



**PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2025**  
*Updated December 2025*



FRANCISCAN  
MISSIONARIES OF OUR LADY  
UNIVERSITY  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

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## Introduction

This handbook serves as a guide to inform students of the graduate policies, procedures, and expectations of the Physician Assistant Program (PA) at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University and augments university policies in other university publications. Failure to read the PA Program Student Handbook, the University Student Handbook, Campus Health and Safety Handbook and the University Catalog does not excuse the student from adhering to all academic and non-academic policies described in these publications throughout enrollment, in both the didactic and clinical phases. The PA Program Principal Faculty Committee consistently enforces the policies of the program, university, and clinical facilities for all students. All program policies are consistently applied to all students, faculty, staff and the program director regardless of location. ***In the event policies and procedures in the PA Handbook are different from those posted in university publications, the PA Handbook supersedes those in other publications. Clinical students are also required to follow the policies and procedures of each facility in which they attend clinical rotations.***

This handbook is reviewed and updated annually in December and published to the students in January. These policies herein may not represent an exhaustive list of all circumstances that might arise for students and faculty in the administration of the program or university. Therefore, information contained herein is subject to change at any time throughout the academic year by authority of PA Principal Faculty Committee, the School of Health Professions, or administration of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University. When such changes are made, the handbook will be updated/published and students will be properly informed of those changes via electronic communication modes (e. g., university website, e-mail, and/or Moodle).

## Section I: PA Program Overview & Organizational Structure

### PA Program Mission

Guided by the tradition of compassionate health care exemplified by the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady, the PA Program will develop graduates who will provide evidence based, patient centered medical care in diverse settings, and who are committed to serving all God's people.

### PA Program Purpose

The purpose of the program is to create and maintain an educational environment that promotes critical thinking as well as clinical knowledge and skills necessary to exercise sound medical decision-making and to provide a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services to patients across the lifespan, in diverse settings. The program also strives to develop compassionate, professional and ethically minded clinicians.

While PA practice is primarily centered on patient care, PAs will also be prepared to take on educational, research and administrative roles. As such, PA students must have an understanding of biostatistics, research methodology and other research principles.

The Physician Assistant (PA) program lies within the School of Health Professions. The Program Director reports directly to the Dean of the School Health Professions. The Dean reports to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, who reports directly to the President of FranU.

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#### Program Faculty

In addition to providing instruction, advising, and mentoring of students, the PA faculty have a variety of other responsibilities. The PA faculty are led by the Program Director, who is ultimately responsible for the oversight of the day-to-day operations of the program and compliance with accreditation standards.

#### Principal Faculty Committee

The Principal Faculty Committee is chaired by the Program Director and includes principal faculty (*per accreditation Standards*) members and the Medical Director. The principal faculty meets regularly to conduct the business of the PA Program, which includes (but is not limited to):

- Approval of students for admission.
- Review and approval of program curriculum issues/revisions.
- Review/revision of program policies and procedures.
- Evaluation of students' progression through the program.
- Evaluation of students' readiness for graduation.
- Discussion of any at-risk students for academic or non-academic reasons.
- Review and adjudicate any academic issues/deficiencies in accordance with the program's academic standards and progression policies.
- Review and adjudicate any disciplinary issues according to program policies.
- Review accreditation *Standards* and requirements

The Principal Faculty Committee consists of the following subcommittees:

#### Curriculum Subcommittees

Curriculum will undergo continuous ongoing assessment to improve the program quality and outcomes. Curriculum changes may be requested by individual faculty, or may be identified by the PA Assessment Committee through their activities of program assessment and analysis. On occasion, curriculum changes may be needed based on other factors such as changes in PA practice, adherence to accreditation *Standards*, legal and/or regulatory requirements, university policy changes, acquisition of new educational technology, etc. Therefore, at any time, a curriculum subcommittee with varied membership may be developed and convened to thoroughly evaluate the curriculum develop the proposed curriculum content. Major curriculum changes are approved by the Principal Faculty Committee and must also be vetted and approved through the university's multi-layer process, which helps to ensure the high quality and rigor expected of graduate clinical education.

All curriculum revisions are vetted through the Curriculum Subcommittee, managed by the Program Director, and require approval of the school Dean, Graduate Council, and the Academic Review Council. Additional layers of approval may be required, depending on the nature of the revision.

#### Admissions Subcommittee

The Admissions Subcommittee is charged with reviewing prospective student applications, interviewing applicants and selecting cohort members for the upcoming academic year. Members of the subcommittee include the program's principal faculty and the program support coordinator. Adjunct faculty, admissions representatives and graduate/practicing PAs and current students may also be invited to participate in admissions activities.

#### PA Assessment Committee

The PA Assessment Committee is charged with ongoing self-assessment of the PA Program. This committee is chaired by the Program Director, includes the Principal Faculty Committee members, and members of administration including the Dean of the School of Health Professions, and the Assistant Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and Research. The committee meets annually in the early fall semester to analyze program outcomes. Through this analysis, the committee ensures program quality and effectiveness, and identifies necessary program modifications.

#### PA Student Learning Outcomes and Competencies

The PA Program strives to educate future PAs to be competent, compassionate, professional life-long learners of medicine. As such, the program has identified seven program learning outcomes (PLO) as well as forty-five associated entry level PA competency measures (COMP). The learning outcomes and competencies were developed based on the program's mission, as well as standards published by the National Commission on the Certification of PAs, the American Academy of PAs, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, and the Physician Assistant Education Association.

The PA Program PLOs and COMPs can be found on the PA Program's webpage: [www.franu.edu/pa](http://www.franu.edu/pa) under Program Level Student Learning Outcomes.

#### Technical Standards

PAs must have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to render a wide spectrum of patient care services in a broad variety of clinical situations. Consequently, it is essential that in its admissions process, the PA Program assesses an applicant's physical and emotional capabilities as well as their scholastic accomplishments and academic potential in order to assure that the applicant can meet the full demands of the program's curriculum and graduate as a skilled and effective healthcare provider. In making this assessment, the program must consider the applicant's current physical and emotional status, any cumulative or progressive disability, and any drug

induced impairment that may pose obstacles to the safe application of their knowledge and skills to the provision of quality care or prevent effective interaction with patients. Applicants will be reviewed individually in this regard on a case-by-case basis. No otherwise qualified individual with a handicap will be automatically excluded from admission.

Once admitted, students are expected to meet the Technical Standards throughout enrollment. Compliance is critical and mandatory, as the ability to function under stress, and in the face of uncertainties is inherent in clinical practice.

Any student found in violation of the Technical Standards at any time is at risk for dismissal from the program. As such, PA students must continually demonstrate skills and abilities in the following areas prior to and throughout enrollment:

1. **Observation:** Students must be able to demonstrate sufficient capacity to observe demonstrations and experiments in basic and clinical sciences (including computer-assisted instruction), and must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance or close at hand.
2. **Communication:** Students must be able to demonstrate sufficient capacity to communicate accurately and with clarity, in oral and written forms, with appropriate respect and sensitivity towards faculty, patients and all members of the healthcare team.
3. **Motor:** Students must have sufficient fine and gross motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. They must be able to grasp and manipulate tools and equipment using proper technique and stand, sit, walk and move as needed in a patient care setting.
4. **Senses:** Students must have sufficient use of the senses of vision, hearing, touch, and smell necessary to directly perform a physical examination.
5. **Problem solving:** Students must demonstrate sufficient ability to learn to measure, calculate, analyze and synthesize data to reach diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical judgments.
6. **Clinical skills:** Students must demonstrate sufficient ability to learn and perform routine laboratory tests and diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical procedures. All students will be expected to perform physical examinations on both males and females.
7. **Behavioral attributes:** Students must possess the emotional health necessary for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of sound judgment, the prompt completion of responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with faculty, clinical staff and patients.
8. **Judgment:** Students must be able to learn and demonstrate the ability to recognize limitations to their knowledge, skills and abilities, and to seek appropriate assistance with their identified limitations.
9. **Stability:** Students must be able to learn to respond with precise, efficient and appropriate action in emergency situations.
10. **Perseverance:** Students are expected to possess the humility to accept criticism and the diligence to successfully complete the PA curriculum and enter the practice of medicine as a certified PA.
11. **Cognition:** The PA Program is a concentrated and fast-paced program. In addition, PAs must often make critical decisions when evaluating patients and must make these decisions in a timely manner. Students must be able to assimilate large amounts of information quickly and efficiently, as well as gather and analyze patient data in a timely manner. Health conditions and/or drugs (prescription, over the counter or "recreational") that alter perceptions, slow responses, or impair judgment are not compatible with success in the program. These may also affect the student's ability to obtain a license or to practice as a PA.
12. **Capability:** PAs work in a variety of clinical settings and may be required to stand for extended periods of time, assist in major surgery, hold retractors, place invasive devices, assist in labor and delivery, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, perform minor surgical procedures or help move patients. Therefore, students must demonstrate sufficient capability to function safely, effectively and efficiently in a classroom, laboratory, or clinical facility without any of the following: a surrogate, intermediate,

companion (animal or human), translator, or assistive device that would interfere with or not be usable in a surgical or other patient care setting

Prospective candidates to the program must attest to their ability to meet the Technical Standards. Additionally, once admitted, students will again acknowledge understanding of the Technical Standards by signing the Technical Standards Student Attestation upon matriculation into the program (Appendix A).

### Didactic Curriculum

The didactic phase of the program consists of four consecutive semesters. The curriculum plan can be found at [www.franu.edu/pa](http://www.franu.edu/pa).

The didactic phase utilizes traditional lectures and seminars, case and problem-based learning sessions, service learning, laboratory, and simulation experiences, to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for competency development and successful advancement to the clinical phase of the program. Students will be assessed by examinations, clinically oriented assignments and direct observation of knowledge and skills demonstration. Students will also be evaluated on professional behaviors in each course.

Didactic courses are scheduled Monday – Friday, generally between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, but evening courses are possible. Weekly course schedules are posted on syllabi and students will receive calendar invitations for each class meeting through the university mail system.

The program will publish a calendar of breaks and holidays annually. It is important to note the PA Program does not observe all university scheduled breaks. Additionally, severe weather events (tropical storms/hurricanes), infectious outbreaks, and/or other “acts of God” can impact university operations, resulting in campus closure for one or more days. Such closures may result in rescheduling class meetings on a previously published break/holiday and/or extend the length of the impacted semester. If a student is unable to attend such make-up classes, he/she may receive an incomplete (I) grade(s) in the course(s) impacted and will not be permitted to attend classes in the subsequent semester until the I grade(s) are resolved.

### Clinical Curriculum

The clinical phase consists of three semesters of supervised clinical rotations, Master’s Project and PA Seminar.

During the clinical phase, students must complete ten four-week rotations, including seven core rotations and three elective rotations. Core rotations include Primary Care I and II, Hospital/Inpatient Medicine, General Surgery, Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, and Focused Topics in Medicine. Students are not expected or required to solicit clinical preceptors/sites prior to, or during the clinical year.

During this phase, students are expected to build upon their didactic knowledge and skills to master the program-defined competencies necessary for entry level PA practice. Students are evaluated by the Clinical Coordinator, and adjunct clinical faculty, with input from clinical preceptors, clinical cases/enrichment assignments, end-of-rotation examinations, and professional behaviors.

Final (summative) assessment of knowledge, skills and competencies takes place during the final semester in the program.

For scheduling in the clinical year, please refer to the Clinical Phase Handbook.

### Student Work Standards

Students enrolled in the PA Program cannot substitute for practicing PAs or provide unsupervised services common to a certified PA while at any learning or employment site. Students are not staff, and therefore employee policies do not apply, nor may the student earn a salary for their services as a PA student or work for the PA Program in any capacity.

Students cannot substitute as instructional faculty while in the role of a PA student. Students must not serve as clinical or administrative staff during clinical rotations.

Due to the intensity of the program, it is not recommended that students work during enrollment in the program. No scheduling exceptions will be made to accommodate a student's work schedule during either the didactic or clinical phases.

## Section II: Academic Policies

### Advanced Academic Placement

FranU PA Program does not award advanced academic credit or advanced placement toward degree requirements.

### Student Rights and Responsibilities

In the administration of all examinations, quizzes or other forms of assessment, the students and the university have rights, responsibilities, and duties.

Students have a **responsibility** to:

- Download exam during download window assigned by instructor, prior to the exam.
- Follow procedures outlined in Appendix G.
- Demonstrate academic integrity during the testing session. Cheating behavior on a test includes but is not limited to: talking during test administration, looking on someone else's computer screen or paper, using notes or resources of any kind, unauthorized access to the test (see Testing Procedures Appendix G).
- Use their student ID on all examinations that require an ID number (this number is entered in the user profile in ExamSoft by faculty).
- Leave all personal belongings in the back of the testing room; There may be nothing on the desk other than laptop computer, scratch paper and pencil/pen.
- Submit/upload their exam PRIOR to leaving the exam room; Failure to properly submit prior to departure from exam room will be considered cheating; It is the student's responsibility to ensure they receive confirmation of exam upload (green confirmation screen, or submission confirmation by proctor).
- In the event a paper exam or quiz is given, the student has the responsibility to hand in their paper when time is called; Failure to do so will result in a zero on the exam/quiz.

Students have a **right** to:

- Receive their exam grade.
- Review incorrect responses.
- Discuss test results with the instructor (with exception of End of Rotation Exams – see Clinical Phase Handbook for details).
- Appeal an individual or final grade they feel is incorrect (deleted "unfair").

Students have the right to know how their work in a course will be evaluated and how those evaluations will determine the course grade. The following information should be available to students in every course, by the day of classes:

- Criteria that will be used to evaluate assigned work/assignments.
- Faculty who is responsible for assessment (grading).
- Explanation of how the final course grade will be determined.
- Due dates for any work that will be evaluated.
- Policies for late submission of work.
- Explanation of how and when graded work will be returned to students and how students can monitor their course performance.
- Guidelines for discussing a grade if the student thinks it is inaccurate.

The university has a **duty** to:

- Assure that results of a test are used in a manner appropriate to the intended purpose.
- Assure confidentiality of an individual's test results; Access will be limited to university officials authorized to review scores.
- Provide a clock.

## Students Requiring Accommodations

Students who wish to request reasonable accommodations for a documented disability must register with the Office of Disability Services within Student Affairs (see University Student Handbook regarding specific policies and procedures). Reasonable accommodations vary based on the student's circumstances and academic program.

## Graduate Degree Credit

Graduate degree credit is earned for the grades of A, B+, B, C+, and C. Graduate degree credit is not granted for the grades of D+, D, F, I, WS or WU.

## PA Program Grading Scale

A = 4 quality points per semester hour

B+=3.5 quality points per semester hour (87-89)

B = 3 quality points per semester hour

C+=2.5 quality points per semester hour (77-79)

C = 2 quality points per semester hour

D+=1.5 quality points per semester hour (67-69)

D = 1 quality points per semester hour

F= 0 quality points per semester hour

P= passing - quality points are not computed

S= satisfactory progress - quality points are not computed

U= unsatisfactory progress - quality points are not computed

I = incomplete - quality points are not initially computed

WA= administrative withdrawal - quality points are not computed

W= withdrawal – quality points are not computed

AU = Audit (no credit) – quality points are not computed

*No portion of a graduate student's social security number will be used for posting grades.* At the end of each semester, as designated by the PA Program calendar, the program faculty member responsible for the course will report final grades for all PA students enrolled in the course.

## I Grade Policy

In some instances, an incomplete or I may be submitted at the end of a PA Program semester for a course in which the student can achieve satisfactory progress.

The instructor will initiate the request to receive an I grade by completing the *Request for I Grade* form from the Office of the Registrar. The form will contain the reason(s) for requesting an I, the instructor's explicit outline for resolving the I, and the deadline by which the I grade must be resolved. An I grade that has not been resolved by the deadline will be changed to an F. The form must finally be approved by the signature of the PA Program Director and then submitted to the Registrar.

In some cases, an extension to resolve the I grade may be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Such authorization must be approved by signature, on the *Request for an I Grade Form*. When an I grade has been resolved, the Program Director will notify the Registrar to make the necessary grade change.

## Academic Grade Point Average

Student academic performance is measured by computation of the GPA. GPA is calculated by dividing the accumulated number of grade points earned by the accumulated number or credit hours attempted. Additionally, any student placed on academic probation will have their cumulative grade calculated on a 100-point scale. Refer to Program Progression policies below for additional details.

## Academic Advising

The objective of academic advising is to foster students' professional, academic and clinical development. The advising form was developed to help students reflect on their progress and serves as a conversation starter between the student and their advisor. Every student will be assigned an academic advisor in the first didactic semester, who will serve as their advisor for the first 4 semesters. Students will be re-assigned to a clinical year advisor in semester 5. The clinical year advisor will serve as the student's advisor throughout the clinical year, and will be responsible for assessing student performance during each clinical rotation. Advising occurs at the mid-point and following the conclusion of each semester in the program. It is the student's responsibility to schedule meetings with their advisor.

Students may request additional meetings with their academic advisor at any point during any semester.

If at any time there are any concerns about any didactic or clinical student's performance or potential threats to progression for personal reasons disclosed by the student, they may be referred to a number of campus resources including:

- Student Affairs for Counseling, Disability services including ADA accommodations, Career Services, emergency funds (St. Francis fund), campus food pantry
- Learning Resource Center for academic coaching, tutoring via PearDeck, and the Writing Center
- Campus ministry
- Office of Financial Aid
- The Program Director (particularly if the student may benefit from a leave of absence)

Additionally, advising concerns are discussed during regularly scheduled Principal Faculty Committee meetings.

### PA Student Academic Standards

At the graduate level, and in the interest of patient/public safety, students are expected to complete all coursework with a grade of "B" or higher and maintain a 3.0 (or calculated 80%) cumulative GPA. However, the faculty acknowledge the pace and rigors of the program present unique challenges and as such, no student may earn more than 2 Cs at any time during the program. Additionally, students must meet all academic benchmarks associated with various assessments described below.

Student knowledge and skills in the didactic phase are primarily assessed using multiple-choice examinations. Case studies and other assessments are also used to help students develop critical thinking and clinical problem-solving skills. The course instructor and Academic Coordinator monitor examination grades very closely, in order to identify at-risk students *prior* to the course completion, allowing time for assistance and intervention.

It is the goal of the program to identify academic needs and deficiencies early, to allow for supportive interventions prior to course failure. As such, the following support is available for students in the didactic phase:

- Test Review: Students may review didactic test results immediately after the examination ends; The ExamSoft testing platform allows the student to review all *incorrect* answers.
- Instructor Support: Any student may meet with the instructor during posted office hours, or make an appointment at an agreed-upon time to address any questions regarding coursework and/or assignments.
- Academic Advisor: Students meet with their advisor regularly as described within this handbook; Students are encouraged to seek guidance/input from their Academic Advisor if they are struggling in any particular course.
- Learning Resource Center: Academic coaching services are available, including note-taking, organization skills, time management, test-taking skills, etc. Tutoring services are available through PearDeck;
- Disability Services: Students with disabilities can request examination accommodations.
- Examination Failure: Any student scoring below 70% on any examination in the didactic phase will trigger the need for the student to develop an examination performance improvement plan, with instructor support as described below.

### Examination Performance Improvement Plan (Didactic Phase)

Any student scoring below a 70% on any didactic examination (block or comprehensive final) is at risk for course failure. Therefore, they will be required to submit a detailed written examination performance improvement plan that serves as a self-assessment of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement (time management, study skills/techniques, etc.), using the SMART goals methodology, with course director input/feedback.

## Didactic Remediation

The following processes outline how the program identifies and corrects deficiencies in student knowledge and skills in the clinical didactic courses.

### Foundations of Clinical Medicine and Surgery (FCMS) Course Series Block Remediation

The FCMS course series introduces students to the etiologies, clinical presentation, evaluation and management of organ-systems based diseases (ex: cardiology). These courses build upon knowledge obtained in the basic science courses within the curriculum (ex: anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, etc.). The PA faculty recognize it is mathematically possible for a student to earn less than a 70% on any FCMS exam (ex: cardiology), and still earn a B (or C) overall in the course. When this occurs, the student may not have demonstrated they have met the learning outcomes for that FCMS block. This also raises concern they may not possess the knowledge and skills required to enter the clinical phase. Therefore, when a student earns less than a 70% on any FCMS organ-systems block exam, the faculty will calculate an overall FCMS block grade by averaging the organ-systems block exam and all other assignments related to that organ-specific block (case studies, homework, problem-based learning activities, simulation, etc.).

If the calculated block grade after is less than 70%, the student will be required to retroactively remediate the block(s) of that course by registering in PHAS 6000 Special Topics in PA Studies. PHAS 6000 is an independent study course used for the purpose of remediation.

The student, with instructor guidance, will develop remediation goals and activities as outlined by the PHAS 6000 syllabus. A remediation contract is also required. The student will be re-evaluated at the end of the remediation period and must earn an 80% in the remediation course in order to demonstrate competency of the material. The grade earned in PHAS 6000 does not replace the previous block grade earned by the student.

### Summative I & II Remediation

Students must meet program-defined benchmarks of 70% on the Summative I (post-didactic) exam and 80% on the Summative II (post-clinical year) exam. Failure to meet the benchmark on the first attempt will result in need to remediate the exam. The student will meet with the Academic Coordinator to develop a customized remediation plan based on identified areas of strengths/weaknesses. The remediation plan may include additional recommended readings, practice exam questions, referral to the Learning Resource Center, etc. The remediation period will be two academic weeks, which may delay progression to the clinical phase (Summative I) or graduation (Summative II). After this time, the student will be permitted to re-take the examination. Failure to meet the program-defined benchmark after the remediation period and examination re-take will result in program dismissal.

### Clinical Competency and Procedural Skill Remediation

Students must demonstrate competency attainment at multiple points while enrolled in the PA Program. Pre-clinical competencies are administered at the end of three didactic phase courses: PHAS 5727 Patient Assessment, PHAS 5728 Clinical Medicine Skills and PHAS 5754 Foundations of Clinical Medicine and Surgical Skills V. Any student not meeting the minimum required benchmark on a competency assessment (defined by rubric) will be required to remediate the skill. Students will be given the opportunity to remediate each skill two times. Failure to successfully remediate will result in program dismissal.

Additionally, students must successfully complete all final competencies scenarios at the end of the clinical phase in PHAS 5925 PA Seminar and PHAS 5910 Master's Project Seminar. Any student not meeting the minimum required benchmark on a competency assessment (defined by rubric) will be required to remediate the skill. Students will be given the opportunity to remediate each skill two times. Failure to successfully remediate will result in program dismissal.

### Clinical Phase Retesting and Remediation

Refer to the Clinical Phase Handbook

## Program Progression

### Didactic Phase Progression

Progression requirements for the didactic phase of the program are described below. Students are expected to complete all course requirements by deadlines published on the course syllabus. Any clinical or procedural skills remediations must be completed by the end of the remediation week as published on the program calendar. Any student required to enroll in the PHAS 6000 Remediation Course must complete the remediation activities/assessments by the deadline established by the remediation contract.

In order to progress through each of the four didactic semesters, students must:

- Pass all didactic courses with a grade of B or higher (with no more than two Cs earned in the program); earn a minimum of 70% in each FCMS organ-systems blocks of instruction.
- Successfully complete any required clinical or procedural skills remediations by the end of the designated remediation week.
- If applicable, successfully remediate any FCMS organ-systems block by the deadline specified on the remediation syllabus/contract.
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 (or calculated 80%) or higher.
- Adhere to professionalism standards and policies outlined in the PA Program Handbook.
- Meet and maintain compliance with the Technical Standards.
- Maintain compliance with all health requirements.

### Didactic Phase to Clinical Phase Progression

Upon completion of semester four of the didactic phase, students must meet the following criteria to progress to the clinical phase:

- Pass the Summative I exam with a minimum score of 70%
- Demonstrate minimum expected competency on the pre-clinical competency evaluations (refer to the PHAS 5754 FCMS syllabus and rubrics for expectations).
- Successfully complete any required remediations by the end of the designated remediation week/timeframe.
- Pass all didactic courses with a grade of B or higher (with no more than two Cs earned in the program).
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 (or calculated 80%) or higher.
- Adhere to professionalism standards and policies outlined in the PA Program Student Handbook.
- Meet and maintain compliance with the Technical Standards.
- Maintain compliance with all health requirements.

### Clinical Phase Progression

Progression through the clinical phase is described below. Students are expected to complete all clinical course requirements by the deadlines published on the syllabi.

Successful progression through the clinical phase includes:

- Completion of ten total clinical rotations (seven core, three electives).
- Pass all clinical courses with a grade of B or higher (with no more than two Cs earned in the program)
- No more than two end of rotation exam re-takes.
- No more than one rotation remediation due to end of rotation exam failure (which will delay graduation).
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 (or calculated 80%) or higher.
- Adhere to professionalism standards and policies outlined in the PA Program Student Handbook and Clinical Phase Handbook.
- Meet and maintain compliance with the Technical Standards.
- Maintain compliance with all health requirements.

## Graduation Requirements

To be eligible for graduation, PA students must:

- Successfully complete all program coursework by deadlines published on the syllabi.
- Complete all summative assessments as described below:
  - Pass the Summative II exam with an 80% or higher.
  - Demonstrate minimum expected competency on all final clinical competency evaluations (refer to rubrics and/or instructions for expectations).
  - Complete the Master's Project Professional Portfolio (minimum standards for each assignment published on the rubrics).
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 (or calculated 80%) or higher.
- Adhere to professionalism standards and policies outlined in the PA Program Student Handbook.
- Meet and maintain compliance with the Technical Standards.
- Resolve all indebtedness to the university.

### Deadlines for Completion of the Program

All students must satisfactorily complete all graduation requirements within 40 months of program matriculation in order to graduate.

### Academic Probation

A PA student may be placed on academic probation in the didactic phase following circumstances:

- The cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 (or <80% calculated), or,
- A second C is earned during any phase of the program.

In either of the above scenarios, the Program Director, on the recommendation of the Principal Faculty Committee, will initiate the process of academic probation. The Program Director will provide the student with written notification of academic probation, which will include specific recommendations for future success in the program. The student will continue attending classes/rotations while on probation.

To be removed from academic probation, the student must raise their GPA to a 3.0 (or calculated 80%) or higher in the subsequent semester. In the event a student has earned two course grades of C, they will remain on academic probation for the remainder of the program. Academic Probation will be noted on the student's transcript.

If the student's GPA remains below a 3.0 (or calculated 80%) upon completion of the subsequent semester, the student will be referred to the Principal Faculty Committee for further evaluation.

### Grade Appeal Policy

All grade appeals must be made no later than one (1) week after the grade is posted on the course management system, work is returned to the student, or final grades are posted in university portal, unless the course syllabus stipulates different guidelines. The appeal process is as follows:

1. Speak with your instructor regarding the grade issue.
2. If the grade dispute is not resolved with the course instructor, you may initiate a formal grade appeal.
3. Complete and submit the grade appeal form along with supporting documentation (this form is located on the university portal and in the school Dean's offices) to the appropriate Program Director/program chair or associate Dean.
4. If the Program Director / program chair or associate Dean is the course instructor, the grade appeal should be submitted to the school Dean. If the school Dean is the course instructor contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs Office for guidance.
5. Upon receipt of the appeal form and documentation, the Program Director/chair/associate Dean will notify the instructor that an appeal has been submitted.

The reviewer evaluates the grade appeal documents, consults with the instructor and as necessary, requests additional information from the student prior to rendering a decision.

6. Written notification of the grade appeal decision is provided to the student within **seven business days** of receipt of the grade appeal form.
7. If the appeal is denied, the student may appeal the decision with the appropriate school Dean. The appeal must be submitted within **one business day** of denial receipt. If the school Dean is the course instructor the student should contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs Office for guidance.
8. The continuation of the grade appeal will entail a thorough review of the initial grade appeal documentation prior to a decision being rendered.
9. Written notification of the final grade appeal decision is provided to the student **within five business days** from receipt of continuation of the grade appeal notification. **The decision is final, and no further action will be taken.**

### Academic Dismissal Policy

As previously stated, the entry level PA must exhibit the requisite clinical knowledge and skills to safely as a matter of public safety. The faculty are compelled to attest to such preparedness as a duty to protect the public. As such, a student will be dismissed from the PA Program/university if they:

- Receive a *final* grade of D+, D, F, I, W in any course.
- Were placed on academic probation for the previous semester and is unable to achieve an overall GPA of 3.0 (or calculated 80%) in the subsequent semester.
- Earn a **third** C in the program.
- Fail to successfully remediate knowledge and/or skills as previously described.
- Fail a **third** end of rotation exam in the clinical phase.
- Require remediation of **more than one** clinical rotation.
- Are unable to resolve an I grade according to plan approved by Instructor.
- Fail to demonstrate compliance with university or program academic policies or Technical Standards.

Students meeting the description(s) above who disagree with the final grade earned in any course, have the right to file an appeal and should follow the guidelines described within the grade appeal policy. If the original grade is upheld, the Principal Faculty Committee will review and make a final recommendation of academic dismissal based on the aforementioned policies. Students will not be permitted to attend classes during the appeal process.

### Automatic Withdrawal

A PA student who fails to attend class or participate in course activities within the first week of the semester will be automatically withdrawn from the program by the Registrar. The Program Director will notify the Registrar's Office at the end of the first week, and the student will be dropped from their courses, and will receive a W (withdrew) on all coursework.

### Resignation

A student who is considering resigning from the PA Program should meet their advisor to explore all alternatives. If the student still wishes to proceed after this initial meeting, they should meet with the Program Director to confirm the decision.

Resignation from the PA Program is the "withdrawal from or discontinuation of all courses in which the PA student is currently enrolled." To resign officially, a PA student must obtain a *Resignation* form that must be completed by the student and signed by the Program Director. A PA student who discontinues an in-progress course or leaves school after the withdrawal date found in the FranU Student Handbook Calendar will be subject to receiving a grade of WF (withdrew, failed) posted on their record for each course in question and will be ineligible for readmission into the program.

A PA student in good standing who resigns from the university or program between semesters may be readmitted to the PA Program only after reapplying with recommendation of the program's Admissions subcommittee.

## Leaves of Absence

Any student who is experiencing significant personal stress, health issues, critical illness, death of a family member, or significant life event resulting in need for a prolonged absence (greater than 5 consecutive days) from didactic classes or clinical rotations may be granted a temporary leave of absence from the program. Leaves of absence may be short- or long-term, depending on the unique situation/needs of the student. All requests for leaves of absence will be reviewed and approved by the Program Director.

### Short-Term Leave of Absence

A short-term leave of absence is defined by a brief absence from the program that does not result in a delay in graduation. The following outlines the program policy regarding short-term leaves of absence:

- A didactic student experiencing any of the previously described issues should first discuss the possibility of remote attendance with the Program Director. All efforts to attend classes virtually should be made when feasible (in which case, the student is not absent).
  - If the student is unable to attend classes remotely, or course structure does not allow (ex: competency laboratory experiences), the student may be granted up to 10 days of personal leave without having to re-join the next cohort at the same point in time, provided the student can satisfactorily complete all assignments, quizzes, and examinations prior to the semester's end.
  - If the student does not feel he/she can complete course requirements within these circumstances, a long-term leave of absence can be requested.
- In the clinical phase, short-term leaves of absences up to 10 days can potentially be made up during weeks designated for remediation or breaks and/or during months designated for PA Seminar and Master's Project. If this is not feasible, the student's graduation may be delayed.

### Long-term Leave of Absence (Deceleration)

The following outlines the program policy regarding long-term leaves of absence (deceleration). A deceleration is defined as a long-term leave of absence that will result in a student falling out of progression and a delay in graduation.

- Any need for a leave of absence greater than 10 days during the didactic phase will require the student to re-enter the program at the same point in time as leave is requested (not to exceed **one academic year** of absence).
  - **If the request is made during a semester, student must be able to successfully complete courses in which he/she is enrolled.** If the leave is approved, he/she will be given an I grade for each course and must return at the beginning of the same semester the following academic year to resolve the I grades.
  - **If the request is made between semesters, the student must be in good academic standing (minimum GPA 3.0 or 80%, and no more than two final grades of C)** and will be required to return at the same point in the following academic year.
  - If the above criteria are not met, the student is **not** eligible for deceleration.
- A clinical student may request a leave of absence up to 8 consecutive weeks (two rotations).
  - Scheduling of make-up rotations is subject to clinical site and preceptor availability. Every effort will be made to schedule make-up rotations to accommodate an August degree conferral, but could result in conferral in the following December or May (**not exceed one academic year**).
  - If the request is made during a clinical rotation, the Clinical Coordinator will confirm the student is performing satisfactorily with the clinical preceptor. If leave is approved, the student will be given an I grade for that rotation.
  - If the request is made between rotations, the student must be in good academic standing (minimum GPA of 3.0 or 80%, no more than two final grades of C, no more than 2 end of rotation exam failures and no more than 1 rotation remediation).
  - Decelerated clinical students may be allowed to *initiate* their master's project in March of the current clinical year, as well as coursework associated with PA seminar in March/April. However, all final summative assessments including the summative II exam and final OSCEs will be delayed until the student has completed all additional/remediation clinical rotation experiences (administered within the student's final 4 months of enrollment).

A student intending to request a leave of absence must present a written request including planned leave start/end dates to the Program Director. After reviewing, the Program Director will approve or deny the request for leave of absence. The Program Director will notify the Registrar and Financial Aid Office of the type of leave of absence and the duration. If a medical leave is requested, the Office of Health and Wellness will also be notified, so the Student Health Nurse can clear the student for return.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Program Director in writing of their intention to resume classes or rotations, or resign from the program at the end of the leave. If the student fails to notify the program, they will not be allowed to resume classes or rotations and will be dismissed from the program. Return from a medical leave of absence will require supporting documentation to be sent to the Student Health Nurse by the student's licensed medical provider indicating the student is fit to return and can meet the Technical Standards of the program.

If any program policies change during the leave of absence, the student will be given written notification of the changes and must adhere to the new requirements.

### **Section III: PA Student Professional Behaviors**

#### **Professional Behaviors**

Professionalism, integrity, and excellence are the cornerstones of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University and the PA Program. Consequently, PA students are expected to be kind, compassionate and patient. They are to consistently demonstrate honesty, service, and respect for others, including classmates, faculty, staff, and all members of the campus and medical community at all times. Therefore, PA students must adhere to all sections described throughout the PA student handbook, the AAPA Code of Ethics, and the program's Technical Standards. Additionally, professional behaviors are assessed in each didactic and clinical course.

Violations of these expectations will be referred immediately to the Principal Faculty Committee. Possible sanctions include probation, suspension, and program dismissal.

#### **Academic Honesty & Integrity**

The FranU PA student is expected to commit to personal and academic integrity by being honest, trustworthy, responsible, fair, and respectful of others. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to the Honor Code. Any formal academic setting relies upon high standards of honesty among its students and its faculty. The university expects both faculty and students to abide by these standards to help fulfill the mission of the university, which is to provide an educational setting where religious and human values are respected. An important aspect of this process is academic honesty. University faculty and students are expected to apply the principle of academic honesty by consistently displaying honesty and forthrightness in their academic endeavors. Intellectual inquiry can possess value only if it is acquired and presented legitimately – whether in the traditional classroom setting or in any distributed learning course work undertaken at FranU.

#### **Honor Code**

Students are expected to demonstrate the highest moral and ethical principles as a member of the PA Program. All students enrolled in the program are expected to maintain academic and professional integrity with regard to class assignments, examinations, research, publications, use of electronic technologies, and service.

All students are obligated to support the Honor Code and report any violation thereof to the instructor. Each student will confirm adherence to the Honor Code by signing the Honor Code Form of the PA Student Handbook (Appendix C). Violations of the Academic Honor Code will be referred to the Principal Faculty Committee for action.

In addition, the PA Program abides by the Code of Ethics of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (Appendix B).

#### **Violations of Academy Honesty & Integrity**

Some of the various ways in which academic honesty can be violated are listed below. Violations include but are not limited to:

**Cheating:** An act or attempted act of deception by which a student seeks to obtain academic credit in a way that is unethical, dishonest, disrespectful, irresponsible, untrustworthy or unfair. Cheating prevents faculty to honestly and fairly assess student knowledge, skills, and competencies. Examples include:

- Copying from another student's exam paper or allowing another student to copy from their exam paper.
- Using notes, course textbook, or other materials not authorized for use during an exam.
- Participation in cheating or lying in reference to clinical laboratory settings, classroom assignments, or computer assignments.
- Giving or receiving information without authority from or to any other person during an exam.

**Fabrication:** The intentional use of false or invented information, data, or research with the intent to deceive. Examples include:

- Submitting as your own any academic exercise that was prepared in full or partially by another person (e.g., written nursing care plans, case studies, computer assignments, or other written work).
- Citing information in a formal paper not taken from the reference indicated.
- Listing references not utilized to research or complete the academic exercise.
- Permitting another student to substitute for oneself to take a test or doing so for another student.

**Plagiarism:** The inclusion of someone else's words, ideas, or presenting data as one's own work. Students must avoid plagiarism by fully and properly documenting any use of outside sources. Examples include:

- Purchasing, downloading, or otherwise acquiring a paper or other course work completed by another person.
- Allowing another person to contribute significantly to completing a graded assignment.
- Using another writer's exact words without quotation marks and appropriate documentation.
- Paraphrasing or summarizing another writer without proper acknowledgment and documentation.
- Any other attempt to mislead an instructor regarding one's performance, activity, or participation.

### Student Dress Code

Students' attire and appearance should promote a professional image, reflect the mission and values of the university, and promote patient safety in the clinical setting. In general, attire, grooming and accessories should not be distracting to others. Additionally, PA students must be appropriately identified by their role in all clinical settings at all times.

This policy provides guidance as to acceptable attire, accessories, and professional grooming standards for PA Students. Failure to adhere to the established dress code of the program will be considered a violation of professionalism standards, and subjects the student to potential disciplinary action.

#### Definitions

*"Accessories"* means personal items such as masks, badge reels, buttons, jewelry, etc., which are not part of regular work attire.

*"Business Casual Attire"* means clothing that is allowed in a more relaxed classroom or clinic environment. Generally, students are required to wear business casual attire to class and outpatient clinic settings where scrubs are not appropriate. Business Casual typically consists of the following:

- Khaki or dress slacks, business dress or skirt;
- Collared shirt, blouse, or sweater set;
- Modest dress shoes.

*"Business Professional Attire"* means clothing that is worn in a traditional professional workplace (not a social setting or cocktail attire). Business Professional attire should be worn to official program and/or university functions such as white coat ceremony, pinning and awards ceremony, or graduation, and typically consists of the following:

- Collared shirt and tie
- Suit or sport jacket (to pinning ceremony; not necessary for white coat or graduation)
- Skirt, business dress, or pantsuit

- Dress shirt, blouse;
- Modest dress shoes.

Skirts and dresses must be no shorter than three (3) inches above the knee. Blouses, shirts, and dresses should be modest with no plunging neck lines or cut-outs/keyholes of any kind. All clothing shall be clean, wrinkle-free, and fit appropriately.

Shoes should conform with established safety and infection prevention standards and promote a quiet environment. Flip-flops or crocs are not appropriate footwear at any time. Sneakers or clog-type shoes may be worn with scrubs only.

"*Scrubs*" means a medical uniform that generally consists of a short-sleeved, collarless scrub shirt and drawstring pants. PA students may wear program-approved embroidered navy-blue scrubs in good condition (free of wrinkles, clean, no frayed bottoms, well fitted) to labs and on testing days during the didactic phase. During the clinical phase, students may wear program-approved scrubs to clinics only if allowed by clinic policy, otherwise, business casual attire must be worn, unless otherwise specified by the clinical site policies. Hospital scrubs must be worn in the operating rooms. Please note, hospital scrubs may not be worn outside of the operating room or removed from the hospital campus. Doing so constitutes "scrub theft" and subjects the student to disciplinary action.

### General Standards

All students must report to class and clinical assignments appropriately dressed and groomed for their role and practice good personal hygiene in adherence to the guidelines set forth in this policy.

Students must practice good personal hygiene, which includes presenting to work with clean hair and nails. Tattoos may be visible, provided they are not obscene or offensive. Faculty or clinical preceptors reserve the right to require students to cover any body art that it deems obscene, offensive, or not supportive of the core values or mission of the program or university.

Students shall report to class and clinical assignments with clean and well-groomed hair, which is styled in a manner that is not a distraction and does not interfere with the work being performed. Hair accessories may be worn provided they are not a distraction and do not interfere with the work being performed. Hair color shall be of a naturally occurring human hair color.

Students shall have clean, well-manicured fingernails. Artificial nails are not permitted in the clinical setting, which includes gel, dip, or extension tips of any kind as these are known to harbor bacteria.

Students may wear cologne, perfume or aftershave provided that the amount is not excessive or a distraction and does not interfere with the work being performed by others, or negatively impact patient care.

Students may wear makeup, provided that the amount is not excessive or a distraction and does not interfere with the work being performed.

Students may wear jewelry in class and in an outpatient clinical setting, provided that the jewelry is not a distraction, does not interfere with the work being performed or create a patient or personal safety hazard. Jewelry may not be worn in the operating room. No facial jewelry is allowed.

Hats may not be worn in class, while on a clinical assignment, or at an official program or university function. Headscarves may be worn provided they are not a distraction and do not interfere with the work being performed.

Denim may not be worn to class unless pre-approved by the program office. Denim may never be worn to a clinical assignment.

## PA Student Identification

Students are always required to wear a university-provided photo ID badge. This badge clearly identifies the individual as a PA student. ID badges must be worn and visible while on campus, clinical rotation, or university-sponsored activity for security reasons. Clinical rotation sites may require additional identification and ID badges to be worn while on site.

All students must identify themselves as PA students upon initial contact with Physicians, other healthcare professionals, patients, or staff. To misrepresent oneself as a practicing PA or another healthcare provider is considered a major violation of program policies and the PA profession's Code of Ethics. Such a violation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to program dismissal.

## Lab Coats

**Short**, white, program approved lab coats with the university emblem on the left side and the student's name on the right side are required to be worn during the clinical phase of the program at all times while in patient care areas outside the operating room. Three quarter length, or long white coats may not be worn by PA students. Students may not wear university, program, or other sweatshirts, active wear or "hoodies" over scrubs while on clinical rotation.

## Didactic Attendance and Absences

To facilitate and maximize learning opportunities, attendance at all scheduled didactic and clinical sessions in the PA Program is expected and required. Students have a responsibility to take advantage of the learning opportunities available to them for the safety of their future patients. Attendance and timeliness in the classroom are viewed as an indicator of the student's future attendance and timeliness as a clinician, and as such, is considered a professional behavior.

Students are responsible for classroom preparedness by reviewing the course syllabus and reading the appropriate textbook sections, reviewing posted PowerPoint presentations or other materials provided by the instructor. Information from required textbooks, lectures, handouts, presentations, or any other educational method may be utilized for examination purposes.

Attendance will be monitored by the course director. Short-term absences due to illness, injury, or other essential matters (1-2 days) may occasionally occur. Anticipated absences (doctor's appointments, funerals, etc.) should be discussed with the course director as early as possible. Unanticipated absences (personal short-term illness, transportation issues, etc.) should be discussed with the course director (not guest lecturer) as soon as possible to make certain the student is safe and to ensure that any missed class materials were obtained from classmates. In these circumstances, students will not be permitted to attend classes remotely (example: student as a doctor's appointment at 1:00, and class at 2:00).

Absences on assessment days present unique challenges as assessments are difficult to recreate and often require scheduling of multiple campus resources. Therefore, absences on assessment days will only be approved by the course director in the event of emergencies or extreme circumstances (personal illness/injury, death of family member, etc.). **Unapproved absences on assessment days (personal travel, vacations, weddings, or tardiness will) result in a zero for any assignment, quiz, simulation, competency evaluation or examination scheduled on that date.** Students should refer to the policies outlined in each course syllabus. Regardless of reason for absence, clinical competencies must be assessed throughout enrollment to ensure eligibility for program progression and/or graduation. As such, any absences from competency evaluations will need to be rescheduled when the student returns to campus based on the availability of faculty proctor(s). Unauthorized absences from a competency assessment will result in a zero as previously discussed.

Students should not report to campus or clinical rotations with infectious symptoms. Students should notify their instructors if ill as described above and notify the Office of Health and Wellness if applicable for guidance on viral testing, quarantine/isolation. If an ill student feels well enough to attend a lecture remotely, such access will be granted and therefore the student will be considered present in class. If remote attendance is not feasible, the student will be considered absent. When attending class remotely, students should behave as if physically present on campus:

- Dress should be business casual as previously described (no sweats, pajamas, etc.).
- Student should be prepared and seated at a desk/table in a quiet space.
- Student should log into virtual link 5 minutes prior to the start of class.
- Camera should be on throughout the duration of the entire class.

- Student will be expected to participate in class discussions/activities.
- Participation from a public space/vehicle will not be permitted.

Virtual attendance to classes is not intended to be a matter of convenience/personal preference and will only be considered for a valid reason as determined by the course director.

Those students with children need to have a varied support network for childcare. Children may not be brought to class.

### Tardies

Tardiness is defined as reporting late for assigned duties including the classroom and clinical rotations. Patterns of excessive tardiness will result in individual counseling by the course director and reported to the Program Director/ Principal clinical faculty committee. All counseling sessions related to tardiness will be documented and become part of the student's permanent file. Continued tardiness will result in disciplinary action including program dismissal, as determined by the Principal Faculty Committee.

Examples: Late for the didactic phase is not being in your seat, your study materials not on the desk, and not prepared to begin class when the class start time occurs.

Late for the clinical phase of the program is not being at your assigned station and prepared to begin work when the start time occurs.

### Laptop and Computer Use

It is highly recommended that students take notes via traditional pen and paper during class. Personal laptops will be used during scheduled examinations. Students are required to purchase and maintain a screen protector for use during examinations. Laptops must be compatible with the ExamSoft and ExamDriver web-based testing applications at all times. Students are responsible for applying any periodic software/operating system updates in order to support testing applications.

In the event that an assessment is to be administered remotely, the program's Remote Proctoring Guidelines must be followed.

Under no circumstances, should a didactic or clinical student share computer or software application usernames or passwords with other students, faculty, or clinical preceptors. Doing so represents a severe breach of professionalism, confidentiality and in the clinical setting has even more significant implications. Sharing of usernames/passwords will result in disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal.

### Cell Phone Use

The use of cell phones during class is very disruptive to the learning environment. As such, cell phones must be turned off or set on silent mode in class and stowed away. There may be times when cell phones are utilized for polls or other learning activities in class. In this case, students are expected to stow their phones as soon as the activity is completed.

Smart watches are not allowed to be worn during examinations/assessments.

### Recordings

Students are not permitted to record classroom lectures, meetings, advising appointments, or interactions with clinical preceptors by any means.

### Falsification of Records/Information

Each student is expected to complete all university and patient care records with accuracy and honesty. This includes but is not limited to, PA Program records, patient logs, clinical records, incident reports and evaluations. Falsification of records will result in disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal. If a preceptor requests a student falsify a patient record or any other document, this should be reported to the Clinical Coordinator and/or the Program Director immediately.

## Privacy/Confidentiality

PA students and other unauthorized persons must not have access to the academic records or other confidential information related to other students or faculty. As such, students, guests, visitors, or unauthorized persons are not allowed behind faculty/staff desks for any reason, nor are they allowed to use any program, office or classroom computers without explicit permission.

Students should never be in any staff or faculty office without express permission of the appropriate staff or faculty member. Viewing faculty or staff computer screens or taking pictures of computer screens without explicit permission is prohibited.

## Mail/Letterhead

Student may not use the program as a mailing address. university or program letterhead should not be used by students for personal correspondence, expressions of personal opinion, or for solicitations.

## Email/Program Calendar

The program utilizes Outlook email and calendar to communicate with students and schedule classes/meetings. As such, students are required to check their university email daily, and respond to email requests within 24 hours of receipt (or sooner if requested). Urgent/emergent changes may be communicated through university-approved channels or via cell phone/text/group messaging app.

## Social Media

The university's primary concern regarding social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media platforms involves the safety of students as well as the integrity of university and its community. The university is aware that students may wish to express their personal ideas and opinions through private social media that are not administered by the University. Nevertheless, students should be aware that the university Student Code of Conduct applies to uses of private social media platforms or communications resources that reflect poorly on the university.

Guidelines to follow regarding social media use:

- Avoid posting personal information like addresses, cell phone numbers, etc.
- Do not make references to alcohol or drugs in photos or blogs.
- Do not post explicit pictures.
- Do not post negative references about your classmates, faculty, instructors, staff or patients.
- Logos and pictures posted on the university's website are copyrighted and cannot be used without university permission.

Note that students participating in clinical training at a medical facility are subject to that facility's policies and should be cognizant of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule when using social media. Students participating in clinical training at Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center (RMC) are subject to the RMC Social Media Policy for Team Members. The PA Program prohibits any form of information sharing about fellow students' academic progress or performance, and all references to clinical work where such sharing could have patient health and legal ramifications according to federal HIPAA regulations. The potential consequences for social networking violations of the Community Creed and Student Honor Code are significant, as are the appropriate disciplinary actions specific violations may warrant.

Posting unprofessional content or private information about the university, faculty, staff, and students, patients, or the PA profession on any website, blog, social site, or forum is prohibited. Doing so is a breach of professional behavior and ethics, and in some cases, may be illegal. Violations will be referred to the Principal Faculty Committee for action including possible program dismissal.

## Interactions with Instructors/Preceptors

Instruction may periodically require physical contact between faculty, preceptors, and students for the purpose of physically guiding appropriate techniques, i.e., Patient Assessment, Clinical Medical Skills and other didactic and clinical situations that may involve

demonstrations. The student's signature on the form found in Appendix D indicates their understanding that this is an appropriate and necessary part of instruction, and the student does accept this practice.

### Interactions with Guest Lecturers

Guest lecturers are providing their time and expertise to enhance student learning. It is an unfair and unprofessional abuse of their kindness to approach a guest lecturer with personal or family-related medical questions. Additionally, being approached by students may deter a guest from returning to lecture.

If this behavior occurs, the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

### Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to review potential violations of the Program and university community standards. Further, the code of conduct represents the concept that a disciplinary process should, in fact, be an educational experience that fosters responsibility for individual actions, as well as for the way the community functions. The prevailing rule in student discipline must be that of fundamental fairness and education. All students are responsible for abiding by the above standards of the Program and university community, and those who violate them are subject to disciplinary action. Moreover, the Program and university recognize and respect local, state, and federal laws and statutes.

The program and university may pursue enforcement of its own rules, whether or not legal proceedings are under way or forthcoming, and may use information from third-party sources, such as law enforcement agencies and outside media, to determine whether Program or university rules have been violated. The standards of behavior should be read broadly and are not designed to define misconduct in exhaustive terms. The program (via the Principal Faculty Committee) will find a student responsible for a conduct code violation if the violation is proven by a preponderance of the information presented.

### Jurisdiction

The Student Code of Conduct applies to conduct that occurs on university owned or leased property, clinical rotation sites and/or at university-sponsored events. In addition, the program reserves the right to address, through the Student Code of Conduct process, incidents which occur on or off campus that may endanger the health, safety, and welfare of others and/or adversely affect the program or university and/or the pursuit of its mission. Each student shall be responsible for their conduct from the time of their application for admission through the awarding of a degree, as well as during periods between terms of actual enrollment and leaves of absence or suspension.

A student who is alleged of a Student Code of Conduct or Academic Honesty violation will retain all program and university rights until due process is completed, unless there is evidence that the student has done any of the following:

- Has been convicted of a felony.
- Has been formally charged with the commission of a felony of such nature that the student's presence on campus or clinical locations is potentially dangerous to the health and safety of the university or clinical locations.
- Engaged in any activity of such nature that presence on campus is potentially dangerous to the health and safety of the university or clinical communities.

In these situations, or if a student has been asked to leave a clinical rotation site for alleged violations, the student may be temporarily banned (suspended) from the campus and clinical locations until due process is completed.

### Standards of Behavior

In addition to the previously mentioned professional standards, below are some examples of behaviors that are unacceptable and not in keeping with the educational mission and philosophy of the program and university. Such actions will subject student(s) to disciplinary action:

- Flagrant and/or consistent violation of the Student Honor Code in the classroom, clinical or any other university-related setting.

- Physical abuse of any member of the university community or conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any such person.
- Participation in hazing, acts which are degrading or injurious, or acts in which another is held against his or her will.
- Sexual assault or unwelcome sexual encouragement, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and/or physical conduct of a sexual temperament comprises sexual harassment when submission to such conduct is made, whether explicitly or implicitly.
- Stalking behavior directed at an individual that would cause a reasonable person to either fear for his/her safety, the safety of others and/or suffer substantial emotional distress.
- Any verbal abuse or other forms of hostile behavior of any member of the university community or conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any such person.
- Theft of university services; theft of or intentional damage to property of the University; theft of or intentional injury to a member of the university community; theft of or intentional injury to a campus visitor.
- Possession, sale, or the attempted sale of stolen property of the university, a member of the university community, or a campus visitor of the civic community/citizens.
- Unauthorized use of computer account(s), computer data files and/or computer facilities/labs.
- Unauthorized use or tampering with campus fire equipment or the fire alarm system.
- Unauthorized use of or entry into university facilities.
- Attendance at, or participating in, any clinical, classroom or university activity when under the influence of any mind-altering substance or impairment.
- Disorderly conduct or lewd, indecent, or inappropriate behavior.
- Any act (verbal or written) which interferes with or adversely affects the normal functioning of the University or; which injures or endangers the welfare of any member of the university; including obscene conduct or expression on university owned property, clinical site, or at university-sponsored events
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages on university-owned or controlled property or at university-approved or supervised functions.
- Possession of firearms, knives, and weapons on the university campus and at other sites where university work or activities take place.
- Falsification of records/information outside the classroom; this would include submitting false, forged, or fraudulent information to any university official or university office or making false statements to a university official. Falsification of academic related items such as assignments, grades, etc. would be considered a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy which is a separate process.
- Failure to respond to a request to report to a university administrative office.
- Failure to comply with directions of university officials acting in the performance of their duties
- Violations of university policies and regulations as stipulated in this and other official university publications.
- Violations of federal, state, or local law, which adversely affect the community and/or the university and the pursuit of its mission.

### Substance Use

The PA Program will not tolerate the use of illegal drugs or the abuse of alcohol. Students are required to submit to a drug test prior to entering the program, and may be tested periodically at random, or for cause/suspicion. Additionally, some prescription drugs may interfere with cognitive and motor skills. As such, students taking such medications may be in violation of program Technical Standards and may be required to take a medical leave of absence and/or be dismissed from the program. Students should not consume alcohol in public places wearing university attire or program scrubs.

### Criminal Activity

Any PA student who is arrested is obligated to self-report this to the Program Director. Arrests during the didactic phase must be reported within 48 hours. Arrests during the clinical phase will result in ineligibility to rotate at some rotation sites and therefore must be reported within 24 hours of arrest. The Program Director will determine based on university and program policies if the student can remain in the program. Failure to self-report an arrest during any phase of the program will result in the student's dismissal from the program.

Should a student be arrested or convicted of a crime prior to the time they are prepared to enter the profession, the criminal record may have further implications for the student's eligibility to progress through the program and/or practice. Students should be aware of state and federal or professional restrictions barring the practice of individuals with criminal records.

**Graduation from the PA Program does not guarantee eligibility to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying exam or obtain state PA licensure.**

### Determination of Violations of Program Professionalism Policies/Code of Conduct

Students found to be non-compliant with any of the above professional policies of the program are at risk for program dismissal. Non-compliant behaviors include, but are not limited to issues such as cheating, attendance, attire, failure to exhibit professional behaviors described within this handbook, and/or non-adherence to Technical Standards. Disciplinary action will proceed as outlined below through the Principal Faculty Committee.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense - Reprimand and student counseling: Student will receive a written notification that they have violated a professionalism policy or the student code of conduct. This will become a permanent/official part of the student's record.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – Non-Academic Probation. A student placed on probation as a final warning prior to program dismissal. The probation will be noted on the transcript and will be reported to clinical rotation sites, as well as certification, licensure and credentialing entities. A clinical rotation site has the right to reject any student on Non-Academic Probation, and therefore, this may delay progression through the program/graduation.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Program Dismissal.
- Suspension - If a behavior or offense is significant as determined by the Principal Faculty Committee, or additional evidence is needed, the student may be placed on suspension for further investigation by the Program Director before a final disciplinary decision is made.
- Escalation of Disciplinary actions– If a behavior is deemed egregious by the Principal Faculty Committee, the student may be placed on non-academic probation or dismissed from the program automatically without a written warning.

### Suspension

A student may be placed on administrative suspension while the Program Director conducts an investigation of an alleged violation of policies, rules or requirements. Suspension may be up to seven business days in length. A student placed on suspension will not be permitted to attend class or participate in clinical rotations until the investigation is concluded and the student is in compliance with program and University policy(ies). Time missed during clinical rotations due to suspension must be made up before graduation from the program. A second suspension at any time during the program will result in dismissal.

### Automatic Dismissal

A student may be dismissed without a suspension for infractions which include (but are not limited to):

- Endangering the safety of patients, coworkers, faculty, and fellow students.
- Refusing a drug test.
- Theft of hospital, university, or program property will result in immediate dismissal.
- Falsifying documents or medical records.
- Non-compliance of any PA Program, university or clinical site policy.

### Appeals Related to Program Professionalism Violations

Students may appeal within seven business days of notification of program dismissal decision to the Dean of the School of Health Professions. The Dean's decision related to such matters is to be considered final. **No other appeals may be made.** The Dean will review the matter and respond to the student within seven business days of written appeal receipt. Students who are appealing dismissal for professional behaviors may not attend program or University classes during the Dean's review of the appeal.

## Section IV: Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment

### Non-Discriminatory Policy

The university assures free and equal access for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy status, or military status in the admission to, participation in, or employment of its programs and activities. University will provide reasonable accommodations for students with learning, emotional, or physical disabilities. Students wishing to self-identify are required to contact the Office of Student Affairs.

If a student believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy status, or military status, that student should report the matter to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment, who will seek to assist the student with the resolution of the complaint as described in the Student Complaint and Grievance Procedure.

### Sexual Offenses

Any sexual behavior including sexual intercourse or attempted intercourse that is against the will of another or the intentional placing of another in reasonable apprehension of receiving unwanted sexual contact. The definition applies whether the assailant is a stranger or an acquaintance. The university prohibits sexual offenses including but not limited to: domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

#### Domestic Violence

Asserted violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by the survivor's current or former spouse or intimate partner, current or former cohabitant, by a person with whom shares a child in common, person similarly situated under domestic or family violence law, or anyone else protected under domestic or family violence law. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.

#### Dating Violence

Violence committed by a person who has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the survivor. Whether there was a relationship will be gauged by its length, type, and frequency of interaction.

#### Relationship Violence

Abusive behavior, including threats, verbal and/or emotional abuse, and physical assault between persons in an intimate and/or sexual relationship.

#### Sexual Assault

Physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol. An individual also may be unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability.

#### Stalking

A course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress. (Electronic stalking via phone, text, email or other web-based means is considered to be stalking.)

## Sexual Harassment

Consistent with the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Clery Act, and the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”), the university prohibits discrimination based on sex in its educational programs and activities, including sexual harassment, and acts of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual violence (including sexual assault) and stalking. The university also prohibits any retaliation, intimidation, threats, coercion or any other discrimination against any individuals exercising their rights or responsibilities pursuant to these laws and institutional policy. Sexual harassment of students can be a form of discrimination prohibited by Title IX. The following types of conduct constitute sexual harassment:

### Quid Pro Quo Harassment

A school employee bases an educational decision on a student’s submission to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other physical conduct of a sexual nature. Quid pro quo harassment is unlawful whether the student resists and suffers the threatened harm or submits and thus avoids the threatened harm.

### Hostile Environment

Sexually harassing conduct can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature by an employee, another student, or a third party. This conduct would be sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create a hostile or abusive educational environment or to limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity.

### Gender-based Hostility

Where an individual or individuals are harassed because of their gender

## Reporting Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination or Sexual Misconduct

In the event of an incident that has occurred on campus or during a campus sponsored activity and appears to constitute sexual harassment, discrimination, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, a complaint should be filed directly to the Title IX Coordinator through the online form located on the FranU Title IX website.

**Please refer to the Campus Safety & Security Booklet for more details which is available on the university portal on the campus safety page.**

Options for students after a sexual misconduct incident, students are advised to do the following:

- Get to a safe location.
- Call 911 to file a police report or call Lake Security at 765-8825.
- Get medical attention, but do not bathe, change clothes or otherwise clean up until proper health care and law enforcement officials have talked to you and treated you.
- Students are urged to notify Student Affairs at 526-1620 so that appropriate actions can be taken and so students can receive support, counseling referrals, and other pertinent types of information.
- Victims of sexual offenses have the option to decline reporting.

### General Support for Students

- Campus security will use all reasonable means to protect the survivor and prevent further violence.
- Counseling is also available for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault through our Counseling Services within Student Affairs and by referral to off-campus agencies.
- Campus Health and Safety director can meet with students to advise on safety and health concerns. Additionally, this director can work with Lake Security and police as appropriate and needed.
- 24- Hour statewide hotline for IRIS Domestic Violence Program is available at 1-888-411- 1333.

- The institution will consider reasonable academic accommodations to the survivors of alleged sexual offenses. Students shall be notified of the options for changing academic situations.

### Complaint and Grievance Procedure

Students who feel they have a non-academic grievance (non-grade related) should first discuss the problem with the faculty member involved, followed then by the Program Director or department chair in the specific program. If the matter has not been resolved at that level, the student should take the issue to the school Dean. For non-academic and administrative concerns, students should first discuss the problem with the individual involved, then to the director of the appropriate department. In the unusual case in which this process fails to bring about a satisfactory resolution, any individual may pursue the matter further by submitting a written complaint/concern to [complaints@franu.edu](mailto:complaints@franu.edu). For additional information please see the Complaint and Grievance Policy.

Statement of complaint or concern guidelines:

1. Identify and explain the exact nature and circumstance of the complaint or concern including the dates and locations of any specific incidents. This written statement must be submitted within fifteen working days of the precipitating event(s), and should be limited to two, double spaced pages.
2. Identify the names of persons or witnesses who have knowledge of any specific incident leading to the complaint/concern, and submit as appendices any available written documentation or evidence that is relative to the complaint/concern.
3. **For academic grievances**, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will give consideration to all written submissions of the complaint/concern and will determine the process for addressing it, related to the nature of the complaint/concern. All other types of grievances, other than academic, will be addressed to the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.
4. The student submitting the written statement of complaint/concern will receive written notification of action taken to address the complaint/concern from the appropriate Vice President within five working days of the statement being received. The decision of the Vice President will be final.
5. There will be no discrimination or retaliation as a result of a student's exercise of his or her rights under this procedure. The university will prohibit and guard against any form of reprisal that may be directed toward a student who files a complaint. Violation of this prohibition will be met with appropriate disciplinary action.
6. Students have the right to file a grievance directly with the Office of Civil Rights. Contact Information is as follows:

Dallas Office; Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620  
Dallas, Texas 75201-6810  
Telephone 214-661-9600

## Section V: General Program and University Policies

### Transfer Policy

The PA Program does not accept transfer students. There is no advanced placement of students in the PA Program.

### Tuition and Fees

Please refer to the PA webpage for current tuition and fees.

#### Tuition and Fee Refund Policy

When a student **officially** drops courses, withdraws from courses or resigns from the university, their account will be credited with a refund of tuition and fees charged for the courses based on the following refund policy. Students must follow university procedures and adhere to published deadlines when dropping, withdrawing or resigning. If a student is de-registered by the university for any reason, the university reserves the right to refund the student according to this schedule using the effective date of de-registration to determine the percentage refunded.

100% Tuition through 1st week  
75% Tuition through 2nd week  
50% Tuition through 3rd week  
25% Tuition through 4th week  
0% Tuition after 4th week

100% Fees through last day to add classes  
0% Fees after last day to add classes

Please note refund percentages are not based on the number of class meetings or whether the student has attended class.

**Special note to financial aid recipients regarding resignation:** Per federal regulation, the university must determine the amount of federal financial aid to be returned to the federal programs for students who withdraw after receiving federal financial aid. This includes students who officially resign and students who are determined to have unofficially resigned. Students considering withdrawal/resignation should contact the Office of Financial Aid to determine any potential effects on aid already received for the semester. If the return of un-earned aid results in a balance on a student's account, the student is responsible for paying that balance to the university. Unpaid balances are subject to the policies detailed in the past-due balances section.

### Financial Aid

All students are strongly encouraged to explore their eligibility and options for financial aid through the Financial Aid Office.

Responsibility for meeting educational expenses rests with the student. Students applying for financial aid may be eligible for all standard sources of state and federal assistance. Information on various financial aid opportunities available to PA students is available through the FranU Financial Aid Office.

### Student Affairs

Students with personal issues which may impact their progress in the PA Program will be referred by PA Program faculty to Student Affairs which provides a wide variety of services to students including:

- Counseling by professional counselors
- Personal, Academic and Career counseling
- Disability services

### FranU Computer Use

As a user of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University computer facilities, each student agrees to abide by the following provisions:

1. The student agrees to abide by any patent or copyright restrictions that may relate to the use of computer facilities, products, programs, or documentation. Students agree not to copy, disclose, modify, or transfer computer programs/applications that they did not create without the expressed consent of the original author. The student agrees not to use any Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University equipment or software to violate the terms of any software License Agreement or any applicable local, state, or federal laws. Students further agree not to tamper with or in any way modify the equipment to which they have access.
2. Students agree not to use Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University equipment or software for any form of private financial gain.
3. Students agree to carefully and responsibly use any computer devices made available to them and to recognize that they assume full responsibility for any loss, damage or destruction of such devices caused by their negligence, misuse, abuse or carelessness. Any problems should be reported immediately to the Coordinator of Administrative and Academic Computing.
4. Users are prohibited from installing, storing, or using unlicensed software on FranU computers. Transmission of such software over either the FranU or FMOLHS network is prohibited.
5. Students agree not to take any actions that constitute inappropriate behavior. The following list provides specific examples of inappropriate behavior, but is not intended to enumerate all possible instances:
  - a. Intentionally infecting the network server or other computers with a virus.
  - b. Sending harassing messages to other computer users either at FranU or through external networks.

- c. Using inappropriate or abusive language to other users, students, faculty or staff.
- d. Engaging in any behavior that causes distractions to other users (e.g. loud radios, loud conversations, shouting, etc.)
- e. Obtaining additional resources not authorized to individual user.
- f. Depriving other users of authorized resources.
- g. Acquiring access to unauthorized systems.
- h. Utilizing another user's account and password

### Student Records

To comply with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974*, commonly called FERPA or the *Buckley Amendment*, the administration of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University informs students of their rights under this Act. The law affords students' rights of access to educational records and partially protects students from the release and disclosure of those records to third parties. Educational records are those records, files and other materials that contain information directly related to a student's academic progress, financial status, medical condition, etc., and are maintained by the university or a party acting on behalf of the university.

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's educational records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies. For more information, please refer to the FranU Student Handbook.

### Section VI: Student Health and Safety Policies

The purpose of the Office of Health and Wellness is to enhance the educational process by fostering a safe campus environment, assist students in minimizing or eliminating health-related barriers to learning, promoting optimal wellness, enabling students to make informed decisions regarding health matters, and empowering students to be responsible and well-informed consumers of healthcare.

A student health program is provided for Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University students. The Student Health Nurse directs and implements the ongoing activities of the health program which include maintenance of student health records, providing information regarding health insurance, ensuring student compliance with immunizations and clinical student health requirements, oversight of the college drug screening program, advising and educating students in health matters. The Student Health Nurse serves as a resource for information on a wide variety of health topics and maintains brochures and other printed materials available to students.

Student health records and health consultations are completely confidential. Immunization records and results of health screening will only be released to the PA program faculty and clinical sites with the written consent of the student.

### Professional Liability Insurance (Malpractice)

Clinical students of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University are enrolled on an annual basis for Student Professional Liability Insurance. Professional Liability insurance protects the named insured against claims arising from real or alleged errors or omissions, including negligence, during their professional activities. It also provides coverage for future claims arising from incidents that occurred while the policy was in force. For more information, contact the Office of Health and Wellness.

### PA Program Health and Safety Requirements

After being accepted into a health career program, students will receive a health packet detailing all health and safety requirements that must be met prior to the first clinical course (or course containing a competency laboratory which simulates the clinical environment).

Documentation for health requirements needing to be updated annually (i.e., TB, CPR) must be submitted to the Health and Wellness Office **by the Friday before the start of the semester in which the requirement is due**. For example: if TB or CPR will

expire after the semester begins, those items must be updated in time to provide updated documentation to the Office of Health and Wellness by the Friday before that semester begins.

The following is a summary of the requirements that are explained in more detail in the student health packets.

### Immunizations

PA students are required to have the following immunizations prior to, and throughout their enrollment. The policy is based on the most current CDC recommendations for health care professionals and any state laws for the state in which the program/campus is located. The student is responsible for providing the initial documentation of their health records as well as submitting the proof of ongoing compliance. Students born after 1956 must furnish proof of immunity to measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) by providing:

- Either proof of TWO immunizations for measles since birth or ONE immunization for measles at age 15 or later;
- At least ONE immunization for mumps and ONE for rubella;
- Tetanus/diphtheria (T/D or TDAP) immunization within the last 10 years.
- Meningitis vaccine within the last 10 years
- Varicella vaccine or serologic evidence of immunity
- THREE doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
- Current influenza immunization
- One of the following COVID-19 vaccines: Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson and Johnson.

Individual clinical sites may require antibody tests (titers) as proof of immunization. Clinical students will be notified of such requirements as necessary.

Any student seeking a medical or religious exemption for any immunization requirement must do so through the Office of Health and Wellness. While the university may approve a specific exemption, the same may not be approved by the clinical site(s). This may negatively impact the program's ability to place the student clinically, and thus delay program progression.

### Physical Examination

PA students are required to have exams performed upon entering the program. The Office of Health and Wellness will provide a health packet which contains all necessary forms and those must be completed by a physician, PA or nurse practitioner.

### Drug Screening

All PA students must sign consent and release forms to submit to a drug-screening test. All incoming students must be cleared before enrollment. PA students are required to obtain drug screens at various times during the didactic and clinical phase of the program.

Students who fail a drug screen will be referred to the Program Director. Use of illegal substances will result in program dismissal. Use of prescription medications that impair judgement, cognition, or coordination are in direct violation of the program's Technical Standards and will result in program dismissal.

### Criminal Background Check

Enrollment in the PA Program is contingent upon a clear criminal background check. The university's general admission and clinical program admission application forms require students to disclose any prior criminal convictions and/or arrests. The background check process is designed to meet agency requirements and ensure the accuracy of students' self-reports. Cases where students have not answered the background question on the application accurately will be dealt with severely and, at a minimum, result in the student being placed on non-academic probation. Additionally, the PA Program cannot guarantee a student who failed to self-report a prior arrest will be eligible to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) and/or obtain a state medical license.

Students will have criminal background checks conducted by Background Research Solutions (BR-Solutions.net). Students will receive information on the procedure for completing the criminal background checks in the student health packet.

Students may be required to complete an additional background check through the Louisiana Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information as required by individual clinical sites.

Students who fail a criminal background check will be referred to the Program Director. Serious offenses such as assault, rape, theft, etc. are not consistent with the student code of conduct or ethical guidelines for PA practice and will result in program dismissal.

#### Healthcare Provider CPR & Advanced Cardiac Life Support

All PA students are required to submit evidence of current certification of Basic Life Saving CPR certification. Students must complete the cognitive and skills evaluations in accordance with the curriculum of the official American Heart Association Basic Life Support program. (ex: Heart Saver CPR and Red Cross do NOT meet this requirement).

All PA students must receive Advanced Cardiac Life Support certification prior to entering clinical rotations as part of their clinical credentialing process. This certification course is provided by the PA faculty as part of the didactic curriculum. All students must participate in the training, even those who were previously certified.

**Failure to maintain compliance with any of the university or program's health requirements each semester will result in the student's inability to attend classes and result in withdrawal from classes. Maintaining these requirements is considered a professional behavior and clinical obligation, and as such, violations will be referred to the Principal Faculty Committee.**

#### Health Insurance

PA students are required to carry personal health insurance coverage for the entire time they are enrolled in the PA Program. Brochures and information on student health insurance plans are available from the Office of Health and Wellness.

The university provides accidental injury insurance for all students enrolled in a clinical program. This insurance only covers injuries resulting from an accident occurring while participating in assigned clinical activities. Expenses incurred from injuries resulting from such an accident that require medical care or treatment and are provided at an emergency room, hospital outpatient department, clinic or doctor's office, will be payable at 100% of the Reasonable and Customary charges up to a maximum of \$10,000 per accident. **Please note that this is a secondary policy and will only pay claims after the student's primary insurance has paid.**

The student must submit an incident report as soon as possible following the **accident on the university portal (RL Datix)**. The Student Health Nurse will assist the student in filing a claim with the claims company for this secondary insurance. This insurance is for an injury sustained during a laboratory or clinical assignment only.

#### Financial Responsibility for Health Care

All students are personally responsible for healthcare costs associated with any illness or injury sustained throughout their enrollment. The PA student is responsible for the payment of all financial obligations including, but not limited to: Professional fees, copays or other expenses incurred in physical examinations, outpatient services, radiologic and laboratory tests, emergency room charges, medications, etc.

#### Maintenance and Storage of PA Student Health Records

Student health records are completely confidential and are maintained separately from academic records by the Office of Health and Wellness. Health records may be released to clinical sites/preceptors only with the student's written consent. Student health records will be stored for a period of three years following the last semester enrolled at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University. Hard copy health documents stored longer than this three-year period will be destroyed.

## Campus Safety and Security

The safety policy for FranU can be located at <https://www.franu.edu/campus-safety>. It is the student's responsibility to review the safety plan for each individual off-campus clinical site where the student is assigned. Any safety concerns or issues during the clinical phase should be reported to the Clinical Coordinator.

## Campus Emergencies

If there is an emergency, please call 911, then notify the on-duty policeman at 225-202-7890 and the Facilities Manager at 225-526-1734.

## Parking Policy

Students are required to follow the Parking Policy as displayed in the current University Student Handbook.

## Firearms and Weapons Policy

The unauthorized possession of firearms, knives or weapons is prohibited on FranU campus. The possession of such weapons on campus or at a clinical rotation site will result in disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal.

## Inclement Weather Policy

Didactic students will be notified of any university/program closures due to inclement weather via text alert, email and/or university website or emergency app announcement.

Clinical students who are not able to safely travel to their clinical site during inclement weather will not be expected to report for assigned duties. It is recognized however, that as future health care professionals, PAs are often called to work during and after severe weather events, and as such, there are valuable learning opportunities during these times. This will be left to the discretion of the individual student and the Clinical Coordinator. If the student cannot safely travel to their rotation, they should notify the Clinical Coordinator prior to notifying the clinical preceptor/site.

It should be noted that attendance policies still apply to absences due to weather, and any clinical student may be required to make up missed clinical time.

## Incident Reporting

An RL Datix incident report must be completed for any injury, property damage, or unusual occurrence involving a student, employee, or visitor on the university campus. The RL Datix Report is an online report that can be accessed via the university portal page. Office of Health and Wellness for any issues with RL Datix. If an incident occurs during a clinical rotation, the protocol of the clinical agency should also be followed and the student should notify the Clinical Coordinator as soon as possible.

## Clinical Laboratory Policy

Those courses, which incorporate the teaching of exam or procedural skills in the classroom or lab, will provide mannequins, standardized patients, or classmates for student practice. No student will be required to serve as a live model for practice of invasive procedural skills such as venipuncture. In the event a PA student participates in live model practice for venipuncture, they must sign the program's laboratory practice consent form.

## Clean Needle Stick/Sharps Policy

Students are instructed on the proper handling, storage and disposal of sharps and instruments in the curriculum. Students should follow these procedures when handling sharps and instruments to avoid injury. In the event of a "clean" needle stick or sharps injury in any clinical skills lab or clinical site, first aid will be rendered to the injured person and referral made to the OLOLRMC Emergency Department or to the student's personal physician (at the expense of the student). Details of the incident and the referral made must be documented in RL Datix. Clinical students should follow the protocol of the clinical agency as well (may require an additional incident report) and notify the Clinical Coordinator as soon as possible.

## Exposure Protocols

### Blood and Body Fluid Exposures

Students are instructed on prevention of exposure to blood and body fluids in the curriculum. If a clinical student is exposed to blood and body fluids, the student will be treated for exposure according to the protocol of the facility where the exposure occurred. In the unlikely event that exposure to blood or body fluids occurs in a didactic laboratory setting, first aid will be rendered and the student will be referred to the OLORMC Emergency Department or to the student's personal physician. Regardless of location of exposure (university campus or clinical site), the student is personally responsible for any costs associated with health care for any blood borne pathogen exposure. The cost of treatment may be covered by the student's primary health insurance. Students who sustain blood borne pathogen exposure during a clinical lab or clinical program assignment may also be covered by the secondary accident policy provided by the university.

### Infectious Exposures

To avoid other exposure to infectious pathogens, students should follow appropriate contact precautions (contact, droplet, etc.) in the clinical setting as dictated by the clinical site policies and procedures, which includes appropriate and correct donning and disposal of PPE.

If exposed to COVID-19, the student should complete the COVID-19 exposure form on the university portal and await further instructions from the Student Health Nurse.

In the event a student is exposed to the varicella virus (chicken pox), it is advised that the student get a titer to determine if he/she has immunity. If the student has no immunity, he/she will not be able to attend class or clinical assignment from day 10 thru day 21 following exposure.

### Latex Sensitivity & Allergy Policy

All PA students are to report contact dermatitis or latex allergy symptoms to the Program Director and the Office of Health and Wellness. Latex allergy symptoms include skin rashes, hives, flushing, itching, nasal, eye or sinus symptoms/irritation, shortness of breath, sneezing/wheezing or asthma symptoms and shock. PA students having contact dermatitis or latex sensitivity symptoms are to report to their personal physician or healthcare practitioner for assessment.

After submitting physician documentation regarding the PA student's signs and symptoms of latex sensitivity of allergy, the Office of Health and Wellness will authorize release of non-latex non-powdered gloves for the PA student. A written notification will be sent to the PA student's Program Director. The program is responsible to supply the PA student with non-latex, non-powdered gloves. The PA student will be responsible for requesting an adequate supply for the non-latex, non-powdered gloves for clinical assignments.

### Pregnancy Policy

It is the responsibility of the pregnant student to voluntarily declare her pregnancy in writing to the Office of Health and Wellness and her academic Program Director as soon after conception as possible. With inherent risks of the clinical program in mind, this documentation should include a statement from the student's personal physician stating: a) the student's ability to meet the program's performance standards is not impaired and, b) the student is able to continue in the academic or clinical setting without undue detriment to herself and/or the fetus. This written release by the student's health care provider will be kept in the student's confidential health record in the Office of Health and Wellness. Student may choose to continue with her program with the understanding that she is expected to satisfactorily meet the same standards of course and classroom performance as are the other students enrolled in the program as well as adhering to academic policies that apply to all students. For additional information regarding possible accommodations, refer to the FranU Student Handbook.

Each pregnant student will be handled on an individual basis and may be availed for a leave of absence (please refer to the Leave of Absence Section of this manual for more information).

## Medical Restrictions

Students should submit documentation regarding temporary medical restrictions and/or medical recommendations due to illness, injury or pregnancy to the Office of Health and Wellness. The student's faculty will be advised of the restrictions and recommendations by the Student Health Nurse. If the restriction is counter to the Technical Standards of the program, prevents the safe delivery of patient care, or cannot be accommodated at a clinical site, the student may consider requesting a temporary leave of absence until such time as the restriction is lifted.

## Healthcare Resources

Program faculty including the Program Director and Medical Director may not participate in or provide healthcare to any PA student, except in an emergency. Students should not ask program faculty for medical advice for themselves or family members.

PA students may utilize the Physician Referral Service offered through Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center:

Physician Referral Service: 225-765-7777

Additionally, PA students may utilize this community service of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center for free 24-hour nurse advice.

225-765-LAKE (5253) or toll free 1-877-765-5253.

Additional health services are available to students at the following locations:

Total Occupational Medicine Clinic: 924-4460 (3333 Drusilla Lane) provides services to FranU graduate students at discounted rates. MMR and TD immunizations are available for Arts and Sciences graduate students. All clinical graduate students may obtain their pre-entrance physical, TB skin test, Hepatitis vaccine, MMR and TD immunizations at Calais Occupational Medicine Clinic. No appointment is necessary, but students must show their graduate student I.D. Payment is due at time of service and may be paid by cash, check, Visa, or MC.

Rx One Pharmacy: 765-8951

Graduate students enrolled in professional degree or certificate programs may obtain prescription drugs at the same discount as hospital employees. To receive the discount, graduate students must present their program nametag at the same time they present a prescription to be filled. The Rx One is located in the lobby of Medical Plaza II, directly across the street from the Nursing Building on Hennessy Blvd.

**Section VII: Student Handbook Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the policies and procedures as described in the PA Student Handbook. I understand that non-compliance with any policies described herein will result in disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A: Technical Standards Student Attestation

1. Observation: Students must be able to demonstrate sufficient capacity to observe demonstrations and experiments in basic and clinical sciences (including computer-assisted instruction) and must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance or close at hand.
2. Communication: Students must be able to demonstrate sufficient capacity to communicate accurately and with clarity, in oral and written forms, with appropriate respect and sensitivity towards faculty, patients and all members of the healthcare team.
3. Motor: Students must have sufficient fine and gross motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. They must be able to grasp and manipulate tools and equipment using proper technique and stand, sit, walk and move as needed in a patient care setting.
4. Senses: Students must have sufficient use of the senses of vision, hearing, touch, and smell necessary to directly perform a physical examination.
5. Problem solving: Students must demonstrate sufficient ability to learn to measure, calculate, analyze and synthesize data to reach diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical judgments.
6. Clinical skills: Students must demonstrate sufficient ability to learn and perform routine laboratory tests and diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical procedures. All students will be expected to perform physical examinations on both males and females.
7. Behavioral attributes: Students must possess the emotional health necessary for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of sound judgment, the prompt completion of responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with faculty, clinical staff and patients.
8. Judgment: Students must be able to learn and demonstrate the ability to recognize limitations to their knowledge, skills and abilities, and to seek appropriate assistance with their identified limitations.
9. Stability: Students must be able to learn to respond with precise, efficient and appropriate action in emergency situations.
10. Perseverance: Students are expected to possess the humility to accept criticism and the diligence to successfully complete the PA curriculum and enter the practice of medicine as a certified PA.
11. Cognition: The PA Program is a concentrated and fast-paced program. In addition, PAs must often make critical decisions when evaluating patients and must make these decisions in a timely manner. Students must be able to assimilate large amounts of information quickly and efficiently, as well as gather and analyze patient data in a timely manner. Health conditions and/or drugs (prescription, over the counter or "recreational") that alter perceptions, slow responses or impair judgment are not compatible with success in the program. These may also affect the student's ability to obtain a license or to practice as a PA.
12. Capability: PAs work in a variety of clinical settings and may be required to stand for extended periods of time, assist in major surgery, hold retractors, place invasive devices, assist in labor and delivery, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, perform minor surgical procedures or help move patients. Therefore, students must demonstrate sufficient capability to function safely, effectively and efficiently in a classroom, laboratory or clinical facility without any of the following: a surrogate, intermediate, companion (animal or human), translator or assistive device that would interfere with or not be usable in a surgical or other patient care setting.

I, PA Student \_\_\_\_\_ have read the above Technical Standards of the PA Program and profession. I attest that I currently meet these Technical Standards. Further, I acknowledge that failure to demonstrate compliance with the Technical Standards at any point during my education is grounds for possible intervention including program dismissal.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B: STUDENT GRADE APPEAL FORM**

Date:	Student ID:	Phone: (    )
Name:		
Email Address:		
Semester:	Course and Section:	Instructor:
Type of Appeal (Circle one):	Non-Final Grade (Exam, Exam, Assignment, Activity)	Final Grade

Reasons for Appeal (Use additional pages as necessary):

**Appendix C: Honor Code**

We, the student body of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University, embrace the idea that honor is an intangible quality, which, if it pervades all phases of campus life, tends to foster a spirit of dignity and personal integrity. Upon enrolling at the university, we become part of the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University Honor System. We realize that honor must be cultivated and that its success depends upon the combined and cooperative efforts of the university's administration, faculty, staff and students. Inherent in the honor system is the premise that students will not perform or tolerate any violations of the Student Code of Conduct published in *Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University Student Handbook*. As responsible members of the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University community, each of us freely accepts and proudly endorses this, our code of honor.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed name:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix D: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession ([www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org))**

The PA profession has revised its code of ethics several times since the profession began. Although the fundamental principles underlying the ethical care of patients have not changed, the societal framework in which those principles are applied has. Economic pressures of the health care system, social pressures of church and state, technological advances and changing patient demographics continually transform the landscape in which PAs practice.

Previous codes of the profession were brief lists of tenets for PAs to live by in their professional lives. This document departs from that format by attempting to describe ways in which those tenets apply. Each situation is unique. Individual PAs must use their best judgment in a given situation while considering the preferences of the patient and the supervising physician, clinical information, ethical concepts and legal obligations.

Four main bioethical principles broadly guided the development of these guidelines: autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice.

Autonomy, strictly speaking, means self-rule. Patients have the right to make autonomous decisions and choices, and PAs should respect these decisions and choices.

Beneficence means that PAs should act in the patient's best interest. In certain cases, respecting the patient's autonomy and acting in their best interests may be difficult to balance.

Non-maleficence means to do no harm, to impose no unnecessary or unacceptable burden upon the patient.

Justice means that patients in similar circumstances should receive similar care. Justice also applies to norms for the fair distribution of resources, risks and costs.

PAs are expected to behave both legally and morally. They should know and understand the laws governing their practice. Likewise, they should understand the ethical responsibilities of being a health care professional. Legal requirements and ethical expectations will not always be in agreement. Generally speaking, the law describes minimum standards of acceptable behavior and ethical principles delineate the highest moral standards of behavior.

When faced with an ethical dilemma, PAs may find the guidance they need in this document. If not, they may wish to seek guidance elsewhere, possibly from a supervising physician, a hospital ethics committee, an ethicist, trusted colleagues or other AAPA policies. PAs should seek legal counsel when they are concerned about the potential legal consequences of their decisions.

The following sections discuss ethical conduct of PAs in their professional interactions with patients, physicians, colleagues, other health professionals and the public. The Statement of Values within this document defines the fundamental values that the PA profession strives to uphold. These values provide the foundation upon which the guidelines rest. The guidelines were written with the understanding that no document can encompass all actual and potential ethical responsibilities, and PAs should not regard them as comprehensive.

### **Statement of Values of the Physician Assistant Profession**

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

- PAs respect their professional relationship with physicians.
- PAs share and expand knowledge within the profession.

## **PA Role and Responsibilities**

PA practice flows out of a unique relationship that involves the PA, the physician and the patient. The individual patient–PA relationship is based on mutual respect and an agreement to work together regarding medical care. In addition, PAs practice medicine with physician supervision; therefore, the care that a PA provides is an extension of the care of the supervising physician. The patient–PA relationship is also a patient–PA–physician relationship.

The principal value of the PA profession is to respect the health, safety, welfare and dignity of all human beings. This concept is the foundation of the patient–PA relationship. PAs have an ethical obligation to see that each of their patients receives appropriate care. PAs should be sensitive to the beliefs and expectations of the patient. PAs should recognize that each patient is unique and has an ethical right to self-determination

PAs are professionally and ethically committed to providing nondiscriminatory care to all patients. While PAs are not expected to ignore their own personal values, scientific or ethical standards, or the law, they should not allow their personal beliefs to restrict patient access to care. A PA has an ethical duty to offer each patient the full range of information on relevant options for their health care. If personal moral, religious or ethical beliefs prevent a PA from offering the full range of treatments available or care the patient desires, the PA has an ethical duty to refer a patient to another qualified provider. That referral should not restrict a patient’s access to care. PAs are obligated to care for patients in emergency situations and to responsibly transfer patients if they cannot care for them.

PAs should always act in the best interests of their patients and as advocates when necessary. PAs should actively resist policies that restrict free exchange of medical information. For example, a PA should not withhold information about treatment options simply because the option is not covered by insurance. PAs should inform patients of financial incentives to limit care, use resources in a fair and efficient way and avoid arrangements or financial incentives that conflict with the patient’s best interests.

## **The PA and Diversity**

The PA should respect the culture, values, beliefs and expectations of the patient.

## **Nondiscrimination**

PAs should not discriminate against classes or categories of patients in the delivery of needed health care. Such classes and categories include gender, color, creed, race, religion, age, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, nature of illness, disability, socioeconomic status, physical stature, body size, gender identity, marital status or sexual orientation.

## **Initiation and Discontinuation of Care**

In the absence of a preexisting patient–PA relationship, the PA is under no ethical obligation to care for a person unless no other provider is available. A PA is morally bound to provide care in emergency situations and to arrange proper follow-up. PAs should keep in mind that contracts with health insurance plans might define a legal obligation to provide care to certain patients.

A PA and supervising physician may discontinue their professional relationship with an established patient as long as proper procedures are followed. The PA and physician should provide the patient with adequate notice, offer to transfer records and arrange for continuity of care if the patient has an ongoing medical condition. Discontinuation of the professional relationship should be undertaken only after a serious attempt has been made to clarify and understand the expectations and concerns of all involved parties.

If the patient decides to terminate the relationship, they are entitled to access appropriate information contained within their medical record.

## **Informed Consent**

PAs have a duty to protect and foster an individual patient's free and informed choices. The doctrine of informed consent means that a PA provides adequate information that is comprehensible to a competent patient or patient surrogate. At a minimum, this should include the nature of the medical condition, the objectives of the proposed treatment, treatment options, possible outcomes and the risks involved. PAs should be committed to the concept of shared Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession decision making, which involves assisting patients in making decisions that account for medical, situational and personal factors.

In caring for adolescents, the PA should understand all of the laws and regulations in his or her jurisdiction that are related to the ability of minors to consent to or refuse health care. Adolescents should be encouraged to involve their families in health care decision making. The PA should also understand consent laws pertaining to emancipated or mature minors. (See the section on Confidentiality.)

When the person giving consent is a patient's surrogate, a family member or other legally authorized representative, the PA should take reasonable care to assure that the decisions made are consistent with the patient's best interests and personal preferences, if known. If the PA believes the surrogate's choices do not reflect the patient's wishes or best interests, the PA should work to resolve the conflict. This may require the use of additional resources, such as an ethics committee.

### **Confidentiality**

PAs should maintain confidentiality. By maintaining confidentiality, PAs respect patient privacy and help to prevent discrimination based on medical conditions. If patients are confident that their privacy is protected, they are more likely to seek medical care and more likely to discuss their problems candidly.

In cases of adolescent patients, family support is important but should be balanced with the patient's need for confidentiality and the PA's obligation to respect their emerging autonomy. Adolescents may not be of age to make independent decisions about their health, but providers should respect that they soon will be. To the extent they can, PAs should allow these emerging adults to participate as fully as possible in decisions about their care. It is important that PAs be familiar with and understand the laws and regulations in their jurisdictions that relate to the confidentiality rights of adolescent patients. (See the section on Informed Consent.)

Any communication about a patient conducted in a manner that violates confidentiality is unethical. Because written, electronic and verbal information may be intercepted or overheard, the PA should always be aware of anyone who might be monitoring communication about a patient. PAs should choose methods of storage and transmission of patient information that minimize the likelihood of data becoming available to unauthorized persons or organizations. Computerized record keeping and electronic data transmission present unique challenges that can make the maintenance of patient confidentiality difficult. PAs should advocate for policies and procedures that secure the confidentiality of patient information.

## **The Patient and the Medical Record**

PAs have an obligation to keep information in the patient's medical record confidential. Information should be released only with the written permission of the patient or the patient's legally authorized representative. Specific exceptions to this general rule may exist (e.g., workers compensation, communicable disease, HIV, knife/gunshot wounds, abuse and substance abuse). It is important that a PA be familiar with and understand the laws and Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession regulations in his or her jurisdiction that relate to the release of information. For example, stringent legal restrictions on release of genetic test results and mental health records often exist.

Both ethically and legally, a patient has certain rights to know the information contained in his or her medical record. While the chart is legally the property of the practice or the institution, the information in the chart is the property of the patient. Most states have laws that provide patients access to their medical records. The PA should know the laws and facilitate patient access to the information.

### **Disclosure**

A PA should disclose to his or her supervising physician information about errors made in the course of caring for a patient. The supervising physician and PA should disclose the error to the patient if such information is significant to the patient's interests and well-being. Errors do not always constitute improper, negligent or unethical behavior, but failure to disclose them may.

### **Care of Family Members and Co-workers**

Treating oneself, co-workers, close friends, family members or students whom the PA supervises or teaches may be unethical or create conflicts of interest. For example, it might be ethically acceptable to treat one's own child for a case of otitis media but it probably is not acceptable to treat one's spouse for depression. PAs should be aware that their judgment might be less than objective in cases involving friends, family members, students and colleagues and that providing curbside care might sway the individual from establishing an ongoing relationship with a provider. If it becomes necessary to treat a family member or close associate, a formal patient-provider relationship should be established, and the PA should consider transferring the patient's care to another provider as soon as it is practical. If a close associate requests care, the PA may wish to assist by helping them find an appropriate provider.

There may be exceptions to this guideline, for example, when a PA runs an employee health center or works in occupational medicine. Even in those situations, the PA should be sure they do not provide informal treatment, but provide appropriate medical care in a formally established patient-provider relationship.

**Genetic Testing** Evaluating the risk of disease and performing diagnostic genetic tests raise significant ethical concerns. PAs should be informed about the benefits and risks of genetic tests. Testing should be undertaken only after proper informed consent is obtained. If PAs order or conduct the tests, they should assure that appropriate pre- and post-test counseling is provided.

PAs should be sure that patients understand the potential consequences of undergoing genetic tests from impact on patients themselves, possible implications for other family members and potential use of the information by insurance companies or others who might have access to the information. Because of the potential for discrimination by insurers, employers or others, PAs should be particularly aware of the need for confidentiality concerning genetic test results.

## **Reproductive Decision Making**

Patients have a right to access the full range of reproductive health care services, including fertility treatments, contraception, sterilization, and abortion. PAs have an ethical obligation to provide balanced and unbiased clinical information about reproductive health care.

When the PA's personal values conflict with providing full disclosure or providing certain services such as sterilization or abortion, the PA need not become involved in that aspect of the patient's care. By referring the patient to a qualified provider who is willing to discuss and facilitate all treatment options, the PA fulfills their ethical obligation to ensure the patient's access to all legal options.

## **End of Life**

Among the ethical principles that are fundamental to providing compassionate care at the end of life, the most essential is recognizing that dying is a personal experience and part of the life cycle.

PAs should provide patients with the opportunity to plan for end of life care. Advance directives, living wills, durable power of attorney and organ donation should be discussed during routine patient visits.

PAs should assure terminally-ill patients that their dignity is a priority and that relief of physical and mental suffering is paramount. PAs should exhibit non-judgmental attitudes and should assure their terminally-ill patients that they will not be abandoned. To the extent possible, patient or surrogate preferences should be honored, using the most appropriate measures consistent with their choices, including alternative and non-traditional treatments. PAs should explain palliative and hospice care and facilitate patient access to those services. End of life care should include assessment and management of psychological, social and spiritual or religious needs.

While respecting patients' wishes for particular treatments when possible, PAs also must weigh their ethical responsibility, in consultation with supervising physicians, to withhold futile treatments and to help patients understand such medical decisions.

PAs should involve the physician in all near-death planning. The PA should only withdraw life support with the supervising physician's agreement and in accordance with the policies of the health care institution.

## **The PA and Individual Professionalism**

**Conflict of Interest** PAs should place service to patients before personal material gain and should avoid undue influence on their clinical judgment. Trust can be undermined by even the appearance of improper influence. Examples of excessive or undue influence on clinical judgment can take several forms. These may include financial incentives, pharmaceutical or other industry gifts, and business arrangements involving referrals. PAs should disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest to their patients.

Acceptance of gifts, trips, hospitality or other items is discouraged. Before accepting a gift or financial arrangement, PAs might consider the guidelines of the Royal College of Physicians, "Would I be willing to have this arrangement generally known?" or of the American College of Physicians, "What would the public or my patients think of this arrangement?"

**Professional Identity** PAs should not misrepresent directly or indirectly, their skills, training, professional credentials or identity. PAs should uphold the dignity of the PA profession and accept its ethical values.

## **Competency**

PAs should commit themselves to providing competent medical care and extend to each patient the full measure of their professional ability as dedicated, empathetic health care providers. PAs should also strive to maintain and increase the quality of their health care knowledge, cultural sensitivity and cultural competence through individual study and continuing education.

**Sexual Relationships** It is unethical for PAs to become sexually involved with patients. It also may be unethical for PAs to become sexually involved with former patients or key third parties. Key third parties are individuals who have influence over the patient. These might include spouses or partners, parents, guardians or surrogates.

Such relationships generally are unethical because of the PA's position of authority and the inherent imbalance of knowledge, expertise and status. Issues such as dependence, trust, transference and inequalities of power may lead to increased vulnerability on the part of the current or former patients or key third parties.

### **Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**

It is unethical for PAs to engage in or condone any form of gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is defined as any behavior, action or policy that adversely affects an individual or group of individuals due to disparate treatment, disparate impact or the creation of a hostile or intimidating work or learning environment.

It is unethical for PAs to engage in or condone any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment, or Accepting or rejecting such conduct affects or may be perceived to affect professional decisions concerning an individual, or Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's training or professional position.

### **The PA and Other Professionals**

Team Practice PAs should be committed to working collegially with other members of the health care team to assure integrated, well-managed and effective care of patients. PAs should strive to maintain a spirit of cooperation with other health care professionals, their organizations and the general public.

### **Illegal and Unethical Conduct**

PAs should not participate in or conceal any activity that will bring discredit or dishonor to the PA profession. They should report illegal or unethical conduct by health care professionals to the appropriate authorities.

### **Impairment**

PAs have an ethical responsibility to protect patients and the public by identifying and assisting impaired colleagues. "Impaired" means being unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety because of physical or mental illness, loss of motor skills or excessive use or abuse of drugs and alcohol.

PAs should be able to recognize impairment in physician supervisors, PAs, and other health care providers and should seek assistance from appropriate resources to encourage these individuals to obtain treatment. PA-Physician Relationship Supervision should include ongoing communication between the physician and the PA regarding patient care. The PA should consult the supervising physician whenever it will safeguard or advance the welfare of the patient. This includes seeking assistance in situations of conflict with a patient or another health care professional.

### **Complementary and Alternative Medicine**

When a patient asks about an alternative therapy, the PA has an ethical obligation to gain a basic understanding of the alternative therapy being considered or being used and how the treatment will affect the patient. If the treatment would harm the patient, the PA should work diligently to dissuade the patient from using it, advise other treatment and perhaps consider transferring the patient to another provider.

### **The PA and the Health Care System**

Workplace Actions PAs may face difficult personal decisions to withhold medical services when workplace actions (e.g., strikes, sick-outs, slowdowns, etc.) occur. The potential harm to patients should be carefully weighed against the potential improvements to working conditions and, ultimately, patient care that could result. In general, PAs should individually and collectively work to find alternatives to such actions in addressing workplace concerns.

### **PAs as Educators**

All PAs have a responsibility to share knowledge and information with patients, other health professionals, students and the public. The ethical duty to teach includes effective communication with patients so that they will have the information necessary to participate in their health care and wellness.

### **PAs and Research**

The most important ethical principle in research is honesty. This includes assuring subjects' informed consent, following treatment protocols and accurately reporting findings. Fraud and dishonesty in research should be reported so that the appropriate authorities can take action.

PAs involved in research must be aware of potential conflicts of interest. The patient's welfare takes precedence over the desired research outcome. Any conflict of interest should be disclosed.

In scientific writing, PAs should report information honestly and accurately. Sources of funding for the research must be included in the published reports.

Plagiarism is unethical. Incorporating the words of others, either verbatim or by paraphrasing without appropriate attribution is unethical and may have legal consequences. When submitting a document for publication, any previous publication of any portion of the document must be fully disclosed.

### **PAs as Expert Witnesses**

The PA expert witness should testify to what he or she believes to be the truth. The PA's review of medical facts should be thorough, fair and impartial.

The PA expert witness should be fairly compensated for time spent preparing, appearing and testifying. The PA should not accept a contingency fee based on the outcome of a case in which testimony is given or derive personal, financial or professional favor in addition to compensation.

### **The PA and Society**

**Lawfulness** PAs have the dual duty to respect the law and to work for positive change to laws that will enhance the health and well-being of the community.

**Executions** PAs, as health care professionals, should not participate in executions because to do so would violate the ethical principle of beneficence.

### **Access to Care / Resource Allocation**

PAs have a responsibility to use health care resources in an appropriate and efficient manner so that all patients have access to needed health care. Resource allocation should be based on societal needs and policies, not the circumstances of an individual patient– PA encounter. PAs participating in policy decisions about resource allocation should consider medical need, cost-effectiveness, efficacy and equitable distribution of benefits and burdens in society.

### **Community Well Being**

PAs should work for the health, well-being and the best interest of both the patient and the community. Sometimes there is a dynamic moral tension between the well-being of the community in general and the individual patient. Conflict between an individual patient's best interest and the common good is not always easily resolved. In general, PAs should be committed to upholding and enhancing community values, be aware of the needs of the community, and use the knowledge and experience acquired as professionals to contribute to an improved community.

### **Conclusion**

The American Academy of PAs recognizes its responsibility to aid the PA profession as it strives to provide high quality, accessible health care. PAs wrote these guidelines for themselves and other PAs. The ultimate goal is to honor patients and earn their trust while providing the best and most appropriate care possible. At the same time, PAs must understand their personal values and beliefs and recognize the ways in which those values and beliefs can impact the care they provide.

**Appendix E: Clinical and Practical Lab Skills Release**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name) understand instruction may periodically require physical contact between faculty, other students, and clinical preceptors for the purpose of demonstrating and learning appropriate physical exam and procedural techniques. My signature indicates my understanding of this as an appropriate and necessary part of instruction, and that I accept this practice.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed name:** \_\_\_\_\_

*No student will be required to participate as a model in an invasive procedure (ex: venipuncture) or exams of a sensitive nature (ex: genitourinary/pelvic).*

**Appendix F: Photograph/Video Release Form**

With my signature below, I hereby permit Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University to use my photograph or video image in official university publications including but not limited to the university website, catalog or other publication or office news release(s). I furthermore release Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University, its Board, Board members individually and its employee and agents, from any and all claim, damage, injury including attorneys' fees, arising out of the use of said photograph or image or likeness thereof.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed name:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G: Physician Assistant Program Student Exam-Taking Procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to provide clear and consistent guidelines for all students during examinations. This may include examinations using ExamSoft, PAEA End of Rotation Exams (ExamDriver), or traditional paper exams.

All efforts have been made to create a distraction-reduced environment.

1. Students must bring the following items in order to be allowed entry into the testing environment for computer-based examinations:
  - a. Laptop:
    - i. Should be fully charged and able to operate on battery for at least 3 hours of normal activity (i.e., web browsing, word processing, wireless)
    - ii. May not have access to power for charging during testing
  - b. Privacy Screen:
    - i. Are filters that attach over the student's laptop display to make information visible to only to the exam taker; The privacy screen must be well-fitted and appropriate to the student's laptop device and are required for all computer-based exams
    - ii. Students will not be allowed to take a computer-based examination without an attached privacy screen; Students failing to bring their privacy screen must report to the program office immediately; They will surrender their phone and laptop to available program staff/faculty and await proctor availability to administer the exam in the program office
2. Students may bring the following items:
  - a. Noise cancelling ear plugs or headphones
  - b. Keys
  - c. Writing instrument
3. Students are prohibited from bringing the following items:
  - a. Mobile phones
  - b. Smart watches
  - c. Hats
  - d. Food or drink
  - e. Personal items (back packs, purses, bags, notebooks, books, etc.)
  - f. Scratch paper
  - g. Paper, textbooks, notes or any other course documents may not be used during quizzes or examinations unless specified by the course instructor.
4. The proctor will provide the students with:
  - a. One piece of blank scratch paper
    - i. Scratch paper must be returned to the proctor prior to exiting the exam room
    - ii. Leaving the exam room with scratch paper will be treated as an act of academic dishonesty
  - b. Clock
    - i. A clock is included in the ExamSoft/PAEA testing platforms
    - ii. For paper exams, the proctor will provide a clock
  - c. Exam Passwords
    - i. Students will be given the password to the examination and start the examination at the direction of the proctor
5. Exam Procedures
  - a. No talking or other communication is allowed once a testing session begins
  - b. Once an examination begins, all personnel will refrain from conversing with examinees; This includes clarification or interpretation of exam questions
  - c. The examination proctor has the discretion to provide critical information to the class when necessary

- d. Entering/Leaving the Testing Environment
    - i. Students arriving late for an examination are permitted entrance within 10 minutes of the start of the exam
    - ii. Students who arrive late for an examination are not allowed additional time to complete the exam
    - iii. ExamSoft timer will not be reflective of total time remaining; As previously stated, the start and end time will not be altered
    - iv. Students arriving later than 10 minutes of start time will receive a zero on the examination
    - v. If a student leaves the testing environment for any reason, the student will not be allowed to return to complete the examination
    - vi. Prior to leaving the testing environment, students must show the confirmation upload screen to the proctor, signifying examination completion
  - e. Examination absences
    - i. Students must notify the course instructor if they will not be present for an examination
    - ii. Make-up examinations will be given only in the case of emergency situations, or other approved absences
6. In the event of a laptop malfunction:
- a. It is the student's responsibility to make sure their laptop is compliant with both ExamSoft and PAEA ExamDriver platforms at all times; program faculty cannot trouble-shoot individual laptop/software issues
  - b. If a student experiences a laptop problem or malfunction prior to, during, or upon exiting an exam, he or she must immediately notify the proctor
  - c. No additional time will be allowed for attempting to resolve computer problems during the exam
  - d. After the examination has concluded, an attempt may also be made to retrieve exam answers from the student's hard drive
  - e. If exam answers cannot be retrieved within 24 hours, the instructor, in consultation with the Program Director may determine if additional remedial options exist
  - f. No consideration will be given to a student who failed to alert the proctor at the time of the difficulty

Student Attestation: I have read and understand the PA Program's Student Exam-Taking Procedures

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H: Remote Proctoring Procedures

The following procedures apply to all assessments administered and proctored via Zoom or other remote modality (including Packrat, EOR assessments, OSCEs or other assessments). Students should also refer to the PA Student Handbook and individual course syllabi for other policies and procedures related to examinations.

Coming to an exam prepared, with all required equipment and following the procedures outlined below is considered a professional behavior. Any breach in the procedures described below will be considered a violation of professionalism policies of the program. Additionally, breaches in procedure may also be found to be in violation of the honor code, which will result in a zero on the exam as well as disciplinary sanctions outlined in the PA Student Handbook.

Any procedural concerns will be reported to the Program Director for investigation.

### Necessary Equipment

The following equipment is needed for each zoom-proctored assessment:

1. Fully charged laptop or desktop computer for ExamSoft, Moodle, PAEA or other exam format
2. Fully charged device to be used for zoom camera monitoring; phone, tablet, etc.
3. Charging cords connected or easily accessible (students will not be allowed to get up from their seat during the examination)
4. High speed internet
5. Optional:
  - Small dry erase board
  - Dry erase marker/eraser

### Testing Environment

Under zoom proctoring guidelines, the student will be taking the assessment off campus on their own personal computer/laptop. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the student to:

1. Ensure wifi/internet connectivity is stable **before** the examination
2. Select a quiet, private room in their home for exam-taking; a bedroom, study or other private room with a lock is highly recommended
3. Obtain approval at least 48 in advance from the Instructor if planning to take the exam away from home (such as library, relative's home) or, if requesting testing space on FranU's campus (emergent change in plans require notification of the Instructor immediately)
4. Inform family/roommates of exam time prior to exam start to avoid interruption/distraction; any disruption by another individual will trigger an investigation by the Program Director (example: Family member, roommate, child entering the exam room)
5. Obtain childcare if needed in advance of the exam
6. Obtain foam earplugs if desired; Headphones/headsets of any kind, including air pods are not permissible
7. Testing surface (desk, table) clear of all items other than listed above. This includes food, drink, books, papers, etc. Items used to prop recording device must be included in the 360 degree scan of room and approved by the proctor.

### Launch Process

1. A Zoom invitation will be provided by your proctor
2. Using your tablet or phone device's Zoom app, join the meeting by entering the meeting ID provided in the invitation
3. Students should join the zoom at least 10 minutes before the scheduled assessment, to allow time for workspace setup
4. Tablet/smart phone camera placement:
  - The device must have the Zoom app open and connected to the correct meeting ID.
  - Use the "selfie" camera so you can view the observation area on the screen.

- The device must be properly set up so your eyes, hands, face, mouse, small white board and dry erase pen are ALL visible to the proctor.
  - You will need to complete this setup prior to the assessment.
3. Video must always be enabled on the Zoom app, **but please disable the audio.**
  4. In phone settings, disable “auto-lock” to prevent your app from closing after several minutes of non-use (this will prevent your screen from going dark, which results in the proctor interrupting the exam)
  5. You must also prevent any calls/text from coming in by placing the device on a Do Not Disturb setting
  6. Before beginning the assessment, the proctor will ask each individual student to:
    - Scan their entire workspace
    - Perform a 360-degree scan of the entire room
    - Display the front/back of their clean dry erase board (students may write the exam password on the dry erase board, but not write notes/brain dump on their dry erase board prior to exam start time).
  7. Students must start their exam immediately after the proctor calls “start time”
  8. If the student is unable to launch the exam, he/she must:
    - Contact the proctor immediately via chat function
    - If 5 minutes pass and the proctor has not responded, the student should contact the Instructor via phone
    - Not unmute their device to speak to the proctor individually, as this disrupts the entire class

### Protocol During Assessment

1. The proctor’s audio will be disabled throughout the exam
2. If necessary, proctors will communicate via the private chat function on Zoom after testing begins; if a student does not see the chat indicator after the proctor will unmute and make necessary announcement
3. If the student must communicate with the proctor, he/she should type a message into the private chat box or write it on the white board and show to the camera; students should wait patiently for proctor response, as they are monitoring several students simultaneously
4. If the proctor does not respond after 5 minutes, the student should contact the proctor by phone
5. Any evidence of phone usage during the exam, other than to communicate with the proctor or program staff will be considered a violation of the honor code and handled as such
6. The proctor may ask the student to show their entire workspace/room at any time during the assessment
7. During test-taking, please refrain from the habit of "mouthing" the words while reading, or acting out the questions by moving limbs and/or head. These actions will be considered suspicious behavior
8. If the student experiences technical difficulties during an assessment, use the zoom chat feature; If unable to re-connect or continue to experience technical difficulties, call the Instructor immediately
9. Upon completion of the exam, the student may not exit the zoom without:
  - Displaying submission confirmation screen to the proctor (either through ExamSoft, ExamDriver or Moodle)
  - Displaying clean dry-erase board to proctor
  - Receiving confirmation to exit, or is removed from the zoom by the proctor
10. All zoom assessments will be recorded; Additionally, ExamSoft and ExamDriver record exam-taker keyboard activities

Student Attestation: I have read and understand the PA Program's Remote Proctoring Guidelines.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed name:** \_\_\_\_\_