



**MOREHOUSE**

**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

Physician Assistant Studies

**Student Handbook**  
**Academic Year 2026-2027**



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**Section 1:  
Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) and  
The Morehouse School of Medicine  
Physician Assistant Program  
(MSM PA Program)**

## Morehouse School of Medicine Mission and Vision Imperatives

We exist to:

- Improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities
- Increase the diversity of the health professional and scientific workforce
- Address primary health care through programs in education, research, and service

With emphasis on people of color and the underserved urban and rural populations in Georgia, the nation, and the world.

### Vision Imperative 1: Translating Discovery Into Health Equity

**Goal 1.** Provide evidence that MSM discoveries improve health through relevance and proven outcomes – implementation science (Tx TM).

**Goal 2.** Leverage and develop novel technologies and mechanisms to better inform decisions affecting health.

**Goal 3.** Commercialize and disseminate MSM discoveries to advance health equity across the nation and around the world.

**Goal 4.** Generate and analyze big data to create solutions that lead to health equity.

### Vision Imperative 2: Building Bridges Between Healthcare and Health

**Goal 1.** Create and disseminate transformational models of care for vulnerable populations.

**Goal 2.** Demonstrate the value of achieving health equity as a national and international priority.

**Goal 3.** Design models of integration between health and healthcare.

**Goal 4.** Operate the MSM clinical enterprise as a model to showcase best practices in achieving health equity.

### Vision Imperative 3: Preparing Future Health Learners and Leaders

**Goal 1.** Develop innovative approaches to diversify the pipeline for health and science careers.

**Goal 2.** Establish an individual endowment for every MSM student.

**Goal 3.** Broaden diversity in the healthcare, scientific, and public health workforces.

**Goal 4.** Lead in training the next generation of physicians and allied health professionals, public health and community health leaders, and biomedical scientists who will create and advance health equity.

## **Welcome to the MSM Physician Assistant Program**

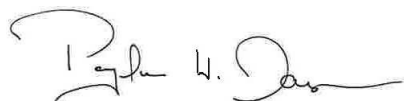
Dear MSM PA Program Student,

The Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) Physician Assistant (PA) Studies faculty and staff would like to extend congratulations to you on your acceptance to the program. We are delighted that you have decided to take this next step toward achieving your educational and career goals.

The purpose of this student handbook is to act as a reference for the policies and procedures of the Institution and the MSM PA program. Applying this information throughout your education will help you navigate the program successfully. However, please understand that changes in structure and policies may occur. If this should happen, you will be provided with the updated information as it is available.

Before reading this manual, it is helpful for you to understand the hierarchal structure of the PA program with regards to policies and regulations. MSM has developed regulations that establish the basic foundation for academic performance and policies across the campus regardless of the discipline studied. The PA program has developed additional standards to which all students must adhere to ensure respect and professionalism when interacting with patients, families, and medical center personnel. Additionally, the PA program has adopted specific technical standards that are based on the standards and competencies relative to the profession. As you go through this manual, keep this structure in mind. As a student in the MSM PA program you are expected to comply with each of these regulations, standards and policies.

Best Regards,



Dr. Pangela Dawson  
Founding MSM PA Department Chair/ Program Director

## Accreditation

### The Morehouse School of Medicine Regional Accreditation

Morehouse School of Medicine is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award doctorate and master's degrees. Contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, telephone 404-679-4500, or visit <http://www.sacscoc.org> for questions about the accreditation of Morehouse School of Medicine.

### Professional Accreditation

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Morehouse School of Medicine. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA Standards.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be September 2033. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.

The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditationhistory-morehouse-school-of-medicine/>.

### Accreditation Grievances

Any students wanting to file compliant related to the accreditation standards and procedures should make these complaints in writing to the MSM PA Program Director who will forward the compliant to the Dean of MSM.

### Morehouse School of Medicine Mission

The mission of the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program is to lead in the creation and advancement of health equity by empowering and educating the next generation of physician assistants to achieve academic, personal, and professional success and become committed life-long learners who will provide compassionate, high quality, patient-centered care to meet the primary healthcare needs of the underserved urban and rural populations in Georgia and the nation.

## Morehouse School of Medicine Program Goals

1. Foster an environment that ensures our education, research, and service initiatives address the primary health care needs of the underserved rural and urban communities across Georgia.
2. Engage learners in opportunities to explore transformational models of care for vulnerable populations that advance health equity.
3. Recruit, educate, retain, and graduate learners from underrepresented groups in the medical profession to increase the diversity of the Physician Assistant workforce.
4. Create a learning environment that promotes collaboration among interprofessional teams to ensure efficient, effective, and equitable patient-centered care.
5. Cultivate effective leadership skills that empower learners to identify and address priority local, regional, and global health concerns.
6. Support faculty development and engagement in teaching, scholarship, and service

## MSM PA Administration Faculty and Staff

Pangela H. Dawson, PhD, PA-C- Program Director, Associate Dean, Associate Professor

Folashade Omole, MD, FAAFP - Medical Director, Professor of Family Medicine

Donny Ard, Ph.D., MHA, PA-C- Associate Program Director, Associate Professor

Ebony Blackmon, DMS, MSPAS, PA-C- Academic Director, Assistant Professor

Stephanie Y. Banks, MPH- Community Engagement Director

Diane Dennis-Griggs, NP-C, Clinical Director

Mieshia Baker Dunn, MBA- Assistant Director of Administration

Crystal Moon, MMS, PAC- Clinical Assistant Director

Lynwood McAllister, PhD., MPA, MA Admissions Director

Sabrina Jackson Botts, DMin, MMSc., PA-C- Instructor II

Sharon Rachel, MA, MPH-Instructor

Tyra Willingham, MPH-Program Manager

Somilez Francis, MS- Grants Program Manager

Gabrielle Leverette, Clinical Curriculum Manager

## **Adjunct Faculty**

Christopher Ervin, MD  
Mahlet Wole, PharmD  
Daniel Roberson, PA-C  
Candace Wooten, PA-C

## **Section 2: Morehouse School of Medicine Policies and Support Services**

Students in the MSM PA program are expected to adhere to the school policies. In the same manner, they are covered by and afforded the same support services as other students in the school. Some of these offices and regulations are delineated below. For a more detailed explanation, please refer to the Morehouse School of Medicine Student Handbook.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

MSM is in full compliance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended (P.L. 93-380) which gives students access to their educational records. Individuals who have particular questions or wish to view a copy of the Act are urged to contact the Office of the Registrar or the Dean's Office. Students can arrange to review their records by making an appointment with the Registrar located on the first floor of the Hugh Gloster Building, adjacent to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs. For additional information regarding FERPA, see Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## **TITLE IX Non-discrimination and Anti-Harassment**

MSM is committed to providing academic and employment environments that are free from unlawful discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of protected characteristics, including race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, religion, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in the administration of the School's programs and activities. The School encourages any individual who feels he or she has been discriminated against or harassed on any legally protected characteristic to promptly report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator, who may be contacted as follows:

Title IX Coordinator  
Director of Privacy and Institutional Compliance  
NCPC A-422  
404-752-1846  
TitleIX@msm.edu

MSM's general policy against discrimination, harassment and retaliation applies to conduct by and perpetrated against all faculty, staff, administration, supervisors, employees, residents, students, applicants, volunteers, patients and visitors to campus, including guests, patrons, independent contractors or clients of MSM ("Person(s)") that is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (including ADAAA amendments), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

Under MSM's general policy against discrimination, harassment and retaliation, if a complainant is able and feels safe, he or she should clearly explain to the alleged offender that the behavior is objectionable and request that it cease. Additionally, if the

complainant is not able or does not feel safe confronting the alleged offender, or the behavior does not stop, or if the complainant believes some adverse employment or educational consequences may result from the discussion, he or she should contact the Title IX Coordinator or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator to make a complaint.

All members of the MSM community are subject to MSM's Sex/Gender Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy, including the investigatory and disciplinary procedures describe therein.

For additional information on the complaint procedures, refer to the following:  
[https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## **Safety and Security**

The MSM Department of Public Safety is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for faculty, staff, students and visitors where security is balanced with freedom of movement, and individual rights are balanced with community needs.

The Department of Public Safety strives to achieve this mission through a community friendly approach that enhances safety through the visibility of police and security personnel, preventive patrols, 24-hour accessibility, positive conflict resolution, and crime prevention and awareness programs. The department enforces school policies and established Federal and State Laws in support of the school's mission; and collaborates with local law enforcement and community organizations in fulfilling its mission.

MSM Public Safety Policy states that all students, faculty and staff **MUST** wear their MSM ID on the upper torso and visible at all times while on the main campus. **NO ONE** is allowed to open or hold open a door to any access controlled building for anyone not properly displaying an MSM ID except when escorting a personal visitor or visitor to your department. Employees and students coming in after hours and on weekends **MUST** present their MSM ID and sign in at the Lee Street gate.

MSM CampusShield is a mass, urgent notification system, comprised of a variety of methods by which the medical school can notify students, faculty and staff of an active, major campus emergency. You are automatically enrolled in the MSM CampusShield System via your MSM email. You must register your mobile device in order to receive emergency text messages. We strongly encourage you to register your mobile device. Participation via MSM email is mandatory. Information on registration can be found on the MSM Public Safety website.

To contact Public Safety call (404) 752-1795 Location: Ground Floor entrance of Parking Deck For additional information on the complaint procedures, refer to the following: <https://www.msm.edu/Administration/PublicSafety/>

## Immunization Policy

The MSM PA Program immunization requirements are based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for health professionals. The requirements also align with the institutional immunization policy, which requires students to provide proof of receiving a set of immunizations prior to enrollment or to receive the required immunizations within thirty days of enrollment. Students who have not received required immunizations will be provided those immunizations. The cost of immunizations will be covered by the immunization fees (previously the student health service fee). For additional information regarding the Institutional Policy related to immunization see the Student Handbook

[https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## Infectious Disease and Environmental Exposure Polices

It is the policy of the MSM PA Program to follow the guidelines and recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding Standard Precautions. Before beginning any clinical education experience through the MSM Physician Assistant Program, students must receive training regarding CDC Standard Precautions. Policies and procedures related to infectious disease or environmental exposures are listed in Appendix E.

Additionally, guidelines and principles outlined by the MSM Environment Infection Control Committee have been outlined in the MSM Infection Control Handbook at [Morehouse School of Medicine](#)

## Financial Services

The Office of Student Fiscal Affairs is responsible for providing qualified students the appropriate documents and counseling to secure financial assistance in the form of loans, scholarships, and grants. This Office is available to assist students in the financing of their medical and graduate education. All students may face financial worries, which aggravate the ability to learn effectively. There are various sources of grant and loan funds available to students eligible for Financial Aid. The amount of educational assistance that a student may receive is determined by the resources available to the applicant, the standard educational costs of a particular academic year, and the financial resources available to MSM.

For Additional information regarding any available Financial Aid, see MSM Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php) or the MSM Office of Student Fiscal Affairs website at: <http://www.msm.edu/FinancialAid/index.php>

Please refer to the MSM Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php) for detailed information on the following:

- Refund of institutional tuition, room and board charges
- Refund schedule
- Check cashing

## Health Services

Student health records are confidential and are released only with the written permission of students. MSM is committed to protecting the privacy of medical information on students.

Eligibility: Regularly enrolled MSM students with ID cards validated for the current semester are eligible for health care at the Student Employee Health Services (SEHS). A valid MSM student I.D. and proof of insurance must be provided before he/she can be seen.

For Additional information regarding Student Health Services, location, and clinic hours, see MSM Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## Library Services

The M. Delmar Edwards MD Library is located on the first floor of the Medical Education Building. All faculty, staff and students of MSM with a current and bar-coded MSM Identification Card may borrow from and use the Library's collection. In addition to the extensive printed and electronic book and journal collection, the MSM Library includes physical space that can be reserved for individual or group work. These include:

- A multi-purpose room and six group study rooms, which may be reserved ahead of time by filling out the signup sheet.
- Twenty-four hours study area consisting of 12 rooms and lounging areas (located in front of the Library). This area offers students access to the MSM wireless network and includes a refreshment center.
- Electronic Computer Laboratory (E-Lab) is located behind the circulation desk. The facility is used by faculty, students and staff learning to utilize information technology and Internet resources in biomedical research.

For Additional information regarding MSM Library Services and hours of operation see MSM Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php) or the MSM Library website at: <http://www.msm.edu/Library/index.php>

## **Section III: MSM PA Student Policies and Procedures**

## Technical Standards and Competencies

All students must be able to perform the technical skills listed below for successful completion of the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program.

### 1. Observation

- Observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences.
- Observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand, noting non-verbal as well as verbal signals. This ability requires functional vision, hearing, and somatic sensation.

### 2. Communication

- Relate effectively with patients, conveying a sense of respect, compassion, and empathy. A student must be able to communicate clearly with and observe patients in order to elicit information, accurately describing changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive verbal as well as non-verbal communications.
- Communicate with patients, their family members, and the health care team through oral, written, and electronic forms.

### 3. Sensory and Motor Coordination or Function

- Demonstrate sufficient sensory and motor function to perform a physical examination utilizing palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers.
- Execute prompt, precise, and appropriate responses to provide general and emergency care to patients.
- Manipulate equipment and instruments to perform medical procedures required to attain curricular goals and patient care (e.g. needles, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, tongue blades, intravenous equipment, gynecologic speculum, and scalpel).
- Perform basic laboratory tests (urinalysis, complete blood count, etc.), and diagnostic and therapeutic procedures (phlebotomy, arterial blood gas drawings, lumbar puncture, arthrocentesis, etc.).

### 4. Cognitive, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

- Conceptualize, integrate and qualitatively analyze information derived empirically and rationally for problem solving and decision-making. This includes abilities to reason, calculate, analyze, measure and synthesize information in a variety of settings, including those that may be urgent with increased transient stress and distractions.

- Comprehend three-dimensional relationships and spatial relationships of structures, including anatomical structures.
- Collect, organize, prioritize, analyze and assimilate large amounts of technically detailed and complex information within a limited time frame. This information will be presented in a variety of educational settings, including lectures, small group discussions, and individual clinical settings.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes

- Demonstrate empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, good interpersonal skills, interest and motivation as these personal qualities are all required during the educational training process and in-patient care.
- Possess the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, that includes the exercise of good judgment, prompt of all educational and clinical responsibilities, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective professional relationships with patients and member of the medical team.
- Possess adequate endurance to tolerate mentally and physically taxing workloads and adapt to changing environments, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.
- Demonstrate cultural competence in all encounters with peers, patients, and the families

## Competencies Definitions

The MSM PA Program has modified the list of domains and competencies developed by the four main PA Organizations: NCCPA, ARC-PA, PAEA, and AAPA. Additional domains have been added related to the program’s mission. Social accountability remains at the core of the Institution’s mission and as such has also been added to the list of competencies. These professional competencies include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge; interpersonal and communication skills; patient care; professionalism; practice-based learning and improvement; systems-based practice; as well as an unwavering commitment to continual learning, professional growth, and the PA team. The MSM PA Program has also implemented the use of Core Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) to supplement the professional competencies.

### Domain I: Patient Care

Provide patient-centered care that is compassionate appropriate, and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.

PC1	Perform all medical, diagnostic, and surgical procedures considered essential for the area of practice.
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PC2	Gather essential and accurate information about patients and their conditions through history-taking, physical examination, and the use of laboratory data, imaging, and other tests.
PC3	Organize and prioritize responsibilities to provide care that is safe, effective, and efficient.
PC4	Interpret laboratory data, imaging studies, and other tests required for the area of practice.
PC5	Make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment.
PC6	Develop and carry out patient management plans.
PC7	Counsel and educate patients and their families to empower them to participate in their care and enable shared decision-making.
PC8	Provide appropriate referral of patients including ensuring continuity of care throughout transitions between providers or settings and following up on patient progress and outcomes.
PC9	Provide health care services to patients, families, and communities aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health.
PC10	Provide appropriate role modeling.

## Domain 2: Knowledge for Practice

Demonstrate knowledge of established and evolving biomedical, clinical, epidemiological and social-behavioral sciences, as well as the application of this knowledge to patient care.

KP1	Demonstrate an investigatory and analytic approach to clinical situations.
KP2	Apply established and emerging bio-physical scientific principles fundamental to health care for patients and populations.
KP3	Apply established and emerging principles of clinical sciences to diagnostic and therapeutic decision-making, clinical problem-solving and other aspects of evidence-based health care.
KP4	Apply principles of epidemiological sciences to the identification of health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources, and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for patients and populations.

KP5	Apply principles of social-behavioral sciences to provision of patient care, including assessment of the impact of psychosocial and cultural influences on health, disease, care seeking, care compliance, and barriers to and attitudes toward care.
KP6	Contribute to the creation, dissemination, application, and translation of new health care knowledge and practices.

### Domain 3: Practice-Based Learning Improvement

Demonstrate the ability to investigate and evaluate one's care of patients, to appraise and assimilate scientific evidence, and to continuously improve patient care based on constant self-evaluation and life-long learning.

PBLI 1	Identify strengths, deficiencies, and limits in one's knowledge and expertise.
PBLI 2	Identify and perform learning activities that address one's gaps in knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes.
PBLI 3	Systematically analyze practice using quality improvement methods, and implement changes with the goal of practice improvement.
PBLI 4	Incorporate feedback into daily practice.
PBLI 5	Locate, appraise, and assimilate evidence from scientific studies related to patients' health problems.
PBLI 6	Use information technology to optimize learning.
PBLI 7	Participate in the education of patients, families, students, trainees, peers, and other health professionals.
PBLI 8	Obtain and utilize information about individual patients, populations of patients, or communities from which patients are drawn to improve care.
PBLI 9	Continually identify, analyze, and implement new knowledge, guidelines, standards, technologies, products, or services that have been demonstrated to improve outcomes.

### Domain 4: Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families and health professionals.

ICS 1	Communicate effectively with patients, families, and the public, as appropriate, across a broad range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.
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ICS 2	Communicate effectively with colleagues within one’s profession or specialty, other health professionals, and health related agencies.
ICS 3	Work effectively with others as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group.
ICS 4	Maintain comprehensive, timely, and legible medical records.
ICS 5	Demonstrate sensitivity, honesty, and compassion in difficult conversations, including those about death, end of life, adverse events, bad news, disclosure of errors, and other sensitive topics.
ICS 6	Demonstrate insight and understanding about emotions and human responses to emotions that allow one to develop and manage interpersonal interactions.

**Domain 5: Professionalism**

Demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles.

P 1	Demonstrate compassion, integrity, and respect for others.
P 2	Demonstrate responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest.
P 3	Demonstrate respect for patient privacy and autonomy.
P 4	Demonstrate accountability to patients, society, and the profession.
P 5	Demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to a diverse patient population, including but not limited to diversity in gender, age, culture, race, religion, disabilities, and sexual orientation.
P 6	Demonstrate a commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of care, confidentiality, informed consent, and business practices, including compliance with relevant laws, policies, and regulations.

**Domain 6: Systems Based Practice**

Demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context and system of health care, as well as the ability to call effectively on other resources in the system to provide optimal health care.

SBP 1	Work effectively in various health care delivery settings and systems relevant to one’s clinical specialty.
SBP 2	Coordinate patient care within the health care system relevant to one’s clinical specialty.

SBP 3	Incorporate considerations of cost awareness and risk-benefit analysis in patient and/or population-based care.
SBP 4	Advocate for quality patient care and optimal patient care systems.
SBP 5	Participate in identifying system errors and implementing potential systems solutions.
SBP 6	Perform administrative and practice management responsibilities commensurate with one's role, abilities, and qualifications.

### Domain 7: Interprofessional Collaboration

Demonstrate the ability to engage in an interprofessional team in a manner that optimizes safe, effective patient- and population-centered care.

IPC 1	Work with other health professionals to establish and maintain a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, ethical integrity, and trust.
IPC 2	Use the knowledge of one's own role and the roles of other health professionals to appropriately assess and address the health care needs of the patients and populations served.
IPC 3	Communicate with other health professionals in a responsive and responsible manner that supports the maintenance of health and the treatment of disease in individual patients and populations.
IPC 4	Participate in different team roles to establish, develop, and continuously enhance interprofessional teams to provide patient- and population-centered care that is safe, timely, efficient, effective, and equitable.

### Domain 8: Personal and Professional Development

Demonstrate the qualities required to sustain lifelong personal and professional growth.

PPD 1	Develop the ability to use self-awareness of knowledge, skills, and emotional limitations to engage in appropriate help-seeking behaviors.
PPD 2	Demonstrate healthy coping mechanisms to respond to stress.
PPD 3	Manage conflict between personal and professional responsibilities.
PPD 4	Practice flexibility and maturity in adjusting to change with the capacity to alter one's behavior.
PPD 5	Demonstrate trustworthiness that makes colleagues feel secure when one is responsible for the care of patients.
PPD 6	Provide leadership skills that enhance team functioning, the learning environment, and/or the health care delivery system.

PPD 7	Demonstrate self-confidence that puts patients, families, and members of the health care team at ease.
PPD 8	Recognize that ambiguity is part of clinical health care and respond by utilizing appropriate resources in dealing with uncertainty.

### Domain 9: Social Accountability in the Practice of Medicine

Prioritize and address community health outcomes through civic engagement, ethical leadership and global social responsibility while delivering equitable and sustainable health care based on the tenets of social accountability.

SA 1	Define, explain and apply the principle of social accountability in the practice of medicine in clinical and community settings.
SA 2	Define, explain and apply principle of social justice to healthcare in the practice of medicine in clinical and community settings.
SA 3	Identify, explain, and apply the physician assistant's commitment to health equity in service to underserved, vulnerable, disenfranchised, and special populations.
SA 4	Identify, explain and apply basic public health principles, practices, and sciences to the practice of medicine in clinical and community settings.
SA 5	Identify, explain and integrate determinants of health (social, political, cultural, environmental, biological, etc.) in the practice of medicine at the levels of the individual patient, family, community and society.
SA 6	Examine, explain and integrate principles of civic engagement, ethical leadership and global social responsibility in the practice of medicine in clinical and community settings.
SA 7	Assess and address the factors influencing the use of health services.
SA 8	Examine and influence health policy-making efforts at the local and national levels.
SA 9	Identify, explain and apply the physician assistant's role as health advocate in clinical and community settings.

## Morehouse School of Medicine Code of Conduct and Ethics

MSM PA Students are expected to maintain high standards of private and public conduct on-campus, off- campus, and at Institution-sponsored events. Student code of conduct policies found in the MSM Student Handbook

[https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php) and on the MSM Office of Compliance website

(<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/44523/index.html>) also apply to MSM PA Students. Violation of these and other generally accepted rules of behavior,

whether or not covered by specific regulations, may subject a student to disciplinary action. Claims of ignorance of acceptable behavior or of enumerated rules and regulations will not be accepted as an excuse for violation.

## Academic Integrity

It is the aim of the faculty of the MSM PA Program to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any MSM PA student to present as his/her own work that he/she has not honestly performed is regarded by the PA Program faculty and administration as a very serious offense and renders the offender liable to severe consequences and possible suspension. Please review the MSM, Student Handbook for additional information at:

([https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php))

## Professionalism

Physician Assistant students enter a field demanding high standards of ethical and personal conduct. It is expected that all students enrolled at MSM will conduct themselves according to acceptable professional standards. It is the students' moral duty to act appropriately in matters relating to ethical conduct. Professionalism will be documented in the didactic and clinical phases and assessed by course directors, instructors, faculty advisors, and preceptors. Standards of professional behavior include: 1. Excellence; 2. Accountability; 3. Interpersonal skills; 4. Ethical behavior; 5. Timeliness; and 6. Self-awareness. Any violation and disregard for professionalism may result in disciplinary action including dismissal from class/activity and/or written documentation (Professional Misconduct Evaluation Form) that will be recorded in the student's file. A third violation will necessitate a meeting with the PA Student Academic Progression and Promotion Committee (PA SAPP). If an incident is determined to be egregious, the PA SAPP committee and the Office of Student Affairs will be notified immediately.

For additional information on Institutional professionalism standards, refer to the MSM Student Handbook at [pg. 108]:

([https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)).

Professionalism is an integral part of PA education which is taught explicitly and implicitly within the curriculum. Students and faculty are expected to adhere to the <https://www.aapa.org/wp-> Department and Institution policies related to professional behavior.

## Breaches of PAS Code of Conduct

Any student who fails to meet the professionalism expectations of the MSM PA Program may be referred to the SAPP Committee. For any breach of the PAS Code of Conduct and Requirements at any time while enrolled in the MSM PA Program, the student may

be referred to the Student Academic Progression and Promotion (SAPP) Committee. SAPP may recommend:

- Professional probation
- Mentoring by faculty and/or additional resources
- Dismissal from the MSM PA Program

## Dress Attire/Code

Dress code for classroom and basic science years: Personal hygiene and dress should reflect the high standards of a health professional in training. It is important that all PA students' appearance reflect the professionalism of the career for which they are training and be appropriate for the professional setting in which our curriculum occurs. Dress and demeanor reflect respect for intergenerational interaction. Jeans, t-shirts, casual shoes (tennis shoes) and scrubs are permitted in laboratories and classroom settings. Open toed-shoes are acceptable for only the classroom. Unacceptable footwear includes flipflops/thongs, and slippers. Watches, wedding bands and/or engagement rings are permissible. Excessive bracelets or necklaces are not permissible. No more than two earrings per ear are permissible. Exaggerated dangling or oversize earrings or large grommets or colored plugs are not permissible. Piercings of body areas other than the ears or nose should be covered. Classmates, co-workers, and patients may be allergic to chemicals, makeup, perfumes, aftershave, and cologne. Use these products with restraint. Hair should be clean and arranged so as not to interfere with providing patient care. Fingernails should be kept trimmed and without nail polish during didactic and clinical year. All tattoos should be covered. Hats are not appropriate for inside use.

Head covers that are traditionally worn for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition are allowed.

The following should diligently be avoided for the classroom and all other occasions' specific to school and training requirements:

- Pajamas
- Unwashed or extremely unkempt clothing (including scrubs)
- Shoes with open back, sides, or toes
- Showing of tattoos
- Dark eyeglasses (indoors)
- Cosmetics \* Use makeup in moderation in a tone which denotes professionalism in a hospital. Fingernails may not extend more than 1/4 inch beyond the fingertip. **No acrylic, gel, gel polish, SNS (nail powder) or tips on nails, no artificial nails.** Students may wear the following color nail polish: clear, pearl, white. No jewels or designs in nail polish are allowed. **Eyelash length should be a natural length (no butterfly or eyelash extensions are permitted)**
- Low-cut and otherwise revealing tops or dresses for women

- Sleeveless tight-fitting t-shirts for men
- Undergarments purposefully visible
- Clothing with disrespectful graphics or writing
- Torn clothing
- Strapless, halter tops, tube tops, tank tops, or spaghetti straps
- Bare Midriffs
- Mini skirts
- Undergarments showing
- Emblems, lettering or pictures that pertain profane or derogatory messages
- Spandex pants or other tight-fitting clothing

Violation of the dress code will result in dismissal from class/activity and/or written documentation that will be recorded in the student's file. Repeated violations and disregard for guidance/instruction on appropriate attire violates professional conduct and will result in action from the Student Academic Progress and Promotion Committee.

## Identification Badge and White Laboratory Coats

All students will be issued a MSM identification (ID) badge, including name and photo, clearly identifying each student as a MSM PA student. This MSM issued ID badge is mandatory at all times and must be worn on either the white laboratory coat or clothes in the classroom, health fairs, and at clinical sites. A short, consultant style, white laboratory coat will be worn in simulated patient encounters and at clinical sites.

## Social Media Policy

MSM PA Program strongly values professional and ethical behaviors from all of its students at all times and in all settings. This includes the “persona” put forth by students when engaged in social media platform (e.g. Facebook®, Twitter®, Snapchat®, TikTok®, Instagram®, blogs, etc.) in which they are identified as part of the MSM PA Program in any form. For additional information on Institutional professionalism standards, refer to the MSM Student Handbook at: ([https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)).

Information of any kind placed on these platforms render an individual subject to the judgement of those who have access to the material and, in many cases, anyone whom the information can be shared with. Though these judgements may be positive, uplifting, or humorous, they can also be slanderous, damaging to others, and project an unprofessional image. Therefore, the MSM PA Program holds students, at any stage of their training, to be responsible for abiding by the same rules of ethical and professional conduct in a social media platform as they would in any other classroom, laboratory, and clinical setting as set forth in this handbook. A breach in professional conduct through social media will result in action from the Student Academic Progress and Promotion Committee.

## Attendance

The MSM PA Program recognizes that the academic success of individual students is related to their class attendance and participation. Students are expected to arrive on time and attend all class sessions. It is disrespectful and disruptive to fellow students and program faculty and staff to arrive to class late. In addition, missing required sessions disrupts the continuity of course content. Promptness in attending required lectures, laboratory, and clinical practice or internship sessions is an integral component to becoming a professional.

## Didactic Year

The following are the attendance requirements for the Didactic students:

- Attendance is mandatory for all classes (lectures, labs, program-related seminars, learning communities, internships, clinical rotations, etc.)
- Missing any course on that day is considered an absence for the day.
- After two (2) consecutive or cumulative absences in a semester, students must meet with their advisor to discuss the importance of attendance and any difficulties the student may have.
- Students may not exceed 24 cumulative absences (10% of instructional days), excused or unexcused, in the didactic year  
The maximum number of unexcused absences may not exceed two (2) absences and excused absences may not exceed five (5) during any semester.
- Any student in violation of the permitted number of absences may result in one or more of the following:
  - Meet with their advisor to discuss reasons for absenteeism and remediation.
  - Meet with the Academic Director to discuss their progression in the MSM PA Program
  - Appearance before the SAPP Committee to review the circumstances and determine the student's status regarding continued participation in the PA program. The SAPP committee can make recommendations regarding the student's progression in the program including deceleration or dismissal.
- It is the responsibility of the student to make up all coursework within one week of return from an excused absence. It is up to the course director to determine if and how make-up course work will be accepted for unexcused absences. For information regarding making up OSCEs and Practical exams, please refer to page 30 in the Student Handbook. For an I(incomplete) in a course please refer to page 30 in the Student Handbook.

The following are what the MSM PA Program considers to be excused absences students across the program. Excused absences require timely prior notification and documentation:

- Jury or Military Duty

- Disability-related absences of students registered with MSM Disabilities Services
- Illness (self and dependents) with a physician note (physician note is required after 2 consecutive absences in any class.)
- Death of immediate family members (to include children, parents, siblings, grandparents, great grandparents, aunt, uncle, cousin, caregiver, and parents-in-law)
- Loss of a pet whom the student is the primary caregiver
- Official participation in MSM-sponsored activities when the student represents the Institution as a critical participant
- Extenuating circumstances that instructors deem excused (Such classification is at the discretion of the instructor and is predicated upon consistent treatment of all students.)

\*These absences require timely notification to the course instructor.

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- Classes begin promptly at the scheduled time.
- Students are counted as tardy\*\* if they are not in their seat when the class session officially begins. **Every three incurred tardiness will result in an unexcused absence.**  
\*\* NOTE: When students arrive to laboratories late, they risk missing important information/directions that may adversely affect their grade. Instructors are not obligated to repeat directions for students when they are tardy.
- **After three unexcused absences, two percentage points will be deducted from the cumulative course score.**
- When a student accumulates 4 unexcused absences for a course the instructor will notify the program director and the attendance infraction policy (see below) will apply.

## Clinical Year

Students who are absent during clinical practice or an internship must notify both the program clinical practice coordinator/preceptor and the clinical director or clinical curriculum manager as soon as possible. Time missed during clinical practice, or the clerkship must be made up and this may result in a delay in graduation. For additional attendance requirements, please refer to the Clinical Manual.

- Students are counted as tardy\*\* if they are not in their seat when the class session officially begins. **Every 3 incurred tardiness will result in an unexcused absence.**  
\*\* NOTE: When students arrive to laboratories late, they risk missing important information/directions that may adversely affect their grade. Instructors are not obligated to repeat directions for students when they are tardy.

- **After three unexcused absences, two percentage points will be deducted from the cumulative course score.**
- When a student accumulates 4 unexcused absences for a course the instructor will notify the program director and the attendance infraction policy (see below) will apply.

## Exam Policy for Unexcused Tardiness

Purpose: To outline the procedure for students who arrive late to an assessment without valid excuse to ensure integrity of the exam process.

- **Definition of Unexcused Tardiness**  
Unexcused tardiness is defined as arriving after the designated exam start time without prior approval or a valid reason, such as a medical emergency or other unforeseen circumstances deemed acceptable by the course director.
- **Time Limit for Late Arrivals**
  - Students arriving within the first 15 minutes after the exam has started will be allowed to take the exam but will not be granted additional time beyond the scheduled exam duration.
  - Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will be considered absent, denied entry, and will receive a zero for the exam unless they provide an acceptable excuse.
- **Notification and Documentation**
  - Students who anticipate being more than 15 minutes late due to unavoidable circumstances must notify the course director and curriculum manager as soon as possible.
  - Documentation, such as a doctor's note, accident report, or official verification of an emergency, may be requested for consideration of an excused late arrival. If accepted, the student will follow the Makeup Exam Policy to schedule the make-up exam.
- **Consequences of Unexcused Tardiness**
  - Students who arrive late without a valid excuse will forfeit their opportunity to take the exam.
  - No make-up exams will be provided for unexcused tardiness unless otherwise specified by the instructor.
  - For the second episode of tardiness (on any exam) by a student in a semester there will be 5% penalty (reduction in grade) for that examination and verbal professional warning. For the third late episode in a year, there will be a 10% penalty for that exam and a written professional warning.

## Make up Exam Policy

Makeup exams must be scheduled and taken within one week of return from an excused absence. The exact timing of the makeup exam will be determined by the

Curriculum Manager and will be based on availability of proctors, and location. The make-up exam date will not alter the date of the previously scheduled exams.

## Attendance Infraction Policy

Program faculty will notify the student and the program director (face-to-face or email) when a student receives a 4th unexcused absence from a course. The program director will give the student an oral warning via a face-to-face meeting. If after the oral warning the student is tardy or accumulates an additional unexcused absence, the student will be dropped from the course with a grade of "F". An official letter will be written to the student from the program director.

## Virtual Learning Environment

Virtual learning is not intended as an optional alternative to in-class in-person learning. Pre-Authorization for the use of virtual learning and meeting link is required. 24-hour advanced notification is required for Teams access. Teams access will not be available to notices sent same day or outside of the 24-hour notice. Student should adhere to the zoom guidelines provided.

### Short Term Matter – Acute Issues

**Step 1:** Notify course director of absence from class. Recordings are available (as applicable), upon request, and/or missed class assignments maybe turned in for excused absences only. Zoom access is not available.

## PA Program Student Files

The MSM PA Program has established a Student File Policy to assure maintenance and confidentiality of all PA student records in order to document academic progress and promotion. Student files will also include documentation to support admissions criteria, health screening and immunizations, and performance while enrolled. The MSM PA Program Student File Policy will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). All records will be secured and only available to authorized personnel. The MSM PA program student files will be kept by the Program Director and Program Manager. Students will not have access to records and/or confidential information of other students or faculty. All records will be secured and only available to authorized personnel.

The Student Program Files will include the following:

- Admission and Enrollment Criteria
  - CASPA Full Application
  - Proof of Background Check
  - Proof of Health Insurance
  - Proof of Immunization BLS Certification
  - Technical Standard Acknowledgement

- Handbook and Policy Acknowledgement
- HIPAA Certificate OSHA Certificate
- Student Performance including Academic Progress
  - Pre-Clinical Year 1 – evaluation and grade reports
  - Clinical Year 2 Clerkships – evaluation and grade reports Commendations
- Remediation Efforts and Outcomes
- Administrative Action(s) – Academic/behavioral disciplinary action
- Completion of Graduation Requirements
  - Documentation that students have met requirements for
  - Completion (see Graduation Requirements below) Proof of completed e-Portfolio
- Local Current Student Addresses and Telephone Numbers

*Student health records will not be maintained by the program. All medical records (except immunization and tuberculosis screenings) will be maintained by Student Health Services.*

Additionally, the MSM Office of the Registrar has as its function the responsibility to maintain permanent academic records for all students. For additional information regarding Institutional Policy related to Student Academic Records see the see Student Handbook [pg. 43] [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## **Program Progression Requirements** (ARC-PA A3.15)

### **Requirements for Successful Completion of the Didactic Phase**

Successful completion of the Didactic Phase of the MSM PA Program requires that students have met all of the following:

- Demonstrated compliance with all policies and procedures published by MSM and the MSM PA Program
- Demonstrated compliance with the MSM PA Program’s professionalism and student code of conduct expectations
- Earned a grade of 70% (C) or higher for all didactic courses
- Minimum Cumulative 3.0 GPA
- Passed all practical and written pre-clinical examinations (OSCE)
- Achieved minimum competent threshold in required MSM PA Program all competency domains and EPAs.

### **Preclinical Examinations**

Prior to the completion of the Summer II semester, a comprehensive multiple-choice written examination covering concepts learned during the Didactic Phase will be

administered. Additionally, a practical examination (OSCE) will be given. The purpose of these examinations is to provide the Program with a measure of each student's base of medical knowledge and preparedness for the Clinical Phase. Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher to complete the preclinical examination. Students who earn a grade of less than 70% (C) will be required to remediate area(s) of deficiency (see below) and may be referred to the SAPP Committee for recommendations on progression in the program. Recommendations may include but are not limited to continuation of the AIP, retake didactic course work, or dismissal. Any student who fails the written exam (69% or lower) will not be permitted to progress to clinical rotations at the beginning of the clinical year. Students will receive an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) focusing on their area(s) of weakness from the preclinical written examination. Remediation readings and assignments will be created using resources available to the PA Program. Furthermore, students will be required to do the following:

- Students will be registered and enrolled in a Directed Study Course. This will be an additional financial assessment to the students' bill.
- Students are required to meet with the Student Success Coach weekly for four weeks during the start of the Clinical Year. Students are required to complete all assessments given by the Student Success Coach to fulfill the AIP.
- At the end of the four weeks, the Student Success Coach will recommend if the student is ready to retake the preclinical exam. To start clinical rotations, students must score 70% or higher on the exam retake. Failure to do so will result in students having to go before the SAPP Committee to discuss recommendations on progression in the program.
- Any student who scores between 70%-79% on the written exam will be permitted to progress to clinical rotations at the beginning of the clinical year. However, they will receive an AIP focusing on their area(s) of weakness from the preclinical written examination. Remediation readings and assignments will be created using resources available to the PA Program.

Furthermore, students will be required to do the following:

- Students are required to meet with the Student Success Coach weekly during their first clinical rotation.
- Students are required to complete all assessments given by the Student Success Coach that are tailored to the student's weaknesses. The AIP is fulfilled once a student has successfully completed assignments.

## Policy on Completing Missed Practicums and OSCEs

In the event a student misses a practicum or OSCE due to an excused absence, the student will be allowed a make-up during the following schedule:

- If the practicum or OSCE is missed before Mid-Semester (for specific dates, please refer to Activities Calendar), the student will be allowed a make-up during Week 8 of the Fall and Spring semesters and Week 5 during the Summer semester.
- If the practicum or OSCE is missed after Mid-Semester, the student will be allowed a make-up during Week 15 of the Fall and Spring semesters and Week 9 during the Summer semester.

### Progression with an “Incomplete” in a Didactic

During any given semester, students are required to complete all course work to receive a grade denoting completion of the course. In the event a student has outstanding assignments due to an excused absence and is unable to complete the work before the semester ends, the student shall receive an “I” in the course. Students will have until the end of the second week of the following semester to submit all incomplete course work to receive a final grade. Failure to complete the work in this timeframe will warrant the student to go before the SAPP Committee for review.

### Requirements for Progression to the Clinical Phase

Progression into the Clinical Phase of the MSM PA Program requires that students have met all of the following:

- Successfully completed the Didactic Phase
- Maintained a current health insurance policy (Any student who does not maintain a current health insurance policy during the Clinical Phase will be removed from clinical rotations until compliance has been established.)
- Provided proof of up-to-date status of all required immunizations and a negative PPD (or chest radiograph for conversions). Students who are not up to date on immunizations will not be allowed to progress to the Clinical Phase.
- Maintained a clear criminal background check
- Tested negative on drug screening as required by clinical rotation site(s)
- Provided the Program and clinical team with up-to-date personal and emergency contact information
- Completed any additional clinical rotation site requirements (credentialing process)

*A student who does not complete the first year of the program in good academic standing will be required to complete appropriate remedial work before receiving permission to participate in clinical rotations.*

## Program Graduation Requirements

To qualify for graduation from the MSM PA Program and be eligible to confer a Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies Degree, students must complete the entire PA curriculum within 48 months of matriculation:

- Complete all of the MSM PA Program approved courses with a minimum of a “C” grade or better
- Satisfactorily complete all PA program courses with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00
- Be in good standing with the program
- Satisfactory evidence of good interpersonal relations and professional conduct
- Achieved minimum competent threshold in all MSM PA Program competency domains and EPAs
- Successfully pass the pre-clinical examination
- Successfully pass all aspects of the summative exam (Comprehensive Exam II, PAEA End of Curriculum Exam, OSCE, Clinical Skills Exam)
- Achieve a final risk profile (predictive value) category at or above “concern.” (The final risk profile is based on the Summative (Comprehensive) Exam II and PAEA EOC Exam.
- Successfully complete all portfolio requirements
- Receive a favorable recommendation for master’s degree conferral from the Student Academic Progress and Promotion (SAPP) Committee, Program Director, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, the MSM Academic Policy Council (APC) and the MSM Board of Trustees.
- Settle all financial accounts with the Institution
- Complete all graduation clearance requirements as instructed by the Registrar

## Summative Examinations

Students will undergo a summative evaluation of cumulative knowledge and skills prior to completing the Program. This may include, but is not limited to, a summary evaluation of professional behaviors, board simulation/cumulative written exams, and clinical case simulations. Satisfactory completion of the summative evaluation is required for graduation. Failure to complete any portion of the summative evaluation will result in, at minimum, a remediation process with re-evaluation. If a student fails multiple attempts of the summative evaluation, the SAPP Committee may recommend dismissal from the Program. No student will graduate from the Program if he/she has been determined to have deficient knowledge and lacks the ability to safely treat patients.

\*All second-year students must remediate any components of the Summative Exam that are below the required pass score. Two [2] attempts are awarded before scheduling a meeting with the SAPP Committee for recommendations

## Student Academic Progression and Promotion Committee

### Overview

The Physician Assistant Student Academic Progression and Promotion (PA SAPP) Committee is responsible for establishing and upholding the academic, behavioral, and professional standards required of all students in the MSM Physician Assistant Program. The Committee monitors student performance each semester and makes recommendations regarding academic progression, remediation, deceleration, and dismissal in accordance with established program policies.

The committee also reviews and considers requests for remediation plans and/or recycling options (“deceleration”) and makes these recommendations to the PA Program.

### Composition

The PA SAPP Committee consists of a committee chair, administrator, selected full-time PA Program faculty members, the Department Chair, Program Director, the Medical Director of the MSM Physician Assistant Program, and designated institutional faculty. The Department Chair and Program Director of the MSM Physician Assistant Program serve as non-voting, ex officio members. The Committee Chair is a non-voting member, except in the event of a tie.

### Meetings

The PA SAPP Committee convenes on the second Tuesday of each month or as designated by the Chair. Meetings, such as student hearings, may be called to convene the committee on a case-by-case basis. All proceedings are confidential, and discussions are closed to individuals outside the Morehouse School of Medicine community. A program manager or designee records official minutes.

The PA SAPP Committee reviews each student's performance immediately following each semester, in accordance with existing academic, professional, and behavioral standards. It makes recommendations regarding program progression based on the semester review and the program progression criteria. As such, students who fail to meet the standards outlined in the Academic Standing policies may incur additional expenses, be required to complete additional coursework, have their program of study extended, or be dismissed. *Students dismissed from the Program for failure to meet requirements are not eligible to reapply.*

## PA SAPP Committee Process/Procedures

The MSM PA Program Student Academic Progression and Promotion (SAPP) Committee is responsible for proposing standards including academic, behavioral, and professional standards, to which students must adhere, and monitoring student performance according to these standards. Specifically, the Committee reviews the performance of each student immediately following each semester according to existing academic, professional, and behavioral standards to make recommendations regarding

program progression for each student based on the semester review and the program progression criteria. The Committee also receives and considers requests for remediation plans and/or recycle options and makes these recommendations to the full PA program faculty. The PA SAPP Committee consists of all full-time PA faculty members, the Medical Director and other institutional faculty. The Program Director serves *ex officio*.

In reviewing a student's performance, the PA SAPP Committee may discover deficiencies in the student's background that are causing difficulty. Additional course work may be required to prepare the student to succeed. The program required for this particular student, therefore, may encompass more than two years given in the curriculum outline. This may result in additional expense to the student for repeated courses or specially designed remediation courses. Continuance in the program requires that students meet all the criteria set forth in the Section on ACADEMIC STANDING. Students who are unable to meet program requirements and are dismissed may not reapply.

### **Meeting Scheduling and Notification**

- The SAPP Chair schedules meetings, distributes agendas to Committee members, and provides written notification to any student required to appear.
- Students will be notified of the meeting date, time, location, and reason for review **at least three business days in advance** via email.
- Students required to meet with the SAPP must appear **in person**.

### **Documentation and Notification**

- Students receive all decisions and require actions **in writing within 3 business days of the committee decision**.
- Students dismissed for failure to meet program requirements **may not reapply**.

The PA SAPP Chair will set the meeting date and time, provide an agenda to the SAPP members, and inform any invited student(s) of the date, time, and location of the meeting and the reason(s) for the meeting by e-mail and standard mail. Students invited to meet with the PA SAPP will be notified at least three business days prior to the meeting. Any student invited to meet with the PA SAPP **will be required to appear in person**. Minutes will be recorded and kept by a recording program manager or designee. Any student invited to meet with the PA SAPP will have the opportunity to answer questions and to submit any information they believe is relevant to their case.

All considered and discussed student cases are submitted to a vote with a simple majority ruling. The PA SAPP Chair will be a non-voting member except in the instance of a tie. All proceedings are confidential. The PA SAPP meetings are closed to anyone not in the Morehouse School of Medicine community. Decisions of the PA SAPP Committee will be documented in the minutes. Any sanctions will be sent to the student

in writing. Students who are dismissed due to failure to meet program requirements may not reapply.

## **Academic Failure and Progression Standards**

### **Didactic Phase Course Failures**

- **First Failed Didactic Course (grade below “C”)**  
The SAPP Committee may recommend one or more of the following:
  - Retake of the failed course
  - Academic probation
  - Remediation (faculty mentoring and/or supplemental academic resources)
  - Deceleration (recess into the next matriculating cohort to repeat the course)
- **Second Failed Didactic Course**  
The SAPP Committee may recommend:
  - Retake of failed course(s)
  - Academic probation
  - Remediation
  - Deceleration
  - **Dismissal from the Program**
- **Third Failed Didactic Course**  
Results in automatic dismissal from the Program.

### **Clinical Phase Course Failures**

- **First Failed Clinical Course (grade below “C”)**  
The SAPP Committee may recommend:
  - Academic probation
  - Remediation (faculty mentoring and/or supplemental academic resources)
  - Retake of the failed rotation/course (may not replace elective rotations)
- **Second Failed Clinical Course**  
The SAPP Committee may recommend:
  - Academic probation
  - Remediation
  - Retake of failed courses (may not replace elective rotations)
  - **Dismissal from the Program**
- **Third Failed Clinical Course**  
**Results in automatic dismissal from the Program.**

## Combined Course Failures

Failure of **any three courses in total** across the didactic and clinical phases results in **dismissal**.

## Academic and Professional Probation

### Academic Probation

Occurrences will be documented on the institutional transcript. Students are placed on academic probation when their cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 or when they do not meet other program progression policies.

- Students must meet with the SAPP Committee to determine an improvement plan.
- A work plan outlining required steps must be completed to return to good standing.
- Students may not remain on probation for more than two consecutive semesters and cannot progress to clinical rotations while on probation.
- Students on probation remain eligible for aid but must regain a 3.0 GPA the following semester.

### Professional Probation

Occurrences do **not** appear on the institutional transcript. Occurrences are documented in student files.

Professional probation is a program-level designation (not recorded on the transcript). It may be imposed for repeated [incidents occurring > two times] or significant professionalism concerns assigned to a student who has demonstrated behavior inconsistent with the PA Program's professionalism standards or Student Code of Conduct. It serves as both a corrective measure and a final opportunity for the student to demonstrate sustained improvement.

Students may be placed on professional probation for breach of the **PAS Code of Conduct and Requirements** at any time during their enrollment in the MSM PA Program. The students' conduct and performance will be closely monitored throughout the probation period.

Feedback will be documented as follows, and concerns will be communicated promptly to support timely correction:

- Verbal warning (i.e., face-to-face advising sessions or classroom encounters, etc.)
- Written warning
- Final written warning escalates to Program Director, SAPP referral, or both.

Depending on the nature of the concern, students on probation may be subject to:

- Additional check-ins or professionalism coaching
- Limitations on leadership roles, program representation, or extracurricular activities
- Other requirements that may be deemed necessary to support improvement

Failure to meet the terms of the Professional Improvement Plan, failure to demonstrate consistent progress, or failure to comply with behavioral expectations may result in further disciplinary action. This may include:

- Extension of the probationary period
- Suspension from academic or clinical activities
- **Referral to SAPP for consideration of deceleration or dismissal**

### Probation Restrictions

Students on any form of probation [academic/professional] must adhere to the following:

- May **not** hold positions in the Henry Lee “Buddy” Treadwell PA Student Society.
- May **not** represent the PA program at any local, state, or national professional medical meetings, fundraisers, or club activities.
- May **not** participate in non-PA program-sanctioned activities, i.e., institution-sponsored interest groups, H.E.A.L. Clinic, etc.
- **Must** complete all SAPP Committee recommendations.

### Duration and Restrictions

- Students may not remain on probation for more than two consecutive semesters; exceeding this limit may result in deceleration or dismissal.
- Students may not advance from the didactic phase to clinical clerkships while on probation.
- Failure to complete required actions within established timelines may lead to a recommendation for dismissal.

### Successful Completion

**Students who meet all requirements and demonstrate sustained improvement will be removed from probation and returned to good standing.**

Failure to adhere to MSM PA Program policies may result in academic probation. Students who are on academic probation must meet with the PA Student Academic Progression and Promotion Committee (SAPP) to discuss options for continuing in the program. The student's overall academic and professional behavior record will be reviewed to determine a disposition. A work plan will be created with required steps to

return from probation. Students may not be on probation for more than two consecutive semesters or they may be decelerated or dismissed. Additionally, students may not transition from the didactic phase to the clinical clerkships while on probation. Failure to successfully complete the required actions in the timeline determined by the committee may result in the SAPP recommending dismissal from the program to the Dean.

It may be necessary for students to repeat a course to be removed from academic or program probation. A student allowed to repeat a didactic year course will need to wait until the course is offered in the next academic year. A place may be held for the student. A student failing a Clerkship will be allowed to remediate the clerkship (per the SAPP Committee) while on program probation.

Students placed on academic probation at the conclusion of any given semester will qualify for Title IV federal aid. They must maintain an overall 3.0 GPA or higher by the end of the following semester and thereafter in order to maintain Title IV eligibility. For more information, students may schedule an appointment with the Office of Financial Aid at [studfisc@msm.edu](mailto:studfisc@msm.edu).

## Dismissal

The MSM PA Program reserves the right to **dismiss any MSM PA Student at any time while enrolled in the MSM PA Program**. Circumstances warranting such action may be of an **academic, professional, or legal nature**. Any student who is dismissed from the MSM PA Program by the SAPP Committee will be notified by the SAPP Chair and will be advised to complete the check-out procedure. The SAPP Chair will create a memorandum stating the change in the student's status and notify the appropriate faculty and staff. Failure to complete this check-out procedure will cause the MSM PA Program to withhold all records pertaining to the student's attendance. The check-out procedure is as follows:

- Complete an exit interview with financial aid
- Return their student ID badge and parking sticker to security

A student dismissed from the MSM PA Program is prohibited from any further attendance in class or participation in medical training. (See Readmission policy, below)

## Deceleration

### Didactic Curriculum

In the event a student fails one or more didactic courses, the SAPP Committee may recommend a deceleration. This allows the student to repeat the failed course(s) with the next cohort. All skills and knowledge must be maintained throughout the Program. Therefore, a decelerated student will be required to repeat all Program courses. The student is responsible for all tuition costs incurred by a deceleration. A second failure after deceleration may result in a dismissal from the Program. All program coursework is still required to be completed within a 40-month period.

## Clinical Curriculum

Failure to successfully complete the clinical or professional requirements of a SCPE may result in loss of the SCPE elective, repeating the SCPE post-graduation, LOA with remediation or dismissal from the Program. The student will be responsible for all tuition costs incurred by the failed SCPE.

## Academic Deficiency Policy

Student learners who earn an “D” or “F” grade in any course or clerkship are required to repeat the same course during the next semester the course or clerkship is offered. A student learner will be allowed to enroll in a course or clerkship for a second time without conditions, regardless of the grade earned in the course or clerkship previously. A student learner who fails a course or clerkship for a second time will not be allowed to re-enroll in that course for a third time, and the student learner will be considered for dismissal. When a course or clerkship is repeated, the original grade will remain on the transcript, but will be removed from the calculation of the grade point average.

**The new grade will enter into the calculation of the grade point average, even if it is lower than the grade originally earned.**

## Probation

### Academic Probation

Refers to the official status determined by the Institution. This will be documented on transcripts. A cumulative GPA of < 3.0 results in students being placed on academic probation.

### Professional Probation

Refers to an official status determined by the MSM PA Program but will not appear on future transcripts from the Institution. Professional misconduct incidents occurring > two times.

### Readmission

Students who are unable to meet program requirements are dismissed and may not reapply.

## Intervention and Remediation

### Early Identification and Academic Intervention Process

The Physician Assistant (PA) Program is committed to the early identification of students who may be experiencing academic, clinical, or professional challenges. Early intervention is designed to support student success by identifying performance

concerns promptly and implementing structured strategies before deficiencies progress to formal remediation.

## Monitoring of Student Performance

Course directors, faculty members, and clinical preceptors are responsible for monitoring student progress throughout both the didactic and clinical phases of the program. Student performance is evaluated through examinations, clinical assessments, course grades, professionalism evaluations, and other formative and summative assessments.

Performance data are reviewed regularly to identify students who may benefit from additional academic support or intervention.

## Early Identification Triggers

Students may be identified for early intervention when one or more of the following occur:

### Didactic Phase

- A cumulative GPA below 3.0
- A score below 70% on a practical examination
- Two or more examination scores below 70%
- A course grade below 80% at midterm during the didactic year
- A score  $\leq$  60% on a single written examination
- Faculty concerns regarding professional behavior, clinical performance, or academic progress

**\*Students earning a 75% or below on any written assessment are required to complete a self-assessment (SA) to review missed items.**

### Clinical Phase

- A cumulative GPA below 3.0
- A score below 75% on an End of Rotation (EOR) examination
- Failure of a second attempt at an End of Rotation examination
- A low predictive PANCE score
- Faculty concerns regarding professional behavior, clinical performance, or academic progress

**\*Refer to the Clinical Handbook for additional details regarding the intervention requirements and processes during the Clinical Phase.**

These indicators serve as early alerts that additional support may be necessary to ensure student success.

## Initial Faculty Intervention

When an early performance concern is identified, the student will meet with the course instructor, course director, or faculty advisor to review the assessment results and discuss contributing factors. The purpose of this meeting is to identify areas of weakness and develop strategies to improve performance.

Intervention strategies may include, but are not limited to:

### Didactic Phase

- Review of exam performance and **strengths and weaknesses reports**
- **Oral or written explanations** for missed examination questions
- **Self-analysis or reflective assessment** of testing performance
- Development of **targeted study strategies or learning plans**
- Faculty mentoring or advising
- Additional practice with clinical or technical skills
- Referral to academic support resources

**\*Students earning a 75% or below on any written assessment are required to complete a self-analysis (SA) to review missed items.**

Refer to the Didactic Tier Student Success Program in Appendix G

### Clinical Phase

Clinical year intervention processes vary and may be based on prior academic and professionalism records during the Didactic year.

**Refer to the Clinical Tier Student Success Program in Appendix H and/or refer to the Clinical Handbook for details regarding the intervention requirements and processes during the Clinical Phase.**

The intervention process is intended to provide timely support and promote development of effective learning strategies.

## Referral to the Student Success Program

Students who demonstrate ongoing academic difficulty will be referred to the **Student Success Program** for additional structured support.

The Student Success Program provides individualized academic coaching, structured study strategies, and additional support services to assist students in improving performance.

Referral to the Student Success Program occurs when any of the following are identified:

Refer to the Didactic, Didactic-Clinical Transition, and Clinical Tiers in Appendices G, H, and I.

## **Purpose of the Tiered Student Success Program**

The tiered Student Success Program is designed to:

- Promote **early identification of academic concerns**
- Provide **structured academic support**
- Facilitate **timely intervention**
- Support student success and retention
- Maintain academic standards and competency expectations

Through proactive monitoring and targeted support, the program aims to assist students in achieving competency in **knowledge, clinical reasoning, technical skills, professionalism, and patient care**.

## **Student Success Program (SSP) Tiered Support Model**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program utilizes a tiered Student Success Program (SSP) to identify students who may benefit from additional academic support during the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum. The SSP model is designed to promote early identification, targeted intervention, and structured support to ensure student success and progression through the program.

Students may move between tiers based on academic performance, faculty concerns, or demonstrated improvement.

Please refer to Appendices G, H, and I for an overview and schematic of the Didactic Phase, Didactic-Clinical Transition, and Clinical Phase SSPs.

## **Transition from Intervention to Formal Remediation**

### **Remediation Policy**

The Physician Assistant Program is committed to early identification and support of students experiencing academic, clinical, or professional challenges. Faculty members monitor student performance throughout both the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum to ensure students are progressing toward program competencies.

When deficiencies are identified, **early intervention strategies** are implemented to support student success. These strategies may include faculty advising, targeted content review, examination performance analysis, structured self-assessment, or other individualized learning activities designed to strengthen the student's knowledge, clinical skills, or professional behavior.

If early intervention strategies are unsuccessful, or if a student fails a course, clinical rotation, summative examination, or other required program assessment, the student will enter **formal remediation**.

Remediation is defined as:

a structured and formal process designed to correct academic, clinical, or professional deficiencies, followed by reassessment to demonstrate competency and readiness for continued progression in the program.

Students requiring formal remediation will be assigned a Student Success Coach to review performance and develop an individualized remediation plan. At this time, the student will also be referred to the **Student Academic Progression and Promotion (SAPP) Committee** for review.

## Purpose and Outcomes of Remediation

The goal of remediation is to provide students with an opportunity to correct deficiencies and demonstrate competency in the core domains required for physician assistant practice, including:

- Medical knowledge
- Clinical and technical skills
- Clinical reasoning and decision-making
- Interpersonal and communication skills

## Didactic Phase Remediation

During the didactic phase, course directors are responsible for monitoring student performance on written examinations, practical assessments, and other graded evaluations.

Students demonstrating ongoing academic or professionalism difficulties will be referred to the **Student Success Program** for additional support. Referral may occur when any of the following conditions are met:

- Failure of a course
- Failure of any component of the preclinical examination
- Failure to meet any program competencies

Students requiring formal remediation will meet with the **course director, Program Director (or designee), and faculty advisor** to develop a remediation plan. These students will also be referred to the **Student Academic Progression and Promotion (SAPP) Committee** for review and recommendations regarding progression.

## Clinical Phase Remediation

During the clinical phase, student performance is evaluated through **Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs)**, preceptor evaluations, clinical assignments, and **End of Rotation (EOR) examinations**.

Students scoring **below 75% on an End of Rotation (EOR) examination** will meet with the clinical course director or faculty advisor to review performance and develop a targeted improvement plan.

Students who **fail a second attempt at an EOR examination**, demonstrate persistent clinical performance concerns, or receive a **low predictive score on the Predictive Modeling tool** may be referred to the **Student Success Program** and/or the **SAPP Committee** for further review and guidance.

Clinical remediation may include structured independent study, targeted clinical skills review, reassessment of clinical competencies, or additional supervised learning activities designed to address identified knowledge or performance gaps.

## Formal Remediation Process

Remediation is formally required when a student demonstrates significant or repeated deficiencies in **academic performance, clinical skills, or professional behavior**, including but not limited to:

- Failure of a course
- Failure of an SCPE
- Failure of any component of the preclinical examination
- Failure of any component of the summative examination
- Repeated or significant professionalism concerns
- Failure to meet other programmatic competency requirements

When formal remediation is initiated, the student may be required to enroll in and successfully complete an **independent/directed study or remediation course** designed specifically to address the identified deficiencies. The remediation plan is developed with input from course directors, clinical preceptors, faculty advisors, and the **SAPP Committee**.

## Oversight and Progression Decisions During Formal Remediation

The **Student Academic Progression and Promotion (SAPP) Committee** reviews student performance at least once each semester, and more frequently when necessary. Based on a comprehensive review of academic, clinical, and professional performance, the committee may recommend actions including:

- Course remediation
- Retaking a failed course
- Academic probation
- Deceleration in the program
- Dismissal from the program

Students dismissed from the program are **not eligible to apply for readmission**.

## Student Appeal Procedures

Students may appeal a decision for dismissal made by the PA SAPP Committee.

- Other decisions of lesser gravity (e.g., a program of remediation for a course deficiency) made by the PA SAPP Committee are not subject to appeal.
- The student must present the basis for the appeal to the President/Dean in his/her notification of the request for an appeal. The only new evidence/grounds for reversal that the student may present to the President/Dean will be:
  - Failure of the PA SAPP Committee to follow proper procedures
  - Prejudice toward the student by faculty or administrative members of the PA SAPP Committee.

*If, in the President/Dean's judgment, either of the above criteria have been met;*

1. An appeal will be heard by the President/Dean within 10 working days of receipt of the student's written notification of intent to appeal; or alternatively, the President/Dean will uphold the PA SAPP Committee ruling, at which point the dismissal is final.
2. The President/Dean will determine the merits of the case based on a review of the information presented to the PA SAPP Committee.
3. At the President/Dean's discretion, consideration may or may not include a meeting between the student and the President/Dean to discuss the appeal
4. Neither witnesses nor legal counsel will be allowed in the hearing, although the President/Dean may request the presence of administrative support to record notes on the discussion.
5. The President/Dean's decision is final. It will be provided in writing to the student by registered mail and to the President/Dean, the Senior Associate Dean for Educational Affairs, the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, PA Program Director, and the Chair of the PA SAPP Committee.

## Leave of Absence

The MSM PA program recognizes that students may have medical emergencies, family emergencies, financial emergencies, maternity, call to active military service or other circumstances that may require a Leave of Absence (LOA). MSM's goal is to assist each student in achieving his/her academic goals in a manner that is consistent with his/her individual values and quality of life, and which accommodates, as feasible, extenuating circumstances that may arise during matriculation.

For more specific information regarding the circumstances and processes for a LOA, as well as conditions relevant to returning from LOA, students should speak with the MSM Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Students are responsible for understanding the implications of a LOA for financial aid, health insurance, and progress towards the degree.

The LOA will not be used to resolve academic difficulties or to finish incomplete coursework. A LOA will not be granted for academic failure. Additionally, the LOA will not be used in lieu of disciplinary actions to address violations of MSM's rules, regulations, or policies. A student who has engaged in behavior that may violate rules, regulations, or policies of MSM may be subject to the school's disciplinary process. A student may be required to participate in the disciplinary process coincident with the request for a LOA. A student permitted to take a LOA while on academic and/or disciplinary status will return on that same status.

Upon the committee's review of each student's academic record, a student may be required to take a leave of absence. For additional information regarding Institutional Policy related to Voluntary Leave of Absence the see Student Handbook [pg. 131] [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php).

## Withdrawal from the Program

A Student may withdraw or be requested to withdraw for academic, medical or personal reasons. Official voluntary withdrawal requires that the student submit a letter to the Dean of Student Affairs stating the reasons. Additionally, the student must clear all financial obligations to the school before the withdrawal becomes official and the school will release the student's transcript. Withdrawal means that the student will no longer remain enrolled as a student and their name will be officially and permanently removed from the roster. For additional information regarding the MSM Withdrawal Policy, see Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php). See section on Financial Policies regarding refund and time of withdrawal.

## Student Advising

Each incoming MSM PA Student is assigned a faculty advisor for the pre-clinical and clinical phases of the program. These advisors are the key support and primary contact during the MSM PA Program. Faculty advisor will:

- Assist students' understanding of policies and practices of the MSM PA Program
- Respond to questions or concerns about course requirements and expectations, performance criteria, academic standing, and professionalism
- Provide feedback to students on their progress in course requirements, faculty expectations, graduate competencies, and program goals
- Provide support for students' personal and professional growth (can include referral to appropriate professionals should difficult situations arise)
- Discuss academic performance in an effort to optimize students' learning experiences
- Assist students with plans to address issues of academic difficulties on an as needed basis

Students are expected to meet with their assigned faculty advisors at least twice every semester. Each session should be scheduled directly with the faculty advisor.

Please note that at **NO TIME** may MSM PA faculty, program director, or medical director act as the medical provider or behavioral medicine counselor of an MSM PA Student.

In the event student support is needed for a personal issue, the student will be referred to the appropriate campus department or office. Referrals or walk-ins are available to the Office of Counseling Services. These services are free and confidential to all students. For additional information regarding Student Counseling Services see the MSM Student Handbook

[https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## Student Success Program

The Student Success Program (SSP) is a structured support system that uses predictive analytics and academic performance data to identify at-risk students.

### Program Features

- One student success coach for the didactic year and one for the clinical year
- Collaboration with faculty advisors to create individualized academic improvement plans
- Ongoing assessment of learning styles, study habits, and performance

## **Entry Into the SSP**

Students may enter the SSP based on:

- Admissions variables\*
- Final Course grades
- PACKRAT, SUMM I, and SUMM II performance
- End of Rotation exam performance
- Post-remediation outcomes
- Committee referral
- Student or advisor request
- Summative Two exam performance
- Professionalism issues

The PA Program has also applied a predictive modeling assessment of student performance to future PANCE scores using various assessment measures. This process allows the PA Program to use success/risk categories to further support student performance in conjunction with the remediation processes. Principal PA faculty serve as academic advisors for students. Two faculty members serve as student success coaches, one in the didactic phase and the other during the clinical year. The student success coaches work with the faculty advisors to create and implement academic improvement plans as required per the remediation policies described in the PA Program Student Handbook. The coaches meet with each student to 1) assess their learning styles and current study habits and 2) create focused academic improvement plans that will be refined throughout the program based on subsequent academic performance. Additionally, students determined to be at risk by the PA Program Student Progress Committee at any point during the program will be tracked into the SSP.

Students whose subsequent academic performance improves may no longer be required to participate in the SSP. (Please refer to the SSP Entry Agreement Forms – Appendices J and K)

Students who are required to participate in the SSP must adhere to all requirements and academic improvement plans outlined by the student success coach. Failure to adhere to all requirements may necessitate referral to the PA SAPP committee with a potential of deceleration or dismissal.

## **Student Support Services**

MSM PA students may receive academic support in the form of guidance in study methods and further explanation of course content from faculty members and Course Directors. Students may self-refer or be referred by faculty members to the Office of Counseling Services or the Office of Student Learning and Educational Resources (OSLER) for further services including study skills, test-taking strategies, and counseling. Additionally, the Office of Individualized Learning and Accessibility Services

(OILAS) is available to support all MSM PA students with accommodations requests and needs to ensure an equitable and inclusive environment.

For Additional information regarding Institution student support services, see MSM Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

To contact MSM student support services use the following links:

- The Office of Student Learning and Educational Resources (OSLER) - <http://www.msm.edu/Education/OSLER/index.php>
- The Office of Counseling Services - [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/counselingservices/index.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/counselingservices/index.php)
- The Office of Individualized Learning & Accessibility Services (OILAS) - <https://www.msm.edu/OILAS>

## Student Counseling Services

All MSM PA program students have access to confidential and free counseling to help with personal, career, and academic concerns that can affect academic success and quality of life. The mission of the MSM Office of Counseling Services is to help ensure our student's adjustment to the physical, emotional and cognitive demands of graduate study in such a way as to ensure an excellent academic preparation, and an established, effective personal system of integrity and resiliency upon graduation.

While peers and personal resources are often a good start, objective and professional consultation may be needed. Seeking help early is strongly encouraged. We offer assistance with personal and academic challenges. Counseling sessions are confidential. All students are encouraged to talk over any issue of concern with a counseling center staff member.

Students may make appointments M-F (8:00AM – 5:00PM). Open services are also available on Fridays during the lunch period. Confidential sign-in will be available on Friday beginning at 10:30 AM for brief 15-30 minutes sessions between the hours of 12:30-1:30 PM.

**Location:** National Center for Primary Care, Office Suite Room 221 Director: Shawn Garrison, Ph.D.

**Counselors:**

Kendall Cantey, MEd, LAPC, NCC

Daisja Duke, MEd, NCC, LPC, CPCS

**Telephone:** (404) 752-1778 Email: [counseling@msm.edu](mailto:counseling@msm.edu)

**For additional information regarding Student Counseling Services, see Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)**

## Student Employment

Experience has shown that most students are unable to give adequate effort to participating and studying if they continue employment while enrolled in an intensive and accelerated program of study. Therefore, employment during a student's course of study and training while enrolled in the Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) Physician Assistant (PA) program is strongly discouraged. We dissuade students from seeking employment while matriculating through the program. The program will not make accommodations for students who choose to work. If employment is essential, then the PA Program Director should be informed in writing of the student's work schedule. Class meetings missed due to work schedules will be documented as an absence. Absences in excess of four for any course may result in faculty discipline, including receiving an "F" grade in the course and dismissal from the program.

To ensure students understand the academic risks of choosing to work while enrolled in the MSM PA program, a Student Employment Form must be read, initialed, and signed. Students must indicate their weekly work schedule and anticipated hours. This form will be added to the student's official program file.

## Student Employment by the Program

Students may not work for the program regardless of their particular skills or prior experience. Neither may students substitute for faculty as instructor or instructor of record for a course or activity.

## PA Student Society

The **Henry Lee "Buddy Treadwell PA Student Society"** is the PA student society (PASS) and the official voice for MSM PA Students. The PASS is open to all MSM PA Students and welcomes proposals and participation from the entire PA Student body. PASS is responsible for promoting the PA profession; acting as a liaison between the PA student body and the MSM PA program faculty and staff; working to improve the quality of life for all students; supporting student activities; and dispersing funds for student activities, charitable giving, scholarships, and other areas as appropriate. Student activity fees that are collected are to be used in accordance with University policy. Any funds remaining in the PASS account of a class one year after graduation will be turned over to the next class to be managed by the SGA. Elections for the PASS are held each summer shortly after the new class matriculates into the Program. Students may not hold more than one elected position at the same time. Students serving as PASS officers must be in good standing in the Program. Any PASS officer placed on academic and/or professional probation by the SAPP Committee will be required to resign.

The PA Program Director will appoint a faculty advisor to the PASS. The advisor will assist students with the process of officer selection, Bylaws, modifications, and any other matter related to governance. The faculty advisor will also assist class leadership in organization and implementation of class activities. The PASS Class President or

designee will be invited to attend PA Program Faculty Meetings, with the exception of closed sessions for discussion of confidential matters.

Each PA class will elect PASS officers to include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, Representatives to state and national associations, and any other officers described in the Bylaws. The officers will schedule meetings throughout the semester to address any issues. The President and Vice-President of each class serve as representatives to the Morehouse School of Medicine Student Government Association (MSM-SGA) and convey information to and from the classes.

The Morehouse School of Medicine Student Government Association (MSM-SGA) is formed to unite and strengthen the voice of the student body. It serves to facilitate communication among individual classes, years, or programs and to organize the student body as a pre-professional group. The MSM- SGA Constitution is intended to complement the student manual as an expression of freedom of speech and the freedom to organize. For information about the MSM-SGA of the Institution see the Student Handbook, [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php).

## **Student Awards**

### **Academic Excellence/Program Director's List**

Full-time MSM PA student learners who demonstrate academic excellence will be placed on the "Program Director's List." To qualify, student learners must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher with no incomplete grades or grades below C in the preceding semester. Student learners who are on any form of probation and/or are not carrying a full course load are not eligible. Qualified student learners will receive a letter of academic excellence.

### **Student Grievance Policy**

The MSM PA Program has established a process to assure timely response to formal and informal complaints from students, while adhering to all Institution policies and regulations. The program policy for internal (informal) complaints indicates that if a student has a problem or concern involving a course he/she should do the following:

1. First, discuss the issue with the course director/instructor (listed on the first page of each course syllabus) first. If the concern is not resolved, then:
2. Discuss the issue with the faculty advisor. If the concern is not resolved, then:
3. Discuss the issue with the PA Program Director. If the concern is not resolved, then:
4. Begin the formal grievance process as outlined in the MSM Student Handbook [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

If the problem or concern does not involve a course the student should:

1. Discuss the issue with the faculty advisor or other PA faculty. If the concern is not resolved, then:
2. Discuss the issue with the PA Program Director. If the concern is not resolved, then:
3. Begin the formal grievance process as outlined in the MSM Student Handbook. [https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

The Office of Student Affairs may be involved at any point in the process outlined above.

MSM desires to resolve student grievances, complaints, and concerns in an expeditious, fair and amicable manner. Complaints regarding any aspect of operations should be filed internally to MSM authorities first and then, if necessary, to external authorities. Contact information for filing complaints is given below.

## Internal MSM Contacts for General Consumer and Other Complaints

### Academic Affairs

Dr. Ngozi Anachebe  
Executive Vice Dean for Academic Affairs  
[nanachebe@msm.edu](mailto:nanachebe@msm.edu)

### Educational Affairs

Dr. Martha Elks  
Senior Associate Dean, Education and UME  
[melks@msm.edu](mailto:melks@msm.edu)

### Clinical Affairs

Dr. Errol Crook  
Chief Medical Officer, Senior  
Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs  
[ecrook@msm.edu](mailto:ecrook@msm.edu)

### Compliance

Alecia Bell, JD, MPH  
Chief Compliance Officer (Interim)  
[ambell@msm.edu](mailto:ambell@msm.edu)

### Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Angela Freeman  
Senior Director of Academic Operations  
[AFreeman@msm.edu](mailto:AFreeman@msm.edu)

### **Title IX**

Marla Thompson, MPA Title IX Coordinator  
[mthompson@msm.edu](mailto:mthompson@msm.edu)

### **Facilities and Management**

Michelle, McGuire  
Executive Vice President for Operations and Business  
[mmcguire@msm.edu](mailto:mmcguire@msm.edu)

For Additional information regarding the Institution procedures for Informal and Formal complaints, see Student Handbook

[https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## **Compliance Hotline**

MSM is an organization with strong values of responsibility and integrity. Students are encouraged to submit reports in instances where you believe violations stated in written standards and policies have occurred. Students can place an anonymous report by phone or Internet to a reporting system that is administered and managed by a third party. This comprehensive reporting tool allows the Office of Compliance and Corporate Integrity to proactively address compliance concerns and potential violations of regulations and policies. All information provided will remain confidential.

To make a report:

- Call the toll free 24-hour phone at 855-279-7520 (in both English and Spanish).  
or
- Use the 24-hour website [is www.msm.ethicspoint.com](http://www.msm.ethicspoint.com)

## **Registration**

Registration for all MSM PA students will occur on a semester basis. Click on Admissions/Student Affairs, Office of the Registrar, then Registration to begin the process. All students are required to register during the appropriate registration period. Registration for any year is not complete until all published procedures have been complied with and until satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Business Office for payment of tuition and other financial responsibilities.

If registration is not completed at the designated time, a late registration fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75) will be charged. Should circumstances result in a delay in registration beyond the student's control, a written appeal may be submitted to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. A student may not attend class or clerkships nor receive credit for such unless registered.

For Additional information regarding the Institution procedures for student registration, see Student Handbook.

[https://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/StudentHandbooks.php](https://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/StudentHandbooks.php)

## **Section IV: MSM PA Program Curriculum**

## PA Program Curriculum

The curriculum is based on an organ systems approach with a spiral of course material from basic and foundational to material of increased complexity and depth. It incorporates a problem-solving approach, stimulating analytical and critical thinking as well as effective analysis and utilization of resource materials. The curriculum has been designed by the faculty utilizing resources including the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education, the NCCPA

Curriculum Blueprint, the Association of American Colleges (AACSB) Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs), evolving health care trends, and the mission and philosophy of the Program and Institution.

The curriculum incorporates core competencies based on the ARC-PA Accreditation Standards. These include medical knowledge, interpersonal skill, clinical skills, technical skills, professional behavior, clinical reasoning, and problem-solving abilities. These attributes are important and necessary to practice as a Physician Assistant. Students will be assessed using the following methodologies:

Characteristic	Assessment
Medical Knowledge	Written (electronic) examinations and quizzes
Clinical Skills Technical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group activities</li> <li>• Laboratory practicums</li> <li>• Objective Structured Clinical Encounters (OSCEs)</li> <li>• 3-D mannequin simulation</li> <li>• Clinical procedure simulators</li> <li>• Practical clinical experience</li> </ul>
Interpersonal Skills Professional Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small and large group discussion and activities</li> <li>• Observation of each student's behaviors during classroom activities</li> <li>• Simulated patient encounters</li> <li>• Interactions with faculty, staff, and peers</li> <li>• Adherence to the Institution's and Program's policies as outlined in the respective handbooks.</li> </ul>

The MSM PA Program consists of seven continuous semesters of graduate level training for a total of 103 semester credit hours. The curriculum meets the goals and missions of the PA Program, provides students with a generalist medical model, and stresses problem-solving, critical thinking, and the importance of patient-centered care and collaboration. Traditional classroom lectures are supplemented with interactive, case-based and problem-based learning experiences in small group sessions.

Additional methodologies include patient simulation lab experiences, standardized patients, and mock medical procedure training.

Semester	Didactic Curriculum	Credit Hours
Summer Semester (Jun–Aug)	PAS 610 Human Anatomy	3
	PAS 620: Physiology	3
	PAS 612 Medical Interviewing	1
	PAS 615 Introduction to Evidence-Based Medicine	2
	PAS 616 Medicine & Society I	2
	<b>Total: 11</b>	
Fall Semester (Aug-Dec)	PAS 624 Pharmacology & Therapeutics I	2
	PAS 626 Integrated Clinical Medicine and Regional Anatomy I	7
	PAS 613 Physical Diagnosis I	2
	PAS 629 Diagnostic Methods I	2
	PAS 611 Scientific Foundations	3
	PAS 617 Medicine & Society II	1
	<b>Total: 17</b>	
Spring Semester (Jan-May)	PAS 625 Pharmacology & Therapeutics II	2
	PAS 627 Integrated Clinical Medicine and Regional Anatomy II	7
	PAS 630 Diagnostic Methods II	2
	PAS 618 Medicine & Society III	1
	PAS 670 Clinical Integration Seminar I	3
	PAS 632 Physical Diagnosis II	2
	<b>Total: 17</b>	
Summer Semester (Jun-Aug)	PAS 631 Special Populations	5
	PAS 628 Integrated Clinical Medicine and Regional Anatomy III	3
	PAS 619 Medicine & Society IV	1
	PAS 614 Behavioral Medicine & Counseling	2
	PAS 671 Clinical Integration Seminar II	2
	<b>Total: 13</b>	
	<b>Preclinical Year Total</b>	<b>58</b>

The second year of the program includes 40 weeks of supervised clinical practice that expose learners to many different aspects of clinical medicine. These experiences provide opportunities for students to acquire the competencies needed for clinical PA practice. Each student is assigned to a clinical preceptor.

## Clinical Year Curriculum

Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPE) in the following specialties: Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Women's Health, Behavioral Medicine & Psychiatry, Emergency Medicine, General Surgery, and Elective.

The clinical clerkship sequence will be based on preceptor availability and will vary among PA students.

Semester	Didactic Curriculum	Credit Hours
	PAS 740 Family Medicine Clerkship	8
	PAS 741 Internal Medicine Clerkship	8
	PAS 742 Pediatrics Clerkship	4
	PAS 743 Emergency Medicine Clerkship	4
	PAS 744 Behavioral Medicine & Psychiatry Clerkship	4
	PAS 745 General Surgery Clerkship	4
		<b>Total: 32</b>
	PAS 746 Women's Health Clerkship	4
	PAS 747 Elective Clerkship	4
	PAS 748 Professional Seminar I	1
	PAS 749 Professional Seminar II	1
	PAS 750 Professional Seminar III	1
	PAS 751 Capstone Project	2
		<b>Total: 13</b>
	<b>Clinical Year Total</b>	<b>45</b>
	<b>Program Total</b>	<b>103</b>

## Required Medical Equipment

Each PA student should own, at minimum, the following equipment as soon as possible after matriculation into the Program

Required equipment list:

- High-quality stethoscope (e.g. Littman except select or lightweight; recommend with a bell and diaphragm)
- High quality oto-ophthalmoscope (e.g. Welch-Allyn Classic Set. Not pocket size, PanOptic not necessary)
- Reflex Hammer- triangle shape preferred
- Tuning fork 512 mHz, 128 mHz- silver preferred
- Penlight
- Tape measure- retractable
- Blood pressure gauge (with at least adult /size cuff)
- Safety glasses
- Rosenbaum eye Chart
- 6 inch clear plastic ruler
- Oral thermometer with covers
- Analog watch (not an Apple watch)
- Pediatric and adult-sized otoscope speculum tips

Each student must implement universal precautions and use personal protective equipment (gown, protective eyewear, etc.) when appropriate during both clinical contact with patients and simulated training skills practice. Training in universal precautions will be provided during the Program. A student who is uncertain about the proper protocol, or use of such equipment during didactic or clinical year should contact the activity coordinator for additional instruction prior to any further clinical experience or patient contact. Students should notify the Clinical Director if a clinical site has inadequate universal precaution policies, equipment, or protocols.

Any student with a known latex allergy or having symptoms consistent with latex allergy should notify the Program immediately. It is advised to avoid any latex product and consult a qualified allergist for evaluation at the student's expense. Any student found to be latex allergic must determine whether to remain in the Program, acknowledging the risk of becoming ill even after reasonable precautions are taken and accommodations are made. If the student elects to continue his/her education in the Program, the student must realize that he/she assumes any responsibility and risk posed by the allergy. If the student remains in the program, they are responsible for the cost associated with purchasing latex free materials such as nitrile gloves.

## Grading Scale

The Program uses the following grading scale to determine letter grades for each course.

Percent Grade	Letter Grade	Interpretation
90 – 100 %	A	Superior
80 – 89 %	B	Satisfactory
70 – 79 %	C	Acceptable
60 – 69%	D	Unacceptable
< 60%	F	Failure

## Final Grade Rounding Policy

At the end of the semester, final course grades will be rounded to the nearest whole point. Course directors will round any final grade to the next letter grade if the final percentage is  $\geq 0.5$  points of the next letter grade. In the event a student has a final percentage grade that is  $\geq 0.5$  points of the next letter grade, the faculty will round this percentage to the nearest letter grade. However, if the final percentage grade is  $\leq 0.4$  points, that final grade will not be rounded up to the next letter grade.

- A final grade between 89.5-89.9% shall be rounded to a 90% (A), whereas a final grade between 89.1-89.4% will remain an 89% (B)
- A final grade between 79.5-79.9% shall be rounded to an 80% (B), whereas a final grade between 79.1-79.4% will remain a 79 (C)
- A final grade between 69.5-69.9% shall be rounded to a 70% (C), whereas a final grade between 69.1-69.4% will remain a 69% (D) d. A final grade between 59.5-59.9% shall be rounded to a 60% (D), whereas a final grade between 59.1-59.4% will remain a 59% (F)

## Academic Standing

An MSM PA Students in good academic standing will have met all the following criteria:

- Earned a grade of 70% (C) or higher in all didactic and clinical courses required by the MSM PA Program (or Independent Study course grade for repeat/replacement course grade)
- Met the MSM PA Program professionalism and student code of conduct expectations.
- Complied with all MSM Institutional and PA Program policies and procedures.

## Change in Name or Address

It is essential that information submitted on admission, registration and other forms be accurate and consistent since enrollment, loan applications and information submitted by the Registrar for licensure and the practice of medicine depend upon it. Each student is held responsible for utilizing his or her full legal name as shown on a birth certificate. Each student is responsible for reporting to the Registrar any changes in information, especially name, local address and telephone number. MSM cannot be responsible for a student's non-receipt of information if it has not been properly notified of changes.

Additionally, all MSM PA students must notify the Program Manager, Academic Director (during the Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Director (during the Clinical Phase), if their personal and/or emergency contact information changes.

## HEAL Clinic Policy

Morehouse School of Medicine, Physician Assistant (MSM PA) students volunteering in the HEAL Clinic will meet the following guidelines:

- Meet all requirements set forth by MSM for those health care related students volunteering in the HEAL Clinic;
- Be in good academic and Professional standing prior to and during the proposed time of volunteering:  
Should a PA student fall below academic requirement during scheduled volunteerism, he/she will be asked to cancel/reschedule this time until after academic requirements are met;
- Be approved by the PA Program Director (or authorized personnel);
- Be approved by the HEAL Medical Director (or authorized personnel);
- Volunteer hours may be limited to allow other PA students to participate within a given time frame (academic semester/year);
- Maintain PA professionalism throughout volunteer experience, Should a specific PA students professionalism be called into question, the PA Program Director will be notified and appropriate action will be taken,

# Appendices

## **Appendix A: Receipt of the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Student Handbook**



### **Receipt of the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Student Handbook**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Student Handbook. I further acknowledge that I am responsible for all the information contained within this handbook and I will abide by the policies, rules and regulations set forth thereof.

I further acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Morehouse School of Medicine Student Handbook and that I am responsible for the policies rules and regulations set forth in that publication.

I understand that failure to comply with the policies; rules and procedures set forth in these handbooks may result in disciplinary action, suspension, or termination from the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program.

---

Student Name (printed legibly)

---

Student Signature

---

Date

## Appendix B: Participation as Peer to Peer Examinations



### Participation as Peer to Peer Examinations

I understand that as part of my experience in the Morehouse School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program, I will be required to participate as a living subject and an examiner during the Didactic Phase of the Program. The program faculty expect that students will be willing, professional, and cooperative in participating in the physical examination courses and practicums.

I understand that I need to come to laboratories prepared and that I may be required to partially disrobe. I also understand that shorts will be required when examining the lower extremities. Upper body, including thorax, abdomen, and extremities will be examined. Males should remove their shirts and women should wear sports bras, so they will be able to remove their shirts.

I understand that participation will not include breast or genitalia examinations. These examinations will be learned with the use of mannequins and/or professional patients.

I understand that faculty expect all students to dress as listed above for the designated activities and be willing to be inspected, palpated, percussed, and auscultated by their peers.

I acknowledge that during the course of my peer-to-peer engagement, I may have access to confidential information,. I agree not to disclose, share, or use any such information for personal gain or harm of the student for the benefit of oneself or others. If confidentiality is breech, it will result in disciplinary action or legal proceedings, or both.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by this policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (printed legibly)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**I opt out of participation for personal reasons.** Please check the box if applicable.

## Appendix C: Acknowledgement of Typical Demands for the PA Program



### Acknowledgement of Typical Demands for the PA Program

#### Typical Mental Demands

The MSM PA student must possess the ability to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Comprehend, retain, analyze and integrate a large amount of information related to medicine and process this information in an appropriate amount of time so as to not negatively impact patient care
- \_\_\_\_\_ Engage in long hours of study in the classroom, labs, and clinical rotations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Respond appropriately to constructive feedback
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communicate effectively with students, instructors, clinicians and patients in written, and oral format.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Participate in written and practical examinations, procedures, and demonstrations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Collect patient data, perform the physical examination, formulate a treatment plan, and provide patient education

#### Typical Physical Demands

The MSM PA student must possess:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Normal or corrected to normal visual and hearing acuity, hand and eye coordination, and manual dexterity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Full range of motion including the capacity to sit for long periods in classroom
- \_\_\_\_\_ The ability to assist patients in range of motion
- \_\_\_\_\_ The ability to stand and walk for long periods of time in the hospital or clinic settings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Capability to work long hours, stressful mental and physical situations, and exposure to various body fluids and communicable diseases

### Typical Working Conditions

The MSM PA student must be able to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Work long hours in the clinical and classroom environments with exposure to individuals with various beliefs, hostile individuals, those with disabilities, communicable diseases, radiation, and toxic substances
- \_\_\_\_\_ Examine and interact with diverse patient populations with different cultural beliefs, varied personal hygiene practices, and a wide variety of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions.

### Student Performance Requirements

The MSM PA student will be required to perform:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Work in medical, surgical, emergency, ob/gyn, along with outpatient and inpatient settings on campus and off campus
- \_\_\_\_\_ Full time didactic and clinical training
- \_\_\_\_\_ Various medical and surgical procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-, peri-, and postoperative care

The MSM PA Student will be required to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrate professionalism, and ethical demeanor, and an understanding of the medical law as it relates to physician assistants and the health care field
- \_\_\_\_\_ Display an ability for mental and physical stamina by long hours in both the classroom and clinical settings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrate knowledge, skills, and competencies to the level required by faculty
- \_\_\_\_\_ Participate in community services
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete other duties to demonstrate aptitude for physician assistant profession

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (printed legibly)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix D: Student Employment Form



### Student Employment Form

Experience has shown that most students are unable to give adequate effort to participating and studying if they continue employment while enrolled in an intensive and accelerated program of study. Therefore, employment during a student's course of study and training while enrolled in the Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) Physician Assistant (PA) program is strongly discouraged. We dissuade students from seeking employment while matriculating through the program. The program will not make accommodations for students who choose to work. If employment is essential, then the PA Program Director should be informed in writing of the student's work schedule. Class meetings missed due to work schedules will be documented as an absence. Absences in excess of four for any course may result in faculty discipline, including receiving an "F" grade in the course and dismissal from the program.


To ensure students understand the academic risks of choosing to work while enrolled in the MSM PA program, the following form must be read, initialed, and signed. Students must indicate their weekly work schedule and anticipated hours. This form will be added to the student's official program file.

Please initial each statement to indicate understanding of program recommendations, policies, and implications.

Student Initial	I understand and agree:
	The MSM PA Program strongly discourages student employment while matriculating through the program.
	The MSM PA Program will not make accommodations for students who choose to work.
	Class meetings missed due to work schedules will be documented as an absence.
	I must maintain a 3.0 GPA while enrolled and to graduate from the MSM PA program.
	Absences in excess of four for any course may result in a disciplinary action including receiving a failing grade or dismissal from the program.



## Appendix E: Infectious Disease and Environmental Exposure

	MOREHOUSE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	POLICY NUMBER	
		EFFECTIVE/ REVISED DATE	10/2020/ 12/16/20
		PAGE (S)	
	Infectious Disease and Environmental Exposure	SUPERSEDES	

### SECTION I: PURPOSE

Infection Control and Prevention is an integral component of the overall educational and practice protocols for students at the Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM). MSM is committed to reducing the occurrence and transmission of infectious diseases. The purpose of this policy is to outline the policy and procedures to address student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards and to describe the mechanisms and resources for determining the effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on student learning activities.

### SECTION 2: POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of MSM to follow the guidelines and recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding standard precautions, Blood Borne Pathogens and OSHA.

### SECTION 3: SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to any student enrolled in the Doctor of Medicine, Physician Assistant Studies, Master of Public Health, or Graduate Education in Biomedical Sciences degree granting program. This policy also applies to any visiting student participating in coursework for one of the above programs.

### SECTION 4: DEFINITIONS

Student – is a person enrolled in an MSM degree program that includes on campus activities or visiting person(s) /doing preceptorships or shadowing. For the purposes of this policy, it does not include those in entirely online programs who do not come to campus.

Resident - a physician who has finished medical school and is receiving training in a specialized area, such as surgery, internal medicine, pathology, or radiology.

Faculty – means any person possessing either a full- or part-time academic appointment at MSM, including faculty-level research appointees, faculty librarians, health system clinicians, and contributed service faculty.

Staff – means any regular, non-exempt and exempt staff in research, academic or administrative positions, including postdoctoral fellows, research associates, counselors, non-faculty physicians and non-faculty veterinarians, part-time and full-time employees, as well as contractors and temporary employees.

Environmental diseases - noninfectious acute disorders associated with environmental exposures such as chemical or thermal burns or physical injuries such as falls.

## **SECTION 5: PROCEDURES (If applicable)**

Standard Precautions include the following concepts and procedures:

1. Hands should be washed before and after contact with all patients. Hands should be washed after the use of gloves. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after contact with blood or body fluids for a minimal of 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizers with at least 62% alcohol when soap and water are not available.
2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be available for students. Students should select appropriate PPE based on CDC guidelines according to mode of transmission.
3. Gowns or other appropriate coverings are indicated if splattering might occur.
4. Gloves should be worn when contact with blood, body fluids, or surfaces contaminated with blood or body fluids is anticipated.
5. Mask and protective eyewear, or face shields should be worn if aerosolization or splattering may occur.
6. For emergency resuscitation, mouth pieces, resuscitation bags and other ventilation devices are strategically located and available for use.
7. Sharp objects should be handled safely. Do not recap needles, use safety needles when available.
8. Sharps should be discarded immediately after use into needle (sharps) box.
9. All needle stick accidents, mucosal splashes, contamination of open wounds (nonintact skin) with blood or body fluids, or other significant blood exposures should be promptly reported

## SECTION 6: POLICY

### Methods of Prevention

MSM carries out the following measures of prevention:

- **Immunizations:** In order to reduce the risk of medical students of being exposed to infectious diseases, medical students are required to have immunizations as required by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Georgia Department of Health and Human Services, Georgia law, and Morehouse Healthcare.
- **N95 Fit Testing Training:** Medical students are also required to be fit tested for an N95 mask respirator during the first semester of medical school.
- **Training:** During all annual student orientations and as part of the visiting student orientation process, students receive training in standard precautions, droplet precautions and airborne precautions. Standard Precautions combine the major features of Universal Precautions and Body Substance Isolation and are based on the principle that all blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, non-intact skin, and mucous membranes may contain transmissible infectious agents. Standard Precautions include a group of infection prevention practices that apply to all patients, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status, in any setting in which healthcare is delivered.
- **Publication of Procedures:** Students may access details related to the prevention of infectious diseases and environmental exposures at any time in the Infection Control Handbook: [http://www.msm.edu/Current\\_Students/SEHC-ICDocuments/ICHandbookrev7202014.pdf](http://www.msm.edu/Current_Students/SEHC-ICDocuments/ICHandbookrev7202014.pdf)

### Post- Exposure Procedure and Student Injuries or Exposures

Exposure is defined as a demonstrated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

1. **Aggressive local wound care** to the site of exposure should be initiated immediately. Percutaneous wounds should be expressed to promote bleeding. The site should be cleansed thoroughly with soap and water using a surgical hand brush when possible. It may be beneficial to use an antiseptic such as chlorhexidine gluconate (Foam Carer CHG), an iodophor (EZ Scrub, Betadine), or Dakin solution (dilute 1:9 buffered sodium hypochlorite). Difficult to scrub areas should be soaked in chlorhexidine gluconate (Foam Carer CHG) or another antiseptic. Non-intact skin should be cleansed with soap and water. It may be beneficial to use an antiseptic as described above. Mucous membrane exposures (e.g., eye splashes) should be irrigated thoroughly with tap water using the nearest eye washing station (or faucet if non available).

2. **The incident should be reported immediately.** The student is responsible for reporting to your immediate supervisor, Occupational (Employee) Health Service at respective practice site or facility and to Student / Employee Health within 24 hours. Employees, Residents, Staff report to the Human Resources / ODS. When possible, students should visit the MSM Student / Employee Health Center.
3. It is imperative that an **incident report** is completed. (addendum A)
4. **Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) protocol should be initiated.** The student may access the post exposure hotline by the following methods:  
<http://nccc.ucsf.edu/clinician-consultation/post-exposure-prophylaxis-pep/> OR  
PEP line: The National Clinicians' Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline Phone: 1-888-448-4911 Hours: 24 hours / 7 days a week
5. **Access to emergency health care is recommended,** and the student is urged to become informed about current PEP guidelines in order to receive most effective treatment within the recommended time frame.

### **Student Injuries**

Incidents involving an injury to a student (such as a fall, or other accidental injury) during a clinical education experience will follow a similar protocol.

1. The injury should be reported to the student's supervisor, instructor, preceptor, or department manager.
2. Students should report to the nearest Emergency Room for treatment.
3. The student must notify the Clinical Director, Educational Coordinator, or Program Director. In addition, the Student Health and Wellness Center.

If a potentially infectious exposure occurs, do not allow feelings of embarrassment, a large workload, or misplaced peer pressures to prevent you from reporting the event immediately. Needle sticks and other exposures can be life-threatening. Responsible health care providers recognize that unintentional injuries and occupational exposures may occur and must be evaluated by competent, objective, and experienced medical professionals.

Students are offered counseling and post exposure prophylaxis or "PEP," a full HIV antiretroviral daily regimen for 28 days, which must begin within 72 hours of the exposure if there is concern for HIV transmission. When applicable, students' follow up will be conducted by SHWC staff on the initial lab results, and an in-person follow up with staff will happen after one month to repeat testing and discuss next steps. The incident will also be documented in the OSHA file. A three month follow up visit after the exposure will also be scheduled for final HIV and Hepatitis B testing. The student can continue with classes during this time, even if taking PEP. Incident reports are shared with the Office of Compliance for review and Quality Assurance issues.

### **Financial Responsibility for Care and Treatment**

Financial responsibility for treatment after occupational exposure is administered by the school through student health fees. Additionally, patient assistance programs with the pharmaceutical companies that make the antiretroviral therapy can be used to pay for the medication expenses if the insurance does not cover those costs. In this case, and in all cases of exposure, lab costs will be covered by student health fees. Clinical agreements provide immediate and initial prophylactic treatment for medical students exposed to biohazards during clinical site rotations.

### **Pandemics**

With a framework for health care preparedness, MSM will provide enrolled and visiting students with the necessary tools for safety and wellness. Students are trained for the use of PPE, social distancing, universal precautions and Exposures. Staff / Faculty members / Public safety will have specific roles to include:

1. Initiate the emergency response plan to ensure appropriate evacuation, quarantine, transport.
2. Responsibility to triage, monitor situation
3. Coordination with on-going local, regional and state planning efforts in collaboration with the CDC for recommendations and management
4. Transparent communications
5. Virtual learning for students
6. Behavioral health staff availability

### **Effects of Infectious and/or Environmental Disease or Disability on Educational Activities**

- **Infectious Diseases:**
  - Blood borne pathogens: Students with HIV, hepatitis B, or other blood borne infections will be evaluated according to the MSM Blood Borne Pathogens Policy
  - TB: Students with latent TB may participate in patient care activities without restriction but may wish to consult with a health care professional regarding treatment as studies have shown that treatment can reduce the incidence of disease progression. Students with active TB should be treated and placed in isolation and will not be allowed to participate in clinical activities until they are determined to no longer be infectious.
- **Environmental Disease:** Students with environmental diseases are evaluated at the Student Health and Wellness Center (SHWC) to determine the impact, if any, on their learning activities. Depending on the nature of the student's environmental disease, they may wish to consult with a specialist, and if so, the

physician will be required to comply with Non-Involvement of Providers of Student Health Services in Student Assessment, if the health care provider is involved in medical student teaching and/or evaluation. Required limitations in learning activities will be communicated to the Office of Student Affairs. Every effort will be made to minimize disruption of the student's progress through the curriculum.

- **Disabilities:** Students with disabilities should contact the MSM Office of Disability Services (ODS) regarding accommodations, if applicable. The Office of Student Affairs will work with the student and ODS to determine, the impact, if any, on the student's learning activities.

## **SECTION 7: RELATED POLICIES (List previous versions, supplemental publications)**

Blood Borne Pathogens Policy


### **Related LCME Standards**

1. LCME 12.4: Student Access to Health Care Services
2. LCME 12.5: Non-Involvement of Providers of Student Health Services in Student Assessment
3. LCME 12.7: Immunization Requirements and Monitoring
4. LCME 12.8: Student Exposure Policy/Procedures

### **Related ARC-PA Standards**

ARC-PA A3.08

## Appendix F: Potential Infectious Exposure Incident Report

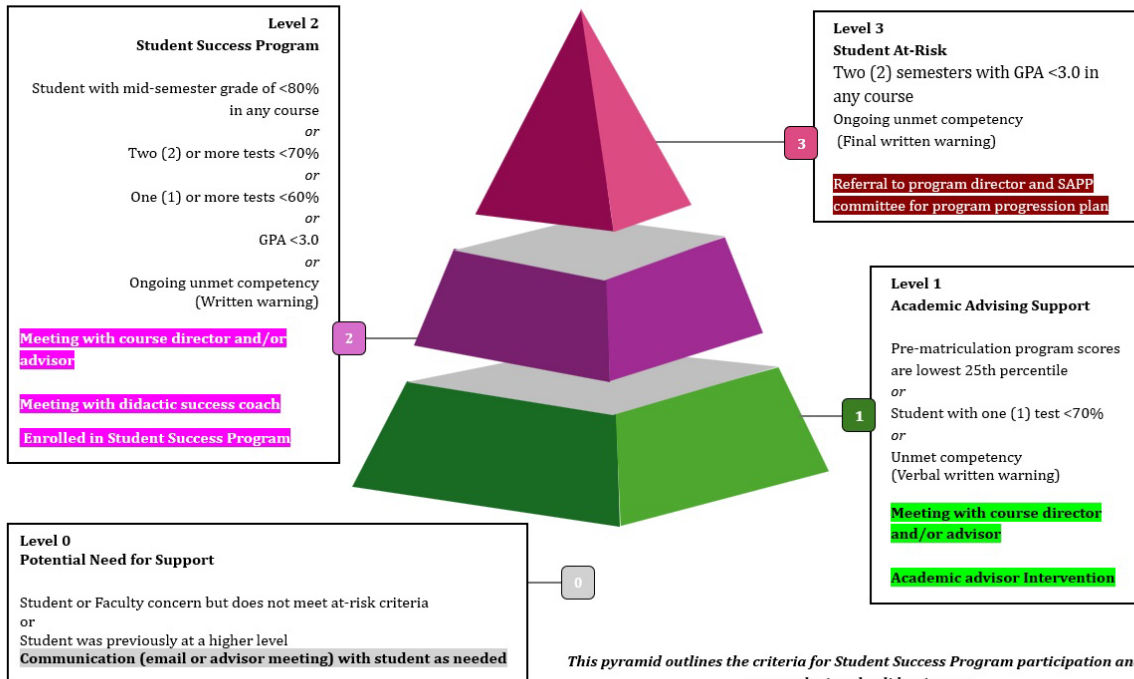
		<b>Potential Infectious Exposure Incident Report</b>		<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b> This is for internal use only for Risk Management and Quality Improvement Activities. [Report Bloodborne Pathogen Exposures]	
Date of Incident / / Date Reported / / <b>REPORT within 24 hours of exposure</b>		Persons Involved: _____ _____ _____		Witnesses: _____ _____ _____	
<b>PERSON AFFECTED</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> MSM <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> MSMS Classification _____					
Name (Last, First, MI)				Age: _____ Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	
Address		City, State, Zip		Phone #(____)	
<b>ELEMENTS OF Incident</b>					
Time of incident: _____ Location: Hospital: <input type="checkbox"/> Office: <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Address of Facility: _____		Equipment/ Procedure involved (type of exposure) i.e. Blood, Fluid _____ _____ _____ Body Part Affected: _____ _____ Action taken after incident (i.e. cleanse site, eye wash, labs drawn): _____ _____		PPE required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> PPE used: Gloves <input type="checkbox"/> N95 mask <input type="checkbox"/> Surgical mask <input type="checkbox"/> Gown <input type="checkbox"/> Comments: _____ _____	
Procedure Involved in Incident 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____		Clinician Notified: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Name of site clinician: _____ Student Health notified: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Date: _____ Time: _____		Immediate treatment needed: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Type of Tx: _____ _____ _____	
Brief Objective Statement of Facts: (include if blood testing done on source patient) _____ _____ _____					
For Internal use only					
<b>PREPARED/REVIEW</b> (Please provide Name, Title, Phone, Email)				<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
Report received:				/ /	
Reviewed by:				/ /	
Student Notified:				/ /	
<b>Plan of Action:</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____					

Please submit to: [SEHWCrequests@msm.edu](mailto:SEHWCrequests@msm.edu)  **OR** Download Facility incident report  Form created 3/2020

# Appendix G: Didactic Tier Student Success Program



## Morehouse School of Medicine's Physician Assistant Studies Advising and Student Success Program for Didactic Year



*This pyramid outlines the criteria for Student Success Program participation and support during the didactic year  
Students may or may not receive support from teaching assistants (TAs) or tutors.*

Revised 03-18-2026 MBD

## Appendix H: Didactic-Clinical Tier Student Success Program



### Enrollment Criteria for the Student Success Program for Didactic Year Students Transitioning to the Clinical Year

**Criteria 1:**

Three (3) final didactic course grades of C

**Criteria 2:**

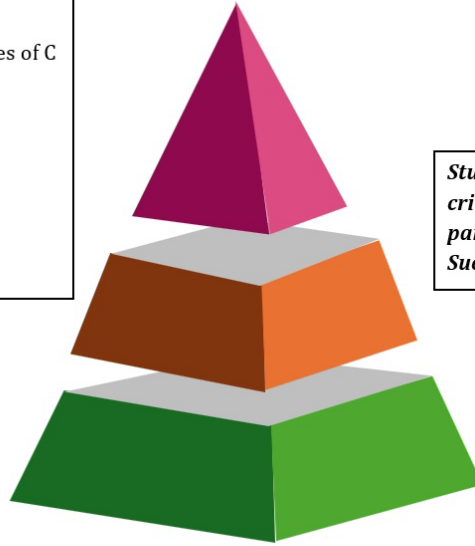
Pre-Clinical Exam score < 70%

**Criteria 3:**

PACKRAT I score  $\leq$  124

**Criteria 4:**

Cumulative GPA  $\leq$  3.2



*Students who meet 3 of the 4  
criteria listed will be required to  
participate in the Student  
Success Program.*

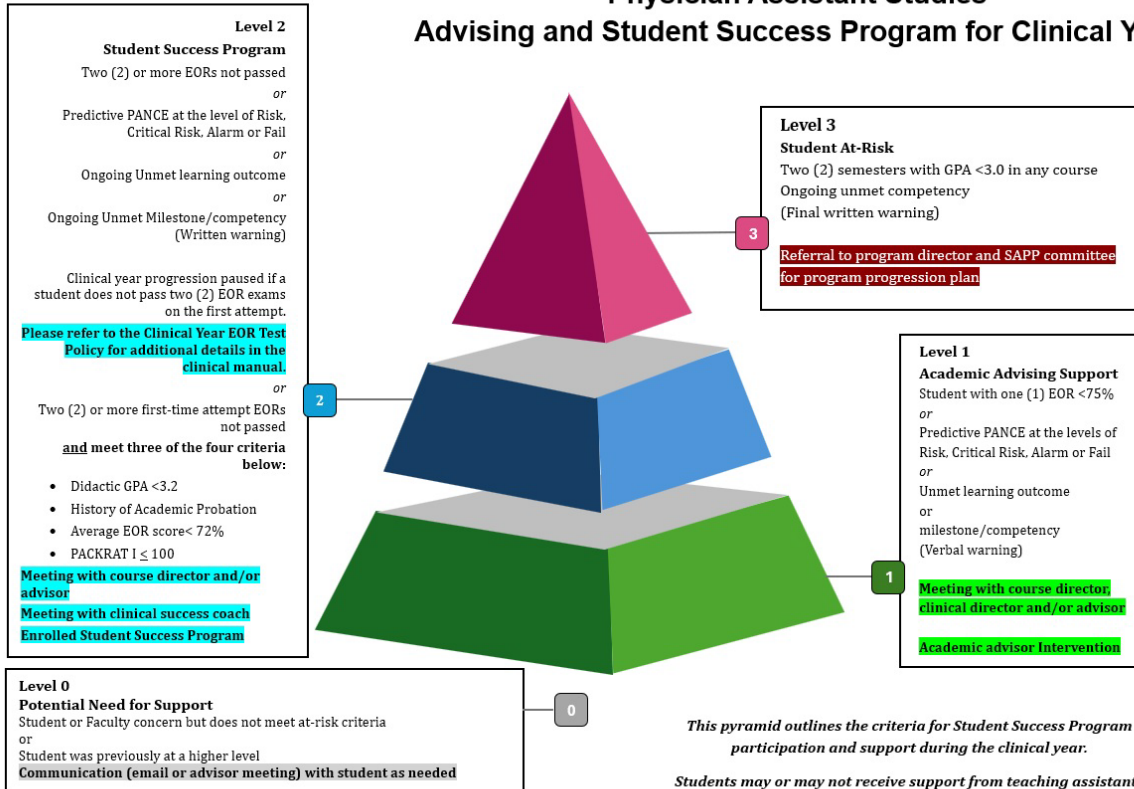
*This graphic outlines the criteria which identifies students who may need to be enrolled  
in the Student Success Program as they transition from didactic to clinical year*

Revised 03-18-2026 MBD

# Appendix I: Clinical Transition, and Clinical Tiers



## Morehouse School of Medicine's Physician Assistant Studies Advising and Student Success Program for Clinical Year



*This pyramid outlines the criteria for Student Success Program participation and support during the clinical year. Students may or may not receive support from teaching assistants (TAs) or tutors.*

Revised 03-18-2026 MBD

## Appendix J: SSP Entry Agreement Form—Didactic Year



### Physician Assistant Program Student Success Program Agreement

#### Didactic Year

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student MSM ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Enrollment in Success Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Student,

Welcome to the Student Success Program. This program is designed to provide structure, support, and accountability as you move forward in your academic journey. Participation is required as part of our commitment to helping you achieve your full potential. We are here to partner with you as you build the skills, habits, and confidence needed to thrive.

#### Student Responsibilities and Commitments

By signing this agreement, I understand and agree to the following expectations:

##### Designated Meetings

- I will **schedule and attend all designated meetings** with the student success coaches (faculty) or designated faculty/staff member.
- If I do not see an available time on their calendar, I will **email the student success coaches directly** to schedule.
- **Within 48 hours** of each TA, tutor, or coaching session, I will **complete the post-coaching/TA/tutor/advisor form**.

##### Teaching Associate Designated Meetings:

- I will **schedule and attend all designated meetings** with my assigned Teaching Associate (TA)
- If no time is available on their calendar, I will email the Teaching Associates directly and copy the student success coaches.
- I will come prepared with specific questions or topics I need help understanding.
- **Within 48 hours** of each TA, tutor, or coaching session, I will **complete the post-coaching /TA/tutor/advisor form**.

##### Tutoring Requirements

- I understand that I **may be assigned a tutor** and am required to meet with them consistently.
- I will use **Tutor Ocean** to schedule these sessions.
- If my assigned tutor is unavailable, I will **sign up with another tutor listed under "PA."**



Physician Assistant Program  
Student Success Program Agreement  
Didactic Year

- I will come prepared with specific questions or topics I need help understanding.
- **Within 48 hours** of each TA, tutor, or coaching session, I will complete the post-coaching/TA/tutor/advisor form.

**Completion of Assigned Work**

I will complete all work assigned as part of my remediation or success plan and come to designated meetings prepared to discuss my progress.

**Weekly Study Schedule**

I will submit a weekly study schedule to my student success coach detailing my exam prep and academic tasks.

**Use of MSM Support Services**

- I will **seek and utilize** appropriate on-campus or off-campus resources as needed (e.g., counseling, academic support, learning specialists, and Office of Individualized Learning & Accessibility Services-OILAS)
- I understand that accessing support is a professional responsibility.
- I understand that I am responsible for notifying the Office of Individualized Learning & Accessibility Services (OILAS) if I have used accommodations in the past — including in elementary school, high school, undergraduate, or graduate education.\

**Failure to abide by this agreement may result in any of the following:**

- Misconduct form
- Professional Probation resulting in loss of Good Academic Standing
- Meeting with the Program Director
- Student may be enrolled in a Professionalism Directed study course (may result in additional fees and/or tuition at the student's expense)
- Appearance before the SAPP Committee
- Dismissal Hearing

**Agreement and Acknowledgment**

I understand that the Student Success Program is designed to support my academic and professional success. I agree to uphold the expectations outlined above and to communicate openly with faculty and staff about any challenges I face.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Success Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix K: SSP Entry Agreement Form—Clinical Year



### Physician Assistant Program Student Success Program Agreement

#### Clinical Year

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student MSM ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Enrollment in Success Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Student,

Welcome to the Student Success Program. This program is designed to provide structure, support, and accountability as you move forward in your academic journey. Participation is required as part of our commitment to helping you achieve your full potential. We are here to partner with you as you build the skills, habits, and confidence needed to thrive.

#### Student Responsibilities and Commitments

By signing this agreement, I understand and agree to the following expectations:

##### Student Success Coach Designated Meetings:

- I will **schedule and attend all designated meetings** with the Student Success Coaches (Faculty) or designated faculty/staff member while I am on a SCPE.
- If I do not see an available time on their calendar, I will **email the student success coaches directly** to schedule.
- I will inform my preceptor/designated clinical supervisor of all scheduled meetings at the **beginning of my SCPE** and at **least 24 hrs** before each meeting.
- If my meeting occurs during the day, I will return to my clinical duties immediately after the assigned meetings.
- I will come to each designated meeting prepared with specific questions or topics I need help understanding.
- **Within 48 hours** of each TA, tutor, or coaching session, I will complete the post-coaching /TA/tutor/advisor form.

##### Teaching Associate (TA) Designated Meetings:

- I will **schedule and attend all designated meetings** with my assigned TA while I am on a SCPE.
- If no time is available on their calendar, I will email the TA directly and copy the student success coaches.
- I will inform my preceptor/designated clinical supervisor of all scheduled meetings at the **beginning of my SCPE** and at **least 24 hrs** before each meeting.
- I will come to each designated meeting prepared with specific questions or topics I need help understanding.
- **Within 48 hours** of each TA, tutor, or coaching session, I will complete the post-coaching /TA/tutor/advisor form.



Physician Assistant Program  
Student Success Program Agreement  
Clinical Year

**Tutoring Requirements**

- I understand that I **may be assigned a tutor** and am required to meet with them consistently.
- I will use **Tutor Ocean** to schedule these sessions.
- If my assigned tutor is unavailable, I will **sign up with another tutor listed under “PA.”**
- I will come to each designated meeting prepared with specific questions or topics I need help understanding.
- **Within 48 hours** of each TA, tutor, or coaching session, I **will complete the post-coaching /TA/tutor/advisor form.**

**Completion of Assigned Work**

I will complete all work assigned as part of my remediation or success plan and come to designated meetings prepared to discuss my progress.

**Weekly Study Schedule**

I will submit a weekly study schedule to my student success coach detailing my exam prep and academic tasks.

**Use of MSM Support Services**

- I will **seek and utilize** appropriate on-campus or off-campus resources as needed (e.g., counseling, academic support, learning specialists, and Office of Individualized Learning & Accessibility Services-OILAS)
- I understand that accessing support is a professional responsibility.
- I understand that I am responsible for notifying the Office of Individualized Learning & Accessibility Services (OILAS) if I have used accommodations in the past — including in elementary school, high school, undergraduate, or graduate education.

**Failure to Abide by this Agreement may result in any of the following:**

- Misconduct Form
- Professional Probation resulting loss of Good Academic Standing
- Meeting with the Program Director
- Student may be enrolled in a Professionalism Directed study course (may result in additional fees and/or tuition at the student's expense)
- Appearance before the SAPP Committee
- Dismissal Hearing

**Agreement and Acknowledgment**

I understand that the Student Success Program is designed to support my academic and professional success. I agree to uphold the expectations outlined above and to communicate openly with faculty and staff about any challenges I face.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Success Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date