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INTRODUCTION

The Physician Assistant Didactic Program manual contains specific policies and procedures pertinent to the Physician Assistant Studies program. In addition to the policies and procedures of the Ohio Dominican University Student Handbook, Physician Assistant education requires that PA students be governed by additional policies and procedures that may not be applicable to non-PA students. Therefore, the policies and procedures outlined in this manual supersede ODU Policies unless otherwise noted. After reading this manual thoroughly, each student will sign the Receipt of Didactic Phase Policies and Procedures Handbook form. See Appendix 1. This will be filed in each student’s official record in the PA program office.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Ohio Dominican University’s Physician Assistant Studies program faculty believes the educational process is a dynamic process. Therefore, faculty consistently strive to make changes whenever necessary in order to provide the most optimal physician assistant education possible. Whenever it is necessary, desirable, or appropriate, the program reserves the right in its sole judgment to make changes of any nature to and within its program as follows: admission policies; degree requirements; the academic calendar and/or schedule including, but not limited to, course content and class schedule (including cancellation); rules, regulations, and policies; standards and procedures; other academic activities; requiring or offering alternatives for any of the aforementioned, in any such case giving notice as is reasonable and practical under the circumstances.

In addition, Ohio Dominican University (ODU) reserves the right to make whatever changes in the requirements for admission to the University and/or the program, tuition, student fees, academic programs, and instructors’ regulations that it deems necessary prior to the start of any class, semester, or term. The University also reserves the right to divide, cancel, or reschedule classes and clinical rotations if circumstances so dictate.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant Program will educate students to become well-qualified, competent physician assistants practicing in physician supervised primary care and specialty patient focused teams. The ODU PA Program embraces a holistic approach to the pursuit of excellence in academics, research, clinical practice and community service.
CATHOLIC STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Ohio Dominican University’s Master’s program in Physician Assistant Studies promotes the Roman Catholic moral teaching on the transcendent and inherent dignity of the human person. The University’s faculty, staff, and students work to guard that dignity through their respect for human life from conception to natural death and by their assurance of the right to freedom of conscience for each person involved in the Physician Assistant Studies program.

STATEMENT OF GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The ODU Physician Assistant Studies program has been established in accordance with criteria determined by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for Physician Assistants (ARC-PA). The program goals and objectives are based upon the Curricular Guidelines and Competencies for the PA Profession as ascribed by the following organizations: The Accreditation Review Commission on the Education of the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA), The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). These goals and objectives ensure that students in the PA program meet nationally recognized standards and attain knowledge, skills, and assessments in order to be successful entry level physician assistants upon completion of the program.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM GOALS

The Program will achieve its mission by accomplishing the following goals:

1. The Well Qualified Competent Physician Assistant

   The Program will provide a high quality curriculum that addresses ARC-PA accreditation standards for curriculum content, PANCE Blueprint curriculum content, and current and evidence-based guidelines for quality care.

   The Program will assess student competency through assessments and evaluations in order to ensure successful completion of the Program, successful PANCE performance, and successful entry into the PA profession.

   The Program will monitor the satisfaction of graduate employers and will modify the Program appropriately to maintain high employer satisfaction.

   The Program will encourage the Team approach to patient care in accordance with curriculum design and clinical rotations.

   Show entry-level proficiencies necessary to provide high quality primary care in a rapidly changing health care system
2. The Holistic Physician Assistant

The Program will provide policies and curriculum content that identify, develop and reinforce compassion in applicants, students, and graduates.

The Program will emphasize patient-centered care.

The Program will provide curriculum content, service opportunities, and clinical experiences that address the care diverse and vulnerable populations.

The Program will encourage participation in community service through faculty mentorship and example.

3. The Professional Physician Assistant

The Program will monitor and promote professional behaviors during didactic and clinical years.

Demonstrate attitudes and skills which show a commitment to professional behavior along with respect for self and others.

EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATION

Educational experiences are most rewarding when those involved in the experience work together. Physician Assistant program goals intertwine with student goals. PA faculty invest in the students to ensure student and program success.

The primary responsibility of the PA program faculty is to teach. That is, to guide students on the path to mastery of Physician Assistant Studies material necessary to enter the PA profession and ultimately be successful.

The primary responsibility of the PA student is to learn. Students must master the material presented and effectively integrate these skills and knowledge. The student must dedicate necessary time and effort in order to be successful. The student must be aware of the behavioral, technical, academic and practical standards necessary to successfully complete the Physician Assistant Studies program. The successful student typically is organized and is able to prioritize. Further, large volumes of information presented in the program must be synthesized and utilized appropriately. Successful students are known to pursue consistent and efficient study routines. Students are faced with learning activities including, but not limited to, group and problem-based situations, written and oral assignments and examinations, and practical applications of medical concepts and skill-sets necessary in the practice of medicine. As it is the student’s responsibility to learn, it is also the student’s responsibility to be aware of anything that interferes with the ability to learn. It is incumbent upon students facing difficulty to seek assistance from their advisors, professors, the program director, student services, or any of the resources at their disposal.

Physician Assistant education requires the student to achieve competence in the application of a
significant body of didactic and clinical knowledge and practical physical and procedural skills. Further, the PA student must embody the highest standards of professionalism.

The PA program curriculum provides training in these aspects and assists the student in development of self-directed learning.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

All students accepted into the Physician Assistant program are expected to abide by the regulations set forth by Ohio Dominican University as specified in the Ohio Dominican University Student Handbook (http://www.ohiodominican.edu/StudentHandbook/) and the written Policies of the Physician Assistant program. Due to the cohort design and methods of instruction required during the PA program, the PA Program Didactic Manual supersedes the guidelines of the ODU Student Handbook when necessary and applicable.

Academic Integrity
Academic integrity presumes that each member of the academic community exhibits respect for him/herself, respect for others, respect for property (including intellectual property), and respect for authority. Honesty and respectful behavior are fundamental to the learning and development of each member of the academic community. Ohio Dominican University expects that all members of the community adhere to these values through the honest pursuit of learning and through the maintenance of an atmosphere of support and respect within the community.

Honesty and the Pursuit of Truth
The Dominican Motto, “To contemplate truth, and to share with others the fruits of this contemplation” guides the thinking and the actions of faculty and students at Ohio Dominican University. Ohio Dominican University expects that all members of the community adhere to the Dominican academic tradition and adopt a strict standard of integrity as their own.

Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty and cheating in any of its forms will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Offenses such as copying from another person or using unauthorized notes or materials during exams, unauthorized collaboration on tests or projects, falsifying research and using fictitious data and so forth, are strictly prohibited. The term “academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to:

• Receipt or exchange of information regardless of the means obtained during any examination (online, written, oral or practical).
• Soliciting or obtaining knowledge of test items prior to the administration of examinations.
• Preparing written materials such as examination notes, copies of test items, examination topic item lists or other testing materials, following the administration of examinations, regardless of the means by which they are obtained.
• Submission of written assignments as original writing without proper footnoting and/or
**Plagiarism (from the ODU Student Handbook)**

A special form of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student submits work purporting to be his/her own, but that borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from some other source without an appropriate acknowledgment of that fact. Plagiarism may take many forms. The most flagrant form of plagiarism consists of directly reproducing someone else's work, whether it is published or unpublished, complete or in part. Examples of this work would include books, articles, another's writings, a friend's paper in another class or school, or a page from the internet. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, the student and the student alone must do it except in cases where the faculty member requires collaboration.

Similarly, when the student's assignment involves research, she/he must be careful to acknowledge exactly what, where and how she/he has employed the work of others. If the student uses the words of someone else, quotation marks must be used with some appropriate indication of its origin added. A citation is also required when the organization, content and phraseology of another's thought remains substantially intact.

These guidelines apply equally to students' academic work of all kinds, and not only to written work. In a case where a student feels unsure about a question of plagiarism involving his/her work, she/he is obligated to consult the instructor on the matter before submitting it. Students who violate University and instructor policy on plagiarism are subject to University discipline.

A thorough discussion of plagiarism occurs in most college writing courses, and detailed information is available through the Writing Center. Faculty members in other courses and other fields also establish expectations and provide guidance about academic honesty in their fields. Students are encouraged to carefully observe academic honesty guidelines presented in all their courses.

If you wish to seek assistance from another student (i.e., proofreading for typographical errors) consult your instructor to determine if such assistance is permissible. If permitted, such assistance should be acknowledged in the written work.

**Academic Standing and Promotion**

The University reserves the right to dismiss a student at any time for unsatisfactory academic performance, academic dishonesty, conduct detrimental to the University, to the welfare of patients, or to the welfare of other students. The program also reserves the right to dismiss a student if it is determined that a student’s conduct is not consistent with the professional behavior of a future Physician Assistant.

Failure to maintain good academic standing may result in dismissal from the program. All courses in the Physician Assistant curriculum are required and sequential. Students must...
receive a minimum grade of “C” in all courses before progressing in the program.

**Probation, Remediation, Dismissal, and Readmission with Advanced Placement**

Academic progress is monitored closely. The Physician Assistant Program Progress and Promotion Committee will consist of the Program Coordinator, Program Director, Academic Coordinator, Clinical Coordinator, Clinical Faculty, Medical Director and any other designated staff/instructor/or faculty member. The Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs may also participate as active members in the Physician Assistant Program Progress and Promotion Committee when determined necessary.

Students with a cumulative GPA or semester GPA of 3.333 or less will be considered At Risk. A student may also be considered to be At Risk by the faculty based on a sudden decline in performance or change in trend of their academic performance. A student may also be considered At Risk based on concern with attendance, professionalism or by exhibiting behavior inconsistent for a PA student. The PA Progress and Promotion Committee will conduct meetings with At Risk students at the start of each semester and as otherwise deemed appropriate. Documentation of the PA Progress and Promotion Committee meeting will be signed by the student and placed in the student’s file. A list of At Risk Students will be sent to the VPAA and the Associate VP of Academic Affairs on a semester basis.

**Probation**

If a student fails to maintain a minimum **cumulative** grade point average (GPA) of 3.000 on a 4.000 scale at the end of any semester, the student will be placed on Academic Probation. The Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs will be notified if any student is placed on probation. The Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs will formally notify the student in writing that they have been placed on probation. The student must then achieve a minimum **cumulative** GPA of 3.000 at the conclusion of the probationary semester in order to progress in the program. Failure to achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.000 by the end of the probationary semester will result in dismissal from the program. The student will be notified of this dismissal in writing by The Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Students on probation are ineligible for any academic or programmatic merit awards and are not considered to be in good academic standing.

**Remediation**

If a student fails an assessment during the Didactic phase, that assessment content must be remediated as determined by the individual course coordinator and/or as outlined by the course syllabus. Remediation of all exams includes the completion of a Student Self-Assessment form. The student self-assessment allows for a critical evaluation of study habits and exam
preparation, and the development of a plan of action to improve learning strategies and outcomes of subsequent exams. Additionally, remediation may include, and is not limited to, the discussion of improvement strategies for the course, reviewing the assessment on an individual basis, being given a second assessment to complete and/or repeating the original assessment. All failed assessments must be remediated, however, only the first failed assessment grade will be changed.

The remediated grade change may not exceed the minimum grade originally required to pass the exam. If a student fails a final exam/course assessment the failed grade will NOT be changed, even if it is the first failed assessment for the semester- however the student must remediate the material of the failed final exam. Failure of a final or comprehensive examination that leads to the failure of a course will result in dismissal from the program.

Remediation is a privilege and cannot be taken lightly. Students who fail more than three exams during the didactic portion of their PA education must meet with the Physician Assistant Progress and Promotion Committee to determine a performance plan. If the performance plan requirements are not met, the student could face dismissal from the program.

Any costs for delayed graduation and/or repeating a course are borne by the student.

**Dismissal from the Program**

A PA student will be dismissed from the PA program if the student fails a course in the Didactic Phase, failure is defined as less than 70%. Students must obtain a minimum grade of “C” in any didactic course or s/he will be dismissed from the program. Failure of a final or comprehensive examination that leads to the failure of a course will result in dismissal from the program.

A PA student will be dismissed from the Program if the PA student had been on probation and did not achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.000 at the conclusion of the probationary semester. Failure to achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.000 by the end of the probationary semester will result in dismissal from the program. The student will be notified of this dismissal in writing by The Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Students must understand that Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant Studies Program considers professionalism and ethical behavior of the utmost importance and essential for the PA student. As such, breaches of professionalism and unethical behavior may be grounds for dismissal from the PA program.

**Readmission**

There is no provision for direct admission of students into the PA program.
However, students who have been dismissed from the program may be readmitted and granted credit for courses successfully completed pending approval of an Appeal by the PA Progress Promotion Committee and Academic Affairs.

This Appeal process begins with a student request for readmission which must be submitted in writing no later than three (3) months after the dismissal date. This Appeal should be sent to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Physician Assistant Program Director. The Appeal must include an explanation of the reasons that led to dismissal or withdrawal and an outline addressing how the student plans to overcome the obstacles that prevented his/her initial success.

The student must demonstrate a clear understanding of the obstacles that prevented success as well as a realistic plan for completion of the PA program. The request is evaluated by the PA Progress and Promotion Committee along with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and any other appropriate University representative. A recommendation regarding readmission is made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs from the committee. The decision to grant or deny readmission is made by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the PA Progress and Promotion Committee. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify the student in writing regarding the decision of the appeal.

If the decision is made to readmit, then the PA Progress and Promotion Committee and any other appropriate individuals as needed, will develop a readmission plan. This plan addresses numerous factors including grades, need for continuity of the academic experience, cohort support and other pedagogical concerns. The plan is then presented to the student requesting readmission. If all parties agree to the terms, an agreement is signed by the student.

The dismissed student must understand that readmission to the program is not guaranteed. Students readmitted to the program will undergo periodic academic review by the PA Progress and Promotion Committee. Readmission is not a guarantee for successful completion of the program. The student that is readmitted must be able to meet the entire above determined program expectations for successful advancement in the program.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND BEHAVIOR

It is expected that students will conduct themselves both on and off campus in a manner consistent with PA program and University policies and expectations. University regulations by their nature cover many types of situations and include all behavior during a student's time of
enrollment. This includes, but is not limited to, behavior on or off campus, during any
University sponsored activities including athletic events, and includes semesters enrolled in a
study abroad program. A violation of University policies will subject a student to
University discipline with possible sanctions up to and including suspension or dismissal from
the University, depending on the severity of the offense and the student's record. Students are
expected to conduct themselves in a mature and morally sound manner, showing respect for
persons and property. Such behavior must stem from recognition of and a basic concern and
respect for the dignity, rights, and sensibilities of self and others. Ohio Dominican
anticipates that all students will behave in accordance with this expectation and abide by
all laws as well as the policies and regulations of the University.

**Access To Facilities**

Campus buildings are open and closed according to class and event schedules. After a
building is closed only individuals with prior authorization from a faculty or staff member
will be allowed access. Students who provide unauthorized access to others are in violation of
University policy and subject to disciplinary action. All faculty, staff, and students are
required to carry their ODU ID card on campus at all times. A Public Safety Officer or other
University personnel may request an identification card before granting access to certain areas
of campus such as the Alumni Hall athletic facilities, computer labs, or residence halls. A
card reader controls access to the Residence Halls. Any problems with card access should be
reported immediately to the Public Safety Department, 251-4700.

**Computer and Email Policy**

The program will utilize email as the primary means of communication. All students are
expected to have access to a computer and their Ohio Dominican email accounts that should
be checked on a daily basis.

Faculty will respond to emails from students between the hours of 9 am to 5 pm during the
week. Faculty will have up to 72 business hours to elicit a response to a student via email.
Students should not expect communication from faculty on weekends and/or holidays unless
it is an emergency situation.

**Classroom Maintenance**

Every effort must be made to keep the classroom and the Student Resource Room clean.
Beverages are permitted provided they are in covered containers. Consumption of food is to
be reserved for break time. It is disruptive to eat while someone is lecturing in class. Books or
notes should not be left overnight and do not leave valuables in the classroom unattended.
The use of any type of plug in air fresheners in the classrooms or common study areas is not
permitted.

**PROFESSIONALISM**

In addition to meeting minimum grade requirements, students must adhere to normally accepted
standards of professional behavior which include, but are not limited to the following:

- Commitment to the Ethical standards of the PA profession
- Strives for the highest standards of competence in skills and knowledge and is committed
to ongoing professional development
• Exhibits altruistic behavior
• Accepts responsibility for educational challenges and self-learning
• Acceptable dress (as defined under Dress Code)
• Ability to accept constructive criticism and develop appropriate behavioral changes in response to such criticism
• Personal and academic integrity
• Sensitivity to patients and their families, with respect for their right to competent, compassionate and confidential care and effective identification of patient concerns
• Dedicated to providing the highest quality of holistic care to patients ever-mindful to promote their emotional and physical well-being
• Uses language appropriate to others’ level of understanding
• Respectful, courteous and empathetic behavior toward others regardless of differences in opinion, philosophy, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity and language
• Adherence to program regulations and social media guidelines, including attendance, punctuality and performance in both the academic and clinical setting.

**Classroom Etiquette**

All students must adhere to professional standards of behavior when present in the classrooms:

• Always address the faculty member, professor, other healthcare professional or other guest by their appropriate title. Professor or Doctor or other appropriate designation.
• Be respectful in communications with fellow students and faculty
• Arrive at a minimum of 5 minutes before the start time of a class or exam.
• Students should not be on any social media or do web-browsing that is not directly related to the lecture during class.
• Understand that faculty reserve the right to prevent late entry to class until break
• Limit leaving and entering class to the appropriate times.
• Cell phones, pagers, alarm watches, or other electronic/mechanical devices capable of emitting sounds will be in silent mode during classes and cannot be brought in the room during examinations.
• Texting during classroom sessions is not appropriate or acceptable behavior.

**Attendance and Punctuality**

Attendance and punctuality is mandatory in the ODU PA program for all classes, laboratories, seminars, clinical experiences, and practice settings. Absence and tardiness impact negatively upon the student’s training experience. The student remains fully responsible for mastering any missed material. Failure to contact the program prior to an absence or tardiness will make that absence or tardiness unexcused, constitutes unprofessional behavior, and will not be condoned. Individual instructors and course coordinators may fail or lower the student’s course grade due to excessive or unexcused absences or lateness.

Each assigned activity and assessment must be completed in order to complete the course and
progress in the program. No assignment or assessment can be deferred as outlined in each course syllabus.

The ODU PA Program retains the prerogative of suspending or dismissing a student from active status for any number of absences and for lateness, regardless of reason, if, in the judgment of the PA Progress and Promotion Committee such occurrences have severely limited the student’s potential to succeed in the program.

The ODU PA Program may, at its discretion, excuse a student’s absence in individual cases, for the following reasons, but only if documented to the program’s satisfaction.

1. Illness, emergency or death of family members
2. Student illness
3. Participation in officially endorsed student activities that would interfere with class time if authorized in advance
4. Absence because of special religious holidays
5. Other activities beyond the student’s control if approved by the program, discretion is left to the academic coordinator

Attendance Documentation:
If a student in the didactic phase must be absent or late for any reason, the process below must be followed:

**Process to request an excused absence with advanced notice**
It is the responsibility of the student to:

Submit a “Request for Approved Absence” form, to the academic coordinator (Dr. Nicole Powell). Forms should be submitted with a minimum of 48 business hours advanced notice prior to the requested date; or sooner if a student is aware of the scheduling request in advance. Forms submitted after business hours will be reviewed during the following business day. Forms may be submitted electronically to powelln2@ohiodominican.edu or can be printed and submitted to Saint Albert room 208.

1. The academic coordinator will determine, based on the above policies, if absence is excused or unexcused. The submitted form will be signed by the academic coordinator, and returned to the student.
2. It is the student’s responsibility to then submit the signed form to the course coordinator for approval, only after it has been approved by the academic coordinator. A minimum of 24 hours’ notice is required for submission to the course coordinator.
3. Once approved, the signed form will be kept in the student’s file

**Process to request an excused absence without advanced notice** (unplanned sick leave, family emergency etc.) it is the responsibility of the student to:
1. The student must email the Course Coordinator prior to the missed class/activity. The student may also contact the program office (614) 251-4320 before the start of class—however the preferred method is emailing the course coordinator. The email message or voice mail must indicate:
a. The reason for tardiness or absence ie: illness, emergency situation
b. Detail all classes (lectures, seminars, laboratories, etc.), examinations, service learning, simulation groups, or other scheduled activities for which the student will be late or absent that day – each course coordinator needs to be contacted by the student for each course that they will miss the day of the absence
c. The student must notify the ODU PA program each day of absence or tardiness if the illness or emergency situation will cause more than one successive day of absence

2. The student must follow the above outlined process for an advanced notice absence within 24 hours of returning to campus.

3. Present to the academic coordinator and course coordinators written documentation, acceptable to the ODU PA program, from the student’s healthcare provider for an absence of three days or any single day of absence if the student misses a scheduled student evaluation activity such as a written examination/quiz, verbal presentation, OSCE, Service learning, simulation group, or clinical skills testing.
   a. Reschedule with the course coordinators make-up times for any excused examinations
   b. Complete assignment to remediate missed material, see your course coordinator for assignment

**Remediation of missed material**
Regardless of the reason for absence, tardiness or missed assignment, both excused and unexcused, the student must make up all missed lecture material, groups, seminars, quizzes, examinations, or other learning experiences.

1. Contact the appropriate course coordinator(s) immediately upon returning to classes to arrange remediation of all missed material.
2. *Assignment* (to be filled in by each course if preset assignment. Include timeline for due date) Example for clinical medicine: Fill out a disease indeces form for each condition covered in lecture on the missed days. Upload the assignment to the dropbox on Panther Learn within 7 days of the missed class.

Any unexcused absence will result in disciplinary action. Students who are absent from class without prior approval from the academic and course coordinator or do not follow and/or meet the above outlined process will be given a written warning and will be required to attend a disciplinary meeting with the course coordinator/instructor and/or the PA Progress and Promotions Committee. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a 5% reduction in the student’s course grade per occurrence. Absence for prolonged or excessive illness adversely effects a student’s learning and jeopardizes mastery of the required knowledge, skills, and experiences needed to successfully progress or complete training as a physician assistant.

Students are expected to be in the classroom a minimum of five minutes before the scheduled start of class. If the student is frequently late, this may be reflected in your grade, evaluation, assignment of clinical experiences, and rotation sites, and may result in disciplinary measures and a meeting with the PA Progress and Promotion Committee and documentation will be placed in the student’s file.

Based on attendance or tardiness issues the ODUP PA Program may, when deemed in the
best interest of the program or the student:
1. Suspend a student
2. Recommend that a student on seek medical guidance for possible medical leave-of-absence
3. Recommend the discontinuation of the student in the program
4. Other actions deemed appropriate by the Program Director and/or the PA Progress and Promotion Committee.

**Dress Code**
The program expects students to dress appropriately both in the classroom and in clinical/patient areas. Your dress is a reflection of the profession and the program. There is no second chance to make a first impression. Many of the guest faculty will be your future preceptors and employers.

Examples of unacceptable dress in the classroom may include hats, sloppy or torn clothing, garments with offensive or suggestive designs or words, pajamas, bare feet or inappropriately revealing clothing.

For Shadowing Experiences, Hospital History and Physical Sessions, and Clinical Experiences, the following *guidelines* apply:

**Women:**
- pants/skirt and blouse or dress
- stockings
- closed toe shoes with heels less than two inches
- no dangling earrings or other hanging jewelry
- no mini-skirts
- no perfume, cologne or strongly-scented deodorant

**Men:**
- slacks (preferably neatly-pressed)
- dress shirt with tie
- shoes and socks
- no hanging jewelry
- no cologne or strongly-scented deodorant

**Both:**
- no sneakers
- no jeans
- no T-shirts
- no sweats
- no open sandals
- facial piercings removed
- tattoos covered

**Social Media Policies/Guidelines (Web Etiquette)**
Whether you choose to create or participate in social media activities such as blogging, tweeting, Wiki, or any other form of online publishing is your own choice. In general, what you do on your own time is your own business. However, whenever you are connected to an institution, employer, or any other group, you want to consider yourself governed by policies and guidelines of the aforementioned. As a future medical professional, you should always consider the tenets of professionalism, good taste, respect, and plain common sense. If you identify yourself as a Physician Assistant Student, or as a person in Ohio Dominican University’s program(s), or any group for that matter, you are now connected to everyone in your class, your program, your group, and even those who will follow you as students. The following guidelines and policies are intended to help you make the proper choice as you engage in social media.

**General Guidelines**

Be thoughtful as to how you represent yourself on social networks. The line between private and public, personal and professional typically blur in online social networks. Respect your colleagues and your audience. Recognize that your cohort, students at Ohio Dominican in general, and the community as a whole represent diverse customs, values and points of view. Express your opinion, be yourself, but be respectful. This includes the obvious (obscenity, personal insults, ethnic, religious or racial slurs, sexually harassing or inappropriate commentary, etc.) but also topics that can be considered inflammatory or obscene. If you are unsure, ask for guidance from faculty. Respect the privacy of others, especially classmates, other students, faculty and staff. If you disagree with anyone, it is rarely appropriate to air your differences publically. Basically, use sound judgment.

**General Email Etiquette**

- Always address an Email with an appropriate salutation (“Dear Professor Jones”, “Dear Susan”).
- Always sign an Email.
- All Email should be written in a professional and appropriate manner. No one should write in an Email anything which you would not be comfortable putting on the board in front of a class.
- Be judicious when cc’ing Emails. “Reply to all,” is not always an appropriate action.
- Respond to Emails in a timely fashion. Disagreements may occur; opinions however, should be appropriate and polite.
- Please understand Email is not necessarily designed to provide unrestricted 24/7 access to the recipient.
- Avoid SPAM.
- Email transmitted in part or wholly over University operated electronic systems is subject to the acceptable use policy as described in the student handbook and elsewhere.
- The use of social media, chat rooms, instant messaging and/or “surfing” the web during class when not engaged in sanctioned web-based course activity is unprofessional, and frequently, inappropriate. A student will receive one verbal warning and if the student is found to be engaging in such behaviors during class on a second occasion, this will result in a meeting with the PA Progress and Promotion Committee and documentation will be placed in the student’s file.
• Do not email the PA program office or faculty during lecture. As in all situations, use good judgment.

Guidelines/Policy when posting as a member of Ohio Dominican’s Community

• Maintain confidentiality. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about your patients or their families, Ohio Dominican University, its students, or its alumni. Use good ethical judgment and follow university policies and federal requirements, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

• Respect class time and your colleagues’ time. You should participate in personal social media conversations on your own time and not during scheduled class time or PA program activities unless appropriate as in class activities.

• Maintain privacy. Do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their permission. As a guideline, do not post anything that you would not present in any public forum. Be honest and identify yourself. In personal posts, if you identify yourself as a PA student or a member of ODU’s community, be clear that you are posting your own views and not the views of ODU or the PA Program. If you make a mistake, correct it. If you modify an earlier post, make it clear you are doing so. Rarely do you “speak on behalf of…” If you say it, it is yours to own.

• Primum non nocere: “First, do no harm.” This is one of the central ethical tenets of medical practice. Also this is known as the principle of non-maleficence. The principle is that you should not do anything that worsens the situation, and risks causing more harm than good. Keeping in line with this philosophy, your Internet activities should do no harm to others.

• Responsibility and liability: You are responsible for the content that you publish.

• Remember that what goes out there stays out there for a long time. Protect your privacy and respect the privacy of others. Individuals have been held responsible for commentary and other postings deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, obscene, or dangerous (see Rutgers University and video posting: http://www.latimes.com/news/nation/nationnow/la-nn-rutgers-verdict-guilty-hate-20120316,0,1906278.story). Moreover, employers typically conduct web searches (including searches on Facebook and other social media) on job candidates before extending offers. You want to make sure that what you did before, or how you represented yourself before, will not prejudice others and haunt you later. If you have posted in the past, commentary and other postings deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, obscene, or dangerous on the web, you may want to consider deleting it.

• Respect others: Be constructive and respectful while disagreeing with concepts of others or if discussing bad experiences.

• Be valued: Importantly, make sure you contribute value to your group. Don’t redirect and monopolize discussions. Watch self-promotion in social groups. Typically this results in negative thoughts and possible banning from social sites.

• Think before you act: There is no protected or private speech on a social media site
Search engines turn up your words and pictures years later. Comments can be copied by others and forwarded. Even clearing your words may not work due to archiving.

- If you are angry, it may not be a good time to email or post. Delay and post after you calm down. Post only pictures you would feel comfortable sharing with family, friends, peers, public, or employers.
- Respect copyright laws.
- Do not post personally identifiable information: Information that can be used to locate someone offline, including phone numbers, addresses, birth dates, etc. should not be posted.
- Posting patient information: Students may not post or otherwise disclose patient information in violation of a federal or state law or applicable professional ethics and healthcare facility policies. This includes cases, pictures or videos. Removal of an individual’s name does not constitute proper “de-identification” of protected health information. Furthermore, inclusion of data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date or location of evaluation may still allow the reader to recognize the identity of a specific individual. Students may not take or post photos of patients or health care environments/rotation/preceptorship sites. Photos may contain background identifying features of which you may not be aware.
- Posting program curriculum information: PA students should not share information about program curriculum or exams in any way that violates Ohio Dominican University or the ODU PA Program policies.
- Misrepresentation: Students may not present or represent themselves as official representatives or spokespersons for Ohio Dominican University or the ODU PA Program.
- Harassing or discriminatory postings: Student may not use social media in a manner that violates Ohio Dominican University Equality and Non-Discrimination Guidelines that prohibit discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability age, gender identification or expression or other legally prohibited characteristic.
- Inappropriate relationships. It is considered unethical to establish non-professional relationships with patients including inviting them to social network groups or accepting invitations from them. Additionally, requests from those who supervise or teach you to engage in activities outside of class sites are considered inappropriate.
- Copyright/trademark violations. Seek the proper permission before posting photos, videos, or other media that you do not own.
- Giving medical advice. Students are not licensed healthcare providers and should not offer medical advice as a medical professional. You should in no way diagnose, manage, or medically advise any other individual on social media sites.

**Guidelines/Policy when posting as an Individual**

- In personal posts, if you identify yourself as a PA student at Ohio Dominican University, please be clear that you are sharing your personal views and are not speaking as a formal representative of ODU. If you identify yourself as a member of the ODU community, ensure your profile and related content are consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues.
- Protect Yourself: Don’t provide personal information that scammers or identity thieves could use. Don’t list your home address or telephone number. It is a good idea to create a separate Email address that is used only with social media sites. You
should not use your ODU address for social media sites.

- Don’t use the ODU logo or make endorsements without permission: Don’t use the ODU logo to endorse political candidates or endorse products or causes.

- Use a disclaimer: If you publish content to any website outside of ODU and it has something to do with subjects associated with Ohio Dominican University, use a disclaimer such as this: “The postings on this site are my own and do not represent Ohio Dominican’s positions, strategies or opinions.”

- Is your content appropriate: If the content of your message would not be acceptable for face-to-face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it is not acceptable for a social networking site. Ask yourself, would I want to see this published in the newspaper or posted on a billboard tomorrow or ten years from now?

- Respect: Don’t use religious or ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in ODU’s community. You should also show proper consideration for others’ privacy and for topics that may be considered sensitive—such as politics and religion.

Now that you have reviewed the guidelines:

1. You expressly acknowledge that you assume all responsibility related to the security, privacy, and confidentiality risks inherent in sending any content over the Internet. By its very nature, a website and the Internet cannot be absolutely protected against intentional or malicious intrusion attempts. Ohio Dominican University does not control the third party sites and the Internet over which you may choose to send confidential, personal, or health information or other content and, therefore, does not warrant any safeguard against any such interceptions or compromises to your information. Ohio Dominican University does not endorse any product, service, views or content displayed on your or other’s social media site(s).

2. You agree that any claim or dispute relating to your posting of any content on a Social Media Site on the Internet shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the state of Ohio without regard to its conflict of laws and provisions and you agree to be bound and shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the local, state or federal courts located in Franklin County, Ohio.

3. If identifying yourself with Ohio Dominican University, you may not provide any content to a Social Media Site that contains any product or service endorsements or any content that may be construed as political lobbying, solicitation or contributions or use the Social Media Site to link to any sites of political candidates or parties or use the Social Media Site to discuss political campaigns, issues or for taking a position on any legislation or law.

4. This policy may be updated at any time without notice, and each time a user accesses a social networking site, the new policy will govern usage, effective upon posting.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM OFFICE POLICIES
Students are not permitted to use program office telephones, copy machines, fax machines, computers, stationery, microwave, refrigerators or supplies. PA program faculty and staff cannot duplicate materials, nor do other work for students.

Students are not permitted to use the office area as a lounge. There are lounges available within St. Albert Hall. No “guests” are permitted in the classroom without prior approval from the program. If granted permission, all guests must be introduced to the entire class.

Program staff and faculty cannot accept or deliver messages or allow students to place or receive phone calls at the PA office, except in an emergency. In addition, the student cannot use the program address for receipt of personal mail.

The Program Director, Medical Director, and principal faculty do not at any time participate as medical providers for students in the program. Faculty employed by the program are required to agree to abide by this policy, and students are asked to not inquire for personal medical treatment by any member of the PA faculty. The principal faculty do not participate as providers in the ODU’s health and wellness center.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

The student acknowledges that they should have their ODU ID with them while on campus at all times.

Ohio Dominican Physician Assistant students will wear a short, white laboratory coat, affixed with a clearly visible nametag and an Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant program patch at all clinical sites and experiences as determined by the PA Program. The PA student will introduce him/herself as a “Physician Assistant Student” at all clinical sites and service learning experiences.

Change of Name or Contact Information
It is the student’s responsibility to inform the PA program staff and appropriate University Offices (e.g., Registrar, Business, and Public Safety) of any change in name, address, or telephone numbers.

POLICIES ON STUDENT EMPLOYMENT WHILE ENROLLED IN PROGRAM

Due to the rigor of the Physician Assistant Studies curriculum, students are strongly advised against employment while enrolled in the program. No time will be granted for students to seek or maintain employment. Employment while enrolled in the program may lead to poor academic performance and failure and should not be pursued.

Further students may not be employed by the program for any reason including, but not limited to clerical or other program work. Students may not be employed and receiving compensation at clinical or shadowing sites in any capacity while enrolled in the program.

FACULTY ADVISORS
Each student is assigned a faculty advisor who will serve as a guide and supporter throughout the student’s tenure in the program. Meetings will be scheduled with the advisor several times throughout the program and additionally, as needed. They meetings may consist of one on one as well as group advisee meetings. Because the student is frequently the first to know of academic difficulties or personal problems that are adversely affecting performance; the student is expected to communicate with the advisor promptly. Communication is an important aspect of professional development. Although the student is expected to handle situations to the best of the student’s own ability, there may be times when it is advisable to make the faculty advisor aware that a difficult situation exists. Talking with an advisor maintains a channel of communication in the event that changes in the student’s status must be made.

The faculty, program director, and medical director must not participate as health care providers for students in the program, except in emergency situations.

The role of the faculty advisor is to assist the student with:
1. Program planning
2. Strategies or approaches to successful goal achievements
3. Comprehension of the complete requirements of the program
4. Maintenance of satisfactory academic progress and professional development
5. Referrals, as needed, to counseling services for educational, personal or emotional difficulties.

The faculty advisor should be informed about the student’s academic progress including any examination failures, breaches of professionalism, or violations of policies and plays a major role in identifying and addressing academic and professional difficulties manifesting with any of their advisees.

The appropriate, preferred course of action for a student is to discuss any failed examination first with the course coordinator and then communicate directly with the faculty advisor. The student and faculty advisor may review the potential need for additional intervention to address the student’s substandard academic or professional performance. The student will have one and one and group advisee meetings

MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Technical standards are defined as the attributes considered necessary for students to complete their education and training and subsequently enter clinical practice. These standards are prerequisites for entrance to, continuation within, and graduation from the Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant program. They are also prerequisites to licensure by various state professional boards. Reasonable accommodation will be offered for persons with disabilities in conjunction with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Students must possess aptitude, ability, and skills in the following five (5) areas:
1. Observation
2. Communication
3. Sensory and motor coordination and function
4. Conceptualization, integration, and quantitation
5. Behavioral and social skills, abilities, and aptitudes

The functions described below are critically important and must be autonomously performed by the student. It should be understood that these are standards for minimum competence in the program:

**Observation**

Students must be able to observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences including, but not limited to chemical, biological, anatomic, and physiologic sciences. Students must be able to observe details through a microscope and observe demonstrations in the classroom, including films, projected overheads, slides or other forms of visual presentation.

Students must be able to accurately observe a patient near and at a distance, noting nonverbal as well as verbal signs. Specific vision related criteria include, but are not limited to detecting and identifying changes in color of fluids, skin, and culture media, visualizing and discriminating findings on x-rays and other imaging tests, and reading written and illustrated materials. Students must be able to observe and differentiate changes in body movement, observe anatomic structures, discriminate among numbers and patterns associated with diagnostic tests such as an electrocardiogram and competently use diagnostic instruments such as an otoscope, ophthalmoscope, and microscope.

**Communication**

Students must be able to relate effectively to patients while conveying compassion and empathy. They must be able to clearly communicate with patients in order to elicit information, accurately describe changes in mood, activity and posture of patients, and understand verbal as well as nonverbal communication.

Communication includes not only speech, but reading and writing. Physician Assistant education presents exceptional challenges in the volume and breadth of reading required to master subject areas and impart the information to others. Students must be able to communicate quickly, effectively, and efficiently in oral and written English in the classroom and later with all members of the health care team. Specific requirements include, but are not limited to the following: rapidly and clearly communicating with the medical staff on rounds or elsewhere, eliciting an accurate history from patients, and communicating complex findings in appropriate terms to patients and to various members of the health care team. Students must learn to recognize and promptly respond to emotional cues, such as sadness and agitation.

Students must be able to accurately and legibly record observations and plans in legal documents, such as the patient record. Students must be able to prepare and communicate concise, complete summaries of both limited patient encounters and complex, prolonged encounters, including hospitalizations. Students must be able to
complete forms, in a timely fashion, and according to directions.

**Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function**

Students must possess sufficient sensory and motor function to perform physical examinations using palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. This requires sufficient exteroceptive sense (visual, auditory, touch, and temperature), coordination to manipulate patients, and adequate motor and diagnostic instruments.

Students must be able to evaluate various components of the voice, such as pitch, intensity, and timbre. They must also be able to accurately differentiate percussive notes and auscultatory findings, including but not limited to, heart, lung, and abdominal sounds. Students must be able to accurately discern normal and abnormal findings, using instruments including, but not limited to, tuning forks, stethoscopes, and sphygmomanometers.

Students should be able to execute physical movements needed to provide general care and emergency treatments to patients. The student, therefore, must be able to respond promptly to emergencies within the hospital or practice setting, and must not hinder the ability of his/her co-workers to provide prompt care. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of a physician assistant include arriving quickly when called and assisting in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), administering intravenous medications, applying pressure to arrest bleeding, maintaining an airway, suturing wounds, and assisting with obstetrical maneuvers. As further illustration, CPR may require moving an adult patient, applying considerable chest pressure over a prolonged period of time, delivering artificial respiration and calling for help.

Students should be able to learn to perform basic laboratory tests such as wet mount, urinalysis, gram stain, and diagnostic/therapeutic procedures such as venipuncture and placement of catheters and tubes. The administration of intravenous medications requires a certain level of dexterity, sensation, and visual acuity. Students must be able to measure angles and diameters of various body structures using a tape measure or other devices to measure blood pressure, respiration and pulse, and interpret graphs describing biologic relationships. Clinical rotations require the ability to transport oneself to a variety of settings in a timely manner.

**Intellectual, Conceptualization, Integration, and Quantitation**

Problem-solving, a critical skill demanded of physician assistants, often requires rapid intellectual function, especially in emergency situations. These intellectual functions include numerical recognition, measurement, calculations, reasoning analysis, judgment, and synthesis. Students must be able to identify significant findings in the patient’s history, physical examination and laboratory data, provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses, and choose appropriate medications and therapy.
It is essential that the student is able to incorporate new information from many sources toward the formulation of a diagnosis and plan. Good judgment in patient assessment and diagnostic/therapeutic planning is also essential. When appropriate, students must be able to identify and communicate the extent of their knowledge to others.

**Behavioral and Social Skills, Abilities, and Aptitudes**

Students must possess the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships in diagnosis and care of patients. Empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, good interpersonal skills, interest in people, and motivation are all required personal qualities. Students must be able to monitor and react appropriately to their own emotional needs. For example, students need to maintain balanced demeanor and good organization in the face of long hours, fatigued colleagues, and dissatisfied patients.

Students must be able to develop appropriate professional relationships with their colleagues and patients, provide comfort and reassurance to patients and protect patients’ confidentiality. Students must possess the endurance to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. All students are at times required to work for extended periods of time, occasionally with rotating schedules. Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine. Students are expected to accept suggestions and criticisms, and if necessary, to respond by modifying their behavior appropriately.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Ohio Dominican University is committed to providing equal access and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students with a documented disability who wish to request reasonable accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office to request accommodations, and then meet with their instructors. Accommodation arrangements should be made during the first two weeks of the semester. Students may request accommodations at any time during the semester, but please note: accommodations are not retroactive. Students must contact the Disability Services Office prior to every semester that accommodations are needed. The Disability Services Office is located in the Office of Student Success, 214F Erskine Hall, the phone number is (614) 251-4233, and the e-mail for Leia Smith, the Disability Services Coordinator smithl11@ohiodominican.edu.

**IMMUNIZATIONS AND BACKGROUND CHECK**

All students must provide a record of immunizations or proof of immunity from childhood communicable diseases, including a 2-step PPD (tuberculosis test) as required for health professionals prior to matriculation into the program. All immunizations and proof of same must be consistent with The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) most up-to-date standards. Ohio Dominican University’s policies regarding health forms and immunization requirements are adapted herein:
A medical history, physical examination and completion of immunizations are required prior to matriculation into the program. The Program e-mails necessary health forms to all students accepted into the Physician Assistant Studies Program. The forms include tests and immunizations which are required by agencies to protect both the student and the patient. All forms must be uploaded to Certiphi by the student via myRecordtracker. The student must sign a release giving ODU authority to release all documentation provided through myRecordTracker for Clinical experiences. See Appendix 2. The student must also submit a Student Release Form indicating that they permit the PA program to release their immunization information to perspective Clinical sites. See Appendix 3.

In addition to standard immunizations, an initial two-step Mantoux TB skin test (or chest x-ray for converters) and completion of Hepatitis B immunizations per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines are required along with standard immunizations. All students must obtain annual TB test updates (or chest x-ray for converters) while enrolled in the program. Students must have a two-step TB prior to the start of the Clinical year- typically done by the start of the second fall didactic semester. Students with a positive TB skin test must be evaluated at the Columbus Public Health Department (or its designee) annually. The results of this evaluation must be sent to Ohio Dominican University’s Student Health Services. If a student tests positive for tuberculosis, as designated by the Columbus Public Health Department, s/he must be treated for active TB per instructions from the Columbus Public Health Department (in keeping with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations). The Health Insurance & Medical History form, Immunization form, Meningococcal and Hepatitis B Vaccination Status form must be uploaded to Certiphi by the students. Students are not allowed to begin the program until all health requirements are met and on file with Certiphi. The Student Health Center is a helpful resource for students. [Questions may be directed to Jamie Kemp, PA-C, Director, Ohio Dominican University Wellness Center at]: (614) 251- 4709 or email kempj2@ohiodominican.edu.

All students who participate in rotations must provide proof of compliance with current CDC guidelines as appropriate for any experience. All students must adhere to any specific hospital/institutional/practice guidelines prior to rotation at the hospital/institution/practice.

EXPOSURE TO BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS/ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Blood-Borne Pathogen Training
The students will complete online module during the PA 510 course designed to provide an understanding of blood-borne pathogens, modes of transmission and methods of prevention. The student will complete a post assessment demonstrating knowledge of the blood-borne pathogens, immunization importance, transmission and risk for health care providers.

Accident/Incident Report Form
In the event of an accident or incident that requires the application of first aid or other emergency
equipment while on campus at ODU, an incident report must be filled and submitted to the Office of Public safety. ODU Public Safety may be contacted at 251-4700. This report serves as a means to, if necessary, rectify and improve safety areas that need to be addressed in current risk assessments to prevent such a situation from occurring again.

Should any student receive a percutaneous (needle-stick, laceration or bite) or peri- mucosal (ocular or mucosal membrane) exposure to a blood borne pathogen, or environmental hazard, during their clinical rotation, the student should go immediately to the preceptor/ individual at the clinical rotation site responsible for managing exposures. The student should complete an appropriate incident report and have it signed by the appropriate preceptor or their designee. Any student who has been exposed needs evaluation as soon as possible in the Emergency Department (unless directed to an appropriate designated area at the clinical site) after the incident occurs after which you may be offered blood tests (e.g., hepatitis profiles, confidential HIV testing), and/or immunizations or booster shots (e.g., hepatitis, tetanus). The student should be counseled regarding the risks and benefits of post-exposure prophylactic treatment at the site in which the incident occurred.

Further, students should refer to the training received during the first month(s) as a matriculated didactic student. Testing of the source patient is also recommended. After being evaluated, the student should contact his/her Primary Care Provider to discuss follow-up care (e.g., HIV antibody and Hepatitis C testing during the 6 months post-exposure period). Students are required to notify the Physician Assistant Program immediately of exposure (contact numbers located on page 3 of this Handbook). Ohio Dominican University is not financially responsible for any cost incurred as a result of a student’s exposure to a blood borne pathogen and/or environmental hazard or any cost associated with the above outlines evaluation processes and treatments.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If a student has any temporary or chronic medical problems that may impair their ability to provide medical care or pose a risk to themselves, to patients, or to fellow students; the student must inform the program director immediately.

ASSESSMENTS

All assigned assessments must be successfully completed in each course as outlined in the course syllabus.

Absence from Examinations:

Each student is personally responsible for the consequences of missing any examination. If a student is absent for a scheduled examination, he/she may or may not be permitted to take a make-up exam. Make-up exams are a rare and exceptional event. They are designed to accommodate unanticipated and uncontrollable life events including, but not limited to, serious illness or death of a family member. The decision to allow or deny makeup examinations will be made by the appropriate faculty/course coordinator and/or the program.
director. If the student misses an examination and is not allowed to take a makeup, then the grade will be recorded as a zero and averaged appropriately within the course. This could result in failure of the course and dismissal from the program.

Generally, as noted in the attendance police above, only acute illness/emergency is considered an acceptable reason for absence from an examination and the following process must be followed if a student does miss an exam:

1. Written documentation of illness from the student’s healthcare provider is required for any absence from an examination due to sickness and attests to the student’s inability to sit for the scheduled examination.
2. The student’s healthcare provider medical documentation of illness must be delivered to the course coordinator(s) upon the same day of the student’s return to school. Failure to provide healthcare provider documentation of illness acceptable to the course coordinator upon the student’s return to classes will result in an examination score of zero (0) being recorded for that student.
3. An absence without prior notification (Refer to the general “Attendance” section of this manual for related information) to the course coordinator is unexcused and will result in a score of zero (0) for the missed exam which could result in failure of the course and/or dismissal from the program.

Lateness to Examinations:
Each student is personally responsible for the consequences of arriving late to an examination and the following guidelines will apply as appropriate:

1. A student arriving up to fifteen (15) minutes late, who still wishes to sit for the examination, is advised that no additional time beyond the scheduled conclusion of the examination is allowed.
2. A student arriving more than fifteen (15) minutes late to an examination will not be permitted to sit for that examination and must contact the course director.
A student, believing that he or she has valid extenuating circumstances for being late, must present an explanation and provide documentation acceptable to the course coordinator, who has the discretion to excuse the lateness and schedule a make-up examination. Multiple occurrences of lateness for examinations may result in the lowering of the student’s course letter grade and other correctional measures deemed appropriate by the program.

Methods and Examination Contents:
The course director determines the type of testing and the material that individual tests cover. Any questions or requests for clarification are appropriately directed to the course director.

Lecture Based Examinations
With the exception of classroom quizzes, examination schedules are announced in advance as determined by the syllabus. All lecture based exams, unless otherwise determined by the course coordinator, will be administered through PantherLearn - ODU’s Classroom Management System, on laptop computers via a secure network browser. All exams will be proctored via a program faculty/staff member or by video surveillance cameras. Please do not touch, turn or unplug the camera in the testing areas. It is considered unacceptable to tamper with the cameras. The ODU PA
program expects students to maintain professional integrity.

Students will be given 1 minute per question for each exam. The amount of time allotted for each exam will be announced by the proctor at the start of the exam. The student will receive a 10 minute electronic warning prior to the end of the time allotment of the exam. All exams will automatically submit at the end of the allotted exam time if the student had not submitted the exam themselves. No additional time will be allowed to continue working on the examination. If deemed appropriate, the proctor can determine the seating arrangement for examinations.

Students will not be permitted to ask the proctor/course coordinator any questions during the exam unless it is related to computer functioning/technology.

In efforts to create a fair and professional exam atmosphere please recognize the following:

- All cell phones must be placed in the off or silent position and placed in a bag, away from the desk.
- Use the restroom before the exam to limit disruptions
- Arrive 10 minutes early to the exam to get computers, boot up, log in and/or restart if necessary
- No hats are to be worn during examinations
- Cleared desk and one blank piece of paper with your name which will turned in on the way out of the classroom.
- No questions during the exam unless there’s a technical issue
- Log off computers when complete but leave the computers turned on
- Exit the exam in a quite non distracting fashion and limit any talking in the lobby/hallway after an exam area for those still testing.

A student must submit appropriate documentation in advance for accommodations to be approved by the Disability Services Office if the student has a medical condition that necessitates leaving the room during an exam to use the restroom or other facilities. See above regarding Studies with Disabilities.

Exam grades will be released in a time frame that is determined by the course coordinator.

**Practical Examinations**
The skills learned in the small group laboratory component will be assessed through demonstration of clinical competence in a timed practical examination. The practical examinations must be passed with a minimum passing grade of 85%. Failure to do so will result in the student’s retaking of the practical exam. All students will be permitted a total of 2 remediation practical exams. These will be proctored by two faculty members. If passed, the initial failing grade will or will not be replaced with the minimum passing grade of 85% based on the program’s remediation policy.
These exams will be graded on a 0-100% basis. If a student fails to pass a practical exam after the third attempt, they will receive a grade of “F” for the course. Failure of a course results in dismal of the program as noted above. Exam grades will be released in a time frame that is determined by the course coordinator.

Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE)
The OSCE is designed to evaluate each student’s clinical exam and communication skills during a simulated patient encounter. This will assess skills learned in all courses prior to the designated OSCE, including but not limited to; effective patient communication, obtaining all required or pertinent medical history and/or performing an appropriate and technically accurate physical exam, demonstrating accurate medical documentation, and determining appropriate diagnostic testing to establish an assessment and plan of care for the patient encounter. The OSCE must be passed with a minimum passing grade of 70%. The OSCE will be graded on a 0-100% basis. Failure to do so will result in the student’s remediation of the OSCE. All students will be permitted a total of 2 remediation attempts. These will be proctored by two faculty members. If passed, the initial failing grade will or will not be replaced with the minimum passing grade of 70%, based on the program’s remediation policy. If a student fails to pass the OSCE after the third attempt, they will receive a grade of “F” for the course. Failure of a course results in dismal of the program as noted above. Exam grades will be released in a time frame that is determined by the course coordinator.

Grading Scale and Grade Points
At the end of each term, the student receives a final grade for each course. The academic standing of the student is determined by a point system in which points are assigned for each course according to the grade earned. Final course grades are calculated to the third decimal point (ie 3.445) by the Registrar and posted to ODUonline. The grading and point system at Ohio Dominican University’s Physician Assistant Program is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100%</td>
<td>4.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94%</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85-89%</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-84%</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>74-76%</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-73%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;70%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

original research of the highest quality, or some imaginative restructuring of an issue.

**A- 90-94:** This is work of EXCELLENT quality like the above, but perhaps not so exceptional, or lacking in some minor way, but still out of the ordinary.

**B+ 85-89:** Work that is VERY GOOD; does everything that is called for with some distinction, and shows a much better than average understanding or level of research, imagination, etc.

**A) 80-84:** Work that is GOOD; does most of what the work requested in a more than satisfactory way.

**B-) 77-79:** Work that is FAIRLY GOOD; is of more than just a satisfactory nature, but less than what is good work.

**C+) 74-76:** Work that is SATISFACTORY, but no more than that. The student does, overall, the requested work, but at a level considered fair.

**B) 70-73:** Work that is JUST FAIR; is all right, but weak in conception, execution, etc.

**F) <70:** Work that is INCOMPLETE OR FAILS TO MEET THE STANDARD

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**EVALUATIONS**

Students are required to complete course evaluations as part of the program’s continuous self-assessment required for accreditation. Evaluations are completed for each course in accordance with the University standards and submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs. Evaluations for Course Lecturers are to be completed on-line within the student tracking software, Typhon.

Students are asked to comment on a professional and productive manner with regards to course evaluations. The PA Program faculty utilizes the evaluations to assess learning outcomes and to assist in curricular planning. Grades may be held until all course evaluations are complete as determined by the course coordinator.
PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Students are expected to maintain patient confidentiality in both the clinical and academic settings and adhere to H.I.P.A.A. (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) regulations. The student will complete an online module designed to provide understanding of HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules as part of their PAS 510 course. The student will complete a post assessment demonstrating knowledge of the HIPAA and impact on patients and providers and this will be kept in their student file in the PA Program office. Students will also be responsible for completing education as determined by Clinical Sites with regards to maintaining patient confidentiality.

The Student understands that patient confidentiality includes but is not limited to the following and the student will comply with the following HIPAA regulations:

- Respect for the patient’s confidentiality
- Do not share the medical or personal details of a patient with anyone except those healthcare professionals integral to the wellbeing of the patient, or within the context of an educational endeavor.
- Do not discuss patients or their illnesses in public places where conversations may be overhead.
- Do not publicly identify patients in spoken words, or in writing, without adequate justification.
- Do not invite or permit unauthorized persons into patient care areas of the institution.
- Do not share your confidential computer system passwords with nonprofessionals.
- Do not take pictures or videos of patients.

Failure to comply with these standards of professional demeanor is cause for disciplinary action, which may include warning, probation, suspension, and/or termination from the program. It is the program’s expectation that each person involved in the education of ODU PA students maintains the highest standards of professionalism. Faculty will evaluate professional behavior of students with the same diligence devoted to academic and clinical performance.

SUPERVISION

The Physician Assistant is an advanced practice provider. The PA is legally and ethically bound to deliver healthcare under physician supervision. Ohio Dominican PA students will not train or practice in the clinical setting without the supervision of a licensed healthcare provider designated by the program. This may be a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner. If a student is asked or expected to deliver patient care services or perform clinical procedures without appropriate or adequate supervision, the student must professionally and firmly decline and immediately contact the PA program.

The PA student must always default to exercising common sense, high ethical standards, and professionalism regarding the welfare of a patient. The Physician Assistant Student is obligated to exercise sound judgment and professionalism in the approach to patient care. In compromising situations, the professional PA student must always contact the PA program in a timely manner.
It is the responsibility of the PA student to protect his/her professional and personal activity as well as to avoid potential legal liability through ethical and professional vigilance. The student must not deliver patient care services or perform any patient care activity or procedure if:

1. The program-designated preceptor or his/her designee is not on the immediate premises.
2. The student has not received adequate instruction and/or is not proficient in or knowledgeable/competent to deliver the care being asked to administer.
3. The student has reasonable cause to believe that such care or procedure may be harmful to the patient.
4. There is no adequate or appropriate supervision available when the student is expected to carry out the assignment.
5. The PA student has not received approval to perform the procedure from the preceptor or his/her designee.
6. The activity exceeds the scope or role/training of a PA student. Avoid any pressure to exceed the student level of training or knowledge.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA)
The Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA) is a branch of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The purpose of the student society shall be to serve as the official organization for the students of Ohio Dominican University’s PA program’s name. The goals of the society shall be: to promote academic achievement, to strive for clinical excellence, to promote the physician assistant as a member of the health care delivery team, and to promote health and awareness for the PA profession within the community. Students will elect officers as outlined in the SAAAPA bylaws. It is required that all students in the Physician Assistant program be members of SAAAPA. First year dues are $20.00 per student and second year dues are $10.00 per student. These funds help to support the SAAAPA activities and program growth.

OAPA Student Chapter
It is required that all students of the Ohio Dominican University PA program become student members of the Ohio Association of Physician Assistants. The first year student membership is free and the second year is $25.00 payable to the OAPA. It is essential that students become engaged in state and national issues regarding the PA profession.

Student Faculty Liaisons
Students will elect 2 Faculty Liaisons. These students will represent their class by attending periodic faculty meetings and other activities as outlined by the PA Faculty.

Program Ambassadors
Ambassadors will be selected by the faculty and will serve the PA program by representing their cohort in the classroom, on campus, and in the community in a variety of specified duties to be assigned by the faculty.
CLOSING OF UNIVERSITY FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER/OTHER EMERGENCY

When there is a decision to close the University due to inclement weather or for other emergency reasons, notice is sent to the media, posted on the ODU website and communicated to the university community via ODU email. This information is also available on the Student Information Hotline (614) 251-4590. ODU Alert will also be used in case of a snow emergency or other campus crisis which entails closing a building or the entire campus. All students should be registered on ODU Alert when they register for classes. An up-to-date list of class cancellations can be found on myODU online. It is the program faculty’s responsibility to deliver the best physician assistant education possible. To this end, the physician assistant student must understand that every effort will be made to provide any missed instruction due to emergency or other inclement situations. This may entail schedule changes and delivery of classes outside of “typical” class times.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leaves will only be granted following successful completion of the didactic phase of the program, and will not be granted to students on academic probation. Requests for a leave of absence must be submitted in writing to the PA program director and should indicate the reason for the leave and expected duration. The program director will consult with the PA Progress and Promotion committee and may approve or deny the requested leave of absence. A student should be in good standing at the time of the request and maintaining the equivalent of a grade of C in each course in progress at the time of your request. Granting of a leave of absence is a rare and an unusual event reserved only for exceptional circumstances. No leave of absence during the clinical phase of the program may exceed three (3) months.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES, HARASSMENT AND PERSONAL ISSUES

Please refer to Ohio Dominican University Student Handbook (http://www.ohiodominican.edu/StudentHandbook/) for a detailed explanation of grievance procedures, appeals process and harassment policies. For issues of a personal nature that may interfere with success in the PA program, the student is advised to do one or more of the following: notify and/or consult with his/her faculty advisor, the program director, any faculty member, or student health services.

ALCOHOL/DRUGS/ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Excessive drinking and intoxication will not be tolerated and members of the Ohio Dominican community who choose to drink will be held fully responsible for their behavior while under the influence of alcohol. Loss of control due to intoxication does not excuse or justify violation of State Law, University policies or the rights of others. According to Ohio State code, it is unlawful for any person under the age of 21 to possess, purchase, or consume any beer, wine, mixed beverage, or other liquor. It is also unlawful for a person over the age of 21 to distribute, sell or give another person under the age of 21 any alcoholic beverage mentioned above. Ohio Dominican University upholds these laws. Public intoxication is not permitted regardless of the age of the individual. Any individual who enters the campus and indicates signs of intoxication (slurred
speech, red eyes, smell of alcohol on breath or clothing, difficulty with motor skills, etc.) will be subject to disciplinary action.

The University maintains a "zero tolerance" approach to all illegal drugs and other illegal substances and expects all members of the community to comply with state and federal laws pertaining to illegal drugs. The sale, purchase, possession, complicity, use and/or distribution of illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia on University premises or as part of any of the University’s activities are prohibited. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, use or complicity with the use of a controlled substance is a violation of University policy whether those activities occur on or off campus. Additionally, to enter the campus under the influence of any non-prescription drug is considered a violation and will be treated the same as if the individual used the drug on campus grounds. In off-campus cases involving legal procedures, the Dean of Student Life can suspend a student from the University. Violation of state and federal drug laws may result in fines and/or incarceration.

HARASSMENT

All students and University employees deserve to be treated with respect. Abusive language, including but not limited to, profanity and threats, prank phone calls or text messages, racist or degrading language, remarks or jokes, inappropriate sexual language or gestures that discriminate against an individual or group, or unwanted physical contact or threats are considered harassment/offensive behaviors and are not acceptable. Such behavior degrades the dignity due all persons and will be treated seriously and dealt with severely.

In order to guarantee the well-being of each and every student, both physically and psychologically, harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. In particular, sexual harassment, hazing for the purposes of initiation into a student group, athletic team, or other club or association, or any behavior creating a hostile environment will not be tolerated. The student discipline process provides an opportunity for a student to bring charges against another student who is engaging in intimidating or harassing behavior that is tormenting, disturbing or threatening. Any student who believes s/he has experienced harassment should report this to the Director of the PA Program immediately. Once the matter has been brought to the Director, it will be investigated and acted upon promptly. The nature of the complaint and the identities of the individuals involved will be held in strict confidence and revealed on a "need-to-know" basis only. The severity of the sanctions imposed will depend on the seriousness of the incident(s) reported.

All students and University employees deserve to be treated with respect. Abusive language, including but not limited to, profanity and threats, prank phone calls, e-mails, text messages; racist or degrading language, remarks or jokes; inappropriate sexual language or gestures that discriminate against an individual or group, or unwanted physical contact or threats are considered offensive behaviors and are not acceptable. Such behavior degrades the dignity due all persons and will be treated seriously and dealt with severely.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Ohio Dominican reaffirms the principle that students, faculty, and staff have a right to be free from discrimination in any form. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race,
national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Any individual who feels that s/he has been sexually harassed should discuss the issue with the Dean of Student Life. The discussion should focus on the validity of the allegation and the scope of the problem. However, an individual may also address the issue through any of the established informal and formal procedures of the institution and may seek the assistance from the Faculty of the PA Program, Director of the PA Program, Assistant Dean of Student Life, Public Safety, Counseling Service, or Campus Ministry, Residence Life, or other University faculty or staff. Complaints about sexual harassment will be responded to promptly and equitably.

Insofar as possible, the University community will make every effort to respect and maintain the privacy of individuals involved in both informal and formal procedures, but in some cases this cannot be ensured. If informal attempts to resolve the complaint fail and there is basis for the allegation, the individual should write out a complete complaint and statement of the incident with as much detail as possible.

VIOLENCE OR OTHER CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to comply with all federal, state, and local laws at all times. Students who violate these laws also violate University policy. The University reserves the right to take independent disciplinary action in cases where students are charged with violations of these laws.

Ohio Dominican University is committed to providing a safe, non-threatening workplace and place of learning for all employees, students, and visitors where individuals are respected and protected from offensive or threatening verbal or physical behavior.

We do not tolerate any type of harassment or threatening contact of any kind, against any student, employee, faculty member, visitor, or any other person on University property or at any University sponsored event or function. The list of prohibitive behaviors, while not inclusive, includes:

- Causing physical injury to another person;
- Making threatening remarks;
- Stalking;
- Cyber bullying or intimidation tactics
- Threats of suicide;
- Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another person to emotional distress;
- Intentionally damaging University property or property of another individual;
- Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or other harassment or domestic violence;
- Any other conduct that a reasonable person would perceive as constituting a threat of violence.

Any student who is subjected to, witnesses, or has knowledge of violent behavior of any of the types listed above, or has reason to believe that violent behavior may occur at or in connection with the
activities of the University, is required to report it promptly to his/her Program Director or appropriate Faculty or Staff member or Human Resources and Public Safety. All reported incidents are promptly and discreetly investigated, and the University will treat such reports as confidential to the extent circumstances permit.

In order to promote the safety of employees, students, and visitors, as well as the security of its facilities, Ohio Dominican University reserves the right to conduct video surveillance of any portion of its premises at any time. Video cameras will be positioned in appropriate places within and around company buildings. The only exceptions to this policy include private areas of restrooms, showers and dressing rooms.

ODU campus policy prohibits weapons on University property as described in our Weapon-Free Workplace policy. The University reserves the right to conduct a search of any vehicle, personal property, campus property or person if it is suspected that a weapon has been brought onto campus or that a person intends to harm another individual on campus.

Violations of this policy will lead to accelerated disciplinary action, not corrective action, up to and including dismissal from the University and/or referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies for arrest and prosecution. Ohio Dominican University can and will take any necessary legal action to protect its employees, students, visitors, and property.

**WEAPON-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

To ensure that Ohio Dominican University is an environment safe and free of violence for all students, employees, contractors, temporary, and visitors, the University prohibits the possession or use of weapons on University property or off University property while conducting University business. A license to carry a weapon, regardless of Ohio law, does not supersede this University policy.

Any student in violation of this policy will be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All students are subject to this provision. “University property” is defined as all University-owned or leased buildings and surrounding areas such as sidewalks, walkways, driveways and parking lots under the University’s ownership or control. This policy applies to all University-owned or leased vehicles and all vehicles that come onto University property.

“Dangerous weapons” include, but are not limited to, firearms, explosives, knives, ammunition and other weapons that might be considered dangerous or that could cause harm. The malicious use of other items not intended as weapons is also prohibited.

Ohio Dominican University reserves the right at any time and at its discretion to search all vehicles, packages, containers, briefcases, purses, lockers, desks, enclosures and persons entering its property for the purpose of determining whether any weapon has been brought onto its property or premises in violation of this policy.

Any student who believes that another person possesses a concealed weapon or is behaving in a threatening manner has an obligation to report this immediately to the Public Safety Department and/or the PA Program. Failure to report knowledge of the presence of any dangerous weapon shall
subject the student to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

Under no circumstances should any student take any unnecessary risks or compromise his or her safety in enforcing this policy. Public Safety and local law enforcement should be contacted as necessary.

**COMPLIANCE WITH CAMPUS OFFICIALS**

It is expected that students will cooperate fully with University officials at all times. Any student who ignores or abuses the right to mutual respect and cooperation will be subject to sanction. Abusive or defiant language or behavior towards University personnel will not be tolerated. In addition, students are required 1) to present their identification cards when requested by a University official, 2) to report to the office of a University official when requested to do so, 3) to respond favorably and in compliance with the directives of a University official. The term "University official" applies to any Public Safety Officer, Faculty Member, Director, Chair, Dean, Vice President, or President.

**STUDENT TEACHING**

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant program are not permitted to teach components of the program curriculum, although they are expected to make presentations before the class as part of their learning experience. In addition, students are encouraged to support their classmates through study groups and informal peer tutoring. Those students with training, education and experiences unique to themselves are encouraged to share with their colleagues in a collaborative fashion. However, this is done in supervised course activity settings or informally in study or peer activities. This is not permitted in a formal teaching fashion.

**ADVANCED STANDING or WAIVER of COURSES**

No students may waive any course within the PA program curriculum, nor are students accepted for advanced standing. The program curriculum is subject to change in order to best meet the needs of the PA Profession and our students.

**SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE DIDACTIC PHASE**

To enter the clinical phase, a student must successfully complete all didactic course assignments and program assessments, as well as maintain standards of professional behavior. Tuition must also be paid in full. In addition to successful completion of the didactic year, the student must be up-to-date with immunizations, including have a pre-clinical two step TB test and have completed a background check within 60 days of starting the clinical year. Students must be CPR and ACLS certified and maintain the CPR/ACLS certification for the entire clinical year of the program. In the event the student’s certification in CPR/ACLS expires before graduation, the student must recertify in the appropriate discipline at the student’s expense.

Many of the program’s clinical sites require criminal background and/or child abuse history clearance forms. All students are required to submit to a complete criminal background check and/or a sexual offender history clearance in order to attend clinical sites. These need to be uploaded into Certiphi by the student. Students who fail to pass the background/sexual offender
check may not be allowed to enter the clinical phase and/or continue in the program. Students may be required to submit to drug testing at the discretion of the clinical site and the student will be responsible for the cost of the drug testing. Ohio Dominican University and the Physician Assistant Program reserves the right to rescind admission to any student whose criminal background check returns positive for any conviction including, but not limited to, alcohol/drug related offenses.

In Summary in order to progress to clinical rotations, the student must have:

- No course grades below “C”
- Active CPR/ACLS certification
- Successfully completed the Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) in the PAS 706 Course
- Demonstrated appropriate professional attitude and demeanor
- Tuition/fees paid in full
- Submitted to Certiphi a record of a completed, satisfactory yearly physical examination and meet all compliance issues regarding up-to-date documented immunizations
- Successfully completed and passed a criminal background check scheduled by the PA program within 60 days of starting the clinical year at an additional expense of the student
- Approval by the Physician Assistant Progress and Promotion Committee

COMPETENCIES for the Physician Assistant Profession
(Originally adopted 2005; revised 2012)

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

In 2011, representatives from the same four national PA organizations convened to review and revise the document. The revised manuscript was then reviewed and approved by the leadership of three of the four organizations in 2012; the AAPA House of Delegates will consider the new version in 2013.

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

The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice
settings. Professional competencies for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice. Patient-centered, physician assistant practice reflects a number of overarching themes. These include an unwavering commitment to patient safety, cultural competence, quality health care, lifelong learning, and professional growth. Furthermore, the profession’s dedication to the physician-physician assistant team benefits patients and the larger community.

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

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

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

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

Patient Care
Patient care includes age appropriate assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of wellness. Physician assistants are expected to:
• Work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care
• Demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
• Gather essential and accurate information about their patients
• Make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment
• Develop and carry out patient management plans
• Counsel and educate patients and their families
• Competently perform medical and surgical procedures considered essential in the area of practice
• Provide health care services and education aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health

Professionalism
Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one’s own. Physician assistants must know their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PAs practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency, or mental illness. Physician assistants must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Physician assistants are expected to demonstrate:
• Understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
• Professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
• Respect, compassion, and integrity
• Responsiveness to the needs of patients and society
• Accountability to patients, society, and the profession
• Commitment to excellence and ongoing professional development
• Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
• Sensitivity and responsiveness to patients’ culture, age, gender, and disabilities
• Self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative

Practice-Based Learning and Improvement
Practice-based learning and improvement includes the processes through which clinicians engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, medical literature, and other information resources for the purpose of self-improvement. Physician assistants must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices. Physician assistants are expected to:
• Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team
• Locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients’ health problems
• Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
• Utilize information technology to manage information, access online medical information, and support their own education
• Facilitate the learning of students and/or other health care professionals
• Recognize and appropriately address gender, cultural, cognitive, emotional, and other biases; gaps in medical knowledge; and physical limitations in themselves and others

Systems-based Practice
Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which health care is delivered. Physician assistants must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that is of optimal value. PAs should work to improve the larger health care system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:
• Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
• Effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
• Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
• Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
• Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
• Partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery of health care and patient outcomes
• Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care
• Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
• Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide more effective, efficient patient care
• Utilize the systems responsible for the appropriate payment of services

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

RECEIPT OF DIDACTIC PHASE POLICIES & PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

This is to verify that I have received and read the Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program Policies and Procedures Handbook and accept responsibility for adhering to all policies, procedures, and regulations. I understand that a signed copy of this agreement will be kept on file with my student records and that I have the right to keep a copy of this receipt for my personal records upon request.

I further understand that violating patient confidentiality, making a false statement on a patient record or program material, or the commission of academic dishonesty may result in dismissal from the PA program. Additionally, I understand that failure to read this handbook does not excuse me from the requirements and regulations described therein. This handbook supersedes all previous editions of the Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant Program Policies and Procedures Handbook. I understand that the information in this manual is subject to change and I will be notified of any such changes should they occur.

Signature: ____________________________________________

Print Name: ___________________________________________
Appendix 2

Authorization for Release of Student Documentation for Clinical Experiences

Student Name

I hereby grant permission to the Physician Assistant Studies Program at Ohio Dominican University the authority to release all documentation I provide through myRecordTracker to various hospitals and clinical sites as needed.

I understand that requested documents may include health information, as well as background and drug screening. Authorization is in effect for the duration of the program and the information will be released from Ohio Dominican University directly to the authorized personnel at the various hospital and or clinic sites. I further understand that any additional copies that I may want for my own personal may be accessed through myRecordTracker.

I have read this form and agree to the disclosure of the information as described. I understand I may revoke this authorization at any time. I understand that if I revoke this authorization I must do so in writing and present my written revocation to the ODU PA Program. I understand that the revocation will not apply to information that has already been released in response to this authorization.

Student Signature

Date

Physician Assistant Studies
Ohio Dominican University
1216 Sunbury Road Columbus, OH 43219
Appendix 3

Authorization to Release Student Information for Clinical Experiences

Student’s Name: _____________________

Student’s ID# or last four of SS#: ______________________

I hereby authorize the Physician Assistant Studies Program at Ohio Dominican University the ability to release my information that is requested for clinical rotations to various hospitals and clinic sites as deemed appropriate and necessary.

I understand that this authorization is good for the entire clinical phase of the program and that the information will be released from Ohio Dominican University directly to the authorized personnel at the various hospital and or clinic sites. I further understand that any additional copies that I may want for my own personal use must be requested for in writing or in person and be accompanied by the standard payment.

Student Signature: ________________________