LSU Health
NEW ORLEANS

School of Allied Health Professions

Master of Physician Assistant Studies
Clinical Handbook

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Introduction

This Clinical Handbook is a reference for Physician Assistant students and others seeking information concerning the policies, rules, expectations, and regulations of LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program Clinical Year. These policies and procedures are in place to maximize student success and help students maintain the high academic and professional standards necessary to be a Physician Assistant.

This Handbook reflects current policies and procedures of LSUHSC-NO and the PA Program for all Clinical Year students. However, they are subject to amendment and change without prior notice. The University and PA Program reserve the right to change policies, procedures, and Programs. Minor changes will be posted directly to the Handbook. When major changes occur, a notification will be sent to all PA students.

It is the responsibility of each student enrolled in the LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program to understand and abide by the regulations and policies within this Handbook and within LSUHSC-NO Publications. Details can also be found in the Chancellor's Memorandum 56.

LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program

Vision

The LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program will be a leader in the education of competent, compassionate, healthcare providers providing access to care for the people of Louisiana.

Mission

The Mission of the LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program is to recruit and educate individuals of the highest quality to provide evidence-based, patient-centered healthcare to the people of Louisiana.

Goals

- Recruit highly qualified applicants for enrollment as students in the LSUHSC-NO PA Program.
- Achieve a graduation rate of 90% or higher for students entering the LSUHSC-NO PA Program.
- Maintain a high five-year first-time pass rate at or above the national average on the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE).
- Maintain accreditation-continuing status.
- Educate high quality healthcare providers who obtain licensure to practice in Louisiana.

Core Faculty

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Required Competencies

Patient-Centered Practice Knowledge	PC 1.01	Gather essential and accurate information about patients and their condition through history-taking, physical examination, and the use of laboratory data, imaging, and other tests	Interpersonal Skills, medical knowledge
	PC 1.02	Make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment	Clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, interpersonal skills, medical knowledge
	PC 1.03	Develop and carry out patient management plans	Clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities
	PC 1.04	Counsel and educate patients and their families to empower them to participate in their care and enable shared decision making.	Clinical and technical skills, interpersonal skills, professional behaviors
	PC 1.05	Provide appropriate referral of patients including ensuring continuity of care throughout transitions between providers or settings and following up on patient progress and outcomes	Professional behaviors, interpersonal skills, medical knowledge
	PC 1.06	Performs essential procedures appropriate for newly graduated physician assistant	Clinical and technical skills
Society and Population Health	PC 2.01	Apply principles of epidemiological sciences to the identification of health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources, and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for patients and populations	Medical knowledge
	PC 2.02	Apply principles of social-behavioral sciences to provision of patient care, health equity, including assessment of the impact of the social drivers of health on disease, care-seeking, care-compliance, and barriers to and attitudes toward care.	Clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities
Health Literacy and Communication	PC 3.01	Communicate effectively with patients, families, and the public, as appropriate, across a broad range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds	Interpersonal skills
	PC 3.02	Communicate effectively with colleagues within one's profession or specialty, other health professionals, and health-related agencies	Professional behaviors
Professional, Legal, and Finance of Health System and Practice	PC 4.01	Identify strengths, deficiencies, and limits in one's knowledge and expertise	Professional behaviors
	PC 4.02	Develop the ability to use self-awareness of knowledge, skills, and emotional limitations to engage in appropriate help-seeking behaviors.	Professional behaviors, interpersonal skills
	PC 4.03	Demonstrate a commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of care, confidentiality, informed consent, and business practices, including compliance with relevant laws, policies, and regulations.	Clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors
	PC 4.04	Appreciate the value of the collaborative physician and PA relationship.	Professional behaviors

Essential Functions and Technical Standards

Medical education requires that the accumulation of knowledge be accompanied by the acquisition of skills and professional attitudes and behavior. Allied health school faculties have a responsibility to society to matriculate and graduate the best possible physician assistants, and thus admission to the PA Program is offered to those who present the highest qualifications for the study and practice of medicine. Technical standards presented in this document are prerequisite for admission, progression, and graduation from LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program. To accomplish its mission, LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program has developed a curriculum consisting of didactic courses and clinical clerkships. The faculty and administration of the school have developed essential functions with which all students must comply independently in order to satisfy PA Program curriculum demands. All courses in the curriculum are required so that students can develop the essential knowledge and skills necessary to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care.

The LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program maintains a strong institutional commitment to equal education opportunities for qualified students with disabilities who apply for admissions to the Program or who are already enrolled. The technical standards are not intended to deter any candidate for whom reasonable accommodations will allow the fulfillment of the complete curriculum. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, LSUHSC-NO has determined that certain technical standards must be met by prospective candidates and students.

A candidate for the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree must possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in the five areas discussed below as advised by the Special Advisory Panel on Technical Standards for Medical School Admissions convened by the AAMC (memorandum 79-4).
The technical standards must be met with or without accommodation. Students who, after review of these technical standards, determine that they require reasonable accommodation to fully engage in the Program should contact the Office of Disability Services at (504) 568-2211 or ods@lsuhsc.edu to confidentially discuss their accommodation needs. Given the clinical nature of our Program, time may be needed to create and implement the accommodations. Accommodations are never retroactive; therefore, timely requests are encouraged.

<u>Observation</u>
The individual must be able to observe demonstrations and participate in experiments of science, including but not limited to: dissection of cadavers, examination of specimens in anatomy, pathology and neuroanatomy laboratories, physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues. PA students must be capable of viewing and interpreting diagnostic modalities and detecting and interpreting non-verbal communication from patients.

<u>Communication</u>
Students should be able to communicate with patients to elicit information, to detect changes in mood or activity, and to establish therapeutic relationships. Students should be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and all members of the health care team both in person, in writing, and through telecommunication.

Motor Function and Coordination

Individuals must possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers. Individuals must be able to perform motor activities required in providing general and emergency treatment to patients, such as performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administering intravenous medication, applying pressure to stop bleeding, opening obstructed airways, suturing simple wounds, and performing routine obstetrical maneuvers.

Intellectual Abilities: Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative

Individuals must have sufficient cognitive abilities and effective learning techniques to assimilate detailed and complex information presented in the PA school curriculum. Individuals must be able to learn through a variety of modalities including classroom instruction; small group, team and collaborative activities; individual study; preparation and presentation of reports and use of computer and information technology. Individuals must be able to memorize, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information by multiple mechanisms. Problem solving, a critical skill demanded of physician assistants, may require all of these intellectual abilities. Individuals must meet applicable safety standards for the environment and follow universal precautions.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

Individuals must possess the emotional health required for the appropriate use of their intellectual and mental abilities, including logical thinking, good judgment, impulse control, empathy, interest, and motivation. These abilities should be sufficient to assure the development and maintenance of therapeutic relationships with patients and those who care for them. Individuals must be able to maintain emotional health despite stress, uncertainty, and physically taxing workloads and to adapt to changing situations while handling the responsibilities associated with medical education and patient care. Individuals must accept responsibility for learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.

Program Curriculum

The Program curriculum can be found on the website.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar for the PA Program may be different from that published in the General Catalog/Bulletin or on the SAHP website and is, therefore, provided to students by the Program.

Clinical Phase

The 12-month clinical phase of the curriculum provides in-depth instruction in the evaluation and management of patients alongside students, residents, allied health practitioners and faculty physicians in Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatric Medicine, Psychiatry, Surgery, and Women's Health. In addition, students will suggest 3 elective/preceptorship clerkships.

Timeline

- The clinical year is divided into twelve 4-week blocks.
- There are seven core clerkships: emergency medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, surgery, and women's health.
- There is one required 8-week clerkship: family medicine. This clerkship must be completed as two consecutive 4-week blocks.
- There are three required 4-week elective/preceptorship clerkships. These clerkships must be scheduled by a Clinical Coordinator.
- There is one 4-week didactic block (FLEX) to be used for research and PANCE preparation.

Clinical Year Schedule

- Dates are subject to change.
- End of rotation examinations occur on the last day of each block.
- Students on EL/P1/P2 are required to be on campus for the last two days of the block – dates and times on Moodle.
  Students on FM (within 60 miles of campus) are required to be at their clinical site during exam time on the 4th Friday of their clerkship.
- Other required on-campus activities can be found on Moodle, and will be communicated with students accordingly.

SUMMER 2026	
Block 1	**5/11/26 - 6/5/26**
Block 2	**6/8/26 - 7/2/26**
Block 3	**7/6/26 - 7/31/26**
Block 4	**8/3/26 - 8/28/26**
FALL 2026	
Block 5	**8/31/26 - 9/25/26**
Block 6	**9/28/26 - 10/23/26**
Block 7	**10/26/26 - 11/20/26**
Block 8	**11/23/26 - 12/18/26**
SPRING 2027	
Block 9	**1/11/27 - 2/5/27**
Block 10	**2/8/27 - 3/5/27**
Summative Week	**3/8/27 - 3/12/27**
Block 11	**3/15/27 - 4/9/27**
Block 12	**4/12/27 - 5/7/27**

Required Clinical Experiences

Healthcare Setting

- Outpatient
- Inpatient
- Emergency department
- Operating room

Types of Care

- Preventive
- Emergent
- Acute
- Chronic

Patient Population

- Infants
- Children
- Adolescents
- Adults
- Elderly

Medical and Surgical Disciplines

- Emergency medicine
- Family medicine
- Internal medicine
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry (to include behavioral and mental health conditions)
- Surgery (to include preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative care)
- Women's health (to include prenatal and gynecologic care)

Learning outcomes and instructional objectives can be found in each course syllabus.

Scheduling Clinical Clerkships

All clerkships are scheduled by a Clinical Coordinator. Students should not solicit a clinical clerkship unless directed by a Clinical Coordinator. The Program reserves the right to change any clinical clerkship at any time, for any reason. PA students who decline to proceed to an assigned clinical site will be deemed to have voluntarily withdrawn from the Program.

Preceptors are assigned by the Program. Students are provided with general instructions and contact information on the PA Clerkship Moodle page.

Student Responsibilities

Supervised Clinical Activity

Students on clinicals work under the direct supervision of a licensed physician or licensed physician assistant and therefore will not make a diagnosis or carry out any procedure or treatment plan without the explicit approval of a licensed physician or licensed physician assistant.

When given an order by a provider, a student has three possible courses of action:

- Carry out the order as directed.
- If there is a disagreement with the order, discuss it with the provider and mutually agree on a course of action.
- Inform the provider that he/she does not feel qualified to safely carry out the order.

At no time will a student change a provider's order or carry out a course of action different from that directed by the preceptor.

Students must have all charts and written orders cosigned in accordance with the policies of the clinical sites.

In the event of the temporary absence of his/her regular preceptor, the student must identify an alternate preceptor and notify a Clinical Coordinator. At no time will the student work without having a supervising preceptor clearly identified and immediately accessible.

In all clinical activities, PA students should be guided by the principle of knowing their limitations.

Students will not be allowed to work outside of their specified clerkship requirements. Malpractice insurance provided by the University is limited to assigned clerkships only. Participation in outside clinical activity without written approval from a Clinical Coordinator will result in dismissal from the Program.

Attendance

Attendance at an assigned clinical site is mandatory. Preceptors extend their knowledge, practice site, staff, and time as a learning opportunity. Consistent attendance is respectful, illustrates motivation, and is a component of professionalism. Students are expected to be punctual. Tardiness may result in disciplinary action. Preceptors are asked to indicate if there is any missed time on the Final Evaluation of the Student after each clerkship.

Students are given a specific time to report on their first day of each clerkship. The schedule is determined by the preceptor and may include call days, off days, lectures, and research assignments. Students are expected to clarify all schedule issues with the preceptor on the first day of the clerkship. Students will upload their schedule for each block to Moodle by the end of the first day at midnight. If a preceptor instructs a student to be absent from an assigned site outside of the initial schedule, the student must immediately notify the Clinical Coordinators via email, with the preceptor copied. The student must also upload a revised copy of the clinical schedule to Moodle.

Students are permitted two (2) absences per clinical year without academic penalty, pending Clinical Coordinator approval. One absence is defined as any missed clinical shift in whole or in part.

- Documentation supporting an absence will be required.
- Approved absences do not exempt students from meeting clinical requirements and may still lead to remediation, delay of progression, or clerkship repetition.
- Additional absences may be approved at the discretion of the Clinical Coordinators and/or Program Director.
- Absences may not be used for examinations or required on-campus activities.
- Absences as a result of non-compliance are considered unapproved.
- Unapproved absences will result in a five (5) percentage point deduction from the student's final grade of the course per day or any portion of a day (including tardiness) missed for the respective clerkship. Failure to notify the PA Program and/or seek approval of any absence from a clerkship will result in disciplinary action. Unapproved absences from a clerkship may result in a failing grade.

For any absence, regardless of reason:

- The student must notify both the Clinical Coordinators and the Preceptor together in writing via email prior to the start of the scheduled shift.
- The student must complete the designated Microsoft Form for Absence Reporting on the same day. The Form must be submitted for each missed shift. (Example: student is out due to illness both on Monday and Tuesday. The Form must be completed in its entirety and separately for both Monday and Tuesday.)

If a student must leave a rotation early for any reason, the student must notify the Clinical Coordinators and Preceptor immediately in writing and submit the Microsoft Form for Absence Reporting that same day.

Failure to complete both the required email notification and Microsoft Form submission may result in the absence being classified as unapproved.

When a student is absent (approved or unapproved), he/she may be required to complete additional assignments to prove competence, at the discretion of the Clinical Coordinators.

If a student is absent from a clinical clerkship for 25% or more of the scheduled shifts, the student will be required to request a leave of absence and repeat the clinical clerkship.

- Absences due to documented medical or personal emergencies may result in a grade of "I" (incomplete) for the course. Completion of a clerkship with a grade of "I" is at the discretion of Clinical Coordinators and dependent on the availability of clerkships and specific circumstances of the absence.
- Repeated absences across one or more clerkships will be reviewed by the Clinical Coordinators and Program Director. Absences totaling greater than 10% of scheduled shifts within a semester may result in required remediation and/or additional clinical time, delay of clinical progression, requirement to repeat one or more clerkships.
- A pattern of absences (approved and unapproved), even if below stated thresholds, may result in review and intervention by the program.

Emergency closures: If the University is closed due to emergency, students should not report to their clinical site.

Students are required to follow the schedule of their medical team, not the University's schedule. Students are expected to always be present when the medical team is present.

All exam days and campus call back activities are mandatory and cannot be missed.

Attendance policies are subject to change based on LSUHSC-NO and CDC guidance.

Course Registration

It is the student's responsibility to register himself/herself during the clinical year. Students are given instructions regarding which courses to register for. Students who fail to register appropriately risk timely progression in the Program.

Withdrawal

Students who are considering withdrawing from the Program should first speak with their faculty advisor. If the student still wishes to proceed, they should meet with the Program Director to confirm the decision. Students are permitted to withdraw from the Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program at any time. If a student who has voluntarily withdrawn wishes to be considered for readmission to the Program, they must file an application for readmission through CASPA in the following application cycle. This application will be considered with all other applicants.

Standing in the Program

Students must immediately inform the PA Program of any personal or professional circumstances that may affect their standing in the Program and/or the University.

Insurance

Health Insurance

Students are required to carry personal health insurance coverage for the entire time they are enrolled in the Program. Clinical students are at an increased risk for injury or illness due to the nature of providing health care services in clinical/health care settings. All students are personally responsible for health care costs associated with any injury sustained while enrolled in clinical courses.

If a student is exposed to bloodborne pathogens via needle stick or mucous membranes while at a clinical site, neither the Program nor the clinical site are liable to assume the responsibility for the accident. The student is responsible for understanding their own health insurance policy and the coverage provided for accidental exposure. Exposure while on LSUHSC-NO campus will be evaluated according to these procedures: The LSUHSC-NO Needle Stick procedure can be found here: Needlestick Injury. LSUHSC-NO Blood borne pathogen control plan can be found here: Bloodborne Pathogens. Other facilities have different procedures and those should be followed. It is the student's responsibility to ensure he/she is managed in the most appropriate manner.

Malpractice Insurance

Malpractice insurance is provided by the University and is limited to assigned clerkships only. Students will not be allowed to present themselves as a PA student in any capacity outside of their specified clerkship requirements.

Professional Liability Insurance
Students must maintain professional liability insurance for the entire duration of the clinical year. Students are responsible for the associated cost and must acquire minimum limits of $1,000,000 per occurrence/$3,000,000 aggregate. Students must provide proof of ongoing professional liability insurance to the Program.

Student Health

Immunizations
Students must maintain an up-to-date immunization record at all times.

To support student safety and preparedness for clinical education, the LSUHSC-NO Physician Assistant Program encourages all students to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) immunization guidelines for healthcare personnel. These recommendations are intended to protect students, patients, and colleagues during clinical training.

In addition to University and Program requirements, clinical affiliates may establish their own immunization, health screening, and compliance requirements as a condition of participation in clinical experiences. It is the responsibility of each student to comply with all requirements established by assigned clinical sites. Students who fail to meet clinical affiliate requirements may be denied access to clinical experiences by the site.

The PA Program is not responsible for modifying clerkship schedules, securing alternative clinical placements, or identifying replacement clinical sites for students who choose not to comply with the requirements of an assigned clinical affiliate. Failure to meet required immunization or compliance standards may result in delayed clinical progression or inability to complete program requirements.

Refer to the PA Program Student Handbook for additional information.

Drug Screen and Criminal Background Check
Students will be subject to drug screening and criminal background checks through Certiphi. Students must successfully complete both prior to matriculation. Students may also be asked to obtain drug screens or complete criminal background checks at various times during the didactic and clinical phase of the Program. Students who fail either will be referred to the SAHP Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Drug screens and criminal background checks are student expenses.

Use of substances or prescription medications that impair judgement, cognition, or coordination are in direct violation of the Program's Technical Standards and may result in Program dismissal.

Compliance Training
As part of enrollment in the Program, students are required to complete the compliance training modules in accordance with institution guidelines and federal/state laws and regulations.

Compliance with such requirements is vital to the organization's operation and to avoid administrative sanctions ranging from stringent oversight to the suspension of Federal Program funding and criminal/civil prosecution. Students are required to access the LSUHSC-NO online compliance training website and complete all modules in a timely manner. Students may also be required to complete additional compliance modules as assigned by clinical affiliates. Students who are not compliant or fall out of compliance at any time while enrolled in the Program will be removed from campus or the clinical clerkship immediately. Students will be permitted to return to class or the clinical site when evidence of compliance is given to the PA Program. Failure to complete the compliance training modules can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of enrollment.

BLS/ACLS

All students entering the Clinical Phase must have current American Heart Association BLS and ACLS certification.

Personal Preparation

Always consider yourself a representative of the LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program and the PA profession as a whole.

Adequate Fund of Knowledge

Prior to and during clerkships, you will need to identify the gaps in your knowledge base and determine how to meet these deficits. This will require an honest self-assessment and the discipline to schedule study time when you are not at a clinical site. You should review the learning objectives and assess your knowledge of each topic. You can use these objectives to check your progress and get input from your preceptor. Evidence based medicine skills you have learned will be refined and help you to develop lifelong learning skills. Do not depend on your clinical experience and preceptor to supply you with all the knowledge you will need to succeed on the End of Rotation exams or the PANCE. You will need to supplement what you learn during your clinical experience with reviewing textbooks and journals.

Ethical Behaviors

Students are expected to understand and uphold the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession.

Communication

One key to a successful clerkship is your ability to communicate effectively with patients, preceptors, faculty, and colleagues. Communication is a valuable and necessary part of your learning experience.

Involvement in Clinical Training

The greater your effort, the greater your return. You will find that you will both learn and enjoy yourself more if you put extra effort into your clinical year. Read about each of the diagnoses you encounter. Volunteer for presentations. Find ways to learn in difficult situations. Be proactive about seeking help from PA Program Faculty.

Individual Readiness

Some rotations require you to take call (to stay at the site late into the evening or overnight) while others may require early morning or late evening hours. Every site is different. Anticipate the need for the care of others who rely on you. You are required to be at your site for all scheduled hours.

Safety
Students are responsible to be familiar with the specific safety policies and procedures of each clinical site. This includes, but is not limited to, understanding emergency protocols, infection control practices, hazardous material handling, and security measures. Actively seek out and review relevant documentation, attend any mandatory safety briefings, and do not hesitate to ask supervising clinicians or staff for clarification on any aspect of safety.

Housing
Housing is the responsibility of the student. Students may be assigned clinical clerkships throughout Louisiana. It may be necessary for you to find short-term accommodations.

Transportation
Many rotations will require you to drive a distance. Have a backup plan should your car fail. Car troubles are not an excuse for tardiness or absence.

Exxat Software
Students will be required to attend a mandatory Exxat training session.

Dress Code
Students are responsible for understanding the dress code requirements at their clinical site. Specific clerkship dress code requirements supersede the PA Program dress code while at that facility. If scrubs are worn, students are to wear navy blue LSUHSC PA Program scrubs or surgical green scrubs only. A white student (short) coat must be worn at all times in the clinical setting with the proper identification. Clinical preceptors, faculty, or other clinical supervisors reserve the right to ask a student who is inappropriately dressed to leave and return appropriately dressed. If subsequent dress code violations occur, the student will meet with the Program Director.

Academic Policies

Academic Advising

The objective of academic advising is to foster the students' professional, academic and clinical development. All students are assigned an academic advisor. During the first semester of the Program, the advisor will meet with advisees to inform them of the advising process, and then again at the end of the semester. In addition to regularly scheduled meetings at least once per semester, students are encouraged to meet with their advisor more frequently if they are having academic challenges. It is the student's responsibility to schedule meetings with their advisor. Faculty may not provide medical care or medical advice to students, therefore other support services will be recommended for matters regarding a student's physical, psychological, and emotional health. The faculty will record notes from each advising session to include major topic areas discussed, deficiencies noted, and description of the action plan devised to assist the student in meeting desired outcomes. The student and the faculty advisor will sign the advising notes. These notes will then be placed in the student record.

Academic advising is designed to be vertically progressive through the course of the curriculum. General advisement begins with such topics as transition to adult learning and differences between undergraduate and graduate education. Over time, there are greater discussions about such topics as readiness for clinical practice and professional development, including faculty and student self-assessment. Student-specific advisement topics will usually include discussion of current course grades and overall GPA, study habits, test-taking skills, and any other aspects of PA education that are particularly difficult for the student. It is critical that any weaknesses or academic problems be identified proactively, and interventions initiated to maximize each student's opportunity for success.

Student advising forms will be made available to students. The student is responsible for completing and sending the corresponding advising forms to their faculty advisor at least 2 days prior to the scheduled advising meeting.

Accommodations

The LSUHSC-NO School of Allied Health Professions commits to provide for the needs of admitted and enrolled students who have disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) by providing reasonable accommodations to such students. Reasonable accommodations will be made to students with disabilities on an individual and flexible basis. It is the responsibility of students, however, to review the technical standards for the Program and make their needs known.

It is the responsibility of the student who requires accommodations to notify the course director as soon as possible at the beginning of each course so that arrangements can occur in a timely manner. The PA Program does not disseminate accommodation letters to any faculty or instructors on the student's behalf. The procedure for obtaining accommodations can be found in the SAHP Student Handbook.

Academic Standing and GPA

All students will be notified of their academic standing at the end of each academic semester by the Office of the Registrar. The grade point average is derived by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of hours attempted.
An A has the value of 4 quality points, B=3 quality points, C=2 quality points, D=1 quality point, and F=no quality points. Thus, a 2.0 ratio is equivalent to a C average.
For more information on academic standing and GPA calculations, please read the SAHP Student Handbook.

PA Program Grading Scale

The LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program holds students to the highest standards of professional knowledge acquisition. To ensure excellence in the provision of healthcare, the Program adheres to the following course grading standards:

- "A" is given to all students whose quality of performance is considered to be excellent and who have demonstrated a degree of understanding and ability which is considered above the level of adequacy required for passing status.
- "B" signifies that all work in a given course has been completed at a level above the minimal requirement but below that of "A".

- "C" is indicative that minimal requirements for completion of the course work have been met.
- "F" is the grade assigned to students who are inadequate in meeting the minimum course requirements and have demonstrated a degree of deficiency which makes them ineligible to be promoted, or to continue in the Program.
- "I" is a grade of temporary significance which may be issued by the PA Program, but which is not recorded on the student's permanent record.
    - A grade of "I" (Incomplete) is assigned when, for reasons beyond the student's control or because of some acceptable circumstance, the student has been unable to complete the course requirements in the usual time or manner. On completion of the required course work, the grade of "I" will be changed to an appropriate grade as described above.
    - Students with Incomplete status in a course must finish all required work in a manner specified by the Program. Conversion of "I" to "F" follows the timeline set by the University and Registrar. See above policy regarding "F" course grades.

Letter grades are assigned on the basis of the following distribution:
A 90 - 100%
B 80 - 89.99%
C 70 - 79.99% C
F <70%

There will be no rounding of individual components of a course grade or the average of a final grade.

Clerkship Grading Information

Clerkship grading information can be found in detail in each respective course syllabus.

Clerkship Schedule
Students must submit a schedule of each clerkship, including days and times of each shift. Template can be found on Moodle. This should be submitted by the end of the first Monday of the block. If the schedule is modified by the preceptor after submission, the student must notify the Clinical Coordinators via email immediately.

Exxat Patient Tracking
Students are required to track patient encounters in Exxat. Students' patient tracking will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Recording an appropriate number of patients per clerkship. This includes a minimum of 30 patients/cases per week (including the last week of the clerkship).
- Completeness of information provided.
- Patient tracking must be kept up to date and be completed prior to the EOR Exam.
- Any information that is deliberately recorded incorrectly will be considered fraudulent and result in disciplinary action due to academic dishonesty. All points will be lost, and the student will be referred to the Associated Dean of Academic Affairs.
- If patient is tracking is not completed, the student will receive an "I" for the course. The student will receive a zero for this portion of the grade and must complete tracking within 3 days. Failure to complete tracking within this time frame will result in a "F" for the course, thereby resulting in Academic Dismissal from the Program.

Clinical Skills Catalog

Required clinical skills are listed in each course syllabus. Students must prove competency in each clinical skill as evaluated by the preceptor. It is the student's responsibility to maintain accurate records of clinical skills throughout the entirety of the clinical year. These skills must also be recorded in Exxat. Competency for each clinical skill must be met prior to graduation.

Mid-Rotation Evaluation

Students must complete a self-evaluation during the second week of each clerkship. The student will review responses with the preceptor of record, and the preceptor will complete a portion of the evaluation and verify with a signature. Students should submit completed, signed Mid-Rotation Evaluations to Moodle by the second Friday of each block. Only one Mid Rotation Evaluation must be completed for Family Medicine Clerkship.

Student Evaluation of Preceptor and Site

Students must complete an evaluation of both the preceptor and the clerkship site. Evaluations are to be completed through Exxat. Evaluations must be submitted prior to the EOR Exam. Grading is determined by completion rather than student-provided evaluation scores.

Clinical Preceptor Evaluation

The preceptor of record is responsible for the final evaluation and grade. The preceptor of record may delegate completion of the evaluation to another preceptor or preceptors involved in the student's training.

The final preceptor grade will be calculated by Exxat software and will be based on the percentage of points earned out of the total available points on the evaluation. Sample preceptor evaluations can be found on Moodle.

The PA Program will not change the preceptor evaluation grade. Students should not solicit preceptors to change his/her grade.

Clinical year students are expected to assume responsibility for their education. Part of this responsibility includes frequently seeking performance feedback from clinical preceptors. The end of the clerkship is not an appropriate time for a student to find out that he/she has not performed satisfactorily.

Professionalism

Professional Behaviors are described further in this handbook. The professionalism rubric found in Appendix B will be used for grading.

Comprehensive End of Rotation Exams

The end of rotation exams will take place on the last Friday of each clerkship, unless otherwise indicated by the course director. There are 7 End of Rotation™ exams, one for each of the core Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPE) of physician assistant education. Each exam incorporates current, relevant test questions that follow rotation-specific content Blueprints and

corresponding Topic Lists. The exam content is reflective of the specific blueprints and topic lists identified for that clinical practice experience or rotation. Questions are typically presented in vignette format so that the exam can better assess students' capacity for problem solving and critical thinking. Exams are scored on a scale from 300 – 500 and are converted to a percentage score by PAEA historical data analysis.

PAEA End of Rotation Content

Grade Appeals

The PA Program follows the SAHP policy and procedure for grade appeals, which can be found in the SAHP Student Handbook.

Student Remediation

At the graduate level, and in the interest of patient and public safety, students are expected to complete all graded elements with a grade of "70" or higher and maintain a 3.0 semester and cumulative GPA. The goal of remediation is to help the student to master the material, not improve the numerical grade. Therefore, remediation of any activity will not change the numerical grade of the exam, assignment, or activity.

The remediation process is designed to help faculty identify and assist students who may experience academic or professional difficulty. The process is proactive, with the goal of identifying at-risk students as early as possible.

At-Risk Student Identification
The student is expected to be proactive and notify the instructor/coordinator and faculty advisor when there are knowledge deficits. The instructor, coordinator or faculty advisor will identify the at-risk student through weekly review of exam grades or advisory sessions. The faculty remediation coordinator will be notified of at-risk students to track and document the process.

Evaluation and Assessment
The student, with assistance from the instructor or course coordinator, will do an assessment for root causes. Referrals to Campus Assistance Program (CAP) may be encouraged or required.

Plan Development
The student is required to submit a detailed remediation plan. This plan is a self-assessment of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. The student will submit the plan to the instructor and/or course coordinator for review, feedback, and approval. All remediation plans must be forwarded to the faculty remediation coordinator to be placed in the student's academic file within the Program.

Plan Implementation
The student will complete the remediation plan within the indicated timeline.

Plan Evaluation
Depending on the remediation needed, the student should be prepared for an additional assessment to determine competency. The instructor, course coordinator, or remediation coordinator will prepare an additional assessment. The student must achieve a grade of 70% on

any remediation activities. The faculty remediation coordinator will track the progress of the student and place all documentation in the student's academic file housed within the Program.

The PA Program will adhere to the following policies regarding remediation in the clinical phase of the Program:

End of Rotation Examinations

Failure of any EOR demonstrates a significant lack of knowledge and skills needed for entry level PA practice. Students must pass all examinations with a 70%. Failure to do so will result in the inability to progress to the next phase of the curriculum.

- Using the remediation process previously described, the student will be given two weeks to complete the defined remediation plan. At the end of the two-week period, the student will be given a second EOR examination. In the interim, an "incomplete" will be given in the course of the failed EOR. Students will be required to make up any course work that is delayed due to remediation. It should be noted that any delays in progression due to remediation can result in a delayed graduation. SAHP policies regarding an "I" letter grade will be followed should the student fail to complete required remediation.
- If the student is unable to successfully pass a second examination with a grade of 70%, the student has one additional attempt to pass the exam. When a third attempt is required, the student will withdraw from the current clerkship and be given an additional two weeks to study and prepare for the third examination. Failure to pass the third examination with a grade of at least 70% will result in student dismissal from the Program.
- Failure of a 3rd EOR examination at any point will result in dismissal from the Program.

The Program recognizes that it may be mathematically possible for a student to earn less than a 70% on one or more exams and still earn a B or C in the course as course grades are calculated by averaging multiple exams, preceptor evaluations, assignments, homework, case studies, etc. Therefore, the Program will limit remediation to two EOR examinations. A student who receives a grade below 70% on three EOR examinations will be dismissed from the Program.

Preceptor Evaluations

All clinical preceptors are asked to evaluate students by completing a student evaluation form. A student who receives less than 70% on the preceptor evaluation will remediate the clinical experience of the clerkship. The clinical coordinator will reach out to the preceptor to gain more information to help guide student remediation efforts. This information will be shared with the remediation coordinator who will develop a remediation plan. The student will receive an "incomplete" for the course until all remediation efforts are complete. The student will be allowed to remediate the failed preceptor evaluation once by repeating the clinical experience of the clerkship. If the student receives less than 70% on the second preceptor evaluation, the student will be dismissed from the Program. Students may complete this remediation process for a failed preceptor evaluation for a maximum of one rotation. Failure of a second preceptor evaluation will result in dismissal from the Program.

Professionalism

Professionalism is a core competency required for successful practice as a PA. It encompasses adherence to ethical principles, effective communication, respect for others, and appropriate conduct. Any breach of professionalism will be addressed through the outlined remediation process. If a student displays unprofessional behavior, the incident will be reviewed by the course

director or Clinical Coordinators, who will assess the severity and impact of the behavior. Based on this assessment, a remediation plan will be formulated. The student will receive specific feedback and guidance on how to address the deficiency, which may include seeking services from the Campus Assistance Program (CAP), targeted workshops, frequent advising sessions, and reflective assignments. The remediation plan will be created and outlined by either the course director, Clinical Coordinators, or faculty advisor. Should the student repeat unprofessional behavior, more severe disciplinary actions may be considered, adhering to the SAHP policies regarding student conduct and disciplinary procedures.

Clinical Phase Progression

To progress through each of the clinical semesters, students must:

- Complete 10 clinical clerkships (7 core, 3 electives).
- Pass all clinical courses with a grade of C or higher.
- Earn no more than 12 hours of C in the Program.
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Adhere to professionalism standards and policies outlined in the PA Program Handbook.
- Meet and maintain compliance with the Technical Standards.
- Maintain compliance with all Health and Safety requirements.

Requirements for Graduation

To be eligible for graduation, students must:

- Obtain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.
- Pass all didactic and clinical phase courses with a grade of C or higher.
- Earn no more than 12 hours of C in the Program.
- Successfully complete a summative examination administered within 4 months of graduation.
- Successfully complete all requirements for the Capstone project.
- Demonstrate ethical, professional, behavioral and personal characteristics requisite to practicing as a Physician Assistant.
- Receive approval and recommendation by the core faculty of the PA Program for conferral of the degree, Master of Physician Assistant Studies.

The University has requirements for graduation which can be found online.

Academic Probation

A student will be placed on academic probation if the semester or cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 while enrolled in the Program.

In this event, the Program Director, on the recommendation of the PA Program Faculty Promotion Committee, will begin the process of academic probation. To be removed from academic probation, a student must raise the semester and cumulative GPA to a 3.0 within the following academic semester.

Academic Dismissal

A student will be dismissed from the Program under the following circumstances:

- The student's cumulative or semester GPA falls below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters.

- The student earns greater than 12 hours of C credit while enrolled in the Program.
- The student earns the final grade of F in any course.
- The student fails 3 EOR examinations within the clinical phase of the curriculum.
- The student fails a 2nd attempt on the summative assessment.

If the PA Program Faculty Promotion Committee concludes that a student should be dismissed because the student has failed to meet academic requirements satisfactorily, a recommendation for dismissal will be sent to the Dean of the School of Allied Health Professions.

Academic Integrity and Testing Policy

Academic Integrity

Effective learning, teaching, and research all depend upon the ability of members of the academic community to trust one another and to trust the integrity of work that is submitted for academic credit or conducted in the wider arena of scholarly research.

Such an atmosphere of mutual trust fosters the free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential.

In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and work that is presented as original must be, in fact, original. Faculty, students, and administrative staff all share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at LSUHSC-NO.

Artificial Intelligence Policy

The Program recognizes the growing prevalence of artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential impact on various aspects of education, including the creation of assignments. While the Program encourages the integration of technology in learning, it is crucial to maintain academic integrity and uphold the principles of fair evaluation. By adhering to this policy, the LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program aims to foster an environment that values academic integrity, creativity, and the development of critical thinking skills among its students.

Assignment Submission

Assignments submitted for assessment must be the original work of the student, reflecting their individual understanding, creativity, and effort.

- The use of AI-generated content as the primary source of an assignment is strictly prohibited.
- Collaboration with AI tools to an extent that diminishes the originality of the work is not permissible.
- If students use AI tools as part of their research or preparatory process, they must transparently disclose the involvement of such tools and clearly attribute any AI-generated content. Proper citation and acknowledgment are required.

All submitted assignments are subject to processing and review through AI-detection tools such as TurnItIn, GPTZero, or Winston AI Detection. (These are examples and not an all-inclusive list).

Penalties for Violations

Assignments which are found to be more than 50% AI-generated by two detection software systems are felt to be in violation of the AI policy. Violations of this policy will result in zero credit received for the assignment and appropriate disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to academic penalties, warnings, and, in severe cases, academic probation or dismissal. Note: The Program carries the financial burden for the initial AI detection software. Any student requiring a second detection software will be responsible for any costs incurred.

Testing Policy

All exams will occur in a low distraction test environment. Exam times, dates, and locations will be provided to students via the semester schedule and/or syllabus. All exams will be administered via PAEA's testing platform.

Prior to the Exam

Exams will begin and end promptly at the time noted. Students should not enter the testing center without a faculty proctor. The student should arrive, be seated in the terminal, and logged in before the start time. Students who arrive after the start time will not be allowed to take the exam during the scheduled period and must meet with Clinical Coordinators to reschedule. Food and drinks are not allowed in the testing center.

During the Exam

No questions will be answered before, during, or after the exam. The faculty proctor will provide a cover sheet of paper. The student may bring one writing utensil. No other materials will be allowed in the testing center. The use of mobile phones, smart watches or other electronic devices is strictly prohibited. Possession or use of these devices during an exam is a violation of the Honor Code and considered academic misconduct. Prior to entering the testing area, students will leave all personal belongings in the agreed upon area. Cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices are not allowed in the testing areas. If a student requires a restroom break during an exam, it must be taken between sections of the exam, unless other accommodations are made.

After the Exam

The cover sheet must be turned into the proctor before leaving the testing area. Once a student submits the exam, he or she should immediately leave the testing area. Grades will be released to the student at the discretion of the course director.

Professional Behaviors

Students are expected to: exhibit the highest standard of personal, academic, professional and ethical behavior; treat faculty, staff, peers, clients, patients, and others with dignity and respect; abide by the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct of the PA Profession; comply with rules, codes, policies, and technical standards set by the Department, School, Campus, and University.

Professionalism is a fundamental aspect of the Program. It is built on the 4 Is: Involvement, Interaction, Integrity, and Introspection. Adhering to these principles ensures a respectful, productive, and ethical learning environment. This expectation aligns with the ARC-PA core competencies for physician assistants, which include medical knowledge, interpersonal and

communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice.

Involvement
Students are expected to actively participate in all academic and clinical activities. This includes attending classes, engaging in discussions, and contributing to clinical clerkships and group projects. Involvement supports the development of medical knowledge and patient care by ensuring students are engaged in learning and clinical experiences essential for their professional growth.

Interaction
Professional interaction involves respectful and constructive communication with peers, faculty, healthcare professionals, and patients. It is essential to maintain a collaborative and supportive academic and clinical community. Interaction is crucial for developing interpersonal and communication skills and professionalism, as it fosters effective information exchange and ethical relationships within the healthcare team.

Integrity
Integrity is the foundation of academic and professional conduct. Students must uphold honesty, fairness, and ethical standards in all their academic and clinical endeavors. Integrity aligns with the core competency of professionalism, emphasizing ethical practice, responsibility, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Any violation that falls under academic dishonesty as defined in the LSUHSC-NO SAHP Student Handbook will be addressed by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Dean of the School of Allied Health Professions. Infractions of this magnitude will result in a zero and a failing course grade.

Introspection
Introspection involves self-reflection and continuous improvement. Students should regularly assess their own behavior and performance to identify areas for growth. Introspection supports practice-based learning and improvement by encouraging students to engage in self-assessment and continuous professional development.

Appendix A: Acknowledgement of Receipt of Clinical Handbook

I have read the Clinical Handbook of the LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program. I understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures as stated. In addition to these regulations, I understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures of the LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program Student Handbook, LSUHSC New Orleans SAHP Student Handbook, and LSUHSC New Orleans University regulations.

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Professionalism Grading Rubric

Observations	**2+ lapses**	**1 lapse**	**No lapses**
Possible Points	**0**	**1**	**2**
Involvement			
Interaction			
Integrity			
Introspection			

Any violation that falls under academic dishonesty as defined in the LSU HSC Student Handbook will be addressed by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Dean of the school. Infractions of this magnitude will result in a 0 for the assignment and a failing course grade.