Physician Assistant Program Handbook

Cuyahoga Community College in partnership with Cleveland State University
# Table of Contents

**Physician Assistant Program Introduction** .......................................................................................................................... 3  
**Faculty and Staff** ........................................................................................................................................................................... 4  
**Cuyahoga Community College Mission, Vision and Values** ........................................................................................................... 5  
**Physician Assistant Program Mission, Vision and Goals** ........................................................................................................... 5  

## Academic Support

- **Office Hours** .................................................................................................................................................................................... 5  
- **Learning Commons** ............................................................................................................................................................................ 5  
- **Tutoring and Learning Center** ............................................................................................................................................................. 6  
- **Personal Counseling** .......................................................................................................................................................................... 6  
- **Services for Students with Disabilities** ............................................................................................................................................... 6  

## General Information

- **Health Documentation** ....................................................................................................................................................................... 7  
- **Health Insurance** ................................................................................................................................................................................ 8  
- **Universal Precautions / Infection Control** ........................................................................................................................................ 8  
- **Patient Confidentiality** ........................................................................................................................................................................ 9  
- **Social Networking Policy** .................................................................................................................................................................... 10  
- **Student Financial Information and Financial Aid** ........................................................................................................................... 10  

## Campus and Student Services

- **Campus Police and Security Services** ............................................................................................................................................... 11  
- **College Closings** ................................................................................................................................................................................ 11  
- **Housing** ............................................................................................................................................................................................. 11  
- **Transportation** ................................................................................................................................................................................... 11  
- **Parking** ............................................................................................................................................................................................ 11  
- **My Tri-C Space & Student Email** ..................................................................................................................................................... 11  
- **My Tri-C Card** ..................................................................................................................................................................................... 12  
- **Indebtedness** ..................................................................................................................................................................................... 12  
- **Outside Employment** ................................................................................................................................................................. 12  

## Physician Assistant Professional Organizations

- **American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)** ...................................................................................................................... 12  
- **The Student Academy of AAPA (SAAAPA)** ................................................................................................................................. 13  
- **Pi Alpha Honor Society** ................................................................................................................................................................... 13  
- **The William A. Falkenstein PA Student Society** ............................................................................................................................ 13  
- **Ohio Academy of Physician Assistants (OAPA)** ............................................................................................................................. 14  
- **National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)** ...................................................................................... 14  
- **The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA)** .......................................................... 14  

## Physician Assistant Program Curriculum

............................................................................................................................................................................................................. 15
Physician Assistant Program Introduction

Welcome to the Physician Assistant program at Cuyahoga Community College in partnership with Cleveland State University. This is the beginning of an exciting and challenging journey that will provide vast learning opportunities that can lead to a promising professional career.

Our historic program has been educating physician assistants for over 40 years. We are proud of our legacy and are eager for you to join our esteemed alumni. Our graduates are active participants in the health care community practicing in many medical disciplines as well as in educational and research settings throughout the United States.

Our program faculty and staff are committed to providing a high quality educational experience for our students. We look forward to working with you in this rewarding profession.
Faculty and Staff
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Cuyahoga Community College Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission
To provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services — including university transfer, technical and lifelong learning programs — that promote individual development and improve the overall quality of life in a multicultural community.

Vision
Cuyahoga Community College will be recognized as an exemplary teaching and learning community that fosters service and student success. The College will be a valued resource and leader in academic quality, cultural enrichment, and economic development characterized by continuous improvement, innovation, and community responsiveness.

Values
To successfully fulfill the mission and vision, Cuyahoga Community College is consciously committed to diversity, integrity, academic excellence, and achievement of individual and institutional goals. We are dedicated to building trust, respect, and confidence among our colleagues, students, and the community.

Physician Assistant Program Mission, Vision, and Goals

Mission
To educate and prepare physician assistant students to service the health care needs of diverse communities

Vision
To educate physician assistant students through applied didactic training and scholarly inquiry

Goals
- Utilize formal and rigorous learning systems in medicine, leadership, and research
- Train students to become critical thinkers in the practice of medicine
- Develop compassion in the practice of medicine
- Promote professionalism in classroom and clinical settings
- Provide current content relevant to physician assistant practice
- Advocate lifelong learning
- Teach evidence-based content throughout the didactic and clinical phases of training
- Raise awareness of healthcare disparities and provide guidance for integration and practice
- Engage continuously in self-analysis for ongoing program development and improvement

Academic Support

Office Hours
Tri-C faculty members maintain scheduled office hours to confer with students regarding class work and related matters. Office hours will be announced by instructors in their classes and posted outside of faculty offices. Students are urged to familiarize themselves with the schedules and to contact their instructors during those hours.

Learning Commons
Each campus provides a library, a Technology Learning Center (TLC), and a Learning Resources Center (LRC), which collectively are referred to as the Learning Commons, to offer a full range of library,
academic computing and educational media support for students and faculty. Each campus Learning Commons provides access to a variety of resources and information—librarians to assist with research, course materials placed on reserve by instructors, study spaces, computer labs, laptops and equipment loans. Tri-C’s College-wide catalog can be used to browse a collection of more than 170,000 books, periodicals, newspapers and non-print media, materials from local libraries and academic resources throughout the state of Ohio. The TLC provides access to the latest learning technologies—computers, academic software, network resources and information services. The TLC staff is available to help with College-related computer applications, and software tutors are available Monday through Saturday.

**Tutoring & Learning Center**

The Learning Center offers students the resources to improve skills, develop strengths and maximize achievement in many College courses. Study guides, outlines and books can be reviewed to help students organize work. They also provide study-skill workshops, supplemental instruction, individual and small-group tutoring and workshops.

**Personal Counseling**

Tri-C Counseling Centers provide short term (7 sessions) personal counseling services for currently enrolled students. Professional counselors or psychologists can help students clarify issues, provide support and guidance, as well as work toward a resolution. If the needs of the student cannot be met at the Counseling Center, a psychologist or counselor will attempt to locate appropriate on or off campus resources that will best meet student needs. Students may schedule a confidential appointment by calling 216.987.6000. Please specify which campus you attend when you call.

Examples of issues students can get help for:
- Balancing the demands of school, family and work
- Isolation and alienation
- Grief
- Difficulty with alcohol or other drugs
- Test anxiety
- Relationship issues
- Depression, anxiety or anger
- Family members’ issues
- Sexual identity
- Eating disorders
- Decision making
- Needing information about community agencies
- For Emergencies:
  - Dial 911
  - Dial 216.623.6888 for the Cuyahoga County 24 Hour Mental Health Crisis, Information and Referral Hotline
  - Dial 800.784.2433 or 800.273.8255 for Suicide Hotlines

**Services for Students with Disabilities**

The following represents the policy of the Cuyahoga Community College PA Program in regards to the identification of students with disabilities. Although a student’s self-identification as a person with a disability is voluntary, the Cuyahoga Community College PA Program can only accommodate known and documented disabilities.
For purposes of this policy, the definition of disability will be that used in the Americans with Disabilities Act, with the exclusions as referenced in the Act. That definition is as follows, “an individual is disabled if he or she

- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the individual’s major life activities; or
- has a record of such an impairment; or
- is regarded as having such an impairment.”

In order to establish the existence of a disability and to require accommodation, a student must first provide appropriate notice to the Cuyahoga Community College Access Office and the PA Program Director, detailing the existence and nature of the disability and the requested accommodation. The student must then, at his/her own expense, provide documentation of the disability in the form of an evaluation by a qualified examiner. The report of the examiner must state the qualifications of the examiner and describe the physical or mental impairment and associated limitations. It must also contain the objective information on which the diagnosis is founded, such as psychoeducational testing, neuropsychiatric testing or neuropsychological testing in the case of learning or mental disability or physical examination results or laboratory testing in the case of a physical disability. The documentation should also identify a reasonable accommodation that will assist the student. It is the student’s responsibility to notify each course instructor in writing of the accommodations they will require at the beginning of each semester.

**General Information**

**Health Documentation**

Every second year PA student is required to present to the program evidence of good health and up-to-date immunizations as required by College policy prior to clinicals.

**Immunizations:**

- Serologic evidence of immunity (positive titer) for:
  - Measles
  - Mumps
  - Rubella
  - Varicella

- Serologic evidence of immunity (positive titer) OR documentation for:
  - Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap).
    - If a Tdap was obtained more than 10 years prior, a Td booster is required.
  - Hepatitis B (documentation of 3 doses or titer)
  - TB test (T ST)

- For the TB test, ONE of the following must be met:
  - Documentation of a negative 2-step T ST (Double Mantoux) within the last 12 months. Obtain test 1, return in 48-72 hours to have test read. Obtain test 2 one to three weeks after test 1 is administered, return 48-72 hours to have it read. Must have proper documentation from health care provider with all dates listed.
  - Documentation of previous negative 2 step PLUS subsequent annual 1-step TB test is required.
- Documentation of a negative QuantiFERON Gold or T-Spot test within the past 12 months
- If positive results, one negative chest x-ray and annual physician medical clearance to confirm the absence of active TB.
  - Documentation of influenza annually beginning in August 1 (must include date administered and lot number of vaccine)

This may be subject to change during the course of the program as clinical site requirements may change. Medical, mental health, or surgical conditions that arise while a student is enrolled in the program must be reported to the Program Director. In no case will program requirements pre-empt the directions of a student’s personal physician or mental health/rehabilitation counselor or therapist. If the student is unable to perform at the expected level of program technical performance standards in a given clinical rotation, or in the classroom or laboratory, a leave of absence may be required, after review by the Program Director and staff. Prior to returning from this leave of absence, the student will be required to present written documentation from their physician or mental health/rehabilitation counselor or therapist stating that the student is able to resume classroom, laboratory and/or clinical rotation activities at the expected level of program technical performance standards.

**Allergies**
Students with allergies to gloves, latex, talcum and/or surgical scrub soaps may be required to provide their own latex-free gloves and hypo-allergenic soap during the first year of the program. During clinical rotations, health care facilities usually have these available.

**Health Insurance**
Students are required to maintain comprehensive health insurance coverage during the program and must submit proof of coverage to the program prior to starting clinical rotations.

**Universal Precautions / Infection Control**

**Definition**
All PA students shall adopt a standardized, comprehensive method of practicing universal precautions during every patient interaction to control the spread of infection. Universal precautions are an infection control practice that is intended to be followed and adhered to in order to prevent and control the spread of infection. All PA students are required to utilize universal precautions when caring for patients and when handling any body fluid or substance.

**Methods / Materials**

**HANDWASHING:** Hands must be washed between procedures and patients. The wearing of gloves does not diminish the need to wash the hands before and after each patient contact.

**GLOVES:** Clean gloves are to be worn when it is expected that direct contact with any body fluid or substance will occur. Body fluids or substances include but may not be limited to blood, urine, feces, wound drainage, oral secretions, genital secretions, and vomitus. Gloves are to be changed and disposed of after each patient contact.

**GOWNS:** A clean gown is to be worn whenever contact of student’s clothing and a patient’s body fluid/substance may occur. Gowns are to be removed after each patient contact.

**GOGGLES:** Goggles must be worn whenever the possibility exists that body fluid/substance may splash near or into the eyes. Eyeglasses are not considered a substitute for goggles, particularly in the case of
profuse secretions or if the likelihood of splashing is present. Goggles are to be washed with soap and water after each patient contact.

**MASKS:** Masks are to be worn when there is an expected contact with respiratory secretions, or if a possibility exists that body fluid/substance may splash or otherwise contact the student’s mouth or nose.

**NEEDLES/SHARP ITEM DISPOSAL:** Needles and sharp items (i.e. scalpels and blades) are considered potentially infective and are to be discarded in a designated sharps container. These containers are to be located as close as is practical to the area in which they are to be used. Needles are not to be recapped, bent or broken preparatory to disposal.

**RESUSCITATION EQUIPMENT:** Individual patient resuscitation equipment must be located and available for use in areas where the need for resuscitation may occur. Institutions offering clinical experiences to Tri-C students will approach the resuscitation/infection issue according to established institution guidelines.

**SOILED EQUIPMENT, LINEN, PATIENT’S CLOTHING & TRASH:** Soiled equipment, linen, patient’s clothing and trash will be handled according to the policy of the institution where the student is attending a clinical experience.

**LABORATORY SPECIMENS:** All laboratory specimens will be handled according to the policy of the institution where the student is attending a clinical experience.

**Training**

During the first year of the PA program, every student will view the material and complete the Self-Study Training Program on “Blood Borne Pathogens” developed by the National Safety Council, both of which meet all OSHA training requirements.

**Occupational Injury**

If a student sustains a sharps/needle stick injury, or suspects that he/she has been exposed to the HIV (AIDS) virus or any other infectious disease (either parenterally or through the mucous membranes), the student must report the incident to the designated individual at the clinical site, and follow the policy and/or protocol for sharps/needle stick injury or exposure to an infectious disease established by that particular clinical site. The incident must be reported to the Program Director and an incident report form must be completed within 24 hours. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain any needed follow-up treatment or testing subsequent to a sharps/needle stick injury or an exposure to an infectious disease. The student is responsible for all financial obligations related to the incident beyond the coverage of their insurance plan.

**Patient Confidentiality**

**Definition**

During the PA program, students will review patient medical records and gather health information. All data gathered about a patient and his/her medical condition, including all items within a patient medical record and/or verbal communication from a patient, is privileged information. Students are not to discuss patient medical records in any manner or situation that would reveal any information about the patient to a person not involved in the patient’s health care.

**Medical Records**

As part of case studies or grand rounds, students may be asked to present information about a patient condition. All identifying information (name, address, and ID numbers) should be deleted from the
records that are copied or presented. A patient may be identified according to a fictitious name. Never discuss patients in a dehumanizing or insensitive manner. When copying any patient records documentation for course assignments, the student must always delete (block out) the patient’s name, ID number, social security number, address, phone number, birth date, physician(s) name, or any other form of identification or personal references.

**Expectations**

Students are expected to be knowledgeable, but not necessarily expert and experienced, in all issues of medical ethics, privacy, patient rights, and legal definitions of medical practice. Students should not place themselves into situations which may compromise, embarrass, degrade or harm themselves, their supervisors, their peers, their patients, their clinical site, or the program. It is the responsibility of each student to inform the appropriate responsible person at the clinical site or seek appropriate guidance, and to subsequently report to the Clinical Coordinator, any incident of which he/she is cognizant and which appears to be unethical or of questionable nature. Students must follow prescribed HIPAA guidelines. Clinical rotation sites are an extension of Tri-C. As such, the “College-Wide Computing Policy” applies to all PA contracted clinical sites, and addresses all first and second year PA students whether they are assigned to a clinical rotation at that site or not.

**Social Networking Policy**

Many individuals participate in social media for a variety of reasons: to connect with professional networks, to find out quickly what’s happening in other places, to enhance productivity and team-building, etc. Exchanging and sharing information can improve our personal and professional lives. However, social networking exposes one to an unsolicited audience and set of experiences, and requires continual attention to successfully manage our personal and professional lives online.

- Students should think before they post. There’s no such thing as a “private” social media site. Search engines can turn up old posts years later. Students should not post something today that may haunt them later.
- Maintain confidentiality. Students should not post or discuss sensitive, confidential, proprietary, protected health information about students, employees, patients, or other members of the Tri-C / CSU community. Students should use good ethical judgment; follow federal guidelines and polices per Tri-C / CSU.
- Be respectful. If readers see an affiliation with Tri-C / CSU, they may read your words as representing the university, even if students provide a disclaimer. As a general rule, students should be respectful and not post anything they would be uncomfortable saying in a public setting- or in front of their colleagues, classmates, etc.
- Students should protect their identity, should not provide personal information about themselves or others including telephone numbers, mailing addresses, and email addresses.
- Any violation of HIPAA may result in appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal from the program and criminal and/or civil charges and fines.

**Student Financial Information and Financial Aid**

**Tuition and Fees**

Although Tri-C and CSU are in collaboration for the PA program, each facility abides by their own policies, procedures, and tuition. Classes taken at Tri-C will be paid at Tri-C at the tuition rate of Tri-C.
Classes taken at CSU will be paid at CSU at the tuition rate of CSU. Financial aid is available and is awarded through CSU. Students are responsible for completion and submission of all financial aid forms prior to the due dates. Students receiving financial aid are required to pay for classes prior to starting the courses, despite the timeframe of financial aid disbursement. Financial aid is issued through CSU and is considered a repayment of funds paid to support your educational needs. Failing to pay for coursework timely (even if awaiting a financial aid check) may result in being dropped from courses.

**Campus and Student Services**

**Campus Police and Security Services**

The Campus Police and Security Services Department at Tri-C is a fully certified law enforcement agency equipped to provide all the necessary safety and security services. The Campus Police and Security Services Department is available to assist students seven days a week, 24 hours a day and provides internal facility patrol, outside campus patrol, student escort service, safety education programs, crime prevention programs, and emergency vehicle service. The student and/or instructor should notify Public Safety regarding any concern or medical emergency occurring on campus. The phone number at Tri-C is 216.987.4911 and CSU 216.687.2020.

**College Closings**

- Tri-C: In the event that Tri-C closes, students are not required to attend classes on Tri-C Campus or clinical rotations.
- CSU: In the event that CSU closes, students are not required to attend classes on CSU campus, but attendance in Tri-C classes and clinical rotations is expected as long as Tri-C is not closed.

**Housing**

Tri-C is a commuter institution primarily designed to serve residents of Cuyahoga County and, therefore, does not provide housing for its students.

**Transportation**

While most of the instruction during the didactic phase occurs at the Western Campus of Tri-C or Cleveland State University, other off-campus sites may be utilized. The clinical phase is offered at hospitals and other clinical facilities throughout the Cleveland area. Students must provide their own transportation to clinical sites and classroom activities.

**Parking**

Tri-C offers parking for students and visitors on all campuses. Tri-C charges an institutional fee automatically at the time of registration based on credit hours. Students are permitted to park on any lot within the College except faculty, staff and visitor lots. Tri-C is officially closed one hour after classes end. No vehicle is to be left on Tri-C property longer than 24 hours.

**my Tri-C Space & Student Email**

*my Tri-C space* is a central gathering point for College information, a virtual “front door” to resources students use on a regular basis. It includes links to registration, grades, financial aid, Blackboard, announcements, campus news, government sites and group activities. Tri-C issues each student an email account. Students should check their email regularly for important messages regarding registration, payment deadlines, account/financial information and College updates/events.
My Tri-C Card
All Tri-C students are required to have a photo identification card called the My Tri-C Card. Cards are required for registration activities, library checkout and admission to athletic, cultural and social events. My Tri-C Card also offers students special discounts and incentives at all campus dining operations, Java City, vending machines and bookstores. Discounts are also available off-campus by presenting a My Tri-C Card. A list of discounts is available at www.tri-c.edu/discounts. College authorities may ask to see a student’s ID card at any time; therefore, it is important that students always carry the card. Cards are non-transferable. There is a $10 charge to replace a My Tri-C Card.

Indebtedness
All financial indebtedness or borrowed items (i.e. pagers, parking permits, ID badges, equipment, lab swipe cards, etc.) incurred within the program or clinical rotations must be paid in full and/or returned before matriculation of the PA program. A Post-Degree Professional Certificate in Physician Assistant Studies & Master of Science Degree in Health Sciences will not be awarded to non-compliant students. Currently enrolled students with outstanding debts or borrowed items may be prevented from registering for courses in subsequent semesters. Upon graduation or leaving the PA program, for any reason, a student failing to return equipment borrowed from the program or clinical site, will also be reported to College Security.

Outside Employment
Students enrolled in the PA program should not attempt to maintain employment while enrolled in the program. Any external employment is likely to interfere with a satisfactory level of student performance in program activities. The intensity and continuity of the program is such that employment is very likely to detract from course responsibilities, including attendance in classes where the schedule is subject to change. Students should also realize that during the clinical-year they may be assigned or “on call” for evening, night, or weekend shifts, and that some rotations involve changing shifts frequently, and/or may be more than 40 hours per week. No program accommodations will be made for work schedules. Students are not permitted to work for the PA program in any capacity, including didactic, lab, or clinical instruction.

Physician Assistant Professional Organizations
American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
Founded in 1968, the American Academy of PAs is the national professional society for PAs. It represents a profession of over 108,500 certified PAs across all medical and surgical specialties in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the majority of the U.S. territories and the uniformed services. AAPA advocates and educates on behalf of the profession and the patients PAs serve. AAPA works to ensure the professional growth, personal excellence and recognition of PAs. For more information regarding AAPA, please visit their website: https://www.aapa.org/about/

Statement of Values of the Physician Assistant Profession
- Physician assistants hold as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings.
- Physician assistants uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice.
• Physician assistants recognize and promote the value of diversity.
• Physician assistants treat equally all persons who seek their care.
• Physician assistants hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.
• Physician assistants assess their personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve their medical practice.
• Physician assistants actively seek to expand their knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.
• Physician assistants work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.
• Physician assistants use their knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.
• Physician assistants respect their professional relationship with physicians.
• Physician assistants share and expand knowledge within the profession.

The Student Academy of AAPA (SAAAPA)
SAAAPA is the Student Association of the American Academy of Physician Assistants. SAAAPA is the national governing body for students enrolled in the physician assistant program. This organization offers a lot of resources to enrolled PA students. There are leadership opportunities in SAAAPA, a national student medical challenge bowl at the annual AAPA conferences, student activities and advocacy opportunities for the profession. For more information regarding SAAAPA, please visit their website: http://www.aapa.org/saapa

Pi Alpha Honor Society
Pi Alpha is the national physician assistant honor society organized for the promotion and recognition of both PA students and graduates. Membership signifies the inductees’ significant academic achievement and honors them for their leadership, research, community/professional service and other related activities. The society also encourages a high standard of character and conduct among students and graduates. For more information regarding Pi Alpha Honor Society, please visit their website: http://www2.paeaonline.org/index.php?ht=d/sp/i/191/pid/191

The William A. Falkenstein PA Student Society
The Falkenstein PA Student Society is the SAAAPA organization of the Tri-C / CSU Physician Assistant program. The Falkenstein Society promotes academic achievement, clinical excellence, professional growth, and promotes the PA as member of the healthcare delivery team. The Falkenstein Society is named for William A. Falkenstein, who was a medic in the Army during the Vietnam War. He attended the Tri-C PA program from 1973-1975, when the Tri-C Western campus classrooms consisted of renovated Army barracks from the former Crile Veterans Administration Hospital. William Falkenstein was a founding member of the Ohio Association of Physician Assistants and the 2nd OAPA President from 1977-1978. In 1982, he received the Charles L. Hudson MD award, presented annually to the PA in Ohio who demonstrates outstanding character and contribution to the PA profession. Mr. Falkenstein was a PA in the family practice setting in Cleveland until his death in 1983. His family graciously developed a scholarship which has been awarded annually to a student in the Tri-C / CSU PA program.
Ohio Academy of Physician Assistants (OAPA)
The Ohio Academy of Physician Assistants is a constituent chapter of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and is governed by a board of directors that includes a director of each of the seven regions in the state. Formed in 1978 to represent the physician assistant profession in Ohio, the OAPA promotes quality, cost-effective, accessible health care through the physician assistant-physician team approach. For more information regarding OAPA, please visit their website: http://www.ohiopa.com/aws/OAPA/pt/sp/home_page

Physician Assistant Certification
National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)
All graduates of physician assistant programs accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) are eligible to sit for the national boards offered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). The NCCPA offers the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). PANCE is a 300-question, multiple-choice exam that is a prerequisite for licensure in all 50 states. This examination is offered 50 weeks out of the year and is administered in a computer-generated format. Please see the NCCPA website for further information: www.nccpa.net

Physician Assistant Accreditation
The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA)
The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant commissioners works to establish, maintain, and promote appropriate standards of quality for entry level education of PAs and to provide recognition for educational programs. Students may access their website http://arc-pa.org/ for information regarding accredited programs, standards of accreditation, continuing accreditation, provisional accreditation, and postgraduate programs. Tri-C / CSU’s PA program was first accredited in 1974.
Physician Assistant Program Curriculum

**Year 1**

**Fall Semester**
- History & Physical Exam Techniques I (3)
- Clinical Anatomy (4)
- Introduction to Clinical Medicine (2)
- PA & the Profession (1)
- *Pathophysiology I (4)
- *Pharmacology (3)

Total credit hours: 17

**Spring Semester**
- History & Physical Exam Techniques II (3)
- Adjuncts to Diagnosis (3)
- Clinical Pharmacology (4)
- Clinical Medicine I (4)
- *Pathophysiology II (4)
- *Clinical Genetics (3)

Total credit hours: 21

**Summer Semester**
- Technical & Surgical Skills I (2)
- Electrocardiography (1)
- Clinical Medicine II (4)
- *Clinical Issues in Bioethics (3)
- *Culture and Healthcare (3)

Total credit hours: 13

**Year 2**

**Fall Semester**
- Behavioral Medicine (2)
- Clinical Medicine III (4)
- Patient Management (2)
- Emergency Medicine (4)
- Technical & Surgical Skills II (2)
- *Research Methods in Health Sciences (3)

Total credit hours: 17

**Spring Semester**
- Field Experience I (Clinical Experience) (4)
- Field Experience Seminar I (1)
- *Evidence Based Medicine (3)

Total credit hours: 8

**Summer Semester**
- Field Experience II (Clinical Experience) (4)
- Field Experience Seminar II (1)
- *Issues in Health Science (3)

Total credit hours: 8

**Year 3**

**Fall Semester**
- Directed Practice (Clinical Experience) I (1)
- Directed Practice (Clinical Experience) II (1)
- Preparation for Practice (2)
- *Leadership Roles in Health Science (3)
- *Master’s Project (6)

Total credit hours: 13

Total credit hours for program: 97

(# credit hours)

*Courses taught at Cleveland State University

^ See page 23 for the breakdown of the clinical experiences
Physician Assistant Program Standards

Academic Standards of Performance

Students who fail to maintain good academic standing will be placed on program probation. Once a student has been placed on probation he/she will remain on probation for the duration of the program. Academic standards which constitute academic probation include: receiving a grade of “C” or less in any PA program course or clinical rotation.

Grading System

Grades for PA program courses at Tri-C (lecture, laboratory, and clinical rotations) will be determined as follows:

A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89.9%
C = 70 – 79.9%
F = Below 70%

A (Excellent-4 points): A grade of “A” indicates that a student has demonstrated excellent academic performance; it carries a weight of four quality points for every credit of the course in which the grade is earned.

B (Good-3 points): A grade of “B” indicates that a student has demonstrated good performance; it carries a weight of three quality points for every credit of the course in which the grade is earned.

C (Average-2 points): A grade of “C” indicates that a student has demonstrated average academic performance; it carries a weight of two quality points for every credit of the course in which the grade is earned.

F (Failure-0 points): A grade of “F” indicates that a student has failed to demonstrate minimal academic performance; it carries a weight of zero quality points for every credit of the course in which the grade is earned.

I (Incomplete-0 points): A notation of “I” indicates that a student has not completed all course requirements as a result of circumstances judged by the instructor to be beyond the student’s control. Students who receive official permission to postpone an examination are assigned an “I” (incomplete) as the grade for that course. Incomplete grades can be removed by completing the examination or other requirements no later than the end of the sixth week of the academic term following the semester in which the “I” was noted. Failure to complete such in the required timeframe will result in an “F” (Failing) grade.

W (Withdrawal-0 points): A notation of “W” indicates a student’s withdrawal from a course in accordance with the Tri-C’s withdrawal policy. 0.0 quality points not computed in the grade point average.

Program-wide remediation

The opportunity to undertake remedial work is a privilege and is not automatically granted. Students who fall below standards of academic progress in any course/clinical experience are to meet with the program director and review their grades and course/rotation documentation. The program director will
review the case with the instructor and determine if a plan of remediation is feasible. Feasibility is determined by various factors including:

1) The student’s performance in program courses.
2) The availability of the faculty member to supervise and conduct the remedial work.
3) The availability of resources.
4) The amount of time needed for the student to remediate.
5) The course sequencing.

The program director will review the student case with appropriate program faculty and make final decision on a remediation plan. If the student chooses to complete the remediation, the remedial work must be completed as agreed.

**Technical Standards of Performance**

These standards apply to all students training for the Physician Assistant profession through the Cuyahoga Community College program. All students must meet the following essential technical standards and should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. Reasonable accommodations may be made on a case-by-case basis for individuals with documented disabilities. Determination of appropriate accommodations is an individualized process, if you have any questions regarding these standards please contact the Cuyahoga Community College Physician Assistant Program directly. The Physician Assistant Program at Cuyahoga Community College is committed to providing equal opportunities to access education and does not discriminate against students on the basis of disability. No otherwise qualified applicant with a disability will be excluded from admission. Any person who wishes to report discrimination should contact the College’s Office of Inclusion, Diversity & Equal Opportunity Compliance by phone at 216.987.4772 or 216.987.4773 or by mail at Cuyahoga Community College 700 Carnegie Avenue Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

1. **Visual (Observation)**
   Students must be able to demonstrate sufficient attention and accuracy in observation skills in the classroom, laboratory, at the patient’s bedside or in an outpatient setting. Functional use of vision and somatic sensation is necessary. Consistent with the ability to assess asymmetry, range of motion and visual patient inspection during examination, it is necessary for students to have adequate visual capabilities for proper evaluation and treatment integration. Required indicators for the observation skills technical standard include, but are not limited to these examples:
   - Accurate observations of physiologic and pharmacological demonstrations and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues
   - Accurate observation of a patient (near and at a distance), recognizing non-verbal cues
   - Accurate visualization and discrimination of texts, numbers, patterns, to interpret x-rays and other graphic images, and digital or analog representations of physiologic phenomena, such as EKGs, with or without the use of assistive devices
   - Accurate identification of changes in color of fluids, skin, and culture media

2. **Oral-Auditory (Communication)**
   Students must be able to demonstrate that they are able to communicate effectively and objectively in both the academic setting and in routine and emergency situations in the clinical health care setting. Throughout the program, the students must show evidence of effective written and verbal English communication skills. Communication includes not only speech, but also reading and writing. Students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, of all ages and genders, with varying degrees and types of infirmities, of varying cultures, ethnicities, and
personalities. Students must also be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with other members of the health care team. In emergency situations, students must be able to understand and convey information essential for the safe and effective care of patients in a clear, unambiguous and rapid fashion. In addition, students must have the ability to relate information to and receive information from patients in a caring, articulate, and confidential manner. Required indicators for the oral-auditory (communication) skills technical standard include, but are not limited to these examples:

- Clear, efficient and intelligible articulation of verbal English language
- Legible, efficient and intelligible written English language
- Accurate and efficient English language reading skills
- Accurate and efficient expressive and receptive communication skills
- Ability to prepare and communicate concise oral and written summaries of patient encounters
- Ability to accurately follow oral and written direction
- Ability to accurately discern and evaluate various components of the spoken voice (pitch, intensity, timbre), percussive notes and auscultatory findings

3. Motor
The students should possess enough physical stamina to sufficiently complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study and is required. Students need to possess coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and integrated use of the senses of touch and vision. Required indicators for motor skills technical standard include, but are not limited to these examples:

- Functional and sufficient sensory capacity to adequately perform a physical examination and must possess the motor skills necessary to perform palpation, percussion, and auscultation
- Execution of motor movements that allows the provision of general and emergency medical care such as airway management, placement of intravenous catheters, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wound closure, and application of pressure to control bleeding
- Physical stamina sufficient to complete long periods of sitting, standing, lifting or moving are required in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings
- Demonstration of strength and mobility as needed to assist in surgery, emergency situations, and activities associated with daily practice as a PA student
- Execution of motor movements to assess patient conditions, provide patient care, and participate in basic diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers and procedures
- Properly use clinical instruments and devices for the therapeutic intervention including, but not limited to tuning forks, stethoscopes, sphygmomanometers, doppler devices, catheters, tubes, etc.

In order to effectively problem solve in the clinical setting, and based upon the critical thinking skills demanded of physician assistants, student must be able to demonstrate cognitive skills including, but not limited to intellectual, conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities. Required indicators for the cognitive skills technical standard include, but are not limited to these examples:

- Demonstrate ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize in a timely fashion
- Demonstrate the ability to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures
- Demonstrate the ability to acquire, retain, and apply new and learned information

5. Behavioral/Social
Students must possess the emotional health and stability required for the full utilization of their intellectual abilities, for the exercise of good judgment, for the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and for the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Required indicators include, but are not limited to these examples:
  o Demonstrate ability to tolerate physically taxing workloads and function effectively under stress
  o Demonstrate the ability to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, compassion, integrity, motivation, interpersonal skills, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of patients
  o Uphold appropriate standards of professionalism and ethics

**Professional Standards of Performance**

A student’s professional conduct should be exemplary and professional at all times. Professionalism is one of the parameters students will be evaluated for consistently through all phases of the program. Students should make an effort to establish professional relationships with preceptors and other health care personnel. Students should always be mindful of conduct, as they are constantly being observed by others. The role of the physician assistant (as outlined in the AAPA Code of Ethics) demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills, and the capacity to react to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. An attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient’s welfare are essential attributes. These qualities apply to physician assistant students as well. Professional standards of conduct will be expected of all students at all times. A student is expected to abide by these rules and regulations at all program sponsored activities. He/she must be constantly vigilant of the need to inspire confidence on the part of patients and the medical and surgical staff observing his/her performance. In many ways the student’s opportunity to learn, and later, to obtain employment will depend on his/her success in achieving this goal. Each student needs to be aware that his/her behavior will also reflect on the PA profession, the program, the College, one’s classmates, and how subsequent students are accepted and treated at a rotation site, on campus, and in the community. Most interpersonal problems are best resolved by the mutual efforts of the people involved. The keys to solving most problems which arise during the program are: clear communication, common sense, personal integrity, and professional responsibility. Evidence of inappropriate behavior or unprofessional conduct considered as such by a member of the physician assistant program staff, including site clinical preceptors, may be referred to the Professional Conduct Committee. Behavior considered inappropriate or unprofessional includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  o Any form of dishonesty including, but not limited to, plagiarism, theft, cheating on quizzes or examinations (i.e. sharing test questions and/or answers), lying, falsifying or omitting any required program information or documentation (i.e. time logs, preceptor evaluations, report of prior employment or spousal employment at contracted clinical sites, etc.), or falsifying medical records.
  o Absenteeism or tardiness
  o Use of profane, vulgar, abusive, obscene, or threatening language of any sort while participating in any program activities
  o Illegally obtaining, possessing, selling, or using controlled substances
  o Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while participating in any program activity or while present in any facility where program activities occur
o Failure to maintain strict confidentiality of patient records or patient encounters
o Failure to demonstrate the appropriate role of the PA (see PA code of Ethics)
o Uncooperative, hostile, disruptive, negative, disrespectful or verbally or physically abusive behavior manifested toward the program staff, patients, instructors, clinical preceptor(s), the PA Program, the College, medical staff, visitors, or fellow students (this includes disruptive behavior in the classroom)
o Inappropriate, accusative, derogatory, argumentative or privileged information included in any kind of written materials, electronic mail, conversations, or comments in any open setting at the College or clinical site
o Any violation of requirements set forth in a PA course syllabus
o Being denied access to a clinical site based upon inappropriate behavior or unprofessional conduct
o Failure to adhere to the defined dress code
o Identifying oneself in any way as “PA-C” verbally, in writing, or on any type of equipment or apparel
o Lack of respect for the privacy or property of others
o Conviction of a felony or offense involving moral turpitude while enrolled as a physician assistant student
o Failure to adhere to these Rules, Regulation and Procedures or to the Individual Rights and Responsibility Policy of Cuyahoga Community College, or the spirit in which they are offered
o Any other situation or condition not addressed in this list of behaviors will be considered independently according to the merits of the case. As far as possible, each will be dealt with in a manner comparable to similar conditions described in this document.

Identification and Dress Code Standards

Contact Information
It is required that we have student’s most up-to-date contact information. In assure accurate information, any change in name, address, telephone number, email address, and emergency contact/number must be communicated to the PA program. All communication from the PA program will be through the student’s personal email address. Clinical preceptors may contact the student through this email.

Identification
PA students must be readily identifiable at all times. In all clinical areas or locations where other health professionals or patients are likely to be met, a College photo ID nametag identifying the wearer as a physician assistant student must be properly worn and visible. When meeting another health professional or a patient, a PA student must introduce himself/herself as a PA student. While in the PA program, it is illegal to use the term “PA-C” in any form—verbal, written, or on any type of equipment or apparel. Doing so will result in immediate program dismissal. Students employed in health care fields, students observing in health care settings or students volunteering in health care settings are not permitted to function or identify themselves as a physician assistant student.

Dress Code and Personal Appearance
The following guidelines are designed to promote a professional atmosphere in all phases of the program.
**Dress Code Didactic Phase**

Students will be required to wear ceil blue scrub top and bottoms with closed toe shoes OR professional dress (as defined below) in all program activities during the didactic phase. Dress-down days may be granted on rare occasion at the discretion of the Program Director for specific events.

**Dress Code Clinical Phase**

During the clinical phase, specific uniforms may be designated by the clinical site preceptor. Unless otherwise specified, students are expected to wear professional dress clothes at all times.

**Cuyahoga Community College Physician Assistant Professional Dress Code**

The Cuyahoga Community College Physician Assistant Program believes in creating a good first impression and projecting a conservative and professional image to reflect what is expected of a clinician. Professional dress can help to establish trust and acceptance from patients, patient families, and other healthcare professionals. It is required that students abide by the following professional dress guidelines to best represent the program and profession.

**Requirements for Men**

- Dark suits – navy & charcoal grey are best*
  - Properly fitted
  - Pant should touch the top of your shoe
  - Suit should be buttoned when standing, unbutton to sit
- Dark dress shoes – polished and buffed (no loafers)
- Dark dress socks (no gym socks)
- Conservative neck tie
- Avoid bright colors or loud patterns
- Tie length should end at the level of the belt
- Long-sleeve shirt, even in warm weather
  - White, cream & light blue are all good choices
  - Pointed collars project a more professional image than button-downs, but either is acceptable
  - Always wear an undershirt
- Belt with conservative buckle

*White coat may be substituted for suit jacket if student has been granted white coat

**Requirements for Women**

- Dark coordinated suits*
  - Properly fitted
  - If skirt is worn, length no more than one inch above the knee
- Coordinating dress blouse - no plunging necklines, no sleeveless tops
- Polished matching dress shoes
  - No open toe shoes
  - If heel is worn, moderate height (3 inches or less)
  - Shoe color should be conservative

*White coat may be substituted for suit jacket if student has been granted white coat

**Personal Appearance**

These grooming standards are required during all phases of the program.

- Makeup should appear natural and be conservative.
Short neatly trimmed nails. Artificial nail enhancements of any kind are not to be worn. Clear or conservatively colored nail polish only, no chipped nail polish.

Students must wear a well-kept white waist-length/consultation style lab coat and Tri-C photo identification badge during clinical rotations (unless otherwise specified by PA program Clinical Coordinator or clinical preceptor).

Closed toe shoes (clean and polished) with socks or stockings appropriate to a health care setting. Sandals are not acceptable.

Hair must be neat, clean, and controlled. Persons with long hair must wear it pinned or tied back. Bangs, if worn, must not be so long as to interfere with interaction with others. Facial hair is acceptable if it is neat and trimmed. No artificial “neon” or “rainbow” dye colors (green, blue, purple, pink, etc.).

Jewelry should not be worn in excess. Body piercing is limited to conservative earrings.

Perfume and after shave lotion should be avoided in all settings due to potential patient sensitivities.

Students who have other facial or tongue piercings must have the hardware removed during the program.

Tattoos must be covered.

Note: Students dressed inappropriately will be excused; repeated violations of the dress code are subject to disciplinary action by the Professional Conduct Committee.

Program Phases

Didactic Phase
The didactic phase of the program is 4 semesters in duration and the courses are generally successive of each other. Students must complete the didactic phase before successfully advancing into the clinical phase.

Clinical Phase
The clinical phase includes ten 1-month clinical rotations. The clinical phase is considered full time clinical practice. Each week consists of 40 hours or more of clinical experiences where the student learns and practices skills learned in the didactic phase. Students are expected to participate fully in all clinical rotations and class activities, including mandatory seminar sessions.

Preparation Phase
The preparation phase is the final semester and students will complete the Master’s project, prepare for the national board examination and prepare for the clinical work force.

Didactic Phase
Refer to individual course syllabi for specific course details. All courses are offered in succession; all courses must be passed with a “C” or better in order to progress to the next semester. Obtaining two grades of “C” or less will result in automatic dismissal.

Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)
After each semester, students will have formal testing that evaluates one’s knowledge base. The OSCEs are examinations to test clinical skill performance and competence. The students must show competence in the tested areas to continue the program sequence. Unsatisfactory performance on any part of the OSCE will be reviewed by the Program Director and staff and an appropriate remediation
plan will be developed. Failure to complete remediation plan or a second failure of the OSCE may result in cessation of program advancement and dismissal from the program.

**Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT)**

The PACKRAT is an online test that consists of 225 questions developed by physician assistant educators and is modeled after the nationally recognized competence examination. The PACKRAT represents the knowledge base that a graduate physician assistant should possess, and identifies areas of strength and weakness in medical knowledge. Students will take this test at the beginning and end of their clinical year and will be nationally compared to other students at similar training levels. This examination will not count as a part of any course or program grade.

**Clinical Phase**

**General Goals of the Clinical Phase**

The clinical phase takes students from the theoretical classroom setting to an active, hands-on learning environment to prepare them for a lifetime of continued refinement of skills and expanded knowledge as a practicing physician assistant. To this end, the goals of the clinical phase include:

- Apply didactic knowledge to supervised clinical practice
- Develop and sharpen clinical problem-solving skills
- Expand and develop the mutual fund of knowledge
- Perfect the art of history taking and physical examination skills
- Develop an understanding of the physician assistant role in health care delivery
- Prepare for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam
- Develop interpersonal skills and professionalism necessary to function as part of a medical team

**Required Clinical Experiences for Field Experience and Directed Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Medicine</th>
<th>Emergency Medicine</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
<td>General Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geriatrics</td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
<td>Women’s Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directed Practice I (Elective)</td>
<td>Directed Practice II (Elective)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supervised clinical practice experiences will enable students to meet program expectations and acquire the competencies needed for entry into clinical practice. Students will experience, at minimum, acute, chronic, and emergent patient encounters. Students will be provided supervised clinical practice experiences with patients seeking the following:

- Medical care across the life span to include infants, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly
- Women’s health, including prenatal and gynecologic care
- Care for conditions requiring surgical management, including pre-operative, intraoperative, and post-operative care
- Care for behavioral and mental health conditions

Supervised clinical practice experiences will occur in the following settings:

- Outpatient
- Inpatient
- Emergency department
- Operating room
Permission to enter the clinical phase of the program is granted by the Program Director with consultation of the PA program faculty and staff. In order to begin clinical rotations, students must, by assigned deadline:

- Be in good academic and professional standing as defined
- Present evidence of good health and the ability to undertake the technical performance standards (essential functions) of the program
- Present proof of comprehensive health insurance coverage
- Be certified as satisfactorily completing BLS (Basic Life Support) & ACLS (Advanced Cardiac Life Support) by the American Heart Association standards. This certification must be valid through the end of the clinical training period
- Satisfactorily complete the educational activities and training in Universal Precautions and Blood Borne Pathogens
- Return any borrowed equipment to the PA program

**Malpractice Insurance**

PA students will have malpractice insurance through Tri-C before entering clinical sites. Arrangements for obtaining this malpractice coverage are made by the Clinical Coordinator prior to the first clinical rotation. Students must be officially registered for the appropriate clinical course for the clinical rotation to which they are assigned before entering that clinical site.

**Guidelines for Clinical Rotations**

Assignment of a student to a clinical site will be determined by the program’s Clinical Coordinator. Students are not permitted to exchange their assigned clinical sites with another student. Students must comply with the assigned clinical rotation schedule which is established prior to the clinical year. Requests for rotation site changes are not permitted once rotations have been scheduled.

If a student must drop out or is unable to complete a four-week rotation (obtain a minimum of 150 hours) for any reason, he/she will be required to resume the scheduled rotation sequence according to the prearranged dates on the written clinical rotation schedule. This may also require the student to repeat or complete the rotation at the end of the clinical year, which will result in a delay in graduation from the program. A student will not be assigned to a clinical site where a relative or spouse is employed in the assigned department or in an adjacent department where interaction may occur. It is the student’s responsibility to report this information to the Clinical Coordinator prior to the start of clinical rotations. A student will not be assigned to a department in a clinical site where he/she is currently or has been previously employed. It is the student’s responsibility to report this information to the Clinical Coordinator prior to the start of clinical rotations.

A student may not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during their supervised clinical practical experiences.

**Guidelines for Clinical Performance**

Students may not take the responsibility or the place of qualified staff. However, after demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to undertake certain defined activities with appropriate supervision and direction. A PA student should not make a diagnosis, carry out any diagnostic or
therapeutic procedure, or administer therapy without appropriate direction or supervision. A PA student should never perform a procedure in which he/she is not familiar or does not have sufficient experience. Should a student have a doubt in the management of a particular patient or procedure, it is important that he/she consult with the program Clinical Coordinator or their designee.

When given an order by a site clinical preceptor, the student has three possible courses of action:

- He/she may carry out the order exactly as directed.
- If the student disagrees in any way with the instructions of the site clinical preceptor (this should be a rare occurrence), he/she should discuss the concerns with the program’s Clinical Coordinator and agree on a course of action.
- He/she may inform the site clinical preceptor that due to the circumstances he/she does not feel qualified to carry out the order. Students should report these situations immediately to the program’s Clinical Coordinator.

Students are to never perform an examination or procedure if the patient objects to it. Students must inform their site clinical preceptor or their designee and request that they speak with the patient. The situation should then be resolved according to the site clinical preceptor’s direction.

While a student is involved in PA program activities and clinical rotations, he/she is expected to perform and identify himself/herself as a physician assistant student only, regardless of whatever other licenses, registrations, or credentials he/she may possess. Students who fail to notify program Clinical Coordinator and rotation clinical preceptor of absence and/or tardiness will be placed on program probation. Being denied access to a clinical site for inappropriate behavior, unprofessional conduct or less than satisfactory knowledge base and/or technical skills, will result in the student being placed on program probation, and will result in a formal review of the circumstances by the Program Director and program faculty. Based upon the outcome of the review, the student will be required to do one of the following:

- Appear before the Professional Conduct Committee, and be expected to adhere to the recommendations of the Professional Conduct Committee as approved by the Program Director and/or the Associate Dean of Health Careers for disciplinary action or dismissal.
- Repeat the particular clinical rotation in its entirety at the completion of the clinical year. Irrespective of what week in the clinical rotation this occurs, the student will be required to wait to resume their clinical rotation sequence until the next scheduled rotation date. The student may additionally be required to do mandatory tutoring sessions or remedial work.
- Be dismissed from the program.

While participating in an assigned clinical rotation, a student must not engage in non-related personal activities i.e. making personal phone calls, working on class fundraising projects, studying for exams, etc.

- All student records i.e. Clinical Rotation Time Record, Mid Evaluation, Final Evaluation, etc. are legal documents. White-out is not to be used on any student record or document.
- Students should not be at any clinical site for any reason other than the site to which they are assigned, unless they have permission from the program Clinical Coordinator.

**Mid and Final Rotation Evaluation**

Students are responsible for assuring the preceptor completes their mid and final evaluation forms. Mid-evaluation forms are to be completed by the 15th of each month. Mid-evaluation forms are to be used as a tool for student self-evaluation and growth throughout the rotation. Mid-point evaluations will also assist the program in monitoring students and sites throughout the clinical phases.
Final evaluation forms are due by the end of the month and due each respective seminar day. See below for final evaluation grading system.

**Field Experience (Clinical Experience) Grading Components**

Each of the required discipline-specific rotations is an individual one credit modular class. These classes are grouped together under one blanket course noted as Field Experience I or Field Experience II. Each modular class is evaluated individually and students are held to programmatic criteria for the individual modules for all purposes, including academic standing and requirements for matriculation. The clinical grade consists of three main components as below (final evaluation, EORE, and documentation).

**GRADING SCALE:**

- **A:** 90 - 100%
- **B:** 80 - 89.99%
- **C:** 70 - 79.99%
- **F:** < 70%

**Final Evaluation by the Preceptor** = 60 points

Each student will be graded on the following:

- Fund of medical knowledge
- History taking/medical interview skills
- Physical examination skills
- Knowledge of lab and diagnostic studies
- Clinical procedure skills
- Assessment skills/differential diagnosis
- Ability to form treatment/management plan
- Ability to implement treatment/management plan
- Patient education and counseling
- Oral presentations
- Documentation of patient records
- Problem solving/critical thinking skills
- Self-confidence

The preceptor of each rotation evaluates the student on a variety of competencies. The evaluated metrics (below) are averaged and the student is given an overall score which will comprise 60% of the clinical grade:

- Exceptional Performance-full credit
- Proficient Performance-full credit
- Adequate Performance-full credit
- Needs Improvement-subtract 5 points
- Unsatisfactory Performance-subtract 10 points
- No Opportunity to Determine-N/A

**End of Rotation Examination (EORE)**= 20 points

Each EORE will be taken on student seminar days and will consist of multiple choice questions. Students are permitted one minute to answer each question. The exam grade will contribute to
the field experience I and field experience II final grade. Exams will be taken through exam
driver with PAEA. Post rotation examinations are designed to assess student knowledge on
topics related to the clinical medicine. The PAEA End of Rotation study lists provide a guide to
topics that students will be tested on. These lists are not exhaustive relative to the specific
content appearing on the exams. There will also be associative content for which students will
be responsible for. The questions are designed to mimic certifying exam questions in complexity
and breadth. Students scoring below 60% are required to complete a remediation exam.
However, the initial grade for the examination will remain as the score calculated into the
rotation grade. Because of the comprehensive nature of the exam, the scale will be as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Score</th>
<th>Points Awarded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;80%</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>76-80</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>74-76</td>
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<td>40-42</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>0</td>
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**EORE Remediation Plan**

Students will not have the ability to review PAEA end of rotation exams (EORE) but will be given a
detailed score sheet with a feedback by keyword section, in which students will be able to review topics
related to questions that were incorrect responses on their exam.

An EORE score of 60 or greater: There are no additional requirements. The student is encouraged to
review their incorrect response topics.

An initial EORE score less than 60: The student will be excused from the next rotation set to allow time
to study for the remedial exam. This will delay the sequencing of the clinical rotations. The student must
meet with program manager to discuss exam scores and a detailed plan. The student will be required to
take a remediation EORE within 2 weeks of the original exam. The remedial exam will be another version
of the PAEA exam and will take place on campus in a proctored setting. The student must earn a score of
60 or greater on the remediation exam to continue in the clinical sequence.

Remediation score below 60: Students earning less than 60 on the remediation EORE will be required to
repeat the rotation and placed in a discipline that is the best fit according to availability of sites. The
student will then take a second remedial EORE exam after the repeated rotation and must achieve 60 or
higher to continue in the program. Students who do not achieve a 60 or higher on the remediation after
the repeated rotation will be dismissed from the program.

Please note that any remediation will result in an extension of the clinical phase. In addition, repeating a
rotation will additionally extend the clinical phase.

Students will be permitted to remediate the exams (either the exam or exam and rotation) twice. If a
third failure occurs on an initial EORE, the student will be considered for program dismissal. Each case
will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Documentation submission= 20 points
There are several documents that must be submitted at the end of each rotation. All documents must
be submitted on time for full credit to be awarded. Points will be deducted for each day late.

Patient log (10 points)
Students are required to log procedures and patient encounters into the patient logging
system. Logging should be completed concurrently with patient experience. Students
with incomplete logs at the end of the month will be awarded no points for
documentation submission.

Site evaluation (5 points)
Students will be required to evaluate each clinical experience at the end of the rotation.
The evaluation form must be completed by the end of the month on seminar day.
Students with incomplete evaluations will be awarded no points for site evaluation
submission.

Clinical Rotation Time Record (5 points)
At the completion of each clinical rotation the student must submit a clinical rotation
time record to the program Clinical Coordinator. The clinical rotation time record must
be signed and dated by the rotation clinical preceptor. All rotation absences and/or
tardiness MUST be recorded on the rotation time log and students must specify reason
for absence and/or tardiness. Should an absence and/or tardiness occur, students are
required to notify ALL persons listed:
1. Clinical Coordinator
2. Program Assistant
3. Clinical Preceptor
Notification must be made by telephone. Email and/or text is NOT acceptable.
Depending upon the circumstance, an absence and/or tardiness will need to be made
up to the satisfaction of the Clinical Coordinator and clinical preceptor. The time log
form must be completed by the end of the month on seminar day. Students with
incomplete time logs will be awarded no points for time record documentation.
**Student Seminar Days**

Student Seminar Days are held on the last day of each month during the clinical phase (January through October). Student Seminar Days are mandatory and consist of: End of Rotation Exams (EORE) & guest lecturer presentations. Professional dress, timely attendance, and professional behavior is required. In the event of an absence (excused or unexcused) from a Student Seminar Day, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the Clinical Coordinator to determine what content is missed. The student is responsible for writing a paper for each topic missed. Paper guidelines must be followed in order to receive full credit:

- Topic should be submitted to the Clinical Coordinator for prior approval
- 5 pages in length and written APA style
- Three articles utilized should be from peer reviewed journals and no more than 5 years old
- Paper will be due within 1 week of seminar no later than 4:00 pm. Articles are to be submitted with paper

**Preparation Phase**

The final phase of the program, during November and December of second year. In addition to scheduled courses, students are expected to complete their Master’s project at Cleveland State University, a grand rounds presentation at Tri-C, prepare for the national board examination (PANCE), and begin applying for jobs.

**Grand Round Presentations**

Grand round presentations are an important teaching tool and ritual of medical education and inpatient care, consisting of presenting the medical problems and treatment of a particular patient to an audience of health care professionals and students. The PA program will hold grand round presentation days during the month of November following clinical rotations. Topics and further details will be discussed during the clinical phase of the program.

**Physician Assistant Program Graduate Competencies**

Upon successful completion of all three phases (didactic phase, clinical phase and preparation phase), the student will graduate with the following credentials:

- Cuyahoga Community College: Post-Degree Professional Certificate in Physician Assistant Studies
- Cleveland State University: Master of Science Degree in Health Sciences

**GENERAL**

Graduates are expected to:

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

INTERPERSONAL AND COMMUNICATION
Graduates are expected to:
o Use effective listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning, and writing skills to elicit and provide information
o Appropriately adapt communication style and messages to the context of the individual patient interaction
o Work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
o Apply an understanding of human behavior
o Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
o Accurately and adequately document and record information regarding the care process for medical, legal, quality and financial purposes

PROFESSIONALISM
Graduates are expected to:
o Understand legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
o Uphold professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
o Demonstrate respect, compassion and integrity
o Have commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent and business practices
o Demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to patients’ culture, age, gender and disabilities
o Exhibit self-reflection, critical curiosity and initiative

PRACTICE BASED LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT
Graduates are expected to:
o Locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients’ health problems
o Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
o Apply information technology to manage information, access online medical information and support their own education

SYSTEM BASED PRACTICE
Graduates are expected to:
- Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
- Effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
- Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
- Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
- Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide more effective and efficient patient care

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) Board Exam

2015 Content Blueprint Task Areas
The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is the regulatory body for preparation and administration of the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). The task areas include knowledge and cognitive skills that are identified as important to PA practice. The didactic and clinical phase of the PA program is designed to ensure exposure to each of these vital task areas. Please see the NCCPA website for more information: http://www.nccpa.net/ExamsContentBPTasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>% of Exam Content (Total 100%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History Taking &amp; Performing Physical Examinations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Laboratory &amp; Diagnostic Studies</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulating Most Likely Diagnosis</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Maintenance</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Intervention</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical Therapeutics</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying Basic Science Concepts</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2015 Content Blueprint Organ Areas
The NCCPA also maintains a list of organ systems that serve as a guide of diseases, disorders and medical assessments that provide a basis for examination preparation. The didactic and clinical phase of the PA program is designed to ensure exposure across all organ systems to include the majority of the specific entities outlined in this detailed listing. Please see the NCCPA website for more information: http://www.nccpa.net/ExamsContentBPOrgans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organ System</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cardiovascular</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dermatologic</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyes, Ears, Nose &amp; Throat</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrine</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastrointestinal/Nutritional</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genitourinary</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hematologic</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infectious Diseases</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musculoskeletal</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurologic System</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Attendance

Because of the concentrated curriculum in the PA program, all courses, laboratories, and clinical rotations require mandatory attendance. Attendance is considered an aspect of professionalism and individual responsibility. The student’s presence in class is crucial to understand the content and structure of the PA program. Attendance is necessary for successful completion of the PA program.

Any unexcused absence and/or tardiness will be considered an infraction of professional conduct. Absence or tardiness, excused or unexcused, will be referred to the Program Director and/or Professional Conduct Committee as appropriate to the situation, as deemed by the program faculty and/or staff.

In addition to regularly scheduled classes and clinical assignments, the program will periodically sponsor additional mandatory meetings and events. Students are required to attend these program sponsored activities, and will be given advanced notice as to the date and time. In order to insure the student’s knowledge base in the subject matter presented, excused absences from a mandatory educational session or post rotation clinical seminar will require the student to complete a remedial project based upon the subject matter presented.

Tri-C is required by law to verify the enrollment of students who participate in Federal Title IV student aid programs and/or who receive educational benefits through other funding sources. Federal regulations require that students attend all registered classes in order to receive federal financial aid funds. Students who do not attend the full session are responsible for withdrawing from the courses. Tri-C is required to insure that students receive financial aid only for courses that they attend and complete. Students who fail to complete at least one course may be required to repay all or a portion of their federal financial aid funds and may be ineligible to receive future federal financial aid awards. Students who withdraw from classes prior to completing more than 60 percent of their enrolled class time may be subject to the required federal refund policy. Tri-C is responsible for identifying students who have not attended or logged into a class for which they are registered. At the conclusion of the first two weeks of a semester, instructors may report any registered students who have “never attended” a class so that those reported students will be administratively withdrawn from that class. However, it is the student’s responsibility to withdraw, using the appropriate Tri-C form, from any class which she/he is no longer attending or risk receiving a failing grade in that class. Students wishing to withdraw must complete and submit the appropriate Tri-C form by the established withdrawal deadline. If illness or emergency should necessitate a brief absence from class, students should confer with instructors upon their return. Students having problems with class work because of a prolonged absence should confer with the instructor or a counselor.

Types of Absence

Emergent Absence

An excused absence will be granted for severe illness of the student, severe illness of a student’s immediate family member or a death in the student’s immediate family. In these instances, the student
must follow the process outlined below. Failure to meet these criteria will result in an unexcused absence.

**Requested Absence**
In certain circumstances, excused absences will be considered for reasons other than the emergent situations noted above, including any necessary legal appearances or religious holidays. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The student must follow the procedures outlined below in order to obtain an excused absence. Failure to follow these procedures will result in an unexcused absence.

**Conference Absence**
Absences from course work or clinical assignments due to attendance at national, regional, or state conferences must be pre-approved by the Program Director. Students desiring to attend conferences will submit a Required Absence Form to the Program Director prior to the event. Students attending conferences must submit documentation verifying attendance upon their return. Failure to follow these procedures will result in an unexcused absence.

**Non-Emergent Absence**
A non-emergent absence encompasses all other missed days not defined above, including sick days. Sick time lasting greater than five consecutive days will require medical clearance to return to program. In these instances, the student must follow the process outlined below. Failure to meet these criteria will result in an unexcused absence.

**Absence Protocol**
The Required Absence Form and communication by telephone are required for all types of absences.

**Required Absence Form**
The Required Absence Form is located on the Blackboard website and at the back of the handbook. If the form is being used for planned absence, it must be submitted one month prior to requested time. If the form is being used to justify an absence, it must be submitted within 24 hours of the time missed. Determination of excused/unexcused will be made and recorded in each individual student’s record. Students are permitted a maximum of five (5) absences during the didactic phase and a maximum of four (4) absences during the clinical phase. This includes any academic conference or activity scheduled outside of assigned clinical rotations. During the clinical phase, students must obtain a minimum of 150 hours per rotation. Failure to submit the Required Absence Form for each absence may result in program probation. Students are to submit the Required Absence Form to the following:

- **Didactic Phase:**
  - Academic Coordinator
- **Clinical Phase:**
  - Clinical Coordinator

**Notification by Phone**
Email and/or text notification is NOT acceptable. Students are responsible to notify all parties below by telephone prior to missed course, laboratory, clinical rotation and/or other program sponsored events. The student is required to leave a voicemail message if he/she is unable to reach the appropriate party.

- **Didactic Phase:**
  - All course professors/instructors for day
  - Academic Coordinator
- **Clinical Phase:**
• Clinical Coordinator
• Program Assistant
• Clinical Preceptor

Long-Term Leave of Absence

Conditions
In the event that a matriculated student in the PA program encounters a situation that requires a prolonged absence (more than one week) from the program, that student may either withdraw from the program or request a leave of absence. A request for a leave of absence must be submitted in writing to the Program Director with sufficient information to explain the situation. The student may be required to meet with the PA program faculty to present his/her request. In the event that the student is ill or otherwise indisposed, the written requirement and the appearance before faculty may be waived, or the Program Director may initiate the action independently.

If the request seems reasonable, the Program Director may grant the leave. Otherwise, the Program Director may, at his/her discretion, deny the leave, recommend that the student withdraw from the program, or may recommend that the student be dismissed from the program. Conditions will be determined individually according to the merits of each case.

The Program Director, in consultation with the program faculty and staff, may require that a student take a leave of absence to complete certain remedial work that is deemed necessary to allow the student to succeed in the program.

In no case will a student be granted a leave of absence for a period of time longer than 12 calendar months. In no case will a student be permitted to reduce down to part-time status, there is no part-time student option.

Students serving as class-elected representatives to the PA Falkenstein Student Society, upon taking a leave of absences, relinquish their position/office, and the class will re-elect a replacement.

A student is permitted to take only one leave of absence during the program.

Returning from a Leave Notification
The student must notify the Program Director, in writing, of his/her intent to return. This request must be submitted at least three months prior to the beginning of the semester when the student is scheduled to return in order for the program prepare for reintegration of the student and ensure availability of resources.

Medical Clearance
Upon returning for a leave of absence due to medical or mental health reasons, the student must obtain a note from the physician and/or rehabilitation/mental health counselor stating that the student is able to return to the classroom or clinical rotation responsibilities with no limitations. The note must specify the date of return. Additionally, the student must have a new health examination form completed by a licensed health care provider.

Make Up Work
A student who is granted a leave of absence is expected to complete all missed work upon return to the program. This may mean that a student may have to drop courses, re-register, and take the courses from the beginning upon return to the program.

Prior to returning from a leave of absence, the student will be required to demonstrate clinical competencies (i.e. physical examination techniques and surgical skills) and take the didactic phase
proficiency exams for all courses completed prior to the leave of absence. These didactic and practical exams must be taken according to the professor’s current schedule for the specific courses. The student must receive greater than 80% on didactic examinations in order to continue in the program and proceed to clinical rotations. A student may be required to repeat program courses previously completed due to an extensive leave of absence.

**Disciplinary Procedures**

The ability of a physician assistant student to remain a student and to progress through the program is the responsibility of the student and the PA faculty. The progress of each student through the curriculum requires continuous satisfactorily academic and professional behavior. Records of any disciplinary actions and counseling will be recorded and maintained as part of the student’s record. The PA faculty have established the Professional Conduct Committee to review the student’s academic performance and professional behavior and to make appropriate recommendations pertaining to eligible disciplinary actions.

**Professional Conduct Committee**

The program faculty and staff may request to bring matters to the attention of the Professional Conduct Committee at any time by notifying the Program Director. The committee is to be utilized during all phases of the program. The Professional Conduct Committee may include but is not limited to the following:

- Program Medical Director
- Program Director
- Academic Coordinator
- Clinical Coordinator
- College Faculty
- College Administrator (including but not limited to other health career program managers & staff)
- Representatives from Cleveland State University
- Clinical Site Preceptor
- Advisory Board Committee Member

The Professional Conduct Committee members will be designated by the Program Director for each meeting. This Committee will hear matters or complaints and interview the persons involved. Recommendations for probation, dismissal, or other disciplinary actions will be forwarded to the Associate Dean of Health Careers to aid in the final decision. In certain cases, the Committee or Program Director may initiate steps as outlined in the Individual rights and responsibilities policy of Cuyahoga Community College. Such action, if taken, could result in not only dismissal from the program, but also from the College. All students have the right to request an appeal of decisions made by the Professional Conduct Committee. Requests must be placed in writing within 10 days. Students may refer to the Grievance Section of the Cuyahoga Community College’s Student Handbook.

**Withdrawal**

Voluntary
A student may voluntarily withdraw from the program at any time. Any student who voluntarily withdraws or is dismissed from the program must follow the current stated application procedures to be considered for readmission.

**Program Course Withdrawal**

Should a student drop a PA program course in any one semester, that student will be considered as withdrawing from the program by the Program Director, unless the student, prior to withdrawal, submits justification for the action and is approved. Unofficial withdrawal from one or more courses in the curriculum or failure to complete all course requirements will be considered a student failure, and the student will be dismissed from the program. An instructor may withdraw a student for excessive absence.

**Program Probation**

**Definition**

Failure to maintain good academic standing or any demonstration of unprofessionalism shall be adequate grounds for the student to be placed on program probation. This is a period of time that a formal plan for correction will be developed. Once a student has been placed on probation they will remain on probation for the duration of the program.

**Criteria**

- Student receiving one grade of “C” or less in any PA program course or clinical rotation grade
- Unsuccessful remediation of OSCE
- Unsuccessful remediation of EORE
- Cognitive and/or activity impairment resulting in an inability to perform duties or carry out responsibilities in a satisfactory manner
- Failure to maintain professional standards of performance, persistent or extreme conduct unbecoming of a physician assistant student
- Failure to comply with program absence policy, including exceeding the maximum number of absences permitted during either didactic or clinical year
- Failure to notify the clinical program staff and clinical site preceptor regarding an absence or tardiness from the clinical site
- Any situation or activity jeopardizing patient safety
- Being denied access to a clinical site for inappropriate behavior
- Activities not meeting acceptable moral or ethical standards
- Hostile, disrespectful, verbally or physically abusive behavior manifested toward the College, the PA program faculty & staff, fellow students (this includes disruptive behavior in the classroom), guest instructors and visitors, clinical preceptor(s) and medical staff, or patients.
- Students attending any clinical site to which they were not assigned
- Acts of dishonesty including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, furnishing false information, and or forgery.

**Process**

If a student meets criteria for probation, they will be notified by the Program Director. The student will have a meeting with the Program Director to discuss the grounds for program probation. The probation will be documented in the student’s file. The student will receive a copy of the probation letter which
will include a student plan for continuation. Failure to comply with the plan or meeting another criterion for probation or dismissal may result in recommendation for dismissal from program.

**Student Removal**

If, in the judgment of the PA program faculty or staff, including clinical site preceptors, a student’s presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, the Program Director and/or Clinical Coordinator may immediately remove a student from any PA course, activity, or clinical rotation. In this event, the student may be placed on program probation, and will have a formal review of the circumstances by the Program Director and/or professional conduct committee.

**Restrictions**

Any student placed on program probation must relinquish the privilege of serving as an officer or committee representative. The class will elect another student to fill the position. While on program probation, students taking a leave of absence will remain on program probation when he/she returns to the program.

**Program Dismissal**

**Criteria**

- Two separate grades of “C” or less in PA program courses or clinical rotation
- Failed attempt of remedial work, including unsatisfactory remediation or unsatisfactory performance following deceleration
- Failure to comply with probationary student plan
- Unsatisfactory attempt to progress in program despite intervention
- Unprofessional conduct in any phase of the program, including events where students are representing the College/PA program
- Failure to demonstrate the appropriate role of the physician assistant
- A clinical evaluation which includes unsatisfactory performance in the student/patient relationship or unprofessional conduct, irrespective of grades
- The use of “PA-C” in any form, verbal, written, or on any type of equipment or apparel while functioning in any capacity as a PA student
- Change in status that restricts successful matriculation through the program
- A medical or mental health circumstance where the treating physical or mental health/rehabilitation counselor indicates that the student is unable to return to the program at the expected level of performance, as defined by the program Technical Performance Standards
- Acts of dishonesty including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, furnishing false information, and or forgery.
- Any violation of the rules and regulations as outlined in this document by a student already on program probation will lead to recommendation for dismissal from the program.

**Process**
The individual will be reviewed by the Program Director and or professional conduct committee to determine his or her ability to continue in the program. If the Program Director or committee determines that dismissal is in order, this recommendation is made to the Associate Dean of Health Careers for review. If it is determined that the student may continue in the program, the program staff or committee will notify the student, in writing, regarding the grounds under which continuation is possible which will include an action plan. Failure to comply with the action plan or meeting another criterion for probation or dismissal may result in recommendation for dismissal from program.

**Right to Grievance of Dismissal**

Should a student dispute a decision of the Program Director or Associate Dean of Health Careers, the student has the right to due process. Information is available through the campus site grievance representative.

**Restrictions**

A student dismissed for reasons of unprofessional conduct is not eligible to re-apply.

**Handbook Disclaimer**

All students enrolled in Tri-C / CSU’s PA program are expected to adhere to these rules and regulations contained herewith. This handbook includes important requirements, policies, practices, and procedures that will be applicable throughout all phases of the program. The Tri-C / CSU PA faculty and staff reserve the right to alter the contents at any time. It is the student’s responsibility to read and completely understand the contents of this handbook.

Edited 3/22/2017