn the history of the profession, the profession's organizations, the credentialing and certification process, as well as an introduction to the health care system.

PAS 513 Clinical Medicine I (8 cr)

The Medicine I course is designed to introduce students to the process of clinical decision making by utilizing critical reasoning skills to diagnosis and treat illness and disease. Students will develop their knowledge base in the etiology, clinical presentation, differential diagnoses, and therapeutic approach to disease processes. This course will focus on the most commonly diagnosed medical problems. In addition to lectures and reading assignments, Problem Based Learning sessions in a small group format will allow for increased focus on the critical reasoning process.

PAS 527 Clinical Lab Science (2 cr)

This course will provide the student with an overview of commonly ordered laboratory tests, accurate application of the tests, and interpretation of the data. Proper laboratory technique for selected tests will also be covered along with quality control measures. Additionally, evaluation and correlation of laboratory data used in the diagnosis and treatment of common infectious disease states will be covered.

PAS 521 Neuroanatomy (2 cr)

An overview of the structure and function of the central nervous system will be discussed with a focus on principles related to clinical neurology and interpretation of the neurobiological examination.

PAS 519 Communication in Medicine I (2 cr)

This course is designed to provide students the skills necessary to become proficient in communication – including verbal communication, non-verbal communication and medical writing skills. Communication is a core component in the practice of medicine. Good communication between patient and provider improves patient outcomes. To effectively build communication skills, the course will address the basic fundamentals and integrate these skills into the clinical curriculum.

PAS 528 Healthcare Systems (1)

This course will provide the physician assistant student an overview of the major types of healthcare systems along with clinical management practices. Coding and reimbursement will be reviewed as well as quality assurance and risk management. Access to care, socioeconomic, and legal issues will be covered.

PAS 517 Pharmacotherapy I (3 cr)

This course provides the physician student the general principals of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of various classes of drugs. Drug actions on the various biochemical pathways and physiological systems will be discussed. The judicious use of drugs in physician assistant practice will be emphasized. This course will lay the foundation for the Pharmacology II course.

PAS 529 Clinical Skills I (2)

This course is designed to provide students instruction in the fundamental clinical skills necessary for patient care. A primary focus of instruction is on performance of complete examinations of patients across the lifespan. Weekly lectures combined with small group instruction ensure students learn proper exam techniques, recognize and appropriately describe physical findings, and use the clinical data to formulate differential diagnoses.

PAS 539 Communication in Medicine II (1 cr)

This course allows students to build upon the knowledge and skills obtained in Communication in Medicine I and continue to increase their competency level. Patient education and counseling skills are emphasized, as is more complex communication such as giving bad news. Significant emphasis is placed on interdisciplinary communication. The skills learned in this course will be integrated into the clinical curriculum, thereby allowing the student to become more familiar with medical communication.

PAS 552 Research (1)

This course is the first in a two course series that covers topics relevant to clinical research and the principals of evidence-based practice. Topics include research design, sound measurement principles, basic descriptive statistics, and an introduction to the efficient use of information systems. A major portion of the course will emphasize the critical appraisal and synthesis of the findings of clinical research.

PAS 533 Clinical Medicine II (8 cr)

This course builds material presented in the Medicine I course and prepares students for the clinical phase of their education. The course focuses on etiology, risk factors, underlying pathologic processes, and epidemiology for disease processes encountered in the practice of medicine. Recognition of signs and symptoms of medical conditions, appropriate diagnostic work-up, development of differential diagnoses, treatment options, patient education, and prevention are focused topics in the course. The course will follow a systems-based approach.

PAS 537 Pharmacotherapy II (3 cr)

This course is designed to build upon the material presented in the Pharmacology I course and will emphasize pharmacotherapeutic practice. Commonly prescribed drugs will be examined with the focus on appropriate drug selection based on individual patients, common adverse reactions, and drug interactions. The cost and

efficacy of drugs will be studied. Prescribing for special patient populations will be addressed to include pregnancy, lactation, pediatrics, and geriatrics.

PAS 549 Clinical Skills II (1)

This course is a continuation of Clinical Skills I and the student is introduced to technical skills of increased complexity to include suturing, casting, splinting, IVs/injections, gowning, gloving, and a general orientation to the operating room. Students will learn proper sterile technique. Students are given an introduction to common minor procedures. In addition, Basic Life Support, Advanced Life Support, and Pediatric Life Support classes will be part of this course so as to certify the student prior to clinical rotations.

PAS 540 Behavioral Medicine (4)

This course will focus on neurobiological, psychobiological, emotional, social, and cultural influences and their effect on health and illness in the practice of primary care medicine. Human development across the lifespan will be presented, as well as end of life issues. Normative and maladaptive responses to developmental tasks and life stressors in relation to physical and emotional health will be covered. Health disparities and societal issues are examined. Psychiatric disorders are covered to include psychotic disorders, personality disorders, mood and anxiety disorders. The importance of practicing biopsychosocial medicine is stressed throughout the course. In addition, preventive healthcare and patient counseling will be emphasized.

PAS 550 Medical Ethics (1)

This course examines the application of human and professional values, judgments, and choices to selective ethical dilemmas arising in clinical practice. Students will be introduced to a structured approach for identifying, analyzing, and resolving ethical issues in clinical medicine. Topics related to patient rights, medical practice laws, professional liability, and medical malpractice are explored.

Required Clinical Preceptorship Descriptions

Family Practice Clerkship – Required

Family practice will consist of two 4-week experiences under the supervision of a community-based primary care physician and/or physician assistant designed to acquaint the student with those aspects of the practice of medicine unique to the community setting. The student works with the preceptor in the hospital, the office, long-term care facilities, and all other areas where the preceptor works. In the hospital the student makes rounds with the preceptor and assists him in fulfilling his inpatient responsibilities. In the office the student learns about management procedures in a medical practice and helps the preceptor by providing services consistent with his individual background and clinical training. Students will observe the team practice concept of health care.

Internal Medicine Clerkship - Required

This four-week clerkship will provide the student experiences in adult medicine. The student will have the opportunity to evaluate and treat problems encountered in an Internal Medicine setting including both inpatient and outpatient settings. This clerkship will allow students to learn management of more complex medical cases and further develop their critical thinking skills.

Women's Health – Required

This is a four-week clinical experience studying the broad spectrum of common obstetric and gynecological problems. During this clerkship, the management of pregnancy, labor, and delivery including prenatal, birth, and postnatal complications is taught. The student is responsible for taking obstetrical histories, performing obstetrical physical examinations, and following patients through labor, delivery, and the early postpartum period. The student will also gain experience in gynecologic care to include well-woman care, cancer detection, sexually transmitted diseases, and contraception. Learning to take gynecologically oriented patient histories and perform complete and accurate gynecological examinations is required to include office based

procedures. In addition, the student will have operating room exposure to gynecologic surgery as well as cesarean sections.

Psychiatry – Required

This is a four-week clinical experience in an outpatient and/or inpatient psychiatric setting. There will be special emphasis on the role of a physician assistant in psychiatry. Students will have the opportunity to evaluate patients, perform psychiatric interviews, assess mental status, and develop a working diagnosis. The student will develop a tentative medical management plan, make referral to a physician or community agency, and learn follow-up management with the treating physician or agency.

Emergency Medicine Clerkship – Required

This is a four-week course which provides the student opportunities to gain experience in evaluating and treating common medical emergencies encountered in Emergency Medicine. The student will be under the supervision of the Emergency Department physician and staff. The clerkship will expose the student to cases of trauma, life-threatening conditions, acute illness, and injuries seen in an emergency setting.

Pediatric Rotation – Required

This is a four-week clinical experience in which the student will have learning opportunities in pediatrics. The rotation will mainly consist of working in outpatient clinics, but may also have some inpatient exposure. The student will learn to manage various acute and chronic childhood illnesses and learn to evaluate normal variations of growth and development of infants and children.

General Surgery Clerkship – Required

This is a four-week clerkship in which the student will learn about surgical patients and the surgical service. Students participate in the pre-operative evaluation of the patient, observe/assist during surgery, as well as care for the patient post-operatively. At the end of the four weeks students are expected to understand the course of surgical illness, be able to conduct themselves appropriately in the operating room, and to have gained the skills necessary for care of surgical patients to include intravenous access, suturing, and other appropriate procedures as required by the clerkship preceptor.

Access to Disability Services

The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities offers a variety of services and reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Office at 402-399-2490 as soon as possible to better ensure that reasonable accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. It should be noted that services do not lower course standards or alter other degree requirements. Reasonable accommodations, when available, are intended to reduce the effects that a disability may have on the student's performance in a traditional academic setting. Requests for services may be made by either calling the Office at the above number or visiting the Office located in the Hixon-Lied Center. Hours of operation are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday or by appointment.

Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid provides assistance to students in finding sources of financial aid and prepares financial aid. The office is located in the Express Center in Walsh Hall. Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Phone: 402-399-2362.

Counseling Services

Counseling services are provided by CHI Health through the Counseling assistance program. Information for this service is in the classroom, PA faculty secretary's office and in the student development office. CHI provides 24-hour services counseling for a wide variety of personal and interpersonal issues. Assistance is available for common difficulties experienced by students to include anxiety, loneliness, depression, and eating disorders among others. All services are free and confidential. Phone: 402-398-5566 or 1-800-847-4975.

Academic Achievement Center

The center provides free academic support to students who may be struggling in their courses. Trained personnel can evaluate the student's study habits and time management skills. The student may call 402-399-2490 for an appointment.

III. PROGRAM POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Attendance and punctuality are mandatory for all program courses. An excused absence is required each time a student will be absent from any class. To obtain an excused absence from **each** class session for which the student intends to be absent, the student must notify the course coordinator or course instructor that he/she will be absent from class. This notice must be given as far in advance as is feasible. Notice may be given in person, by phone, or email.

The student is responsible for obtaining all information related to any missed class time including course material and announcements. The student is responsible for arranging to make up any work missed due to an absence. Instructors are not obligated to provide material to students due to an absence; instructors are further not obligated to provide the opportunity for students to make up missed material due to an unexcused absence. Attendance at all classes is considered part of the student's professional responsibility and an aspect of individual dependability. Attendance is considered essential for the successful completion of all courses.

Attendance is also an important educational and professional component of the clinical phase of the program. Students are required to be present for their supervised clinical clerkships as directed by the preceptor and clinical site. As stated elsewhere in this document, that may include weekends, evenings, and/or nights dependent upon the rotation. In cases of absence during clerkships, students are required to notify the preceptor, the program's clinical coordinator, and his/her academic advisor in ALL cases of absence.

Consequences for *unexcused* absences from courses/clerkships are:

- First occurrence – a meeting with the student's advisor to discuss prevention of further occurrences
- Second occurrence – an academic warning and a meeting with the faculty to discuss prevention of further occurrences
- Third occurrence – academic suspension
- Continued unexcused absences – absences after the third occurrence may result in academic dismissal

Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, will require a meeting with the faculty to discuss continuation in the program.

Policy on Leaves of Absence

Regular Leave of Absence

Students in the Physician Assistant Studies Program may, under exceptional circumstances, be granted a leave of absence. Any such leave of absence granted shall be solely within the discretion of the program director based upon the merits of the request, evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A leave of absence constitutes formal permission to delay progression through the program, but does not excuse the student from any course requirements. A leave of absence may be granted for a period of time mutually agreed upon by the student and the program director, but under no circumstance will a leave be granted for longer than one year. A leave of absence that extends the student's academic program beyond the usual 24 consecutive months will require the assignment of a new program completion date, new graduation date, and may require assignment to a new class. The new graduation date assigned will depend on the length of the leave and the official University graduation dates. In addition, a new completion date will delay eligibility for taking the NCCPA PANCE examination and will delay the temporary and/or permanent licensing process in various states including Nebraska. **NOTE:** Any student who is experiencing academic failure, who is not in good academic standing (for example a student with failing grades on exams or clinical clerkships), or any student who is the subject of an involuntary dismissal from the program for any reason is not eligible to utilize this policy for the purpose of avoiding or delaying academic or disciplinary consequences.

For all leaves of absence, the following will apply:

The student request for a leave of absence must be through myCSM.edu site. The reason for the request should be stated clearly. In most cases, the student should continue to attend classes, take examinations and fulfill any other class assignments until leave has been formally granted.

The student is responsible for initiating determination of the financial consequences of taking a leave of absence. Students must review financial arrangements with the Business Office and the Office of Financial Aid.

When a leave of absence is granted, the program may require that the student meet additional academic requirements (e.g., remedial course work) and or/submit specific documentation (e.g., certification for medical leave or a medical release to return to classes).

When a leave of absence is granted, students must notify the course coordinators of all classes in which they are enrolled of their withdrawal from course work, or the clinical preceptors of any clerkships in which they are enrolled of their withdrawal from clerkships.

A student who has been granted a leave of absence is responsible for notifying the program director in writing of his/her intention to return to classes on the appointed date no later than two months before the start of classes. If not so notified, the student's place in the class will be forfeited. Re-entry into the program will then require re-application through the usual admissions process of the program.

Upon re-enrollment following a leave of absence, the student will be subject to all rules and regulations which pertain to any new class to which he/she will be assigned.

Military Leave of Absence

Students in the Physician Assistant Studies Program will not be excused from classes to attend short sessions (2-31 days) of active duty associated with their National Guard or reserve training commitments. Because of the critical nature of the educational material being presented at any given time, absence from scheduled classes or clerkships could seriously interrupt the academic progress of students. Cases will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Policy on Student Work

The program strongly discourages any type of outside work during the course of studies in the program. Program responsibilities are not negotiable, and will not be altered due to student work obligations. Students may not be hired as employees for any private or public practice, clinic, or other institution to perform any medical services during any time they are part of the Physician Assistant Studies Program. Students may not be given any payments, stipends, or other remuneration for medical services performed as part of the physician assistant educational program. Students may volunteer their medical services to charitable, humanitarian, or community service organizations when such services are assigned or approved within the physician assistant educational program. Students may not substitute for regular clinical or administrative staff during the clinical year.

Computer Use and Electronic Information Security

Personal use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter have rapidly increased over the last several years. While this technology allows instant widespread sharing of information, basic privacy and information security requirements apply. Sharing confidential CSM or clinic information, including protected health information on personal social networking websites is strictly prohibited. Examples of prohibited disclosure include:

- Any references to patients or patient care events, even if the patient's name is not included. Under HIPPA, such information is still considered protected health information.
- Photographs of patients, even if the patient or his/her legal representative gives a copy of the picture to a student.

A component of professionalism is how you present yourself in and out of the classroom – which in turn represents the Physician Assistant Studies Program and College of Saint Mary. We are aware that many students and faculty subscribe to online social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. In the past, things you have written or pictures posted in fun may have seemed innocent. However, now that you are in a professional program, we encourage you to review sites you may use through a professional lens. Look at the pictures and information you have posted to determine if current content reflects appropriate professionalism, particularly if you identify yourself as a student of the CSM PAS Program. Sites allow users to delete past items and to block, screen, or limit access to information to only specific groups. Students are strongly encouraged to limit access to their social media to only individuals they know, and then to restrict access so that “casual” or “professional” and “personal” area of their lives are kept separate from one another.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Be very careful what you post on social media
- Complaints regarding other persons, employers, teachers, clinical rotation sites, or peers should not be posted
- Do not post anything on your profile that you would not want your instructors, family, colleagues, supervisors, or future employers to see
- Add photos very selectively
- Do not use foul, demeaning, threatening, or discriminatory language
- Do NOT post any patient information or cases
- Confidential information of any kind should not be shared to include
- Names of supervisors, comments, or criticism about clinical sites or information about what is happening at sites are not appropriate for Facebook, Twitter, or other public social network sites
- It is a HIPAA violation if you mention a patient with enough information the person might be identified, even if you avoid names or distinguishing information

Violation of the PAS Social Media Policy will result in an “unsatisfactory” on the Professionalism evaluation and will place the student on probation. Should the violation be significant, the PAS Program Committee may recommend student dismissal from the program.

Under HIPAA, students can be found civilly or even criminally liable for privacy and information security violations. Patients trust students to maintain the confidentiality of their information. Any student violating confidentiality may be subject to corrective action up to and including academic disain the rights and safety of students in various aspects of the educational program, the following policy has been adopted:

1. Students have the right to access and use program equipment for review and practice during business hours (Monday through Friday 8:00AM to 4:30PM) and during non-business hours (evenings and weekends). With ID cards, the student will be able to enter the building between 6:00AM and 10:00PM.
2. Exam rooms must be locked at all times unless occupied by departmental students or personnel. The last person to leave any area is responsible for turning off all lights, equipment, to dispose of any garbage in the room and for ensuring the doors are locked.
3. Punch codes are installed on the doors of the department’s exam rooms. Students must have prior permission to gain access to these rooms.
4. Students are encouraged to utilize scheduled practice times arranged by each course instructor. During these scheduled hours, instructors or graduate assistants will be available to observe and answer questions.
5. Facilities and equipment are for teaching and research purposes. They are not to be utilized for recreation, exercise training, or the treatment of students, friends, or family members.

Student Services

Food and Drink

The dining hall will be open for breakfast Monday-Friday from 6:30 am-9:00 am, lunch 11:00 am-1:00 pm, and dinner 5:00pm-7:00 pm. Saturday and Sunday hours are 9:00 am-1:00 pm and 5:00-7:00 pm. Christina’s Place is open Monday through Thursday 7:30 am-9:00 pm, Saturday 7:30 am-1:00 pm, and Sunday 2:00 pm-9:00 pm.

Students are encouraged to eat meals and snacks during class breaks scheduled throughout the day. As a courtesy to our guests, we ask that you refrain from eating during class sessions with guest speakers. Consult with course instructors if you have questions about food in the classrooms.

If the Student Commons is full, eating in open classrooms will be permitted provided students bringing in food items clean up after themselves. Except for special department functions (including departmental meetings), food is not permitted in the laboratories or computer rooms. Closed-top containers are to be used for personal beverages to minimize spills throughout the building. Spills are to be cleaned up immediately and large spills are to be reported to the department office.

Student Printing, Copying and Fax Services

Students are provided with \$100 for printing each semester. For larger printing needs or if you need to send a fax, see department staff.

Library

The library is open 24 hours a day for your studying convenience. A librarian is present from 8:00 am-10:00 pm Monday through Thursday, 8:00 am-5:30 pm Friday, 10:00 am-4:00 pm Saturday, and 1:00 pm-5:00 pm Sunday. Most journals and books are available electronically either on or off campus. The library provides desk-top computers, as well as a wireless network for internet access. There are study rooms available to reserve. The library also offers inter-library loans.

Health Insurance and Health Services

Health insurance is mandatory for all students during the entire length of the program. If any changes to your health insurance coverage are made while you are enrolled in the PAS Program, notify the program staff immediately. Students are responsible to find new coverage as soon as possible. Any expenses incurred by the student for an illness, is the student's responsibility.

Prior to matriculation into the program, students must have documentation of a physical exam within 6 months before starting the program. The provider must state the student is cleared to participate in the program and clinical rotations. The student must have immunizations up to date, as well as TB test results. The student will sign an authorization to release information to clinical sites.

While on clinical rotations, the student must seek out healthcare available at the site. If the condition is emergent, the student should present to the nearest emergency room. If non-emergent, the student should find an available clinic or urgent care to be assessed. Any expense occurred for student illness is the financial responsibility of the student.

No faculty member, including the program director and the medical director, are permitted to participate as healthcare providers for PA students. This includes giving medical advice, as well as physically providing healthcare. Program faculty are able to help refer students for healthcare, including mental healthcare, upon request.

Background Checks and Drug Screening

Students are required to complete a background check prior to starting classes in the program. Most clinical sites require background checks. If criminal or illegal behaviors are discovered that were not previously disclosed, the student may be subject to dismissal from the program. If a student cannot complete clinical rotations because of negative items contained in the background check, the student will not be able to graduate from the program.

Clinical clerkship sites often require drug screening for students. If illegal drug use is discovered, the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

HIPAA Training

Students must complete the initial training for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) at the start of the PA curriculum. This course will be administered by the faculty and/or personnel in the health sciences programs. This training must be completed annually.

Universal Precautions

All PA students will be required to complete training in blood borne pathogens and bodily fluid exposure on a yearly basis. This course will be administered by the faculty and/or personnel in the health sciences programs.

Exposure Policy and Incident Reporting

Students may be at risk of exposure to bodily fluids as part of their clinical training. Should a student be exposed, he/she will immediately report the incident to the clerkship preceptor, other site supervisor, or, if on campus, to a faculty member. The student will follow institutional infectious and environmental hazard policy, including completion of all documentation required by the institution of clerkship the student is currently serving. The student must also advise the program's clinical coordinator within 24 hours of the incident. Should any expense be incurred as a result of an exposure, the student is responsible for all costs related to the incident. Students should be aware that an infectious or environmental hazard exposure can adversely affect student overall health and performance in the PA program.

Phase II (Clinical Clerkship) Policies

All students must complete the clerkships designated as "required" by the program. Only clerkship sites approved by the program are eligible for student rotations. Students are not to solicit clinical sites nor provide their own clinical sites. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate student preference on clerkship scheduling and sites. However, in ALL cases the final determination for all clerkship times, sites, and activities will be at the discretion of the clinical coordinator.

All students are required to be present for clinical duties at the times designated by the preceptor, including Saturdays and Sundays. Students shall not be required to be present on holidays designated by the official PA program academic calendar.

Students will observe a dress code when working in any clinical situation. This means a professional appearance is mandatory for all students unless otherwise specified by the clinical preceptor. **In all clinics, a white coat with the program name and the student name tag will be worn with appropriate dress clothes.** For men, a shirt and tie with dress pants are required. For women, a skirt and blouse, dress, or dress slacks are required. Personal grooming and hygiene must be a priority.

Students must agree to pay their own transportation costs to all clerkship sites. Students must agree to pay for room and board at a distant site if these are not furnished at the site. Students must also pay all costs incurred to attend the end-of-clerkship exam and educational sessions as scheduled.

All clerkship assignments and schedules must have the approval of the clinical coordinator, and the **final authority** for the assignment of all clerkships and schedules **rests with the clinical coordinator.**

IV. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS

Program Expectations

1. All students are expected to show common courtesy to others.
2. All students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and demonstrate qualities reflecting a professional-in-training. These qualities include honesty, accountability, consideration for others, mature judgment, fairness, and academic integrity.
3. All students are expected to be cooperative with faculty and staff.
4. All students are expected to participate in class meetings and activities.
5. All students are expected to understand that, as a healthcare professional in training, they will be required at certain times to participate in educational and clinical experiences that may be outside of traditional work week hours.
6. All students eligible to graduate are expected to participate in hooding and commencement ceremonies.
7. All students are expected to strive for the highest academic and professional standards throughout their enrollment in the program.

Dress Code

The Physician Assistant Studies Program is a professional graduate program and, as such, students enrolled in the program are expected to dress in a manner consistent with the following policy. Modest, casual, and comfortable clothing such as jeans, sweats, shorts, and shirts with tasteful logos/wording may be worn. Hats, shirts with low cut neck lines, cropped shirts or low-cut pants exposing any portion of the midriff, extremely short shorts or miniskirts, and torn and tattered clothing are prohibited. Faculty may request professional dress for certain guest speakers or departmental events.

During particular laboratory or clinical education sessions where there is a possibility of exposure to blood, bodily fluids, chemicals, or any other harmful agents, students **MUST** wear appropriate clothing or will not be allowed to participate in the activity. Proper attire includes scrubs, or long pants along with shoes that cover the foot. **NO** open-toed shoes are allowed.

Professional Evaluations

The concept of professional identity implies knowledge of professional conduct, professional attitudes, and professional growth collectively known as *professionalism*. Every student in the PA program is encouraged to move intellectually and attitudinally toward developing a greater sense of professionalism in order to realize his/her greatest contribution in the promotion of health and alleviation of suffering. In particular, the attributes of excellence, humanism, accountability, and altruism together with a sense of dedication to service and to ethical principles need to be developed if a student is to grow toward a sense of professional competence, professional identity, and the shared values which function to reinforce greater service to humanity within the PA profession. It is incumbent upon PA faculty to evaluate professional growth in students as they progress through the program. To assess professionalism, an evaluation form will be completed each semester by the faculty for each student on a continuing basis. See Appendix I.

V. ACADEMIC POLICY

Overall Evaluation of Student Performance

The faculty of the College of Saint Mary Physician Assistant Studies Program is responsible for educating students as well as determining each student's capacity for professional competency and responsibility. During the length of the program, the faculty must evaluate this capacity on a regular basis and recommend whether or not the student should continue in the program. Therefore, the faculty reserves the right and has the responsibility to recommend the academic or disciplinary suspension or dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal of a student when unsatisfactory academic progress, academic dishonesty, unsatisfactory clinical performance, unsatisfactory professional growth, impaired mental or physical health, unsatisfactory personal conduct, failure to comply with published program policies, requirements, or other factors deemed necessary for professional competency make it impractical or inadvisable for the student to continue in the program.

If at any time during the student's course of study the student is in the position of being recommended for academic or disciplinary suspension or dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal, for any reason, the student shall be notified in writing as to the cause for such action by the program director.

Academic Requirements for Graduation

In order to graduate from the PA program, every student must satisfactorily complete all required coursework and all letter graded and non-letter graded coursework, clerkships (required and elective), assignments and projects designated by the program as "required," and receive an overall "satisfactory" rating on the professional evaluation form throughout the student's enrollment in the program. **"Satisfactory completion" shall mean completing all non-letter graded assignments and projects with an instructor's "pass" or "satisfactory," completing each course and clerkship with a minimum grade of "C" AND maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 throughout the student's entire enrollment in the program.** A grade of "C" represents quality points of 2.00 and is only acceptable as a satisfactory grade when the cumulative GPA is 2.50 or above.

All courses in the PA program are designated as "required" and must be taken by every student. No program courses will be waived, no advanced standing in the program will be granted, and no advanced credit for any previous coursework will be given even though it may be similar or identical to coursework in the program.

All clerkships designated as "required" must be taken by every student unless excused in writing by the program director.

As a requirement for graduation, all students must undergo a summative evaluation of their medical knowledge and clinical skills. The summative evaluation will consist of a comprehensive written examination and a clinical skills examination. These exams are scheduled in the last semester prior to completion of the program. **In order to graduate from the program, every student must pass the summative evaluations with a grade of "C" or higher. If a student should fail either/both examinations, remediation will be arranged by the student's advisor and will be allowed to take the examination(s) a second time. Should the student not pass the exam(s) on the second attempt, after remediation, the student is not allowed to graduate from the program.**

All written and performance assignments for all classes will be required to be performed or turned in before a class will be considered "successfully" completed by a student. Assignments turned in or performances completed past the designated due date will be penalized according to the criteria established in the course syllabus, or by the instructor unless other specific arrangements have been made with the instructor. A student, who has not completed and turned in all assignments or completed all performances by the end of

the course, unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor, will receive a grade of “F” (failure) for the course.

Deceleration

Deceleration occurs when a student fails a course or clerkship which necessitates an extension of the usual time required for a student’s completion date and a new graduation date. An approved leave of absence will also cause the student to become decelerated.

Evaluation of Student Academic Work

All courses and clerkships taken by students will be evaluated by letter grade according to the following scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A+	4.00	C+	2.33
A	4.00	C	2.00
A-	3.67	C-	1.67
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.67	D-	0.67
		F	0.00

Within selected courses and clerkships, a non-letter grade evaluation may be given for designated assignments and projects. Students will be given either a “Pass/Fail” or “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory” evaluation on these assignments. The method and description of the assignment will be found in the syllabus of each course utilizing these non-graded evaluations.

Standards of Academic Progress

Every student must meet **all four** of the following standards of academic progress each semester and/or enrollment period in order to be designated as making satisfactory academic progress in the program and to be considered “in good standing” in the program.

Standard I

Every student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 on a 4.00 scale throughout the student’s entire enrollment in the program.

Standard II

All courses and clerkships will be evaluated by a letter grade. Every student must attain a letter grade of “C” or higher in each course and clerkship. Any grade below a “C” will be considered unsatisfactory and designated as a failure in the course or clerkship.

Standard III

Every student must maintain a “Satisfactory” rating in all categories of the Professional Evaluation on a continuing basis throughout the student’s enrollment in the program.

Standard IV

Every student must achieve a “Pass” or “Satisfactory” evaluation on all non-letter graded assignments or projects designated as “required.”

Academic and Disciplinary Probation

If a student is unable to maintain all four *Standards of Academic Progress* (as noted above) in every semester and/or enrollment period, the student will automatically be placed on Academic Probation. Academic consequences discussed in the following section will apply with reference to each of the four *Standards of Academic Progress*.

A student will only be allowed one probationary period of any type throughout his or her entire enrollment in the program. Once a student is placed on probation and he or she successfully completes all of the requirements for the probationary period, the student will be returned to “good standing” status in the program. **Any occasion for a second probation (academic or disciplinary), will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.**

Academic Consequences

Standard I

Any student failing to achieve a GPA of 2.50 at the end of the first semester or cumulatively thereafter, will incur *automatic academic probation*. The period of academic probation will be for one semester and will be effective during the semester or enrollment period immediately following the semester or enrollment period in which the student failed to achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.50. During the semester of academic probation, the student must:

- 1) Take the regular, required academic coursework as sequenced in the PA program curriculum
- 2) Attain a cumulative GPA of 2.50
- 3) Not receive any grades below “C”
- 4) Receive “satisfactory” ratings in all areas on the professionalism evaluation

Failure to achieve any of these four requirements during the probationary semester will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. Thereafter, throughout the remainder of the student’s enrollment, the student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 or better. Failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 will result in termination of enrollment via **voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal**.

Standard II

Phase I Consequences

All courses will be evaluated by letter grade. Every student must attain a letter grade of “C” or higher for each course in the program. Any grade below a “C” in any will considered unsatisfactory does not meet the *Standards of Academic Progress*. Any student who receives a grade below a “C” for any course will be placed on academic probation until such a time as the failed course can be re-taken and successfully completed. The period of academic probation will be for up to one year immediately following the semester resulting in probation. The student must meet ALL of the following requirements of academic probation during the probationary period and until the repeated course has been successfully completed:

- 1) Repeat and successfully pass the course with a grade of “C” or higher at the earliest time the course is offered again. Failure to pass the course a second time with a minimum grade of “C” will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.
- 2) Complete the required academic coursework as sequenced in the PA program curriculum.
- 3) Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 for the remainder of the student’s enrollment.
- 4) Achieve a grade of “C” or higher in all courses.
- 5) Receive “satisfactory” ratings in all categories of the professional evaluation.

If the student does not satisfy ALL of the above requirements during the probationary period, the student will be dismissed from the program. Any student receiving **two grades below “C” in any semester** will have their enrollment in the PA program terminated via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

In certain circumstances, the student *may* be allowed to advance from Phase I to Phase II if they are deemed to have the necessary knowledge and skills base to progress through the curriculum until the failed course can be repeated.

Phase II Consequences

Every student must achieve a letter grade of “C” or higher in each clerkship, required or elective. Any clerkship grade below a “C” will be considered unsatisfactory and does not meet the *Standards of Academic Progress*. Any student who receives a grade below “C” for any clerkship will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one semester. Upon receiving a clerkship grade below “C”, the probationary period will become effective immediately and will remain in effect through the semester immediately following the failed clerkship which resulted in probation. The probationary period may be extended if the clerkship cannot be rescheduled in the semester immediately following the semester which resulted in probation, in which case the student will remain on probation until such a time that the failed clerkship is repeated. The student must meet ALL of the following requirements of academic probation during the probationary period:

- 1) Repeat the clerkship at a time designated by the clinical coordinator. Failure to obtain a minimum grade of “C” for the repeated clerkship will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.
- 2) Complete the required academic coursework and clerkships as sequenced in the PA program curriculum.
- 3) Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 for the remainder of the student’s enrollment.
- 4) Achieve a grade of “C” or higher in all courses and clerkships.
- 5) Receive “satisfactory” ratings in all categories of the professional evaluation.

Throughout Phase II of the program, only one grade below a “C” will be allowed. If, at any time during Phase II the student receives a second grade below “C” in a required or elective clerkship, the result will be termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

Standard III

Every student must maintain a “satisfactory” rating in all categories of the professional evaluation on a continuing basis throughout the student’s enrollment in the program. Any action, behavior, incident, or occasion at any time during a student’s enrollment that results in the student receiving a rating of unsatisfactory by the faculty in one or more categories of the evaluation will result in the student being placed on academic probation immediately. The student will also be on academic probation the semester following the action, behavior, or incident which will be designated as the *probationary semester* during which the student will be expected to improve or remediate the unsatisfactory area of professionalism. At the end of the probationary semester, the student must obtain ratings of satisfactory in all categories.

If on any occasion the student is given a ‘needs improvement’ rating, the student will be given 30 days in which to make the necessary corrections. If, after 30 days, the student fails to achieve a satisfactory rating, then an unsatisfactory rating will be assigned. Probationary action will then be undertaken as described above. Failure to achieve satisfactory ratings in these categories at the conclusion of the probationary semester will result in recommendation for termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. Serious breaches of professionalism by a student – for example causing harm to others, academic cheating, committing a felony – will result in a recommendation by the faculty for termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. A copy of the professional evaluation form as well as the PA program model of professionalism is included in the appendix of this handbook.

Standard IV

Every student must achieve a “pass” or “satisfactory” evaluation on all non-letter graded assignments and projects designated as “required.” Any student who does not pass or satisfactorily complete a non-letter graded assignment will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one semester. The probationary period will become effective immediately and will remain in effect through the semester immediately following the incomplete assignment which resulted in probation. The student must meet ALL of the following requirements of academic probation during the probationary semester:

- 1) Meet with faculty to arrange the successful completion of the assignment.
- 2) Pass or complete the previously incomplete assignment to the faculty’s satisfaction.
- 3) Complete the required academic coursework and clerkships as sequenced in the PA program curriculum.
- 4) Achieve a grade of “C” or higher in all courses and clerkships.
- 5) Obtain “satisfactory” ratings in all categories of the professional evaluation.

Failure to meet any two or more of the above *Standards* in any semester or enrollment period will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

Remediation Policy

Remediation will be available to students having difficulty achieving academic competency (based on the *Academic Standards* noted above) while attending the PA program. Deficiencies in academic knowledge or clinical skills are identified and addressed as early as possible. The PA faculty and PA Program Director ensure that each student meet the requirements for advancing into the next semester of the program. If a student does not meet the Academic Standards, the student’s advisor is notified and will develop a remediation plan for the student. The remediation plan may include (but is not limited to) the following methods:

Focused reading topics	Focused exam review items
Focused written topic review	Written self-evaluation
Specific written course material review	Clinical skills review
Focused written problem based learning review	Remediation Exam

Time Limitation for Completion of Requirements

The requirements of the PA program must be satisfied from the date of matriculation into the program within a period of 5 years, not including any period of service in the Armed Forces.

Academic Integrity

Preface

By accepting employment at the university or by accepting admission to College of Saint Mary, faculty, staff and students affirm support of the principle of honesty in their endeavors on behalf of the institution. Each member of the CSM community is responsible for acting with integrity.

Forms of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is any attempt to deceive involving academic work or records. Forms of deceit include but are not limited to the following:

Cheating

Cheating is the use or attempted use of materials such as notes, ideas, words, information, study aids, solution manuals, tests, quizzes, electronic devices (such as calculators, cell phones, or iPods) or any academic assignment in a dishonest and deceptive manner. Cheating includes any party who is knowingly involved in the deception.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional presentation of another's words, idea or facts as one's own. Examples include using phrases, sentences or paragraphs from a source without quotation marks, paraphrasing another's work or using information (verbal or visual), opinions, or concepts from a source without proper citation or acknowledgement, and submitting another's paper or assignment, in whole or in part, as if it were one's own.

Unauthorized Assistance

Unauthorized assistance is the use of any source of information not authorized by the instructor. Examples include collaboration on completing assignments or tests without the authorization of the instructor or outside the limits designed by the instructor and allowing another such as a tutor or fellow student to complete or revise a paper or assignment specifically.

Multiple use

Multiple use is the submission of the same work in more than one course without proper permission of the instructor. Examples include submitting the same papers, assignments or presentations, in whole or in part, to satisfy course requirements in more than one class.

Falsification or Fabrication

Falsification or fabrication is intentionally altering or creating data in an academic exercise or record. Examples include inventing research or lab results, counterfeiting a record of a practicum experience, sabotaging another student's work such as a lab report, fabricating an excuse (e.g., an illness or accident) to justify a delay in submission of an exam or assignment, inventing a citation, altering a grade on an assignment or academic record, unauthorized altering of a returned test or paper before seeking regrading, or impersonating another student live or via electronic format.

Complicity

Complicity is assisting another person in committing an act of academic dishonesty. Examples include using another person's password, allowing another student to copy from one's exam or assignment, writing or procuring an assignment for another student, taking an exam for another student, changing an academic record for another student, supplying another student or students with unauthorized copies of an exam, or exam questions or answers, or lying to students, faculty or administration on behalf of another student.

Abuse of Academic Materials

Abuse of academic materials is intentionally destroying, stealing, or making such materials inaccessible. Examples include hiding or removing library resources so other students do not have access to them, destroying software or files needed in academic work, and stealing notes, assignments or exams from students or instructors.

Grade Appeal Policy

The pre-appeal process for an Academic Appeal is as follows:

- 1) Discuss the matter of the appeal with the instructor
- 2) Discuss the matter of the appeal with the appropriate Program Director
- 3) Discuss the matter of appeal with the appropriate Associate Dean

If the matter of the appeal is not resolved, submit a written appeal to the office of Academic Affairs. Submission forms are available on myCSM, Resources, Division of Academic Affairs, and Academic Forms. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Admissions and Policies Committee to evaluate each case confidentially and fairly and to develop a course of action that will resolve the matter. The Graduate Admissions and Policies Committee will notify the party whose decision/action is being appealed and schedule a hearing in which both parties have an opportunity to state their side of the case. The committee may ask either or both parties to return for additional questions if necessary. The committee will make a decision within two weeks of the time of the hearing. The Graduate Admissions and Policies Committee will make a recommendation to the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs who will make the final decision.

PROFESSIONALISM EVALUATION

Student Name	Semester	Date
<p>Students will be evaluated on each of the eight categories. Examples of expected positive professional behaviors, attitudes and attributes are listed below under the first seven categories. The eighth category, Professional Concerns, reflects undesirable behaviors, attitudes and attributes.</p>		
	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>
I. Excellence		
*Strives for the highest standards of competence in skills and knowledge	_____	_____
*Accepts responsibility for educational challenges and self-learning	_____	_____
*Accepts correction and guidance graciously and corrects shortcomings	_____	_____
*Respects teachers and their teaching endeavors	_____	_____
II. Humanism		
*Shows respect, compassion and empathy for others	_____	_____
*Honors the choices and rights of others	_____	_____
*Sensitive and responsive to culture, gender, age, disabilities and ethnicity of others	_____	_____
*Able to establish cooperative relationships with others who have differences in opinion, philosophy, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity and language	_____	_____
III. Accountability		
*Punctual and prepared for all obligations	_____	_____
*Dependably completes assigned tasks	_____	_____
*Appears neat in grooming, dress and hygiene	_____	_____
IV. Altruism		
*Responds to the needs of others without regard to self-interest	_____	_____
V. Ethical/Legal Understanding		
*Maintains confidentiality standards	_____	_____
*Truthful to patients and colleagues	_____	_____
*Committed to ethical principles of the PA profession	_____	_____
*Possesses personal and academic integrity	_____	_____
VI. Communication Skills		
*Able to effectively relate to patients, peers and colleagues	_____	_____
*Establishes positive rapport with others	_____	_____
*Effectively identifies patient concerns	_____	_____

	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
*Maintains composure during adverse interactions or situations	_____	_____	_____
*Uses language appropriate to others' level of understanding	_____	_____	_____
VII. Clinical Competence			
*Committed to ongoing professional development	_____	_____	_____
*Dedicated to providing the highest quality of care to patients	_____	_____	_____
*Promotes the emotional and physical well-being of patients	_____	_____	_____
*Uses a holistic approach to patient care	_____	_____	_____
		NO	YES
VIII. Professional Concerns			
*Lacks Initiative Needs excessive direction; little self-directed learning	_____	_____	_____
*Lacks Self-Confidence Performance is limited by a lack of self-confidence	_____	_____	_____
*Does Not Know Limitations Overestimates abilities	_____	_____	_____
*Condescending Makes demeaning comments about others	_____	_____	_____
*Arrogant Displays an attitude of superiority or self-importance	_____	_____	_____
*Abrasive Is overly aggressive in a matter that annoys others	_____	_____	_____
*Sarcastic Excessive use of sarcasm in inappropriate settings	_____	_____	_____
*Impulsive/Reactive Displays inappropriate behavior when frustrated or angry	_____	_____	_____
*Disruptive Socializes during lectures/class	_____	_____	_____
*Uncooperative	_____	_____	_____
Unable to cooperate or work well with others			
<input type="checkbox"/> No Professional Concerns:			
Comments:			

_____ Signature of Advisor or Program Director			_____ Date
_____ Signature of Student			_____ Date

Competencies for the Physician Assistant

Preamble

Between 2003-2004, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) led an effort with three other national PA organizations (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) – formerly the Association of Physician Assistant Studies Programs (APAP) to define PA competencies in response to similar efforts conducted within other healthcare professions and the growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice. The resultant document, *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession*, provided a foundation from which physician assistant organizations and individual physician assistants could chart a course for advancing the competencies for the PA profession.

In 2011, representatives from the same four national PA organizations convened to review and revise the document. The revised manuscript was then reviewed and approved by the leadership of the four organizations in 2012.

Introduction

This document serves as a map for the individual PA, the physician-PA team, and organizations committed to promoting the development and maintenance of professional competencies among physician assistants. While some competencies will be acquired during formal PA education, others will be developed and mastered as physician assistant progress through their careers. The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and education experiences requisite for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies.

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, and systems-based practice.

Patient-centered, physician assistant practice reflects a number of overarching themes. These include an unwavering commitment to patient safety, cultural competence, quality healthcare, lifelong learning, and professional growth. Furthermore, the profession's dedication to the physician-physician assistant team benefits patients and the larger community.

Physician Assistant Competencies

Medical Knowledge

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis 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 investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. Physician assistants are expected to understand, evaluate, and apply the following to clinical scenarios:

- evidence-based medicine
- scientific principles related to patient care
- etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic processes, and epidemiology for medical conditions
- signs and symptoms of medical and surgical conditions
- appropriate diagnostic studies
- management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and other treatment modalities
- interventions for prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance
- screening methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual
- history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

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

- create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information
- adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction
- work effectively with physicians and other healthcare professionals as a member or leader of a healthcare team or other professional group
- demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
- accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes

Patient Care

Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable. Physician assistants are expected to:

- work effectively with physicians and other healthcare professionals to provide patient-centered care
- demonstrate compassionate and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
- obtain essential and accurate information about their patients
- make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and informed clinical judgment
- develop and implement patient management plans
- counsel and educate patients and their families
- perform medical and surgical procedures essential to their area of practice
- provide healthcare services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance
- use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education

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 acknowledge 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 healthcare providers
- respect, compassion, and integrity
- accountability to patients, society, and the profession
- commitment to excellence and on-going 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 abilities
- self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative
- healthy behaviors and life balance
- commitment to the education of students and other healthcare professionals

Practice-based Learning and Improvement

Practice-based learning and improvement includes the process through which physician assistants engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self- and practice-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 healthcare delivery team
- locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health
- apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
- utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education
- recognize and appropriately address personal 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 healthcare to provide patient care that balances quality and cost, while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient. PAs should work to improve the healthcare system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:

- effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
- understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care and use the systems effectively
- practice cost-effective healthcare 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, healthcare managers, and other healthcare providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of healthcare 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
- apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide effective, efficient patient care
- recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to healthcare disparities
- apply the concepts of population health to patient care

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS

I, (please print clearly) _____, understand that I must demonstrate mastery of the technical standards described in this document. If I have a disability and need an accommodation, I agree to provide appropriate documentation of the disability to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities with a request specifying desired accommodations

This request must be presented in a timely manner prior to the need for accommodation to permit the request to be processed by the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities. The PA program faculty will determine if any recommended accommodation will fundamentally alter the PA Program of Study.

Student Signature

Date

Contact the PA Program at 402-399-2477 if you have any questions about the Technical Standards and requirements stated above. Questions regarding disability certification and/or requests for accommodation should be directed to the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities at 402-399-2490.

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CERTIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK FORM

This is to certify that I have received and am responsible for the contents of the 2018-2019 College of Saint Mary Master of Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook as well as College of Saint Mary Student Handbook which is on-line at

http://www.csm.edu/sites/default/files/Student_Handbook_2018-2019

If there are any sections that I do not understand, I realize it is my responsibility to seek clarification from my advisor, the Director of the Physician Assistant Studies Program, or other university personnel.

 Student Signature

 Date

CONTACT INFORMATION

We would like to update our records to include any name changes that may have occurred during the summer, your current address, and emergency contact information. **Please keep us informed of any name or address changes as they occur throughout the school year.** If anyone anticipates a name change during the school year, please let us know at this time and the approximate time for the change. ***Please print clearly***

Full Name: _____

Previous/Other Name: _____

Current Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Current Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Primary E-mail Address: _____

Alternate E-mail Address: _____

Emergency Contact Person: _____ Relationship _____

Emergency Phone Number: _____
 (please list all numbers)