



MACON & JOAN BROCK VIRGINIA HEALTH SCIENCES

**Physician Assistant**

AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

# PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK



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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program at Old Dominion University. You are joining a program committed to developing highly skilled, compassionate, and service-oriented PAs who will lead in improving access to quality healthcare. Our mission is to prepare graduates through a rigorous, patient-centered curriculum that emphasizes leadership, service, and lifelong learning.

This handbook outlines the policies, expectations, and resources to guide your time here. Please use it as a reference throughout the program. What you are about to undertake is challenging, but you will be supported every step of the way by faculty, staff, and peers who are committed to your success.

We proudly welcome you into a profession rooted in service and trust. Thank you for choosing the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences' PA Program. We look forward to watching you grow into the kind of provider our healthcare system needs.

Sincerely,

*Kimberly K. Dempsey*

Kimberly K. Dempsey, MPA, EdD, PA-C, DFAAPA  
Associate Professor and Program Director  
Physician Assistant Program  
Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University  
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### ***BRIEF PROGRAM HISTORY***

Eastern Virginia Medical School initiated a plan to develop a Physician Assistant (PA) program in 1995 at a time when there were no programs in Virginia. Against the backdrop of rising enrollments in PA programs across the nation and a federally recognized universal shortage of Physicians, EVMS applied to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to develop a PA program.

The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) visited the PA program at EVMS in June 1998. In August 1998, SCHEV reviewed the revised application for a master's degree education Program. CAAHEP awarded the PA program provisional accreditation on October 16, 1998, for the period of 1998-2001. At that time, the PA program at EVMS became the 109th accredited Program in the United States and one of only 15 operating within a medical school.

The EVMS PA program was the first master's degree PA program in Virginia and enrolled its charter class in January 1999. The first classes were held in Andrews Hall and were relocated to the first floor of Lewis Hall in September 2000 until 2010. The program moved to its new, state-of-the-art facility in Lester Hall in July 2011.

Student enrollment in the PA program began with 27 students in the inaugural class in January of 1999. As demand for PAs increased and the number of qualified candidates expanded over the years, class sizes have increased. In 2002, the first class of 36 students was enrolled. The class size increased to 50 in January 2005. Class size was gradually increased to 65 students in 2012 and 80 students in January 2013.

Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University was established July 1, 2024, following the integration of Eastern Virginia Medical School and ODU.

## GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

### INTRODUCTION

This PA Program Student Handbook is designed to provide the matriculated student with information about the educational Program culminating in the Master of Physician Assistant (MPA) degree offered at Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University. It specifies the standards and expectations of a student to be successful in the Program and remain in good standing. This handbook should be seen as an adjunct to the [Institutional Student Handbook](#), which contains specific information regarding the school and related policies.

The information herein is subject to periodic review and revision. Any substantive changes will be communicated to students in a timely manner. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to be aware of all requirements and work closely with their faculty mentor and the Program to ensure these requirements are fulfilled.

**This current handbook will apply to all students matriculated in the PA Program until an updated version is announced and posted to the PA Program webpage.**

Please read this document and sign the acknowledgement form electronically in Exxat indicating agreement to follow the policies and procedures while enrolled as a student in the Brock Virginia Health Sciences PA program at ODU. The form is retained in the student's administrative file.

The information contained in this section of the handbook is an overview of current policies and procedures of the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU. The implementation of any health professions curriculum remains dynamic and is therefore subject to continuous review and improvement. Provisions listed herein are directive in nature and subject to change. Changes will be communicated to students as soon as possible.

**Please Note:** this manual is meant to provide guidance for students and faculty on the usual procedures for day-to-day conduct in the PA Program. It does not represent an exhaustive list of all possibilities that might arise for students and faculty in the training and administration of the Program. Unique situations will arise. They will be handled in a manner that ensures fairness and mutual respect in all cases.

## MISSION STATEMENT, VALUES & GOALS

The mission of the Physician Assistant program is to prepare students to provide healthcare in a broad range of medical settings by training them in the medical arts and sciences in an inclusive, multicultural environment dedicated to the delivery of patient-centered care, while fostering a strong commitment to clinical and community partnerships.

Three core values drive our daily efforts:

- **Excellence:** We determine with our stakeholders what is valuable and hold ourselves to high performance standards that fulfill our promises.
- **Collegiality:** We serve our community and one another, building strong and mutually supportive relationships. We work as a cooperative, united team to further our purposes of education, research and patient care.
- **Integrity:** We strive to maintain the highest ethical standards and accept accountability for all we do and say.

The overall goals of the Physician Assistant program are to prepare graduates to provide quality healthcare and to nurture their service as capable leaders in clinical, research and community service environments.

The successful achievement of the program's mission is demonstrated through the following goals and performance indicators:

- **Enrollment and Retention:** Recruit, enroll and retain a highly qualified and diverse student cohort.

*Indicators:*

- Entering class average prerequisite GPA equal to or above 3.75.
- At least 50% of the entering student cohort will represent highly qualified, diverse backgrounds as indicated by admissions Program Enhancing Qualities (PEQs.)

- **Community Service:** Foster an attitude of service.

*Indicators:*

- Entering class average of 500 volunteer hours.

- 80% of the class will complete over 40 hours of community service prior to graduation.
- **Interprofessional Education:** Produce graduates who function as collaborative members of the healthcare team.

*Indicators:*

- SClinical evaluations reflective of student collaboration on the healthcare team.
- **Program Completion Rates:** Ensure students successfully complete the program and graduate on time.

*Indicators:*

- 
- 90% On-time graduation rate
- **Knowledge and Skills:** Equip graduates to enter PA practice with excellent clinical knowledge and skills.

*Indicators:*

- Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) first time pass rate at or above national average
- 95% pass rate on final Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)
- 95% first time pass rate on End of Curriculum (EOC) exam

## ACCREDITATION

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University Physician Assistant program sponsored by Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited Program complies with the ARC-PA Standards.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be April 2026. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.



## PA PROGRAM KEY CONTACTS & ORGANIZATION CHART

<i>FACULTY/STAFF</i>	<i>EMAIL</i>	<i>PHONE</i>
<b>Program Director</b> Kimberly Dempsey, MPA, EdD, PA-C, DFAAPA Associate Professor	dempsekk@odu.edu	757.446.7158
<b>Medical Director</b> Richard Conran, PhD, MD, JD Professor	conranrm@odu.edu	757.446.5620
<b>Associate Program Director and Academic Director</b> Angela Jean Cerezo, MPA, PA-C Assistant Professor	cerezoaj@odu.edu	757.446.7158
<b>Clinical Director</b> Angela Conrad, MPA, PA-C, DFAAPA Associate Professor	conradam@odu.edu	757.446.7158
<b>Program Administrator</b>		757.446.7158
<b>Office Coordinator (Didactic)</b> Nina Joyner	joynerwd@odu.edu	757.446.4886
<b>Student Program Administrative Support Coordinator (Clinical)</b> Tiffany Smith	smithtl@odu.edu	757.446.5673
<b>Student Program Administrative Support Coordinator (Clinical)</b> Tabitha Rodgers	rodgertr@odu.edu	757.446.7193

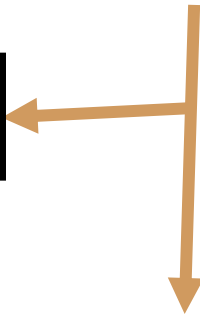
**PA PROGRAM ORGANIZATION CHART**

**Alfred Abuhamad, MD**  
Executive Vice President of  
Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU



**C. Donald Combs, PhD**  
Senior Associate Vice President and  
Dean of the EVMS School of Health  
Professions (SHP)

**Brielle Ashley, PhD**  
SHP Associate Dean of Administration



**Kimberly Dempsey, EdD, PA-C**  
PA Program Director



**Richard Conran, PhD, MD, JD**  
Medical Director



**Principal PA Faculty**  
**Angela Jean Cerezo**  
Associate Program Director  
and  
Academic Director  
**Angela Conrad**  
Clinical Director  
**Megan Adams, Shandi Brito,  
Joy Hampton, Amanda Lois,  
Christopher Roberts, Megan  
Senter, Daniel Thibodeau,  
Jennifer Wohl, Jeffrey Yates**  
PA Faculty



**Administrative Staff**  
Program Administrator  
**Nina Joyner**  
Office Coordinator  
(Didactic)  
**Tabitha Rodgers  
Tiffany Smith**  
Student Program  
Administrative Support  
Coordinators  
(Clinical)

### ***ACCESSIBLE TEXT VERSION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHART***

- I. Alfred Abuhamad, MD, Executive Vice President of Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU
  - a. C. Donald Combs, PhD, Senior Associate Vice President and Dean of the EVMS School of Health Professions (SHP)
    - i. Brielle Ashley, PhD , SHP Associate Dean of Administration
    - ii. Kimberly Dempsey, EdD, PA-C, PA Program Director
      1. Richard Conran, PhD, MD, JD, Medical Director
      2. Principal PA Faculty
        - a. Angela Jean Cerezo, MPA, PA-C, Associate Program Director and Academic Director
        - b. Angela Conrad, MPA, PA-C, Clinical Director
        - c. Megan Adams, MMS, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - d. Shandi Brito, MHSA, MMS, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - e. Joy Hampton, DMSc, MS, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - f. Amanda Lois, MSPAS, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - g. Christopher Roberts, MPA, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - h. Megan Senter, MPA, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - i. Daniel Thibodeau, DHSc, MHP, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - j. Jennifer Wohl, DHSc, MPAS, PA-C, PA Faculty
        - k. Jeffrey Yates, MPA, PA-C, PA Faculty
      3. Administrative Staff
        - a. , Program Administrator
        - b. Nina Joyner, Office Coordinator (Didactic)
        - c. Tabitha Rodgers, Student Program Administrative Support Coordinator (Clinical)
        - d. Tiffany Smith, Student Program Administrative Support Coordinator (Clinical)

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) requires all Physician Assistant (PA) programs to publish technical standards for enrollment, defined as “physical, cognitive and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and for entry into the profession.”

The technical standards for enrollment establish the expectations and abilities considered essential for students admitted to Brock Virginia Health Sciences PA program at ODU to achieve the level of competency required for graduation and the practice of medicine. Applicants to the program must possess independent ability, aptitude, and skills in the following areas – observation, communication, critical reasoning, motor and sensory functions, and behavioral and social attributes – as outlined below. It is expected in this technological age that students also have sufficient computer skills and are comfortable with electronic communication and media to successfully and professionally function as a PA student.

Students will be required to demonstrate full compliance with the technical standards to the degree students attested to at matriculation. If the student has or believes they have a disability for which they would like to request accommodation, the student must self-disclose to the Student Disability Officer as soon as possible. For details on the process see [VHS Student Disability Services](#)

### *OBSERVATION SKILLS*

Demonstrate sufficient attention and accuracy in observation skills (visual, auditory, and tactile) in the classroom, laboratory, patient’s bedside, and outpatient settings.

Indicators include but are not limited to:

- Accurate observation and participation in the lecture hall, laboratory, and clinic with patients at a distance and close at hand including non-verbal and verbal signals.
- Accurate identification of changes in color of fluids, skin, and diagnostic media examinations.
- Accurate visualization and discrimination of text, numbers, patterns, graphic illustrations, and findings on X-ray and other imaging tests.

### *COMMUNICATION SKILLS*

Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills with other students, faculty, patients, and healthcare providers from different social and cultural backgrounds, varying degrees and types of infirmities, and varying cultures, and personalities.

Indicators include but are not limited to:

- Clear, efficient, and intelligible articulation of English language.
- Legible, efficient, and intelligible written English language.
- Ability to prepare and communicate concise oral and written summaries of patient encounters.
- Ability to provide appropriate patient counseling and instruction to patients.
- Record examination and diagnostic results clearly, accurately, and efficiently.

### ***CRITICAL REASONING SKILLS***

Demonstrate critical reasoning skills required to undertake the full curriculum, achieve the level of competency required by the faculty, and meet the demands of total patient care. These skills include, but are not limited to, intellectual, conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities.

Indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Demonstrate ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information.
- Comprehend the spatial relationships of structures (e.g., three-dimensional relationships)
- Demonstrate ability to acquire, retain, assimilate, and apply large amounts of complex, technical, and detailed information.
- Demonstrate ability to synthesize and apply concepts and information from various disciplines in order to formulate diagnostic and therapeutic plans.
- Demonstrate appropriate judgment in patient assessment, diagnosis, monitoring, evaluation and intervention, including planning, time management, and use of resources.

### ***MOTOR AND SENSORY FUNCTION***

Demonstrate sufficient motor and sensory function to perform typical functions of physician assistants, including, but not limited to, physical examinations, treatment interventions, and general care of patients.

Indicators include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Functional and sufficient sensory capacity (visual, auditory, and tactile) to adequately perform a complete physical examination and elicit information gained

from proper use of examination tools and maneuvers (inspection, palpation, percussion, and auscultation).

- Execute fine and gross motor movements with sufficient coordination, postural control, equilibrium, and hand-eye coordination to safely participate in laboratory sessions, use standard medical/surgical instruments, assess patients, provide patient care, and participate in basic diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers and procedures.
- Execute motor movements that demonstrate safety and efficiency in the various learning settings (i.e., classroom, laboratories, and clinical settings, including appropriate negotiation of self and patients in various patient care environments).
- Accurately discern and evaluate various components of the spoken voice (pitch, intensity, and timbre), percussive notes, and auscultatory findings.
- Physical stamina sufficient to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study, which may include prolonged periods of sitting, standing, and/or rapid ambulation.
- Coordination of motor skills necessary to respond to emergencies quickly and appropriately.

### ***BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES***

Demonstrate the behavioral and social attributes vital to participation in a professional Program and service as a practicing professional physician assistant.

Indicators include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Possess personal qualities that facilitate effective therapeutic interactions (e.g., compassion, empathy, integrity, honesty, benevolence, confidentiality).
- Possess the emotional health required for full utilization of mental faculties (including judgment, orientation, affect, and cognition).
- Ability to establish rapport and develop mature and effective professional relationships with faculty, patients, the public, and other members of the health care team.
- Demonstrate impartial motives, attitudes and values in roles, functions, and relationships. Communicate and care for, in a non-judgmental way, persons who differ from oneself and one's beliefs in a variety of ways, including but not limited to gender, age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, culture, creed, military status, sexual orientation and identity, and religious or spiritual beliefs.

- Ability to monitor and react appropriately to one's own emotional needs and responses.
- Display appropriate flexibility, adaptability, composure, and emotional stability during periods of high stress or uncertainty associated with didactic and clinical encounters and environments.
- Ability to accurately follow oral and written directions with prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom and clinical setting.
- Compliance with standards, policies and practices set forth in the Program Handbook.

Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU must maintain the integrity of the curriculum and preserve those elements deemed essential to the education of a physician assistant and cannot compromise the health and safety of other students or patients. Physician Assistant applicants must be prepared to meet the technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, to complete the program and indicate possession of such ability prior to their matriculation into the program. The students must meet these standards for enrollment, continuation, promotion, and graduation from the program, and students must be prepared to indicate their ability to meet these standards as a condition of acceptance and during registration for each semester.

**\*Note:** The use of an intermediary (a person trained to perform essential skills on behalf of the student) is not permitted.

Inquiry by the program faculty and staff regarding disability is strictly prohibited. The program, in accordance with Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU policy and as delineated by federal and Virginia law, does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs or employment against any individual based on that individual's disability, and will make good faith efforts at providing reasonable accommodation as required. However, the program reserves the right not to admit or register students who cannot meet the technical standards or who would constitute a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

## PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

PA education and the profession face increasing demands for greater accountability. It is therefore imperative that PA education and practice are closely aligned to ensure students are prepared to deliver quality, patient-centered care upon graduation. Based on the Competencies for the PA profession, the following competencies are expected of

each PA graduate as they enter the profession. Under each domain and competency more specific student learning outcomes are listed.

### ***MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE***

- a) Appropriately diagnose emergent, acute, and chronic conditions across the lifespan and in association with patient-specific factors.
- b) Make informed clinical decisions using an evidence-based approach.

### ***INTERPERSONAL SKILLS***

- a) Demonstrate effective oral and written communication with patients, their families, and healthcare team members.

### ***CLINICAL AND TECHNICAL SKILLS***

- a) Perform an appropriate physical exam tailored to the medical history in any setting.
- b) Perform clinical procedures as indicated.
- c) Order and interpret diagnostic and screening tests based on history and physical exam findings.

### ***PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS***

- a) Demonstrate professional and ethical behaviors consistent with the PA Profession.

### ***CLINICAL REASONING AND PROBLEM SOLVING***

- a) Develop a differential diagnosis following a clinical encounter.
- b) Develop a tailored management plan based on probable diagnosis.

## **PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

### ***DEGREE COMPLETION***

The PA Program is a seven-semester, 28-month Program taken on a full-time basis. All courses must be completed in sequence. No advanced standing, substitutions or waivers will be granted based on previous experience, training or testing. Students must satisfactorily complete 99.5 credit hours of course work and meet all graduation requirements. Graduates earn a Master of Physician Assistant (MPA) degree.



All degree requirements must be completed within 3.5 years from first starting the program. This is based on the federal government's maximum timeframe defined as 150% of the program's published length.

### *Didactic Phase*

The 16-month didactic phase of the program spans four consecutive semesters before the clinical phase. It is designed to introduce and provide a foundation for basic and clinical sciences, culturally appropriate interpersonal and communication skills, evidence-based medicine, diagnostic and therapeutic management, clinical reasoning, and aspects of physician assistant professional practice. This phase incorporates traditional and active learning classroom interaction with practical clinical skills development and simulated patient interaction. Each semester's coursework is a prerequisite for the subsequent semester and must be completed in the specified order. Students may advance to the clinical phase with successful completion of the didactic phase, which requires a grade of C- or better in all individual courses and a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher at the conclusion of 4th semester.

### *Clinical Phase*

Following the successful completion of the didactic phase, students advance into the 12-month clinical phase of the Program where they will complete nine clinical rotations, Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) courses. SCPEs represent clinical education opportunities that enable students to actively participate in the evaluation and management of diverse patient populations across the lifespan with medical, surgical, and emergent problems. Each student will complete SCPEs in Family Medicine, Pediatric Medicine, Internal Medicine, Women's Health, General Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Psychiatry and Behavioral Health and two electives.

All students will also enroll in a one credit Introduction to Clinical Practice course, a five credit Senior Seminar course and a longitudinal interprofessional practice course.

Students learn to become a practicing PA by fine tuning the life-long, self-directed learning skills that will serve them throughout their professional career. Students are encouraged to take full advantage of the preceptor's knowledge, skills, and willingness to teach.

The program has established clinical sites available to provide students with opportunities to gain valuable clinical experience by applying knowledge and skills from the didactic phase. The program provides clinical sites for all students. Students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors, but students may choose to initiate out of area rotations.

Program affiliated sites are primarily located throughout Eastern Virginia and Northeastern North Carolina. Students are not guaranteed assignment at clinical rotations in close proximity to their home or campus. Clinical assignments may be located up to 60 miles from the program location. Students are required to complete their first three (3) rotations at program-affiliated sites. After the first three (3) rotations, students may initiate their own rotations at sites outside of this area, if all requirements are met and the student is in good academic standing. Students who are not in good academic standing will be placed in program-affiliated sites to support their learning and for access to institutional support and resources.

Please refer to [Appendix A](#) for the curriculum associated with each matriculated cohort.

## PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### STUDENT MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Joining professional organizations is critical in keeping well informed of the latest knowledge, practices, current issues and opportunities related to the PA profession, as well as for professional development. Students are required to obtain and maintain student memberships upon matriculation for the [American Association of Physician Associates \(AAPA\)](#) and the [Virginia Academy of Physician Assistants \(VAPA\)](#). Details for student membership are available on the organization websites.

### INSTITUTION & PROGRAM ORIENTATION

The program sponsors a mandatory professional orientation for matriculating students before the first day of class in Semester 1 (January). Orientation activities will include, but not be limited to:

- Introduction to school officials and policies
- Introduction to the use of technology at VHS
- Reviewing the content of the PA Student Handbook
- Meeting the faculty, staff, and fellow students
- Reviewing the requirements and expectations for participating in the program

## TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

### *COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS*

Requirements for a Wi-Fi capable laptop are updated annually and can be accessed here: [Computer Standards for Students.](#) Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU is committed to utilizing new and emerging learning technologies that enhance and facilitate learning opportunities and outcomes and continually monitors, evaluates, and improves the curriculum to provide the best possible educational program.

For incoming students to take advantage of the ever-changing technology, requirements will be revised, as appropriate, each year. The current technology requirements are posted on the program's website, provided at admissions interviews, and again when admission offers are made.

Each incoming student will need to have a personal laptop computer capable of running the necessary software and applications used in the program's curriculum. The standards are the minimum necessary for a student to successfully participate in the curriculum during the 28-month program. Students are also required to have access to their computer while in class.

Because of the variability in computer manufacturers, hardware, software, etc., the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU Network Center will only provide support for installing the necessary software to ensure compliance with and access to the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU wireless network. The Network Center will not provide support or troubleshooting for hardware or software/application support. All support, troubleshooting, and updates will be the student's responsibility; therefore, purchase of a service plan for the computer is recommended and highly encouraged.

We understand that choices in computer manufacturer and operating system are personal choices, and every effort has been made to provide for such flexibility, however, the computer **MUST** meet the minimum specifications. As such, "netbooks", iPads, and other tablets will not meet these requirements and cannot be relied on as sufficient to fulfill this requirement for incoming students.

### **EMAIL ACCOUNTS**

All students will be assigned a student ODU email account prior to matriculation in the program. These e-mail accounts are used by all school departments for timely communication with students (not just the Program) and are essential to facilitate this communication. ODU policy forbids program communication through student's personal email accounts. The program will not respond to any emails sent through a student's personal email account.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

With an ever-changing world of communication and instant access, professionalism dictates a certain level of decorum and restraint. Students who communicate with others through social networks, blogs, or online postings of any digital content such as photo, video, or otherwise should refer to the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU Social Media Policy located in the [Institutional Handbook](#) for guidance regarding expected appropriate behavior related to social media use. Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU students represent the school both directly and indirectly and there is certain inherent risk in the use of social media that may impact their future career, the reputation of Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU, the program and its faculty, staff, and students.

### **MENTORING**

Students will have a principal faculty member assigned as their faculty mentor when beginning the program. The role of the faculty mentor is to monitor student progress and serve as a guide and advocate. To become acquainted with faculty mentors, an initial meeting will be scheduled during the first two weeks of Semester 1. This meeting will allow for an assessment of support including referrals to academic support services as necessary.

Every semester, students must schedule an appointment with their faculty mentor. Faculty will notify students when meetings are available and their preference for scheduling. Two forms will guide the discussion during the meeting:

- **Mid-Semester Form:** this form prompts the student regarding their successes, difficulties, and challenges related to the current semester course load and any outside influencing factors. It also serves as a Professionalism Self-Evaluation prior to each mid-semester meeting.
- **Semester Grade Sheet:** a summary of the course grade elements will be made available to the student for them to complete and track course grades and semester GPA. Students should be prepared to discuss their grades up to that point

in the semester. Students must be aware of the importance of self-monitoring GPAs to ensure they will meet academic progress and graduation requirements.

The students must complete and submit these forms electronically in Exxat at least 24 hours before the meeting or by the due date established by the program. Students who do not submit completed forms by the due date are subject to disciplinary action following the tiered approach under **Professional Deficiencies**.

Students who are experiencing difficulties in courses or who are experiencing life events that affect progress or performance in the program may schedule an appointment with their faculty mentor, the Academic Director, Clinical Director, Associate Program Director, or the Program Director whenever the need arises. A student or faculty may initiate other meetings outside those required.

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES

To facilitate and maximize learning opportunities, attendance at all scheduled didactic and clinical sessions in the Program is expected. Students have a personal responsibility to take advantage of the learning opportunities available to them and a professional responsibility to be present and actively involved in all academic and clinical activities. Attendance and timeliness while enrolled in the program is viewed as an indicator of the student's future attendance and timeliness as a clinician.

Throughout the clinical phase of the program, students are expected to follow the schedule provided by the preceptor and be present for all shifts assigned unless otherwise stipulated by the preceptor or Clinical faculty. Students should attempt to integrate themselves into the team or practice to which they are assigned. Certain sites will require extended hours due to the nature of the practice. Students are expected to be present day, night, and weekend hours as required by the preceptor.

### MONITORING

Attendance is monitored by badge swipe for on-campus events. Preceptors and timesheets in Exxat track attendance during clinical rotations. Students are expected to adhere to the following:

- Students must have their school ID badge on their person at all times.
- For all on-campus classes and events, students are required to badge in no more than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the class or event.
- Students are responsible for monitoring their own attendance through Canvas for didactic courses and on-campus events in the clinical courses.
- Students are responsible for entering their clinic hours in Exxat during SCPEs.

- Students must submit a time off form in Exxat as soon as possible on the day of any attendance occurrences. Noncompliance is subject to documentation of a professionalism incident in a student file and disciplinary actions that follow the tiered approach in **Professional Deficiencies**.

For MPAS 615 Clinical Anatomy for Health Professions: Students must badge in for both lecture and lab in order to avoid an absence being recorded for attendance. Nonattendance and failure to badge in for either lecture, lab or both will be recorded as one (1) attendance occurrence.

### ***FRAUDULENT BADGING***

Students are expected to attend class in its entirety once they have badged into class. Depending upon the context, fraudulent badging is a breach of professionalism or a violation of the Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy. The following are examples of breaches of professionalism related to fraudulent badging and are subject to disciplinary action following the tiered approach in **Professional Deficiencies**. This is not an all-inclusive list.

- A student scans their badge during the specified timeframe yet does not enter the classroom until after the class start time.
- A student scans their badge during the specified timeframe yet leaves early without submitting a time off form.

The following scenarios are violations of the Technical Standards, Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy and will be referred to the PA Student Progress Committee.

- A student scans their badge during the specified timeframe and does not attend class.
- A student possesses another student's ID badge and badges in for that student.
- A student documents attendance via timesheets in the clinical phase yet does not attend clinic.

### ***ATTENDANCE OCCURRENCES***

The program acknowledges situations may arise due to unforeseen circumstances. In those cases, communication with the program through proper channels is imperative to best support and guide students.

Students are expected to notify course directors if they are leaving class early as a professional courtesy although these instances are not monitored or considered an attendance occurrence.

To cover various situations that may affect attendance, students are allotted six (6) attendance occurrences per semester. **A Time Off form in Exxat must be submitted as soon as possible for all attendance occurrences.** The policies regarding attendance occurrences are outlined below.

### ***UNRECORDED BADGE SCAN***

An attendance occurrence is recorded for students who forget their badge, forget to badge in, or have a missed badge swipe for a class or event on campus. A Time Off form in Exxat must be submitted stating the reason for the attendance occurrence as soon as possible from the day of the unrecorded badge scan.

### ***LATE ARRIVALS AND ABSENCES***

An attendance occurrence is recorded for students who arrive late to a class or event. A late arrival is defined as a badge scan recorded after the start time.

An attendance occurrence is recorded for students who are absent for a class, required event, or clinic day. An absence is defined as nonattendance for a portion of a class, event, or clinic day. The following are examples of recorded absences.

- If a student is absent from a morning and afternoon class or a full clinic day, this is considered two absences.
- If a student is absent from either a morning or afternoon class or a partial clinic day, this is considered one absence.

If there is graded classwork or other testing on the day of an absence, students must contact course directors and follow course policies regarding make-up work.

Students absent three or more consecutive days will be required to attach documentation to the Time Off form in Exxat. Clinical students must discuss the missed days with the Clinical Director and may be required to make up time at the discretion of the Clinical Director.

**A Time Off form in Exxat must be submitted as soon as possible on the day of an absence or late arrival for a class, event, or clinic day.**

#### ***Anticipated Absence or Late Arrival***

In the event of an anticipated absence or late arrival, both didactic and clinical students must fill out a Time Off form in Exxat at least 2 weeks in advance or as soon as the

student is aware. This policy applies to all classroom activities, exams and clinical rotation days. Anticipated absences are not permitted during the clinical year for the Introduction to Clinical Practice and Senior Seminar courses, and on the first day of a rotation.

Exams are not rescheduled prior to the originally scheduled exam for anticipated absences and are rescheduled based on the return date reported on the Time Off form. Students must closely monitor their email for instructions regarding the rescheduled exam. See the [\*\*Examination Reschedules\*\*](#) policy for complete details.

### Unanticipated Absence or Late Arrival

In the event of an unanticipated absence or late arrival, both didactic and clinical students must fill out a Time Off form in Exxat as soon as possible on the day of the absence or late arrival. This policy applies to all classroom activities, exams, and rotation days.

### Absence or Late Arrival Related to Exams

If there is an absence or late arrival that affects an exam, the following applies:

- Students must contact by email the PA Program Office Coordinator, Program Administrator, Course Director(s), and Academic Director or Clinical Director as soon as possible and submit a Time Off form in Exxat with documentation if applicable.
- The Academic Director or Clinical Director will coordinate with the program office the time and location of a rescheduled exam. Students must closely monitor their email for instructions regarding the rescheduled exam. See the [\*\*Examination Reschedules\*\*](#) policy for complete details.
- The privilege of rescheduling exams must not be used to extend time for studying. Details regarding rescheduling exams is a confidential process.
- Students must be prepared to take the rescheduled exam on the return date reported on the Time Off form. Due to the constraints of the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU Testing Center schedule, it may be necessary to reschedule an exam on the same day of an originally scheduled exam or have two rescheduled exams on the same day. A 10-minute break is provided in between the exams.
- The Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU Testing Center monitors attendance and notifies the Program of all late arrivals and absences according to their policies and procedures. Students are notified of late arrivals reported to the program and a professionalism incident is recorded in a student's internal PA program file. Students are subject to disciplinary actions that follow the tiered



approach in **Professional Deficiencies** and the policy under **Grades for Rescheduled Examinations**.

### *Preceptor Absence, Preceptor Schedule Change, or Site Adjustments*

In the event of a preceptor absence, preceptor schedule change or site adjustments, clinical students must submit a Time Off form in Exxat and notify the clinical year faculty for purposes of establishing make-up time and/or assignments. The placement and timing of make-up days will be at the discretion of the clinical year faculty and based upon the amount of missed time. This may result in an extension of the SCPE course, delayed graduation, or repeating the rotation in its entirety.

### ***ATTENDANCE RECORD REVIEW***

Program leadership reviews an attendance record when a student accrues six (6) attendance occurrences in a semester. This supports the program ensuring all students are meeting the Technical Standards and satisfactorily progressing in meeting the Program Competencies. Following an attendance record review, no measures are taken if Time Off forms are submitted for every attendance occurrence along with reasonable explanations. When there are concerns, the student's faculty mentor is notified and will schedule a meeting with the student. Students that have obtained 12 or more attendance occurrences and not submitted Time Off forms or required documentation are subject to disciplinary actions following the tiered approach in **Professional Deficiencies**. If a student is referred to the **PA Student Progress Committee (PA SPC)**, submitted time off forms and documentation are included in the PA SPC review. Refer to PA **Student Progress Committee** for details.

### ***LEAVE OF ABSENCE***

Prolonged or repeated absences may make it difficult to satisfactorily continue in the Program. More information about the Leave of Absence Policy can be found **here**.

### ***INCLEMENT WEATHER***

In general, the ODU office of Strategic Communication and Marketing will alert students to the impact of weather on the academic schedule through local television and radio stations, the ODU Alerts system, and postings on the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU and ODU web sites and social media pages. Refer to the **Institutional Handbook** for specifics.

Clinical phase students should follow the policy of the clinical site. However, students who feel it is unsafe travelling to a site that is open should consider safety first. The program will support any decision to not attend a clinical day because of safety and traveling

concerns. No student should endanger themselves by trying to get to class if the conditions in their area prove unsafe. In this case, notify the site and preceptor as soon as possible and follow the procedures listed in [Attendance Policies](#).

### *HOLIDAYS AND TIME OFF*

Holidays during the didactic phase are according to the published institutional academic calendar. Semester breaks are for at least one week after each semester for semesters 1 through 4.

Students in the clinical phase of the program will abide by the Clinical Year calendar rather than the institutional academic calendars. Students are expected to be present at the assigned site on all additional holidays, provided the site is operational. There are built-in breaks to allow for medical appointments, personal time off, and interviews.

### *INTERVIEWING AND SHADOWING*

All interviews and shadowing should be scheduled during semester breaks to avoid disruption of SCPEs. Students will not be permitted to represent themselves as a Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU student during the interview process or during shadowing experiences. Time spent in a shadowing experience must be volunteered during a student's personal time only. Students are not covered under Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU liability insurance or authorized to participate in a clinical capacity during interviews or shadowing.

## **EXAMINATION POLICIES**

### *EXAMINATION PROCEDURES*

All computer-based examinations are administered using web-based testing software (e.g., ExamSoft for didactic phase and PAEA and Blueprint Prep for clinical phase) and conducted in the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU Testing Center when scheduled on campus. Students with approved accommodations will take their exams in the Accommodation Testing Center. Testing Center examination procedures are distributed by the program office before each examination. Students must adhere to these policies and procedures.

Discussion and dissemination of exam topics or items is a violation of the Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy and reported to the SOM and SHP Student Affairs.

## **EXAMINATION SCHEDULE**

### ***DIDACTIC PHASE***

The Academic Director will distribute semester exam and Post Exam Review of Concepts (PERC) schedules before the beginning of the semester. All attempts are made to schedule exams within a week of completing a module, but it is not guaranteed. PERCs are typically scheduled within a week of the exam. Once published, the exam schedule is final; however, unforeseen circumstances may necessitate changes. Students are notified of changes as soon as possible.

Due to testing center space limitations for accommodation students, the exam times may be adjusted. This may result in exam times as early as 7 AM on the exam date and/or ending in the evening. Students are expected to remain flexible and plan accordingly for any adjustments in the exam start and end times.

### ***CLINICAL PHASE***

End of Rotation (EOR) exams are scheduled based on availability of the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU Testing Center. All students are required to start at the same time, regardless of location. Adjustments will not be made for students traveling from other time zones. If there are concerns regarding site location and time required for travel, students must notify the Clinical Director at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled exam date. In the event of extenuating circumstances, changes to the start time may be considered at the discretion of the Clinical Director. Additionally, testing center conflicts may necessitate adjustments to the start time and this will be communicated to students as necessary.

Students rotating at local sites will take their exam in the Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU Testing Center. Students rotating at out of area sites will have the option of returning to Old Dominion University's medical campus to take the EOR exam or use the program approved web-based proctoring service at the student's expense. Students planning to use the web-based proctoring service must notify the program by the deadlines provided by the clinical coordinators.

## **RESCHEDULED EXAMINATIONS**

The exam and Post Exam Review of Concepts (PERC) schedules are distributed during the previous semester so students may plan accordingly. However, it is understood that unexpected circumstances occur. The policies for late arrivals and absences on an exam day are under **Attendance Policies**.

### ***GRADES FOR RESCHEDULED EXAMINATIONS***

Grades for rescheduled exams are recorded as outlined below for computer-based exams and pass/non-pass competency assessments, but do not include lab practical examinations and SCHSIL testing.

Students who miss an exam due to illness, injury, family emergency, or death in the family must upload a reasonable form of proof with the Time Off form in Exxat to be eligible to earn 100% of the total possible exam points.

For students who miss an exam for reasons other than those stated above or are unable to provide a reasonable form of proof, the maximum possible score is 85% of the total points allotted for that exam. Exam grades between 85% and 100% will receive a final grade of 85%. Grades below 85% will receive the grade earned. Students have 24 hours from the time the exam was administered to explain their situation to the Academic Director or Clinical Director, who in extraordinary circumstances may grant the ability to take the rescheduled exam at 100% of the total possible points.

Rescheduled computer-based exams will contain 20% new questions in the didactic phase. In the clinical phase, nationally published exams are utilized and cannot be adjusted.

Discussion and dissemination of exam topics or items is a violation of the Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy and reported to the EVMS SOM and SHP Student Affairs.

### ***POST EXAM REVIEW OF CONCEPTS (PERC)***

A Post Exam Review of Concepts (PERC) session is provided as another opportunity for students to learn after an exam. Based on the analysis of class performance on the exam, course directors choose concepts to review during the session including those related to adjusted exam questions (i.e., more than one or all answers accepted). The format of the PERC is a review of concepts, and exam questions are not shown. At the discretion of course directors, the PERC may include a review of how to approach test questions. During the clinical phase, PERC sessions are not offered; however, students will be provided with individual detailed exam performance reports after each EOR exam.

PERC sessions for computer-based exams are typically within one week of the exam date and do not include lab practical exams and Sentara Center for Healthcare Simulation and Immersive Learning (SCHSIL) testing. Only in extenuating circumstances, as deemed by the Course Director(s), will a PERC be given outside of the scheduled PERC time. PERCs

and distribution of Strengths and Improvements Opportunities (S&O) reports will not occur for cumulative final exams.

PERCs will be conducted as follows:

- A link to the student's personal "Strengths and Improvements Opportunities" (S&O) report is sent through ExamSoft for the student to access the ExamSoft Portal. It shows the category performance of an individual exam taker for a specified exam. The exam taker's Unique Identifier (UID) is located at the upper right corner of the report. For each category, the percentage of questions answered correctly is given.
- The PERC session is delivered asynchronously as a Panopto video posted on the course's Canvas site.
- If all students are not able to take the exam prior to the scheduled PERC date and time, the PERC is postponed. The S&O report is released on ExamSoft before the PERC regardless of the timing.

Inquiries or additional discussion regarding a test item will not occur during a PERC and will only be addressed after following the steps for self-regulated learning in the algorithm below:

- Consult personal notes.
- Consult the required textbook and/or assigned readings.
- If a lack of clarity or questions remain, wait a minimum of 24 hours from the conclusion of the PERC to email the Course Director(s) regarding questions or concerns about the material. Emails must be sent no later than five (5) business days following the 24-hour period after the PERC. Except in rare circumstances, this process should occur in the timeframe of 1 to 7 calendar days following the PERC session.
- The outcome of any inquiry and discussion will be at the discretion of the Course Director.

Discussion and dissemination of exam topics or items is a violation of the Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy and reported to the EVMS SOM and SHP Student Affairs.

Professional behavior is expected at all times during asynchronous PERC sessions, related email communications, and during any meetings after the PERC. Any deviation from this standard may result in dismissal of the student from a meeting and/or a professionalism

incident recorded in the student's internal PA Program file. Students are subject to disciplinary action following the tiered approach in **Professional Deficiencies**.

Viewing PERC sessions is highly recommended for all students. However, those scoring less than 70% must view the PERC sessions by the due date of the remediation plan and fully engage in the educational process of self-regulated learning. They must also participate in the Personal Self Evaluation (PSE) process described under **Remediation**. Failure to complete viewing of the PERC sessions and/or initiate the PSE process is viewed as insufficient student engagement in the educational process and will result in a professionalism incident recorded in the student's internal PA program file. Professionalism incidents are considered in deliberations by the PA SPC, if indicated.

## EVALUATIONS

### *PERFORMANCE SELF-EVALUATION*

Students are expected to continually reflect on their performance and evaluate their learning strategies to develop a process that supports success and lifelong learning. This process is referred to as Performance Self-Evaluation (PSE) and the program will provide guidance on reflection and self-evaluation throughout the curriculum. Faculty mentors will refer to this process throughout the Program.

Students undertake the first step in this process by completing the self-reflective practice assignment prior to beginning the program which is reviewed with their faculty mentor. Students are expected to continue self-reflection by completing mid-semester self-evaluations each didactic semester and as needed through the clinical phase of the program. Remediation also includes a PSE process to support students in the assessment of their academic performance and identify areas for support and improvement.

### *STUDENT EVALUATION*

Throughout the program, modular and cumulative final evaluations are performed to measure each student's competence and identify areas of weakness. All faculty are involved in continually evaluating student professionalism. Generally, a student's academic success in the program courses is determined by participation, computer-based examinations, written assignments, oral presentations, hands-on skills, and standardized patient encounters.

During the clinical phase, students are evaluated on their knowledge, clinical skills and overall competence in specific task areas using formative assessments, preceptor evaluations, and EOR exams. See clinical phase SCPE course syllabi for details on graded elements.

Additionally, each student reviews a professionalism self-evaluation checklist each semester throughout the program as well as being monitored by the faculty throughout the program. Any breach of professionalism is subject to disciplinary action following the tiered approach described in **Professional Deficiencies**.

### ***PROGRAM EVALUATION***

The program is committed to delivering a curriculum that will prepare the student to deliver optimal health care in an ever-changing environment. Students are involved in evaluation of the program to support our commitment to the process of continuous quality improvement. The evaluation process is a part of every continuing medical education course in which a practitioner participates to maintain their Physician Assistant license. As such, completion of evaluations is a professional standard and expectation.

Students are expected to complete all evaluations assigned by the program through anonymous survey by the due date. Failure to complete required evaluations will result in documentation of a professionalism incident in a student's internal PA program file and/or a meeting either with a faculty mentor, the Associate Director, or the Clinical Director. Noncompliance is subject to disciplinary actions that follow the tiered approach in **Professional Deficiencies**.

Although evaluations are conducted through an anonymous survey, comments provided in evaluations should be constructive and respectful. Student evaluations of clinical sites and preceptors are anonymous to preceptors but are identifiable to the program. If written comments are a violation of the Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy the evaluation may be subject to investigation. Evaluations are required to be completed by students for courses, course directors, clinical sites, and preceptors.

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates evaluate the curriculum through an anonymous survey. Alumni of the program are also surveyed to determine readiness for practice and preparedness for employment.

## LIABILITY INSURANCE

Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU provides professional liability insurance for all students while enrolled in a course involving patient contact. There is no additional fee for the student during the clinical phase. Students are required to notify the program immediately of any potential liability issues that arise during the course of clinical rotations.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH POLICIES

Occupational Health provides services that promote a safe and healthy environment. Occupational Health in coordination with Student Health provides tuberculosis surveillance, vaccinations, and management of blood and body fluid exposures. The policies and procedures for student exposure to infectious disease can be found here through the [School of Medicine and School of Health Professions Student Exposure Policy Occupational Health](#) at 757.446.5870 and [Student Health](#) Line at 757.446.5700.

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students in the EVMS School of Health Professions must meet high expectations for academic integrity. In addition to being required to maintain the guidelines outlined for Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, students enrolled in the School of Health Professions must adhere to the Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy.

If a student is aware of a violation of any of the above policies, it is their professional and ethical duty to report it. Reporting should be done immediately to an appropriate authority (ex: Testing Center Proctor) or directly to the SOM and SHP Student Affairs. Reporting a violation to a faculty member does not absolve the student from reporting it to SOM and SHP Student Affairs. Direct reporting by students to the SOM and SHP Student Affairs is preferred.

Any student who is convicted of a violation of policy by the SOM and SHP Student Affairs will be referred to the [PA SPC](#) for further disciplinary action which may result in dismissal from the PA program.



### ***PLAGIARISM***

Students are expected to do their own work. Turning in an assignment that is believed to be another person's work will be considered a violation of Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy. The student will be referred to the VHS SOM and SHP Student Affairs. Faculty members may utilize online resources, like *Turnitin*, to evaluate writing assignments for evidence of improper use of another's words or ideas. Students are expected to be familiar with the **Standards for the Safe Use of Artificial Intelligence** prior to engaging in the use of AI for academic purposes.

### ***ASSESSMENTS AND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS***

Students are expected to complete their own work except when authorized by the course director to work in pairs or groups. Sharing knowledge of assessment information will not be tolerated. The following constitutes a violation of Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy:

- A student obtaining unauthorized information about patient scenarios or assessment content in advance of their own test.
- Any student sharing information about scenarios or assessment content prior to another student's examination or turning in their assignments.

### ***COPYRIGHT, FAIR USE & EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS***

Printed matter, videos and other electronic materials to include PowerPoint presentations viewed on Canvas or in the classroom as well as exam and assessment content are copyrighted materials owned by the author(s) and/or Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU. These materials are never to be copied or transferred electronically outside of the program or ODU for any reason without the written permission of the author. Doing so risks violation of US copyright laws with resulting legal action or other reasonable sanctions from the program or Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU.

### ***CONFIDENTIALITY***

Students will respect patient confidentiality at all times. Patient information is to be discussed only in the context of professional interaction with healthcare providers at clinical sites. Failure to protect confidentiality may result in dismissal from the program. Students will omit identifying personal patient information on patient logs or case presentations.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### *RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR)*

As part of the University's responsibilities as an R1-designated research institution, the EVMS School of Health Professions requires all students to complete RCR training. Students must complete the training requirement prior to accumulating 12 credit hours (by the end of semester 1). PA students must complete the Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research module. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the application of a registration hold that may impede academic progress.

### *PROGRAM COMPLIANCE*

Completion of program compliance is a part of being a VHS student and is vital to maintaining continuity in the program. As part of program compliance, students are expected to adhere to all mandatory program and institutional requirements including but not limited to submission of required forms, completion of evaluations, maintaining immunizations and annual trainings by specified deadlines. Students are required to comply with mandated institutional policies and participating hospital system policies related to vaccination.

Ongoing compliance requirements will be completed throughout the final semesters of the program in order to comply with affiliated sites and hospitals for clinical rotations. Noncompliance may result in delay in graduation and is subject to disciplinary actions that follow the tiered approach in **Professional Deficiencies**.

### *COMMUNICATION WITH PROGRAM*

The program will utilize ODU student e-mail and Exxat as mechanisms for expedient communication with students. Students must check their ODU email and Exxat accounts at least three times a day and respond to program communication within 24 business hours. Students should refrain from sending or responding to emails during class or labs where this may distract from learning. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), communication must not occur through a student's personal email accounts. Therefore, students must maintain ODU email access and provide a current phone number in Exxat. The program must be updated of any change to this contact information as soon as possible. Noncompliance is subject to disciplinary actions that follow the tiered approach in **Professional Deficiencies**.

## ***IDENTIFICATION***

All students are required to wear an ID badge provided by the school. For security reasons, the ID badge is required to be always worn and visible while on campus. Clinical affiliation sites may require additional identification and nametags to be worn. ID badges will be provided at the Institutional Orientation during the first week of the Program.

Students will wear identification pins and/or badges bearing their name, the institution's name and "Physician Assistant Student" spelled out on their short white lab coat. The nametag should be worn over the breast pocket.

Students must identify themselves to other providers and patients as a PA student with sufficient clarity to ensure understanding of others. Students are not permitted to identify themselves as PA students while employed or volunteering in situations not associated with the program or institution.

Students who lose or misplace their ID are required to obtain a new one through Human Resources as soon as possible and notify the program as outlined in [\*\*Attendance Policies\*\*](#). Students without an ID must check in with the security desk to access campus buildings.

## ***ATTIRE***

### ***CLASSROOM***

Students may be dressed comfortably in the classroom according to seasonal norms. Refrain from cutoffs, torn clothing, workout clothing, revealing clothing, or clothing with images, drawings, or sayings of a controversial or suggestive nature. Clean scrubs may only be worn on days of scheduled labs. The Program Director may request clinical attire for special occasions as deemed appropriate.

### ***CLINICAL***

Students will follow the dress code in accordance with the SCHSIL policies for all SCHSIL practice and testing simulated sessions during the didactic phase and clinical rotation experiences. For all other occasions where clinical attire is required course directors will specify.

Students will comply with established dress code policies for SCPEs and the host institution which includes business professional attire for men and women. Students should exhibit discretion when choosing a professional wardrobe. Avoid low necklines and form fitting apparel. Closed toe shoes are required. Scrubs are allowed in some emergency departments, select inpatient and surgical settings and only after inquiring regarding the expectations of the rotation. Clean short white lab coats are mandatory for clinical rotation sites unless otherwise specified by the preceptor. Proper identification is

required to be worn at all times.

### **LABORATORY**

Students may choose to purchase a white jacket to be worn only during their anatomy laboratory or clinical skills laboratory experiences. No open-toed shoes are acceptable in the lab. Rules will be established by the Course Director for appropriate attire and personal protective equipment in the lab.

**Note:** Course directors, principal faculty, and preceptors reserve the right to question attire choices that may seem inappropriate. A student may be refused participation in clinical or didactic setting when attire is clearly inappropriate.

### **RECORDING DEVICES**

Students may not record synchronous online, on-campus class sessions, labs, SCHSIL events, or meetings with faculty, staff, or other students without expressed permission. Recorders and recording capable devices (cellphones, laptops, etc.) may only be used in a very transparent manner by being visible to those being recorded if permitted. Any recordings without the permission of all parties are considered a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and a breach of professionalism subject to disciplinary action described in [\*\*Professional Deficiencies\*\*](#).

Recordings of scheduled lectures are provided by VHS to be used by students in their education and learning. Guest speakers have the right to request their lectures not be recorded. If so requested, students may not record the lecture in any format (audio, video, photograph or otherwise).

### **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones must be off or on vibrate mode during class and lab. Cell phone use during class, lab sessions, or program events is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the [\*\*Professional Deficiencies\*\*](#) policy.

During the clinical phase, use of cell phones or other personal electronic devices are to be used strictly for medical references or patient logging, but only with the expressed permission by the preceptor.

### **FOOD**

Eating a full meal or disruptive snacks during class is unprofessional and will not be tolerated. An exception to this policy is when the program provides food for a function or celebration in the classroom. Otherwise, there is no eating allowed during in-class or virtual sessions. Small, non-disruptive, snacks can be eaten. Drinks are allowed as long as

they are in a spill proof or resistant container. Eating in a classroom may occur when the classroom is available before or after scheduled classes. Food and drinks are not permitted at any time during labs.

### *INTERACTIONS WITH GUEST SPEAKERS*

Guest speakers provide their time and expertise to enhance the education offered. It is unprofessional to approach them with personal, or family related medical questions. Giving advice without a patient-provider relationship is inappropriate and unsound. Students must also refrain from approaching speakers to request a clinical rotation. All rotation requests must be coordinated through the program's clinical year team. Frequently being approached by students may deter speakers from returning. If this behavior occurs and is observed by a faculty member, disciplinary actions will follow the tiered approach described in **Professional Deficiencies**.

### *EMPLOYMENT*

Due to the academic and clinical demands of the PA curriculum, the program strongly recommends that students are not employed during their time in the program.

The following guidelines are meant to help the student in making decisions about work during participation in the program.

- Students should keep in mind that while they may be able to work during the didactic phase, variable schedules and travel associated with clinical placements during the clinical phase may make this difficult.
- Students who choose to work are encouraged to make this known to their faculty mentor.
- Clinical rotation hours or schedules will not be altered to conform to personal job schedules or requirements. The student's clinical education must remain the student's primary responsibility when balancing work and school.
- Students may not be employed by the program and may not function as staff or faculty while in the program.
- Students cannot serve as substitutes for paid clinicians or clerical office staff and may not be compensated for services at clinical sites.

### ***DROP/ADD COURSE POLICY AND PROCEDURE***

Dropping a course or courses would effectively lead to withdrawal from the program. The PA SPC determines the possibility of deceleration (see [\*\*Deceleration\*\*](#)).

Permission to add courses from another program is unlikely as the course of study in the program is quite rigorous. Adding a course or courses can only be done with the written permission of the Program Director.

### ***TRANSPORTATION DURING CLINICAL PHASE***

In order to provide students with adequate exposure to various facets of medicine and required clinical experiences, travel beyond the immediate campus and the Hampton Roads area is required. Students are not guaranteed clinical rotations in close proximity to their home or campus. Students will be required to do any rotation that is 60 miles from the program. Thus, students are required to have access to a private, reliable means of transportation throughout the program specifically during the clinical phase. Students are responsible for transportation to and from all clinical sites regardless of location. In addition, each student is responsible for all transportation expenses incurred while rotating at a clinical site including but not limited to parking, gas, tolls, food, and other incidentals.

### ***PRECEPTOR ROLE***

The preceptor is integral in our program, serving as an essential role model for students. Through guidance and teaching, the preceptor helps the student improve skills in history taking, physical examination, communication, documentation, diagnosis, assessment and plan development, and coordination of care.

Preceptors can be an MD, DO, PA or NP and must be board certified in their area of practice and have a minimum of 2 years clinical experience in the field they are teaching. They are expected to supervise, demonstrate, teach and observe clinical activities to aid in the development of clinical skills and ensure proper patient care. Preceptors should increase levels of responsibility in clinical assessment and management as appropriate to the student's experience and the comfort of the preceptor.

### ***PRECEPTOR SUPERVISION***

Appropriate supervision of the PA student by the clinical preceptor is expected at all times during the SCPE courses. This should include providing direct supervision of technical skills with gradually decreased supervision as the student exhibits an increased level of expertise. However, every patient must be seen, and every procedure evaluated by the preceptor prior to the patient being discharged. The student will not be allowed to

examine, treat or discharge a patient without the patient having also been evaluated by the preceptor.

### *INFORMED PATIENT CONSENT*

The preceptor and student are obligated to inform the patient of the educational nature of the patient care and the student status of the trainee. Patients have the option to refuse student involvement and must give informed consent for student involvement.

### *DOCUMENTATION DURING CLINICAL PHASE*

Students will confer with the preceptor regarding general practice of chart entries and/or dictation procedures of the clinical site. Students must receive permission from the preceptor prior to accessing or making written entries into the electronic medical records. Student entries in records must include status such as Student Name, PA-S (Student) and must be countersigned by the preceptor. The student is responsible for notifying preceptors of the requirement described here with questions being directed to the program.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) no longer requires that clinicians serving as preceptors re-perform student-provided documentation. As of January 1, 2020, preceptors can verify by signing and dating student documentation. There are no restrictions on the verification of student-provided documentation based on the profession (i.e., preceptor does not have to be a PA to verify the documentation of a PA student). See details [here](#)

Students may transmit prescribing information for the preceptor, but the preceptor must sign all prescriptions. More specifically, the student's name should not appear on the prescription. For sites that use electronic prescriptions, the preceptor must log into the system under his or her own password and personally sign and send the electronic prescription. These guidelines must not be violated by the student or the preceptor.

## PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Students are expected to adhere to the professional standards described below. Any breach of the professional standards described in this section will result in a tiered approach of reconciliation described in [Professional Deficiencies](#).

Students are expected to comply with all institutional policies at all times, including but not limited to the Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy. Disciplinary actions related to professionalism are described in Professional Deficiencies.

The goal of the program is to mentor students in the development of their professional identity. It is essential to remain composed and professional in the face of emergent or emotionally charged circumstances, as these will undoubtedly occur during PA education and training and in future practice as a PA. Student responses to stresses associated with rigorous graduate-level coursework can mirror how practicing PAs respond to stresses associated with being a healthcare provider.

PAs must know their professional and personal limitations; as such, students are expected to do the same. They must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Students must conduct themselves in a highly professional manner consistent with the patient care responsibilities with which they will be entrusted during their training in the program. Professionalism comprises those attributes and behaviors that serve to maintain patient interests above clinician self-interest. It involves building relationships through interactions with patients and families as well as all those involved in medical education and the delivery of patient care including PAs, physicians, other health professionals, students, and administrators. They are expected to adhere to the following behaviors and characteristics in all didactic and clinical settings. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action described in [Professional Deficiencies](#).

## PROFESSIONALISM PRINCIPLES

### *ALTRUISM*

Altruism is the selfless regard for and devotion to the welfare of others and is a key element of professionalism. Self-interest should not interfere with the care of one's patients and their families.



### ***RESPECT***

Students are expected to treat all faculty, staff, clinical preceptors, patients, and fellow students with dignity and respect as well as demonstrate sensitivity to and appreciation of diversity. Conflicts should be resolved in a diplomatic and reasonable manner.

### ***HONESTY AND INTEGRITY***

Honesty and integrity are the consistent regard for the highest standards of behavior and the refusal to violate one's personal and professional codes. They imply fairness, truthfulness, adherence to commitments, and being forthright when interacting with others through communication (email, written or oral), presentations, and all other interactions. Students are also expected to adhere to policies, procedures, and standards at each scheduled clinical site during the clinical phase of the program.

### ***FLEXIBILITY***

The program provides instruction from practicing clinicians with unpredictable schedules. At times lectures or clinical rotations may need to be adjusted with short notice. Students need to be flexible and tolerant of change in all circumstances. This quality exemplifies an exceptional clinician as medicine and patients continually change, and it is the duty of a professional to learn to adapt and remain flexible.

### ***RESPONSIBILITY***

Students are expected to behave in a responsible, reliable and dependable manner. Students must project a professional image in manner, dress, grooming, speech and interpersonal relationships that is consistent with being a medical professional. Personal limitations and biases should be recognized and self-corrected. Success in the program requires certain behavioral attributes including empathy, discipline, teamwork, self-directed learning, reflection, and the ability to address a crisis in a composed manner.

### ***EXCELLENCE***

Excellence is described by a conscientious effort to exceed ordinary expectations and make a commitment to lifelong learning. Commitment to excellence is an acknowledged goal for all PAs. A key to excellence is the pursuit of and commitment to providing the highest quality of health care through lifelong learning. Students must seek to learn from errors and aspire to excellence through self-evaluation and acceptance of critiques from fellow classmates, faculty, preceptors, and others.

## PROFESSIONAL DEFICIENCIES

Any breach of the Professional Standards is documented as an incident in the student's file. Continued, repeated incidents, as well as the severe nature of an incident result in a tiered approach of reconciliation except where explicitly stated in the policies above. There may be some instances that require immediate escalation of the tiered approach based on details of the incident and will be determined by program leadership.

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Referral to the PA Student Progress Committee (see [PA Student Progress Committee](#)).

**\*Note:** For extreme cases of professional deficiencies of the professional standards, this process may be escalated.

The [PA SPC](#) will meet to discuss and deliberate a student's situation and a recommendation will be made to the Program Director. Students may be dismissed for the following reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Repeated or egregious violation of program standards.
- Violations of the Code of Student Conduct, the Compact for the Teacher-Learner Relationship, Technical Standards or Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy.
- HIPAA or other confidentiality violations.
- Failure to comply with probationary [Academic Plan](#).

## GRADING POLICIES

### *Didactic Phase Grading Scale*

PERCENTAGE	GPA	LETTER GRADE
94 – 100	4.00	A
90 – 93	3.67	A-
87 – 89	3.33	B+
84 – 86	3.00	B
80 – 83	2.67	B-
77 – 79	2.33	C+
74 – 76	2.00	C
70 – 73	1.67	C-
*Less than 70	0.0	F

\*Exam score less than 70 percent requires the Performance Self-Evaluation (PSE) process with the Course Director.

### *Clinical Phase Grading Scale*

PERCENTAGE	GRADE
90-100	HONORS (H)
80-89	HIGH PASS (HP)
70-79	PASS (P)
69 or less	NON-PASS (NP)

**\*NOTE:** The Interprofessional Education course series spans the entire program and is assessed per the clinical phase grading scale.

### *Mathematical Rounding*

Mathematical rules for rounding to the nearest whole number based on two decimal places are applied to the grade percentage. For example, a final grade of 93.45 would round to a 94 (A), while a final grade of 93.44 would round to a 93 (A-). The GPA is not rounded to whole numbers.

### *Erroneous Grade Recorded*

If an incorrect final course grade is posted, the student should immediately contact the Academic Director or Clinical Director to verify the accuracy of the grade. If an error is verified, the correct grade will be posted as well as the correction made on the student's grade record.

### ***GRADE APPEAL***

Students may appeal a course grade element or final course grade by submitting a written request to the Course Director within ten (10) business days of the grade posting. The appeal must include the reasons for the appeal and actions the student requests. The Course Director must then respond to the student in writing within ten (10) business days with a decision. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the Academic or Clinical Director and then subsequently Program Director within ten (10) business days of the Course Director's response stating the reason for the appeal and actions the student requests.

If there is no appeal within ten (10) business days after a response from the Academic or Clinical Director and Program Director, the grievance is considered resolved. If desired, the student may appeal the Program Director's decision about a grade to the Dean of the EVMS School of Health Professions, also in writing and within ten (10) business days of the report of a decision by the Program Director. The Dean's decision will be final. For further details on the grade appeal process, see the [\*\*EVMS School of Health Professions Handbook\*\*](#).

## **SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS**

### ***DIDACTIC PHASE***

Grades, professionalism, and ability to meet technical standards are factors that determine satisfactory progress. Standards of acceptable performance for courses are communicated to students in writing via the syllabus and orally reviewed at the introduction of each course.

The standard of performance for students in the didactic phase is to obtain a C- or higher in all letter-graded courses, maintain a 3.00 grade point average (GPA) or higher each semester as well as for the cumulative GPA, and a "P" (Pass) in all performance-graded courses to remain in good academic standing and graduate from the program. Grade percentages will be calculated to 2 decimal places. See [\*\*Mathematical Rounding under Grading Policies\*\*](#).

The policy of a semester GPA of 3.00 or higher in a graduate professional program has been adopted to better ensure student's preparation for future sequential course work.

Any course grade of F or NP shall result in dismissal from the Program (See [\*\*Dismissal from the Program\*\*](#)).

Remediation prior to the clinical phase of the program may be considered for a student with a cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 at the end of the 4th semester of the Program (See [\*\*Remediated Progression to the Clinical Phase\*\*](#)).

### ***STUDENT PROGRESS AT THE END OF DIDACTIC PHASE***

Semester 4 represents the final semester of didactic instruction for the program. All coursework during the clinical phase of the Program is graded on a “pass-fail” system that awards Honors (H), High Pass (HP), Pass (P), or Non-Pass (NP) for each course. As such, the grade point average for the entire program is established at the end of semester 4 of the Program.

The program requires a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 to graduate from the program as is customary at most graduate training Programs. Therefore, to progress to the clinical phase of the program, the cumulative GPA must be 3.00 or higher at the conclusion of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester.

### ***CLINICAL PHASE***

The standards of performance for students in the clinical phase is to obtain a grade of pass (P) or higher on each supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE) course. A passing score for the course requires a grade of pass (P) or higher on both the Preceptor Evaluation of Student and the End of Rotation (EOR) exam in order to proceed through the clinical phase.

Our goal is to ensure success in the clinical phase and as practicing clinicians. Specific grading details are outlined in the SCPE course syllabi. Students who do not meet these criteria will be subject to stipulations outlined in [\*\*Unsatisfactory Performance & Progress\*\*](#).

### ***SUMMATIVE EVALUATION***

The Summative Evaluation ensures students have the knowledge, interpersonal skills, patient care skills, and professionalism required for entry into the profession. This is completed within four months of graduation. This evaluation consists of the following components:

- Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs): Students will conduct problem-focused encounters utilizing standardized patients and must receive a passing score. OSCEs are used to evaluate the student’s overall clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning, interpersonal skills, medical knowledge, and professional behaviors learned throughout the curriculum.

- End of Curriculum (EOC) Exam: Students will complete an objective, standardized evaluation of student's knowledge as a component of readiness for graduation developed by the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). Students must receive a passing score.

### ***GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS***

In order to meet eligibility to graduate from the Program, and earn the Master of Physician Assistant (MPA) degree, candidates must:

- Achieve a grade of C- or better for all didactic courses (first 4 semesters of the Program), and a grade of Pass (P) or better for all seminar courses, interprofessional courses, and clinical rotations or SCPE courses.
- Achieve a minimum cumulative GPA at the end of the didactic curriculum (end of semester 4) of 3.00 or better
- Complete and pass all components of the Summative Evaluation (see [\*\*Summative Evaluation\*\*](#))
- Complete and record 40 hours of community service during the course of the program
- Be recommended for graduation by the Program Director
- Have satisfied all debts to the school
- Complete all program courses and requirements

## **UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS**

### ***AT RISK STUDENTS***

Students at academic risk of not meeting the minimum course grade and semester GPA requirement during the didactic phase may be required to meet with a Course Director, faculty mentor and/or the Academic Director to discuss their academic progress.

### ***FAILING GRADES***

#### ***DIDACTIC COURSE FAILURE***

Any didactic course grade of F or NP shall result in dismissal from the program (See [\*\*Dismissal from the Program\*\*](#)).

### ***DIDACTIC EXAM FAILURES***

Examination failures will be addressed in a stepwise fashion with gradually increasing student responsibilities. The following process applies to exams taken in one semester. With the exception of being placed on Academic Probation, each semester begins the process anew.

1. First Examination Failure: Remediation.
2. Second Examination Failure: Remediation and the student is placed on an Academic Warning. If the student is already on Academic Warning prior to a second examination failure, he or she will remain on Academic Warning.
3. Third Examination Failure: Remediation.
4. Fourth Examination Failure: Remediation and Academic Probation ([see Didactic Phase Probation](#) Duration for further details).

### ***CLINICAL COURSE FAILURE***

Students receiving a non-pass (NP) for a clinical course are required to repeat the course and are placed on academic probation (see [Probation](#)). The Clinical Director will determine the timing and location of the repeated course. The goal is to complete the repeated course as soon as possible to ensure attainment of learning outcomes before progressing. Decisions on placement location may be dependent on available rotation sites. Following a course failure, failure of any of the following shall result in dismissal from the Program.

- Repeated clinical course
- EOR exam for repeated course
- Subsequent course final grade

Students who have been removed from a rotation by the preceptor for academic or professional deficiencies will receive a grade of NP for the final course grade and will be referred to the [PA SPC](#).

### ***CLINICAL COURSE EXAM FAILURES***

#### **Non-Pass End of Rotation (EOR) Exam**

Students are permitted one retake of the SCPE exam within the designated remediation period. The following outlines the requirements for students receiving a non-pass (NP) score on an End of Rotation (EOR) exam.

- Meet with a Clinical Year Faculty Member.
- Complete Remediation which includes the PSE process and remediation of

student learning outcomes (see [Remediation](#)).

NP on Re-take EOR exam:

- Receive an NP score for the course.
- Repeat the rotation (see [Clinical Course Failure](#) for details).

Students with a total of four EOR exam failures shall be dismissed from the program.

## **REMEDIATION**

The purpose of remediation is to identify and address obstacles to student success with the goal of putting the student back on the path to being successful. The remediation process is two-fold. It involves the Performance Self-Evaluation (PSE) process and individualized remediation of student learning outcomes. When a student earns a score of less than 70% on a summative assessment, excluding final exams, there will be a requirement for that student to engage the course faculty as a part of the remediation process. The remediation process begins when the student contacts the Course Director(s) after receiving the exam grade, as described in the section below for Performance Self-Evaluation.

A Student Success Coach is available to support students who meet the criteria for referral. Students may be referred to the Student Success Coaching Program as part of an academic remediation plan or when additional support is needed.

## **PERFORMANCE SELF-EVALUATION**

It is expected that students actively participate in the continuous self-assessment of their performance. Students are encouraged to engage with course directors to review their PSE at any point during a given semester if they require additional guidance or support. A PSE session may cover various aspects such as time management, study skills, test-taking skills, psychosocial factors, and exam reports (Strengths & Opportunities (S&O) report generated by ExamSoft or EOR Performance report generated by PAEA Assessment Hub). The format of the session is at the course director's discretion. However, no aspect of assessments (questions, checklists, etc.) will be shown during PSE sessions.

### **Description**

The PSE process involves the student completing and sharing their Performance Self-Evaluation Form on Exxat with the Course Director(s). The student must self-initiate this process upon receiving a score of less than 70% on a summative evaluation component in a course. Course Director(s) will review the form and offer feedback based on their assessment of the student's performance and form responses. As an outcome of the PSE process, the student may be referred to one or more of the following resources:



1. Student Affairs
2. Mandatory meetings with the Course Director, Mentor, or Academic Director
3. Student Health or Mental Health.

Course Director(s) will also discuss remediation of the material as described below.

### Timing

The PSE form must be completed and submitted in Exxat and the Course Director(s) emailed to set up a meeting for additional guidance within 5 days (120 hours) of the grade being posted. At times, extenuating circumstances may affect this timeline; therefore, adjustments to this timeline are at the discretion of the Course Director(s). However, it is the student's responsibility to ensure this is completed in a timely manner.

### Compliance

Noncompliance with mandatory meetings or remediation assignments is subject to disciplinary actions that follow the tiered approach in [\*\*Professional Deficiencies\*\*](#) and is recorded as an incident in the student file.

### Didactic Phase Final Exams

Exams labeled as "Final Exam" or "Cumulative Final" are not subject to this policy. Module exams given during Final Exam week are subject to this policy.

## **REMIEDIATION OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The PA curriculum builds on material from previous lectures, modules, and courses. Therefore, it is essential that students master material prior to progressing further in the Program to successfully complete the curriculum.

### Description

The Course Director(s) will establish a remediation plan based on areas of low performance as indicated on the student's individual exam report and after reviewing the student's PSE.

For didactic phase students, the remediation plan may include reviewing lectures, reading, meetings with the Course Director(s), Osmosis, or other resources. Remediation of computer-based, multiple-choice assessments will be accomplished through Osmosis questions that are assigned by the Course Director(s). The format for remediation for lab-based assessments will be at the discretion of the Course Director(s) and based upon the availability of lab or SCHSIL space. When feasible, the student will engage in the same or similar lab testing. However, an alternate activity that assesses the deficit in learning outcomes may be necessary. The original score on

an assessment will not be replaced by the grade achieved on the remediation. Students who unsuccessfully remediate on the first attempt will be required to meet with the Course Director(s) for further remediation.

The format of the further remediation is left to the discretion of the Course Director(s) but is directed at the achievement of student learning outcomes required for successful progress in the program. Students who fail to successfully remediate will be required to meet with the **Student Progress Committee (SPC)** at the end of the semester, which may result in dismissal from the Program.

For clinical phase students, the remediation plan includes a structured remediation assignment prior to retesting. The assignment includes a review of the exam feedback and completion of related Osmosis content and questions. Assignments must be submitted 5 days after the EOR exam results are released. Students will meet with the Course Director. Remediation of EOR exams requires that the student display competence in the material by re-testing which is accomplished through a retake of the EOR exam. The original score on an assessment will not be replaced by the grade achieved on the remediation. Students who unsuccessfully remediate the first attempt will receive a NP grade for the course and be required to meet with the Clinical Director for further remediation.

### Compliance

Noncompliance with any aspect of the remediation plan is subject to disciplinary actions that follow the tiered approach in Professional Deficiencies and is recorded as an incident in the student file.

### Didactic Phase Final Exams

Exams labeled as "Final Exam" or "Cumulative Final" are not subject to this policy.

## ***REMIEDIATED PROGRESSION TO THE CLINICAL PHASE***

The PA SPC may exercise limited discretion in this regard when they believe that extenuating circumstances affected a student's ability to achieve the required cumulative GPA at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester. Remediated progression to the clinical phase requires that the student enroll in MPAS 694 Directed Medical Studies. Consideration for a remediated progression to the clinical phase would require all the following conditions to be met:

- A cumulative GPA\* between 2.97 and 2.99 at the end of semester 4 of the Program
- Extenuating circumstances affecting the student's achievement
- A consensus of the PA SPC and PD that the student has the requisite skills and knowledge to progress despite their grades, after a period of remediation.

- The student has taken advantage of recommended student support services.
  - Student academic records will be reviewed for evidence of student seeking support from faculty mentors during all four didactic semesters.
  - Students who have documented referrals for tutoring, study and testing evaluations, or other student support services will be evaluated by the progress committee in terms of whether they took advantage of available student support services.
  - Failure to follow through on recommendations may be viewed unfavorably by the committee when determining eligibility for remediation.

The PA SPC would meet at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester to determine if the Academic Director and appropriate faculty should develop an individualized plan of remediation for a student or students.

**\*Note:** A student with a cumulative GPA of 2.96 or less will not be eligible for consideration. In addition, a student who has already been decelerated or who was on probation two or more times in the didactic semesters would not be eligible for this consideration.

#### MPAS 694 Directed Medical Studies

A remediating student will not progress to clinical rotations with their classmates. The first semester of the clinical phase will be devoted to their remediation efforts. Thus, the graduation date for the student will be affected.

The remediating student will be enrolled in MPAS 694 - Directed Medical Studies. The general syllabus for this course will be the same for all students, but an individualized schedule of directed remediation and a schedule for activities and assessments will be provided.

Within the Directed Medical Studies course, an individual remediation plan will be tailored to the needs of the student, based on didactic performance throughout the first 4 semesters of the Program.

The individual remediation plan will outline the following in detail:

- Subjects and skills to be remediated
- An instruction and study plan
- Methods of assessment for each component
- A schedule for each activity
- A schedule for each assessment
- Grade criteria for each form of assessment, and

- Results of unsatisfactory remediation (i.e., dismissal)

Students who successfully progress to the clinical phase by remediation will also enter the clinical phase on probation. See **Probation Duration** section for additional details on length of probation. Remediated progression to the Clinical Phase of the program is meant to be a rare occurrence based on the judgments of the PA SPC's best efforts to evaluate and acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. It is not offered to students who have struggled throughout their training, had two or more semesters on probation, or who have already been decelerated.

The GPA parameters outlined above trigger a review of a student's record and consideration for remediation. It is essential that the resulting cumulative GPA is 3.00 or higher in order to successfully progress to the clinical phase of the program. Students will not be automatically offered an opportunity to remediate. The outlined criteria must be met. The effect of the grade from this variable credit course will be factored into the cumulative GPA.

**\*NOTE:** This process does not change the student's ability to appeal academic decisions by the PA SPC. A student may still appeal academic decisions to the Dean of the EVMS School of Health Professions as indicated elsewhere in this Student Handbook.

### **ACADEMIC WARNING**

Academic Warning status provides for closer guidance and monitoring of academic progress and ensures student utilization of recommended resources to support their academic success.

Students may be placed on Academic Warning for the following reasons:

1. Failure of 2 didactic exams in a semester: Academic Warning shall continue until the completion of the semester
2. Semester GPA less than 3.10: Academic Warning will remain until the completion of the following semester
3. Professionalism issues: Academic Warning will remain until the student completes the Program

### ***ACADEMIC PROBATION***

Students shall be placed on Probation for the following reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Failing to achieve or maintain the required 3.00 semester GPA
- Fourth examination failure in a semester
- Deceleration
- Recommendation by the PA SPC
- Remediated progression to the clinical year
- Receiving a NP grade for an SCPE course
- HIPAA or other confidentiality violations
- Repeated or egregious violations of the Code of Student Conduct, Compact for the Teacher-Learner Relationship, Technical Standards, Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy, or other institutional policies.

**\*Note:** Probation is grievable see [Student Rights](#).

### ***DIDACTIC PHASE PROBATION DURATION***

Students placed on probation for failure to achieve the requisite semester GPA must receive a 3.00 semester GPA the following semester to be placed in good standing. Failure to receive a 3.00 semester GPA the following semester will be presented to the [PA SPC](#) for possible dismissal.

The following probation duration exceptions apply:

- Students placed on probation where behavioral, professional, or other conduct issues were also a factor shall remain on probation for the remainder of the program.
- Students placed on probation during a semester for failing four or more exams will stay on probation until the end of the semester and are not required to obtain a minimum 3.00 semester GPA at the end of the semester they are placed on probation.
- Students placed on probation for failing to achieve the required 3.00 GPA during semester 4 will be placed on probation during semester 5 of the clinical year and must receive a passing score for all courses in Semester 5.

### ***CLINICAL PHASE PROBATION DURATION***

Students placed on probation in the clinical phase remain on probation for the duration of the clinical phase.

### ***ACADEMIC PLAN***

All students placed on Probation or Warning shall have an Academic Plan. The Academic Plan will outline corrective actions the student must take while on Probation. Students placed on Probation must also meet regularly with their faculty mentor or Clinical Director to discuss their academic progress and compliance with the Academic Plan. The Academic Plan may be amended at the discretion of the Program Director to address additional issues that are discovered or not previously addressed.

Students who fail to successfully abide by the Academic Plan, or who have future academic and/or professionalism issues shall be subject to dismissal by the **PA SPC** (see **Dismissal from the Program**).

### ***DECELERATION***

In rare circumstances, the **PA SPC** may determine that a student is suitable for deceleration in lieu of dismissal.

Students facing extraordinary non-academic challenges and who take a Leave of Absence (LOA) preventing them from completing coursework by the end of the semester, may withdraw from the program and reapply at a later date. Alternatively, they may submit a written petition to the PA SPC to seek approval for deceleration.

Students approved for deceleration will reenter the Program on **Academic Probation** with the next cohort in Semester 1 (one) of the Program. The student must attend Orientation with the new cohort and complete all Program requirements.

Decelerated students will receive an **Academic Plan** that outlines all requirements. Failure to meet any terms of the **Academic Plan** may result in dismissal by the **PA SPC**. Students will only be allowed to decelerate once for any reason.

### ***REPEATING A COURSE***

For the didactic phase, repeating a course is only offered through deceleration (See **Deceleration**). For the clinical phase, the schedule is more flexible, and students may have the opportunity to repeat a course, but this will result in a delay of graduation.

### *WITHDRAWAL*

The PA Program follows the same Withdrawal policy as outlined in the [School of Health Professions Policies and Procedures](#).

### *DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM*

In cases where a student is at risk for dismissal, the [PA SPC](#) will meet to discuss and deliberate the student's situation. A recommendation will be made to the Program Director. Students shall be dismissed for the following reasons, including, but not limited to:

- A grade of F or NP in any course in the didactic phase of the Program.
- A semester GPA less than 3.00 while already on probation.
- A cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 at the end of the 4th semester.
- An NP grade on any two EORs, or clinical phase course while already on probation.
- An NP grade on three EOR exams.
- An NP grade on a second or subsequent repeat of an SCPE course in the clinical phase of the Program.

## PA STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE

### *POLICY*

Physician Assistant Student Progress Committee Structure and Function

### *PURPOSE*

This policy establishes the composition of the Physician Assistant (PA) Student Progress Committee (SPC), its operations, and the standards for decision-making.

### *RESPONSIBILITY AND REVIEW CYCLE*

The PA Program faculty will review this policy annually.

### *DESCRIPTION*

#### *RESPONSIBILITIES AND MAKE-UP OF THE PA STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE*

The PA SPC has an overall responsibility for the assessment of student performance, professional development and behavior, and overall progress to ensure students are meeting the academic and technical standards of the program. The SPC also has responsibility to review and recommend appropriate remediation or other action when a student's performance, behavior, or progress is not satisfactory.

The SPC is a PA Program Standing Committee that includes voting and non-voting members as described below:

Voting Members:

- 4 PA Program faculty members.
  - Note: A faculty member referring a student will not be a voting member and will be replaced with an alternate member.
- PA Program Medical Director

Non-voting Members:

- Student Affairs Representative
- Student Advocate

#### *PROCEDURES OF THE PA SPC*

Students may be required to appear in front of the PA SPC and will be notified, in advance, when their appearance is required. If a student declines to appear or does not respond to



the notice, the PA SPC will meet as scheduled and proceed with the decision-making in the absence of the student.

Appearance is typically required for reasons including, but not limited to the following:

1. Failure of a didactic course.
2. Four End of Rotation Exam (EOR) failures.
3. Failure of an EOR exam on a repeated course.
4. Failure of a repeated SCPE course.
5. Failure of a Preceptor Evaluation of Student to include removal from a rotation by a preceptor for any reason.
6. Recurrent or single egregious unprofessional behavior, including behaviors that may violate the Student Code of Conduct, or the Student Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy regardless of whether adjudicated by the SOM and SHP Student Affairs.
7. Recurrent or single egregious violations of Program Technical, Professional, and Academic Standards.
8. A student who will be taking a Leave of Absence (LOA) for reasons related to extraordinary non-academic challenges and inability to meet academic standards, technical standards, or professional standards.
9. The Student SOM and SHP Student Affairs rendered a finding of responsibility for a violation of Technical Standards Monarch Citizenship through the Honor Code, Honor Pledge, and Monarch Creed, or Expectations for Health Professions Student Behavior Policy.
10. Failure to comply with an Academic Plan previously established by the PA SPC or the PA program.

In the event that a PA student will come before the PA SPC, the Student Advocate or designee will meet with the student in advance to prepare them for the meeting and answer any questions. In the preparation meeting, the student will be provided with written documentation that includes the logistics of the meeting, the composition of the committee, student rights at the meeting, procedures for participating in the meeting, what to prepare for the meeting, and what to expect after the meeting, including the right to due process for dismissal.

Either the Associate Program Director, Academic Director, or the Clinical Director will chair the meeting depending upon the student's current phase in the program and the reason

for the appearance. A majority of the membership of the SPC will constitute a quorum. The Chair must be included in this quorum. A simple majority vote of the quorum is required. The decision of the PA SPC will be communicated to the student by the chair of the SPC.

At the meeting, committee members will be presented with reports of the student's performance (academic or professional) and progress toward graduation for their consideration. The PA SPC will have access to the student's entire academic record. Additional information regarding a student beyond that contained in the academic record (e.g., attitudinal, personal, or extenuating factors) may be obtained from other sources as the PA SPC may deem appropriate, and the PA SPC may interview the student. The student will not be allowed to have any electronic devices during the meeting (cell phone, smart watch, recording devices, etc., ...). During the meeting, the student may elect to present any information or documentation deemed relevant. Attorneys retained by the student cannot attend the PA SPC meeting or meetings with program faculty or staff in preparation for a PA SPC meeting.

After the presentation of all relevant information, the PA SPC will convene in a closed session to deliberate and discuss the student's future standing in the program. Throughout such consideration the PA SPC shall use, but shall not be obligated to adhere solely, to the following guiding principles:

- A student who has not met the academic guidelines set forth in the PA Student Handbook will be subject to dismissal.
- A student who is permitted to decelerate due to an academic failure will be subject to dismissal if the student subsequently does not meet the academic guidelines set forth in the PA Student Handbook. This guiding principle includes students who withdrew or took an LOA for an extended period when they were experiencing academic failure(s) at the time of the withdrawal/leave.
- A student who demonstrates recurrent or singly egregious unprofessional behavior will be subject to dismissal.
- Action by the PA SPC resulting from being found responsible for a violation of the SOM and SHP Student Affairs or Student Code of Conduct will be determined on a case-by-case basis based on overall academic and professional performance.

At the conclusion of its deliberations, the PA SPC will vote to decide whether the student will be dismissed.

The student will be notified, in writing, of the decision. This written notification will include a statement of the decision, any Academic Plan or other conditions (remediation, skills training, coaching, etc.), the consequences of failure to abide by the conditions, and the

consequences of any subsequent academic, technical, or professional deficiencies. A copy of the notice will also be provided to relevant institutional officials (e.g., Registrar, Director of Financial Aid, Student Affairs, etc.).

A recommendation of dismissal will be automatically reviewed by the PA program Director and a decision will be rendered within 5 business days. If the dismissal is upheld, the student may appeal to Dean of the School of Health Professions within the timeframe specified in the SHP Policies and Procedures. If no appeal is filed, the dismissal decision of the PA SPC shall stand and be final effective as of the date of the written notification of dismissal to the student.

## STUDENT RIGHTS

### LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The program is committed to providing a professional, safe, and positive environment for learning and training. The learning environment at Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU allows students to pursue their education in a humane and respectful atmosphere with a sense of belonging. Students who have a concern about a fellow student, faculty, or preceptor may address their concerns directly with the individual if they feel comfortable doing so. If the concern is not resolved, the student may bring that concern following a tiered approach first to the attention of the Course Director. If resolution is not attained, the concern may escalate next to the Academic or Clinical Director and finally to the Program Director, if needed.

Additionally, unprofessional behaviors and student mistreatment by fellow students, faculty, preceptors, and staff are damaging to the fundamental principles of Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU and will not be tolerated.

Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU defines mistreatment as behavior that shows disrespect for learners and interferes with their respective learning process. Detailed information regarding student mistreatment is provided in the [Institutional Student Handbook](#). The policy includes details on mistreatment as well as how to report concerns as outlined in the [Students' Rights to a Professional Learning Environment Policy](#).

Students are encouraged to report incidents of mistreatment in accordance with the Student Complaint Process through the following means:

- Program course or rotation evaluation forms
- Personal contact with a member of Student Affairs
- [Concerns in the Learning Environment Reporting Form](#); this form is sent automatically to Student Affairs. See QR code on your student ID badge or through the link here.
- SOM and SHP Ethics and Compliance Hotline 1.800.461.9330

### DISABILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

Brock Virginia Health Sciences at ODU provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with a documented disability. The student must self-identify with the Office of Student Disability Services as having a disability to begin the accommodation process. It is in the best interest of the student to begin the accommodation process as soon as they

are aware that they may need them, as accommodations are not retroactive. All students must be able to fulfill the academic and technical standards of their academic Program with or without reasonable accommodations; however, accommodations are made available to aid in fulfilling those standards, not to waive them. If a student has, have, or believe that they have, a disability for which they wish to request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, you must contact the Disability Officer (Vhs-studentaffairs@odu.edu). For more information about the disability accommodations process, please visit: [Disability Guide for Students](#) or the [Student Disability Services](#) website.

### *REQUESTING AN ACCOMMODATION*

If a student needs course or evaluation accommodations due to a documented disability, please consult the Disability Officer and complete the application found in the link below. The application must be accompanied by the requested documentation. The Disability Officer will define the appropriate accommodations and facilitate confidential instructions to course and/or Program directors regarding the expectations. More information can be found in the [Disability Guide for Students](#)

Revealing a disability is voluntary; however, such disclosure to the Disability Officer and disability committee is necessary before any accommodations are made in the learning environment or in the program's procedures. Information regarding disabilities is handled in a confidential manner. The Disability Officer will not reveal a specific disability to the Program. They merely identify the necessary accommodation(s).

### *ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EXAMINATIONS*

Students with approved accommodation for exams from the Disability Officer will follow the guidelines outlined in the accommodation as guided by the [Institutional Student Handbook](#). Students who receive approved accommodations from the Disability Officer must provide the faculty letter to the Program Director via email at least 3 days prior to the next exam for accommodation procedures to be implemented. Exams are proctored at the Testing Center with the approved accommodations fulfilled as determined in the letter. Students are expected to remain flexible and plan accordingly for adjustments in exam start and end times. Exams may begin as early as 6am or end in the evening depending on Testing Center capacity and scheduling.

## **GRIEVANCE**

Students have the right to due process involving grievances for probation or any such determination of action by the [PA SPC](#).

The student should discuss the grievance with the Program Director. If the grievance is not resolved, a student may file a written appeal to the Dean of the School of Health Professions within ten (10) business days of the student's notification of the Program Director's decision. Additional details of this policy can be found in the [EVMS School of Health Professions Policies and Procedures](#).

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE INFORMATION

### CORE COMPETENCIES FOR NEW PA GRADUATES

Source : PAEA

#### Competencies for New Physician Assistant Graduates

##### *PATIENT-CENTERED PRACTICE KNOWLEDGE*

Competent graduates will continually refine and revise their knowledge base to ensure they remain abreast of current scientific evidence and best practices in patient care. Demonstrating the ability to continually assess one's level of medical knowledge and constantly strive to augment it is essential for lifelong learning and delivering quality, patient-centered care. Graduates must demonstrate the ability to listen to and understand patients' beliefs and attitudes toward health and health care. Competent graduates understand that their relationship with patients can be affected by differences in power, privilege, and the inequities embedded therein, and they work to ensure that patients are viewed as partners in health. Competent practitioners must be able to develop the professional relationships with their patients that will ensure patient-focused decision-making. The competent graduate will be able to access and integrate pertinent information from both the best scientific evidence and their clinical expertise and apply it to the care of the patient in a way that respects the individual needs, desires, care preferences, and values of the patient. In this way, PAs use an evidence-based approach to shared medical decision-making. Developing not only critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills but also critical consciousness is essential for graduates.

##### *SOCIETY AND POPULATION HEALTH*

Competent graduates will understand how the communities in which they live and work affect individual patients. They will also be able to demonstrate an understanding of how their patients contribute to the health of the community and society. By understanding the community, environmental, genetic, and other influences on the health of a community, graduates will be able to accept the responsibility for the betterment of the patient populations they serve. Competent graduates must be aware of their own biases and work intentionally to recognize that their ego and ethnocentric beliefs and norms can

influence patient care. They will understand how civic responsibility, patient advocacy, service to the community, diversity of the workforce, and improving the health of underserved populations factor into patient care.

### ***HEALTH LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION***

Competent PA graduates will also use a variety of techniques to determine patients' capacities for understanding their health and the systems that serve them. For example, new graduates must be able to incorporate an understanding of genetics and pathophysiology as well as the importance of environmental and societal influences on health. PA graduates must be emotionally intelligent and able to guide how best to communicate with patients, then adjust the content and style of their verbal communication for maximum clarity. Developing strategies to communicate effectively with patients will become increasingly important as demographics shift and reliance on technology continues to increase. Competent PA graduates will need to be able to establish rapport and communicate in meaningful ways with patients, regardless of the modality. In addition, competent PA graduates will need to be able to recognize and overcome linguistic and cultural barriers to effective communication, as well as understand different perspectives and expectations about health and how health care can impact health disparity.

### ***INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE AND LEADERSHIP***

Competent PA graduates will have a firm grasp of the roles of PAs and other team members and will demonstrate the ability to work effectively in teams, but not for this end unto itself. Rather, effective teamwork begins by ensuring that the goals of the patient remain the focus of the healthcare team. As patient advocates, PAs will have to assume a leadership role on a healthcare team, and they will also need to understand how to contribute to quality patient care by working with other healthcare professionals. PAs who possess knowledge and skills in this domain will have the self- and team awareness to recognize limitations and rely on other members of the team to provide the highest level of patient care. Leadership in this context is demonstrated regardless of title or status and is determined by the needs of the patient above all else. Knowing when to lead and when to follow is essential and demonstrates one's ability to value the needs of the patient over self. The ability to determine how to demonstrate leadership requires PAs to be competent in self-awareness, communication, and interpersonal skills.

### ***PROFESSIONAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH CARE***

Competent PA graduates will be able to articulate and adhere to standards of care and will possess knowledge of the laws and regulations that govern the delivery of health care

in the United States. They will be able to demonstrate professional maturity by attending to the needs of the patient over self-interest. Competency in this domain requires graduates to use self-assessment and metacognitive skills, as well as exercise humility and compassion to provide patient-centered care regardless of the situation. This requires a level of maturity and professional identity that is demonstrated consistently, even in high-stress, ambiguous, and uncomfortable situations.

### *HEALTH CARE FINANCE AND SYSTEMS*

Competent graduates will understand how the micro and macro systems of health care influence patient outcomes, and they will be able to increase their capacity to improve access to care and quality of care. This requires graduates to not only identify the barriers but to see the avenues to quality care. Competency in this domain requires an understanding of the economic factors that affect access to care, including how to deliver high quality care in a value-based system. Graduates must also demonstrate an understanding of their role and productivity limits and potential and how it influences the finances of their organizations.

### *CULTURAL HUMILITY*

This requires an awareness of one's personal and professional beliefs, biases, attitudes, and actions that affect patient care and a commitment to ongoing professional development. Cultural humility requires listening to those from different backgrounds while also being aware of one's own thoughts and feelings about the culture of others. Cultural humility goes hand-in-hand with ongoing professional development because developing it is a lifelong project.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT*

Competent graduates must demonstrate an awareness of their personal and professional limitations and develop plans and interventions for addressing gaps. This requires self-reflection, metacognition, continuous quality improvement, and recognition of the PA's potential impact for improving the health of individual patients, populations, and society. Competent graduates develop systems and strategies for determining their level of understanding and confidence in addressing patients' health needs. This ongoing, continual process requires discipline and self-control. Graduates must possess the ability to self-evaluate and make a commitment to refining their knowledge throughout their career as practitioners.

## **PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT OATH**

**Source: PAEA | PAEA Website**



I pledge to perform the following duties with honesty, integrity, and dedication, remembering always that my primary responsibility is to the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings:

I recognize and promote the value of diversity, and I will treat equally all persons who seek my care.

I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and the principle of informed consent.

I will hold in confidence the information shared with me in the course of practicing medicine, except where I am authorized to impart such knowledge.

I will be diligent in understanding both my personal capabilities and my limitations, striving always to improve my practice of medicine.

I will actively seek to expand my intellectual knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medical art and science.

I will work with other members of the health care team to assure compassionate and effective care of patients.

I will uphold and enhance community values and use the knowledge and experience acquired as a PA to contribute to an improved community.

I will respect my professional relationship with the physician and act always with the guidance and supervision provided by that physician, except where to do so would cause harm.

I recognize my duty to perpetuate knowledge within the profession.

These duties are pledged with sincerity and on my honor.

## CODE OF ETHICS OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSION

Source: AAPA | [AAPA Ethical Conduct](#)

## PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

### *AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATES (AAPA)*

The American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) is the only national organization that represents Physician Assistants (PAs) in all specialties and all employment settings. Its membership also includes Physician Assistant students and supporters of the profession. (AAPA Website).

### ***STUDENT ACADEMY OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATES (SAAAPA)***

Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Associates (SAAAPA) is the national organization for students enrolled in Physician Assistant Programs. The SAAAPA has an elected board and participates in many capacities including subcommittees within the AAPA. The SAAAPA can provide information on many topics including financial aid, survival tips, clinical pearls, hot topics, etc. (SAAAPA website | [www.aapa.org/about/aapa-governance-leadership/student-academy/](http://www.aapa.org/about/aapa-governance-leadership/student-academy/)).

### ***VIRGINIA ACADEMY OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS (VAPA)***

Physician Assistants in the Commonwealth of Virginia are represented by the Virginia Academy of Physician Assistants (VAPA). VAPA represents the concerns of Virginia PAs locally, statewide and nationally (VAPA Website).

## APPENDIX A CURRICULUM & SEQUENCE

The tables below outline the curriculum for each cohort covered by this handbook.

### CLASS OF 2028

#### *PHASE I: DIDACTIC CURRICULUM (MPA 2028)*

#### Semester One

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 619	Physiology and Pathophysiology	4
MPAS 615	Clinical Anatomy for Health Professions	5
MPAS 601	Legal and Ethical Issues in Medicine	2
MPAS 604	Introduction to the PA Profession	3
MPAS 602	Business of Medicine	1
MPAS 603	Introduction to Medical Diagnostics & Interventions	0.5
MPAS 620	Foundations of Interprofessional Practice	<b>Awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> semester</b>
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>15.5</b>

#### Semester Two

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 628	Clinical Pharmacology I	3
MPAS 623	Medical Diagnostics I	3
MPAS 624	Patient Counseling and Education	2
MPAS 639	Introduction to Clinical Medicine I	5
MPAS 625	Clinical Assessment and Reasoning I	3
MPAS 620	Foundations of Interprofessional Practice	0.5
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>16.5</b>

Phase I: Didactic Curriculum continued (MPA 2028)

## Semester Three

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 648	Clinical Pharmacology II	3
MPAS 643	Medical Diagnostics II	3
MPAS 644	Intro to Epidemiology and Evidence Based Medicine	2
MPAS 649	Introduction to Clinical Medicine II	5
MPAS 645	Clinical Assessment and Reasoning II	4
MPAS 640	Practicum in Interprofessional Practice	<b>Awarded 4<sup>th</sup> semester</b>
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>17</b>

## Semester Four

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 665	Clinical Assessment and Reasoning III	5
MPAS 663	Medical Diagnostics III	2
MPAS 688	Clinical Pharmacology III	2
MPAS 689	Introduction to Clinical Medicine III	5
MPAS 664	Psychosocial Elements of Wellness	2
MPAS 640	Practicum in Interprofessional Practice	0.5
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>16.5</b>
<b>Total Didactic Program Credits</b>		<b>65.5</b>

**PHASE II: CLINICAL CURRICULUM (MPA 2028)****Semester Five**

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 701	Introduction to Clinical Practice	1
MPAS 710	Supervised Practice Experience in Family Medicine (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 720	Supervised Practice Experience in Pediatric Medicine (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 730	Supervised Practice Experience in General Internal Medicine (5 weeks)	3

**Semester Six**

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 740	Supervised Practice Experience in Emergency Medicine (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 750	Supervised Practice Experience in General Surgery (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 760	Supervised Practice Experience in Women's Health (5 weeks)	3

**Semester Seven**

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 770	Supervised Practice Experience in Psychiatry and Behavioral Health (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 780	Supervised Practice Experience in Elective I (5 weeks) *	3
MPAS 785	Supervised Practice Experience in Elective II (5 weeks) *	3
MPAS 794	Senior Seminar	5
MPAS 702	Interprofessional Practice (semester 5, 6, & 7)	1
<b>Total Clinical Program Credits</b>		<b>34</b>

**TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS 99.5**

\*The sequencing of courses in the clinical phase varies from student to student.

## CLASS OF 2027

### PHASE I: DIDACTIC CURRICULUM (MPA 2027)

#### Semester One

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 619	Physiology and Pathophysiology	4
MPAS 615	Clinical Anatomy for Health Professions	5
MPAS 601	Legal and Ethical Issues in Medicine	2
MPAS 604	Introduction to the PA Profession	3
MPAS 602	Business of Medicine	1
MPAS 603	Introduction to Medical Diagnostics & Interventions	0.5
MPAS 620	Foundations of Interprofessional Practice	<b>Awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> semester</b>
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>15.5</b>

#### Semester Two

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 628	Clinical Pharmacology I	3
MPAS 623	Medical Diagnostics I	3
MPAS 624	Patient Counseling and Education	2
MPAS 639	Introduction to Clinical Medicine I	5
MPAS 625	Clinical Assessment and Reasoning I	3
MPAS 620	Foundations of Interprofessional Practice	0.5
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>16.5</b>

Phase I: Didactic Curriculum continued (MPA 2027)

## Semester Three

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 648	Clinical Pharmacology II	3
MPAS 643	Medical Diagnostics II	3
MPAS 644	Intro to Epidemiology and Evidence Based Medicine	2
MPAS 649	Introduction to Clinical Medicine II	5
MPAS 645	Clinical Assessment and Reasoning II	4
MPAS 640	Practicum in Interprofessional Practice	<b>Awarded 4<sup>th</sup> semester</b>
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>17</b>

## Semester Four

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 665	Clinical Assessment and Reasoning III	5
MPAS 663	Medical Diagnostics III	2
MPAS 688	Clinical Pharmacology III	2
MPAS 689	Introduction to Clinical Medicine III	5
MPAS 664	Psychosocial Elements of Wellness	2
MPAS 640	Practicum in Interprofessional Practice	0.5
<b>Total Semester Credits</b>		<b>16.5</b>
<b>Total Didactic Program Credits</b>		<b>65.5</b>

**PHASE II: CLINICAL CURRICULUM (MPA 2027)****Semester Five**

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 701	Introduction to Clinical Practice	1
MPAS 710	Supervised Practice Experience in Family Medicine (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 720	Supervised Practice Experience in Pediatric Medicine (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 730	Supervised Practice Experience in General Internal Medicine (5 weeks)	3

**Semester Six**

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 740	Supervised Practice Experience in Emergency Medicine (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 750	Supervised Practice Experience in General Surgery (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 760	Supervised Practice Experience in Women's Health (5 weeks)	3

**Semester Seven**

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME	CREDITS
MPAS 770	Supervised Practice Experience in Psychiatry and Behavioral Health (5 weeks)	3
MPAS 780	Supervised Practice Experience in Elective I (5 weeks) *	3
MPAS 785	Supervised Practice Experience in Elective II (5 weeks) *	3
MPAS 794	Senior Seminar	5
MPAS 702	Interprofessional Practice (semester 5, 6, & 7)	1
<b>Total Clinical Program Credits</b>		<b>34</b>

**TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS 99.5**

\*The sequencing of courses in the clinical phase varies from student to student.



## **APPENDIX B EXTERNAL LINKS**

**Computer Standards for Students**

**Disability Guide for Students**

**Office of Student Disability Services**

**VHS Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policy**

**Student Policies and Handbooks**

- **Institutional Student Handbook**
  - **Student Exposure Policy**
  - **Student Rights to a Professional Learning Environment Policy**
- EVMS School of Health Professions Handbook

**ODU Code of Student Conduct**

**Occupational Health**

**SOM and SHP Expectations for Student Conduct Policy**

**Standards for the Safe Use of Artificial Intelligence**

**Student Health (Student Wellness Program)**

**PAEA: Core Competencies for New PA Graduates**

**AAPA: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession**

**Students' Rights to a Professional Learning Environment**

**Concerns in the Learning Environment Reporting Form**

## STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that the contents of the PA Program Student Handbook are for my information as a student in the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University Physician Assistant Program. I acknowledge receipt of this handbook and accept my responsibility to follow the policies and regulations outlined in this handbook.

I also acknowledge and understand my responsibility to access and follow the policies found in the Institutional Handbook and the EVMS School of Health Professions Student Handbook.

*\*This acknowledgment must be electronically signed in Exxat and is retained in the Program's student administrative file.*