

MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

REQUIRED ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Preparation for a career in the health sciences is rigorous and requires the development of strong cognitive, technical, ethical, and professional competencies. These standards begin during Physician Assistant (PA) education and are essential for safe and effective clinical practice.

Students are expected to exercise sound academic and professional judgment, including seeking assistance promptly when academic difficulties arise. Early intervention is strongly encouraged to prevent escalation of concerns. Students should consult course instructors, academic advisors, or the Program Director as soon as challenges become apparent to direct the student in a timely manner. Program leadership may recommend support services (e.g., MU Student Services or the Student Success Center), and it is the student's responsibility to follow through with these recommendations.

Didactic students are to contact the Didactic Director with any instructor, course, or other academic issues or concerns. Clinical students are to contact the Clinical Director with any supervised clinical practice experience, preceptor, or other academic issues or concerns. The following academic standards are required to maintain enrollment in the program.

DIDACTIC ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Program students may not receive more than two (2) grades of C in the completed didactic phase. A final grade of C in any course will result in the student being placed on academic probation and require successful **remediation**. No more than two (2) courses may be remediated throughout the didactic phase, therefore a third C in any course will result in dismissal from the program. If the student earns a final course grade below a C in any course it will be a failure and will result in dismissal of the student from the program. No remediation can occur with a failing grade.

1. All students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better to remain in good academic standing in the program. If unable to do so, the student will be dismissed from the program.
2. Remediation is designed to address deficiencies in a student's knowledge and skills, such that the correction of these deficiencies is measurable and able to be documented. The intent is to improve a student's level of clinical knowledge and skill so that the student is better prepared for entry into the clinical year and / or into clinical practice. (Please refer to the section of this document defining the "Remediation" process and Academic Mentoring Form)
3. The academic standing of each student will be reviewed at the mid-point and end of each academic semester. For students whose academic status is not to the standards required by the PA program, the Didactic Director will submit mid-semester warnings in accordance with university-designated dates and procedures, or as needed.
4. Violation of the Honor Code, Code of Ethics and/or Program or University Policies in any way will be subject to reprimand, which may include dismissal from the program for serious offenses, depending on the severity of the violation.
5. Students whose academic status is not consistent with program/course expectations at the end of any semester may be subject to Sanctions, Academic Probation, Remediation, or Dismissal from the program.

CLINICAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS

1. PA Program students may not receive more than two (2) grades of C in the clinical phase of the program. A final grade of C in any course will result in the student being placed on academic probation and require successful **remediation**. No more than two (2) courses may be remediated throughout the clinical phase, therefore a third C in any course will result in dismissal from the program. If the student earns a final course grade below a C in any course, it will be a failure and will result in dismissal of the student from the program. No remediation can occur with a failing grade.
2. All students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better to remain in good academic standing in the program. If unable to do so, the student will be dismissed from the program.
3. Remediation is designed to address deficiencies in a student's knowledge and skills, such that the correction of these deficiencies is measurable and able to be documented. The intent is to improve a student's level of clinical knowledge and skill so that the student is better prepared for entry into the clinical year and / or into clinical practice. (Please refer to the section of this document defining the "Remediation" process and Academic Mentoring Form.)
4. The academic standing of each student will be reviewed during the mid-point and end of each clinical rotation. For

- students whose academic status is not to the standards required by the PA program, the Clinical Director will submit mid-point warnings in accordance with PA Studies designated dates and procedures, or as needed.
5. Violation of the Honor Code, Code of Ethics and/or Program or University Policies in any way will be subject to reprimand, which may include dismissal from the program for serious offenses, depending on the severity of the violation.
 6. Students whose academic status is not consistent with program/course expectations at the end of any semester may be subject to Sanctions, Academic Probation, Remediation, or Dismissal from the program.

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATION ACADEMIC STANDARDS

FORMATIVE EVALUATION

Formative Evaluation is intermediate or continuous evaluation that may include feedback to help students in achieving goals. Formative evaluation of Physician Assistant students is a multi-step process that begins toward the end of the initial fall and spring semesters:

1. **FORMATIVE OSCE ASSESSMENT** occurs during the fall of the initial year. Toward the end of the initial fall semester, each first year Physician Assistant student will participate in a two to three station OSCE as a component of PA538 - Patient Assessment I. This OSCE is designed to be a formative assessment of the history taking and medical interviewing skills gained after completion of PA537 Patient History & Communication and PA538.
2. **FORMATIVE EXAMINATION:** This is a multiple-choice exam consisting of board-style examination questions based on the NCCPA Content Blueprint. This examination tests the Physician Assistant student's knowledge base in all organ systems. After completion, students will receive a report showing their strengths and weaknesses. Students will be able to discuss with their advisors a study strategy that they can pursue to prepare for the second year.
3. **FORMATIVE H&P ASSESSMENT** occurs during the summer II semester of the first year. Each first year Physician Assistant student will participate in an H&P as a component of PA540 - Patient Assessment III. This H&P is designed to be a formative assessment of the history taking and physical assessment skills obtained after completion of PA537, PA538, and PA539.
4. **PACKRAT EXAM** The Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool exam is administered once during the didactic phase and once during the clinical phase of the program. The PACKRAT score is not a component of any grade, it is used for Physician Assistant student self-assessment. The results of the examination provide students with a report of their areas of strength and areas for improvement. This report may be utilized in formulating study plans for success in the PANCE examination. The examination report also allows the program to compare student performance with national scores.

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

Summative Assessment is an assessment of the learner conducted by the program to ensure that the learner has the medical knowledge, interpersonal, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required for entry into the profession. This evaluation must consist of more than a listing and review of student outcomes otherwise obtained in the course of the program.

The Summative Evaluation course occurs during the final four months of the program. The course focuses on verifying that each student meets program competencies required for entry level practice. Students are expected to pass a written summative exam, a comprehensive objective structured clinical examination (OSCE), complete a full history and physical documentation, complete a capstone project, and complete a summative procedures and test interpretation evaluation in order to demonstrate the proficiency of a practice-ready physician assistant. This course will also provide students with additional support in preparing for the PANCE.

Summative Evaluation in the 2nd year occurs by utilizing five tools:

1. **SUMMATIVE OSCE ASSESSMENT** occurs during the last four months of the program. Each PA student will participate in a multiple station summative OSCE. This OSCE is designed to assess history taking, physical examination, differential diagnosis, treatment plan development, and patient education skills expected of Physician Assistant graduates from the Misericordia University Physician Assistant Program. Each student must achieve a

minimum score of 80% to be successful and qualify for graduation. The PA student should pay particular attention to the program's published Program Competencies as these will identify areas of focus during this summative assessment.

2. SUMMATIVE EXAMINATION is a standardized multiple-choice exam designed to measure a PA students medical knowledge in the final four months of the curriculum. Summative Examination uses board-style examination questions based on the NCCPA Content Blueprint. Each student must achieve a passing grade of Satisfactory or Advanced Medical Knowledge to be successful and qualify for graduation.
3. SUMMATIVE H&P occurs during the last four months of the program. Each PA student will complete a History and Physical Exam along with a formal write up that will be evaluated by a faculty member. Each student must achieve a minimum score of 80% to be successful and qualify for graduation.
4. MASTER'S PROJECT is where each Physician Assistant student must successfully complete a capstone project. Each student must achieve a minimum score of 80% on the project to be successful and qualify for graduation.
5. SUMMATIVE PROCEDURES AND TEST INTERPRETATION occurs during the last four months of the program. Each PA student will perform common procedures in primary care medicine including I&D, Intramuscular Injection, Speculum Exam, Splinting, Suturing, and Venipuncture. In addition, each PA student will interpret common tests seen in primary care medicine including CXR, Skeletal X-ray, EKG, and Lab Tests. This assessment determines the student's ability to perform procedures and interpret tests in a safe and competent manner for entry-level practice. This evaluation aligns with our Program Competencies and is designed to assess clinical and technical skills. Each student must receive a minimum score of 80% on each procedure and overall test interpretation to be successful and qualify for graduation.

Note: Each student must participate in PANCE preparation to successfully complete PA635 and to qualify for graduation.

Policies and procedures are consistently applied to all similar situations in a similar manner.