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# Student Manual

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**MCPHS**

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE *of* PHARMACY *and* HEALTH SCIENCES

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## Physician Assistant Program

MCPHS School of Health Sciences

**Academic Year 2010 – 2011**

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## Foreword

Welcome to the Physician Assistant Program at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS). The information contained within this manual has been compiled to assist students while in the program and the College. The manual includes policies and procedures we follow including our responsibilities to the students and the students' responsibilities to the program and students' future profession. Some topics in this manual may overlap with subjects covered in the current MCPHS College Catalog and the MCPHS Student Handbook. However, this manual contains useful information that students will be asked to refer to during the Physician Assistant Program.

Information contained within this manual may change but only in accordance with the academic and administrative policies of the institution. Any changes apply to all current and prospective students. Students are responsible for knowing and understanding the content of this manual.

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Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences  
School of Physician Assistant Studies  
Richard E. Griffin Academic Center  
179 Longwood Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts 02115  
617-732-2918 Tel  
617-732-1027 Fax  
<http://www.mcphs.edu>

Jennifer Hixon, DHSc, PA-C <i>Griffin 403</i>	Dean/Program Director <a href="mailto:Jennifer.hixon@mcphs.edu">Jennifer.hixon@mcphs.edu</a>	617-735-1576
Carlina Costa, MCAS <i>Griffin 401</i>	Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:Carlina.costa@mcphs.edu">Carlina.costa@mcphs.edu</a>	617-732-2918
Stephen Galante, MS, PA-C <i>Griffin 402</i>	Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:Stephen.galante@mcphs.edu">Stephen.galante@mcphs.edu</a>	617-732-2941
Evelyn Graeff, MEd <i>Griffin 409</i>	Clinical Coordinator <a href="mailto:Evelyn.graeff@mcphs.edu">Evelyn.graeff@mcphs.edu</a>	617-732-2916
Maha Lund, MA, MPAS, PA-C <i>Griffin 406</i>	Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:Maha.lund@mcphs.edu">Maha.lund@mcphs.edu</a>	617-879-5904
Ana Maldonado, MPH, PA-C <i>Griffin 404</i>	Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:Ana.maldonado@mcphs.edu">Ana.maldonado@mcphs.edu</a>	617-732-2268
Cynthia McDermott, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:Cynthia.mcdermott@mcphs.edu">Cynthia.mcdermott@mcphs.edu</a>	617-432-3676
Thomas Patnaude, MD	Medical Director <a href="mailto:tomkel3882@aol.com">tomkel3882@aol.com</a>	508-756-1808
Anthony Pellegrino, MPAS, MBA, PA-C <i>Griffin 408</i>	Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:Anthony.pellegrino@mcphs.edu">Anthony.pellegrino@mcphs.edu</a>	617-274-3346
Sean Robinson, MS, PA-C <i>Griffin 405</i>	Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:Sean.robinson@mcphs.edu">Sean.robinson@mcphs.edu</a>	617-274-3383
Marianne Vail, MS, PA-C <i>Griffin 407</i>	Associate Professor <a href="mailto:Marianne.vail@mcphs.edu">Marianne.vail@mcphs.edu</a>	617-732-2203

## Physician Assistant Program

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### Introduction

The School of Physician Assistant Studies at MCPHS offers a Master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) for students who seek careers aimed at improving the health and well-being of people across the life span. The MPAS major offers students from a variety of educational and experiential backgrounds a challenging course of study designed to prepare them for future roles in practice, education, research, policy, and advocacy as a Physician Assistant (PA).

### Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The Mission of the MCPHS PA Program is to provide each student with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to provide quality medical care, function as an effective member of a health care team, and serve as an advocate for persons seeking health care.

The specific goals of the faculty teaching in the MPAS program are to:

- Develop within each student a strong foundation in the basic and clinical sciences so that they deliver high quality illness prevention and disease management services in a wide variety of practice settings.
- Foster within each student the humanistic and interpersonal qualities essential to the understanding of lifestyle and societal forces as major determinants of morbidity and mortality.
- Facilitate active learning and independent judgment about disease prognosis, diagnostic testing, and disease management by developing skills of critical assessment.

Faculty members teaching within the Program are committed to producing physician assistants who demonstrates competence, sound clinical judgment, intellectual honesty, ability to relate to people, and the capacity to react to emergency situations in a calm and reasoned manner.

## General Program Objectives

The MCPHS Physician Assistant Program is designed to provide students with the skills and activities that enhance their professional and personal growth as physician assistants through course objectives which cover three areas of learning: Cognitive Skills (knowledge base), Psychomotor Skills (manipulative and motor skills), and Affective Skills (attitudes and values). Graduates will also be able to demonstrate:

- Knowledge of the structures of the human body and how they function at the molecular and physiological level.
- Understanding of the common pathophysiological disturbances that occur in each of the organ systems and those disease processes in human beings resulting from immunological disorders or from infectious organisms.
- Knowledge of the principles of drug absorption, distribution, action, toxicity, and elimination.
- Practical and working knowledge of commonly prescribed drugs.
- Knowledge and application of clinical laboratory skills in the diagnosis and management of disease states.
- Knowledge of scientific, clinical, and public health foundations underlying illness prevention and disease management.
- Understanding of historical, social, family, and community context of illness prevention and disease management.
- Attitude and skills that show a commitment to personal growth and sensitivity to cultural and individual differences.
- Critical analysis and quantitative skills necessary to assess illness prevention and disease management problems.
- Understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of approaches to illness prevention and disease management problems in at-risk population groups.
- Understanding of the health care and social service systems, and the role of the PA/Physician Team within those systems.
- Interpersonal and communication skills requisite to the effective planning and implementation of illness prevention and disease management practices and policies.
- Analytical and behavioral counseling skills required to select, implement, and maintain effective solutions for illness prevention and disease management problems in at-risk populations.
- Understanding of the role of information technology in the provision, tracking, and evaluation of illness prevention and disease management services.
- Importance of legal and ethical concepts related to medical care.
- Understanding of the PA profession, its origin, and the development of all PA organizations that help foster the PA profession.

- Application of scientific method to solution of medical problems and the principles to critically interpret medical literature.
- Knowledge and skills necessary for patient evaluation, monitoring, diagnostic/therapeutics, counseling, and appropriate referral.

## **The Physician Assistant**

### *Professional Responsibilities*

Physician Assistants (PAs) are skilled members of the health care team qualified by academic and clinical experience to provide a broad range of health care services in practice with a licensed physician. The health care services PAs provide include: performing appropriate medical interviews and physical examinations, identifying health care problems in need of evaluation and management, screening results of laboratory diagnostic studies, implementing treatment plans, counseling patients regarding illness and health-risk behaviors, monitoring responses to a program of therapy, and facilitating access to appropriate health care resources. These services may be provided to individuals of any age in those various settings considered part of the physician's practice.

### *Professional Credentials*

Over the past 40 years, several milestones within the profession have become markers by which the appropriately trained PA is identified. These markers include graduation from an academic program accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, certification through examination by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants and registration or licensure by State Boards of Medical Examiners. Continued professional competence is evidenced by the completion of 100 hours of continuing medical education every two years and successful passage of a recertification examination every six years.

## Technical Standards for Admission, Progression, and Graduation

Candidates for and students enrolled in health services professional programs must have abilities and skills in the areas of observation, communication, motor, intellectual, and behavioral/social attributes. Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis. Students wishing to request accommodations for disabilities should contact the director of Academic Support Services (see “Students with Disabilities” in “Student Services” section of the MCPHS College Catalog).

### *Observation:*

Candidates and students must have sufficient capacity to observe in the lecture hall, laboratory, and diagnostic and treatment areas of outpatient and inpatient settings. Sensory skills to perform the procedures of the health care profession in which students are enrolled are required. In any case, where a candidate or student’s ability to observe or acquire information through sensory modalities is compromised, the candidate or student must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to acquire and demonstrate the essential information conveyed in this fashion.

### *Communication:*

Candidates and students must be able to communicate effectively in both academic and healthcare settings. Candidates and students must show evidence of effective written and oral communication skills. Candidates and students must be able to communicate with patients in order to elicit and impart information.

### *Motor:*

The ability to participate in the basic diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers and procedures is required. Candidates and students must have sufficient motor function to execute movements reasonably required to properly care for all patients. Candidates and students must be able to perform motor functions with or without assistive devices.

### *Intellectual:*

Candidates and students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize. Problem solving, one of the critical skills demanded of health care professionals, requires all of these intellectual abilities. Candidates and students must be able to read and understand medical literature. In order to complete the specific Health Science Program, students must be able to demonstrate mastery of these skills and the abilities to use them together in a timely fashion in health care problem-solving and patient care.

*Behavioral and Social Attributes:*

Candidates and students must possess the emotional health and stability required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities. The development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and other members of the health care team are essential. The ability to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical practice, flexibility, compassion, integrity, motivation, interpersonal skills, and concern for others are all required (MCPHS College Catalog).

# The MPAS Curriculum

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## Curriculum Philosophy

The curriculum is designed to address transformations in the science and art of medicine. Advances in molecular biology, genetics, immunology, pharmacology, and the information sciences coupled with more sensitive diagnostic technologies continue to transform both the methods and techniques of clinical practice. Changes in the economics of medical care and ethical policies surrounding the provision of care are likewise altering the manner in which health care is now and will be delivered. Medical education requires that the accumulation of scientific knowledge be accompanied by the simultaneous acquisition and competency of skills and professional attitudes and behavior.

It is in the care of the patient that physician assistants learn the application of scientific knowledge and skills. The faculty has immediate responsibilities to students and patients and ultimately a responsibility to society to graduate the best possible physician assistants. As a member of the program, students will be expected to contribute their talents, abilities, and energy to foster a positive learning and working environment for students, classmates, and faculty. This will be accomplished through a creative combination of didactic and clinical professional requirements.

The objectives of the curriculum are:

- Attitudes and skills of critical thinking and self-directed learning are developed via courses that use lectures, labs, case-based, problem-based, or evidence-based methods of instruction.
- Students are provided a framework from which to view people as members of an interactive society so that students can better appreciate the value of multidimensional assessment, care plan development, and case management skills.
- The communication skills of students are developed through interview, physical examination, health education, counseling skills and presentations.
- Students begin their professional training with an introduction to the health care system as well as provider roles and responsibilities before they are asked to interface with other professionals, interdisciplinary teams, and patient record systems.

- Students are provided an understanding of personality and physical development, and abnormal behavior prior to studying normative responses to stress, psychosomatic manifestations of illness, and at-risk behavior patterns related to health status.

Knowledge in the biomedical, clinical, and behavioral sciences is considered essential for the education of physician assistants. These are taught in sufficient depth and breadth to ensure that there is a strong foundation of knowledge, skills, and abilities in the study of diseases, preventative medicine, and socioeconomic aspects of health care.

The objectives of the clinical phase of medical education are described in a MCPHS PA Program Clinical Handbook, insuring that there is achievement of comprehensive cognitive and skills knowledge in each of clerkship. Faculty ensure that each student is provided with an opportunity to observe and to participate in the care of patients with a broad spectrum of disease in each of the major disciplines of medicine. Graduation from the MCPHS PA Program prepares the individual to sit for the National Board Exam.

## MPAS Program Curriculum

### Didactic Phase – Year I

<i>Fall Semester – Year I</i>		Credits
PAS 514	Ethics and Professional Issues in PA Practice	3
PAS 515	Genetics	3
PAS 516	Primary Care Psychiatry	3
PAS 517	Human Physiology and Pathophysiology I	3
PAS 518	Clinical Pharmacology I	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>15</b>

All library modules and Medical Terminology exams must be completed during the fall semester of year one.

<i>Spring Semester – Year I</i>		Credits
PAS 520	Clinical Pharmacology II	3
PAS 524	Gross Anatomy and Lab	5
PAS 527	Human Physiology and Pathophysiology II	3
PAS 529	Research Methods for Physician Assistants	3
PAS 535	Electrocardiography	1
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>15</b>

### Didactic Phase – Year II

<i>Fall Semester – Year II</i>		Credits
PAS 531	Primary Care Medicine I	4
PAS 532	Manifestations and Management of Disease I	6
PAS 536	Patient Assessment I	2
PAS 537	Clinical Therapeutics I	2
PAS 538	History and Physical Examination I	2
PAS 538 L	History and Physical Examination I – Lab	2
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>18</b>

<i>Spring Semester – Year II</i>		Credits
PAS 540	History and Physical Examination II	2
PAS 540 L	History and Physical Examination II – Lab	2
PAS 541	Primary Care Medicine II	4
PAS 542	Manifestation and Management of Disease II	6
PAS 546	Patient Assessment II	2
PAS 547	Clinical Therapeutics II	2
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>18</b>

### Clinical Phase – Year III

For orientation purposes, below is an example of how the students' final clinical year curriculum may be set up.

<i>Summer Session I and II – Year III</i>		Credits
PAS 600	Internal Medicine Clerkship	5
PAS 601	Pediatrics Clerkship	5
PAS 602	Psychiatry Clerkship	5
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>15</b>

<i>Fall Semester – Year III</i>		Credits
PAS 603	Surgery Clerkship	5
PAS 604	Emergency Medicine Clerkship	5
PAS 605	Women’s Health Clerkship	5
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>15</b>
 <i>Spring Semester – Year III</i>		Credits
PAS 606	Ambulatory Care Clerkship	5
PAS 607	Geriatrics/Rehabilitation Clerkship	5
PAS 608	Elective	5
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Order of clerkship placement varies among students.</b>		
<b>Total credits for the PA Program</b>		<b>106</b>

**The Program reserves the right to change curriculum offerings and sequence.**

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the didactic phase, students will receive orientation sessions to the clinical year. Students should be aware that a number of clinical sites may be scheduled at some distance from the campus. This is necessary to provide a range of diverse learning experiences and ensure availability and quality of clinical clerkship sites. Students are responsible for all travel expenses to and from clinical sites and any additional housing costs if necessary.

### **Basic Life Support (BLS)**

All students in the PA Program must present proof of BLS Health Care Provider certification prior to entry into the second professional year. Students must also maintain certification throughout the remainder of the program. BLS Health Care Provider certification is required for ACLS Health Care Provider training and both active BLS Health Care Provider and ACLS Health Care Provider certification are required for clinical clerkships.

## MPAS Graduate Outcomes

Graduates of the MCPHS Physician Assistant Program are expected to be competent in many functions and tasks as entry-level physician assistants. The entry-level physician assistant must be able to function in various clinical encounters, including: initial workups, continued care, and emergency care. The graduate must be able to identify, analyze, and manage clinical problems and be able to apply a scientific method to the solution of the medical problems. The graduate's functions and tasks are divided into six categories: evaluation, monitoring, diagnostics, therapeutics, counseling, and referral.

### *A. Evaluation*

The graduate will be able to perform:

- Accurate and comprehensive medical history and physical examination for patients of all ages, in any health care setting.
- Be able to recognize and interpret pertinent factors in the patient's history and physical findings.
- Elicit a screening and problem-based health history consisting of the chief complaint, history of present illness, pertinent review of systems, past medical history, family and social history and alternative therapy practices.
- Perform skills necessary to accomplish screening and problem-specific physical examination involving major organs and systems of the human body. The medical information obtained will be organized and presented in a form that lends itself to physician interpretation and will be recorded in the medical record.
- Recognize personal prejudices and biases that affect the ability to incorporate cultural beliefs and alternative therapy practices of patient groups into the care planning process.
- Develop rapport and trust by using interpersonal skills to facilitate patient sharing of personal information including cultural beliefs, at-risk behaviors, and alternative therapy practices.
- Synthesize patient data pertinent to the identification of age-related physiologic changes, health risks factors, medical illness, behavioral disorders, socioeconomic problems, cultural beliefs about health/illness, and alternative therapy practices.

### *B. Monitoring*

The graduate will be able to:

- Manage health care activities in the acute care, long-term care, home care and outpatient settings by making routine rounds, ordering needed diagnostic tests and therapies,

accurately recording progress notes and other documentation, providing services necessary for continuity of care, nursing homes and house calls.

- Focus on identifying risk factors or characteristics for patient population groups at risk.
- Define accurately problems of a biological, functional, psychosocial, environmental, and cultural nature and their differential diagnosis.
- Generate care plans that are relevant to the further evaluation and management of a range of at-risk behaviors, illnesses, and injuries that incorporate the conventional medical therapies, cultural beliefs and alternative therapy practices of individuals.
- Implement problem management and treatment decisions for individuals seen initially or in follow-up for a previously diagnosed problem that acknowledges cultural beliefs and alternative therapy preferences.
- Provide continuous care to persons in the home, nursing home, extended care facility, hospital and any other setting considered part of the physician practice.

### *C. Diagnostics*

The graduate will be able to:

- Initiate requests for routine diagnostic procedures.
- Assist with obtaining quality specimens and /or performing common laboratory and diagnostic procedures.
- Establish priorities for appropriate diagnostic and laboratory testing.
- Order and interpret common laboratory procedures, such as CBCs, sedimentation rates, serum chemistries, urinalyses, microbiological smears and cultures from various sites, pulmonary function testing, electrocardiograms, and plain film radiographs and other diagnostic studies to further delineate and monitor health risks, illness, or injury with attention to risks and costs.

### *D. Therapeutics*

The graduate will be able to:

- Perform routine therapeutic and/or diagnostic procedures including injections, immunizations, applying and removing casts and splints, debriding and repairing minor lacerations and wound care.
- Managing and caring for simple conditions, assisting surgeons, and assisting in the management of complex illnesses and injuries such as: initiating evaluation and management of acute life-threatening situations from motor vehicle accidents and trauma injuries, cardiac arrest, respiratory failure and other life-threatening situations.

## *E. Counseling*

The graduate will be able to:

- Provide patient education and counseling services such as: instructing preventative medicine measures and the impact of habits and lifestyles on health, fostering an awareness of signs, symptoms and precautions for certain diseases common to certain age groups, helping patients and families understand issues of normal growth and development, sensitively working with patients making family planning decisions, helping patients cope with emotional problems of daily living, helping patients and family members cope with the emotional issue of the dying patient and the ability to discuss implications of certain diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, diseases, and medications.
- Communicate with and counsel individuals and families about growth and development, family planning, disease prevention through risk factor reduction, diet and nutrition, immunizations, illness and injury evaluation, and therapeutic management plans including alternative therapies and advanced care directives.
- Assess patient and family member comprehension of a health problem, illness, or injury and the diagnostic and therapeutic care plans for that problem.

## *F. Referral*

The graduate will be able to:

- Recognize their own limitations and the limitations of their practice setting, facilitating timely referral of patients to appropriate physicians and others in the interdisciplinary health care team and social service agencies.
- Report, record, and retrieve findings obtained through interview, examination, and diagnostic testing to the supervising physician and other health care providers in an articulate, efficient, and accurate manner.
- Communicate with physicians, other members of the health care team, and peers about the evaluation and management of patients based upon illness severity and personal level of confidence.
- Use critical analysis skills to evaluate whether information in the literature will help to better evaluate manage, and advise patients about prognosis, laboratory testing, and treatment benefit.

The learning experiences within the curriculum are designed to develop each graduating student's ability to demonstrate these competencies.

## MPAS Academic Requirements

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### General Standards

The College and the School of Physician Assistant Studies have established a number of policies and procedures designed to safeguard the quality of the environment in which people study and learn.

### Student Attributes

Graduates of the PA Program are expected to be professionally capable, intellectually mature, and socially conscious individuals. Those qualities felt to reflect the highest ideals of health care practice and ethical behavior within students pursuing the PA Program include:

- **Academic integrity:** Each student enrolled in the College is expected to personally complete all assignments, laboratory exercises, reports, and patient assessments identified as a requirement for any academic course or clinical experience.
- **Altruism:** Students in health psychology, nuclear medicine, pharmacy, physician assistant studies, radiation therapy, and radiography are expected to put the needs of the patient before their own.
- **Confidentiality:** Information related to any scheduled examination or patient evaluation and management must remain confidential unless otherwise authorized for discussion by an individual faculty member or clinical preceptor.
- **Commitment to Learning:** Students should demonstrate intellectual curiosity, seek ways to learn about issues and patient problems, improve their fund of knowledge, and teach others.
- **Interpersonal Communication:** Students should demonstrate the ability to socialize with peers, develop rapport with faculty and professional staff, interact effectively with clinical preceptors and patients, and show courtesy and respect in all interpersonal interactions.
- **Personal Integrity:** Students should behave in a way that is truthful and honest, accepting responsibility for their actions and working diligently to correct identified deficiencies.

- **Personal Demeanor and Appearance:** Students are expected to be neat and clean with appropriate attire in the classroom. When guest lecturers are presents, students should wear “business casual” attire. When in the clinical setting, students are expected to be well groomed and appropriately dressed for working with patients and other health professionals. Students not meeting such standards of dress may be denied access to the classroom, clinical setting, and patients, which could jeopardize their grade and satisfactory completion of the program.
- **Professional Responsibility:** Students are expected to participate actively in classroom, laboratory, and small group activities, and be present as scheduled during assigned periods for courses and clinical clerkships unless they notify the faculty and/or preceptor-in-charge and are excused.
- **Environmental Respect:** Students are expected to demonstrate respect for the educational activities offered by the College, the physical facilities of the College, and affiliated clinical training sites, and their peers.

Each individual admitted to the PA program is obligated to follow the MCPHS Student Code of Conduct, with the requirement continuing until such time as the student graduates from or departs from the College for other reasons. The faculty and staff of the College likewise shall work to provide an environment conducive to the intellectual and professional development of each enrolled student.

## Progression Requirements

All PAS designated courses (500 level and above) count towards the professional GPA. The following are the requirements to remain in good academic standing:

- To progress within both the didactic and clinical phase of the program, students must achieve a final course grade of C or better. In all PAS designated courses, obtaining a course grade of less than a “C” results in a student having to repeat the course, which stops progression through the Program because professional phase courses are offered only once a year. This would also have a significant impact on GPA, which could also jeopardize progression.
  - Students who fail a professional course or clerkship are required to repeat the course or clerkship prior to progressing in the curriculum. If a student is unable to progress in a professional course or clerkship after two attempts, they will be referred to the Academic Standing Committee with a recommendation for dismissal.

- A cumulative professional GPA of 2.85 on a 4.0 scale must be maintained throughout the entire length of the program. If students do not have the required cumulative 2.85 GPA, they are required to repeat and replace grades for up to two professional phase courses prior to progressing further in the curriculum.
- Students who have replaced two professional phase courses and still do not have the requisite course grade and/or the professional GPA will be referred to the Academic Standing Committee with a recommendation for dismissal.
- Successful completion of the PA Didactic Cumulative Examination administered at the end of the second year is mandatory before entering the clinical year. Students who are unable to successfully pass the cumulative examination on the first administration will complete remediation, which may result in a delay of entry into clerkships, program completion, and graduation.
- Successful completion of the PA Summative Examination administered during the final professional year of the Program is mandatory before graduation. Students who are unable to successfully pass the summative examination on the first administration will complete remediation, which may result in a delay of program completion and graduation.

## Readiness to Graduate

The School of PA Studies requires all students to meet the following requirements for graduation with the Master's degree:

- Submission of petition of intent to graduate one year prior to graduation. The petition must be signed by the student's Academic Advisor and submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- Completion of the professional courses and clinical clerkships designated by the prefix "PAS" with a grade of C or better.
- Final cumulative grade point average of 2.80 or above.
- Final professional grade point average of 2.85 on a scale where 4.0 equals "A."
- Demonstration of required clinical skills proficiencies.
- Successful completion of both the PA Didactic Cumulative Examination and the PA Summative Examination.

## Policies and Procedures

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For complete information on the MCPHS policies and procedures, please refer to the MCPHS College Catalog and the MCPHS Student Handbook.

### Remediation Policy for Individual Courses

Remediation is a process by which students will be given an opportunity to review, learn, and correct inadequate knowledge and skills. All students that score a 73% or less on any exam must meet with the course coordinator and complete an individual remediation assignment. All students requiring remediation will be referred to the MCPHS PA Progress and Remediation Committee for ongoing review.

### Examination Policy

Students are expected to be present for all written, oral, and practical assessments of knowledge and skills. In cases of acute illness, documentation by an appropriate health care provider must be provided to Academic Support Services. In cases of death in the family, the College Bereavement Policy will be in effect (Refer to College Catalog). Students who miss an examination for reasons that do not constitute an approved absence will receive a grade of “0” for the exam missed (Refer to College Catalog).

### Testing Policies

The policy and procedure for test administration are:

1. Students are expected to take examinations at the time designated.
2. A student who arrives late to an exam will not be given additional time.
3. Hoods, hats, and sunglasses are not permitted to be worn during any examination.
4. Students will be permitted to bring only pens, pencils, erasers, tissues and watches into the examination room. Watches, pagers, cell phones, etc. should have their timers/alarms/ringers turned off and placed in a book bag. Books, book bags and other personal belongings are to be left at the front of the examination room. **Having personal digital assistants (PDAs), recording devices of any type, electronic storage/memory devices, cell phones, or communication devices on the student’s person will result in**

**expulsion from the exam and a score of zero will be awarded for that exam.**

5. Each student is responsible for properly marking the answers on the computer and/or on the answer sheet.
6. Any corrections/clarifications to the examination will be written on the black/white board at the front of the examination room as needed during the examination. Students should check the white board for written notes and verify that they have answered all the test questions correctly on their answer sheets.
7. All written notes and calculations made during the examination must be included with and passed in with an individual's examination and answer sheet. Under **NO** circumstances may examinations, answer sheets or notes taken or used during an examination leave the examination room.
8. If students finish before the end of the examination period, they may turn in all students' papers and leave the room **quietly**, so as not to disturb the students still in the process of taking the examination. After leaving the room, students are not to congregate outside the door of the examination room, re-enter the examination room for any reason or discuss the examination. Discussing the examination prior to the end of the examination period will be considered academic dishonesty and reported to the Program Director and Dean of Students.
9. Any suspicion of cheating by a student by the exam proctor or violation of any testing policy will result in expulsion from the examination and a score of "0" will be awarded for the exam. This will be considered academic dishonesty and be reported to the Program Director and Dean of Students.
10. In the event of an illness, the student must contact the PA office, **BEFORE** the test. Please refer to both the College and each course syllabus examination policy requirement.

## Examination Review

During the review of any examination, students may be assigned specific seats by the proctor unless otherwise instructed. The use of calculators, personal digital assistants (PDAs), recording devices of any type, electronic storage/memory devices, cell phones, communication devices, or communication with other people is **NOT** permitted unless otherwise authorized by the professor. Having any of the aforementioned items in the test area or on student's person will result in expulsion from the exam and a score of zero will be awarded for that exam. This will be considered academic dishonesty and reported to the Program Director and Dean of Students.

## Classroom Behavior and Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and professional manner at all times, both on campus, at all clinical sites and within the community. Please refer to the MCPHS Student Code of Conduct in the College Handbook.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful toward other students, faculty, and patients. In addition, students should refrain from any behavior that would bring harm or abuse to any person or property. Behavior that disrupts teaching, research, administrative, or student functions, will result in dismissal from the activity and referral to the Program Director and Dean of Students (Refer to the College Catalog).

Cell phones and beepers must be turned off during class hours.

College policy does not allow food or beverages inside the classrooms or labs.

## Course Evaluations

The MCPHS PA Program requires that each student completes course and instructor evaluations. These evaluations will be completed on-line. Student will complete guest lecturer evaluations in written form following their presentation. Course evaluations will be conducted at the conclusion of each course.

## Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Academic Support Services assists students with physical, psychological and learning disabilities in fulfilling the fundamental requirements of the curriculum by accessing reasonable accommodations to ensure that they have equal access to educational opportunities at the college. Students wishing to request accommodations should meet with the Director of Disability Services–Boston (located in the Learning Center) or the Director of Academic Support Services–Worcester/Manchester at the beginning of each semester to review their documentation and discuss their courses. The College requires that a copy of a recent assessment, completed by an appropriate service provider, be on file in the Academic Support Services Office. The assessment should include recommendations made by the service provider. All information related to disabilities will remain confidential. ([The Disabilities Grievance Procedure is outlined in the MCPHS Student Handbook](#)).

## Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI)

Certain laws require health care agencies to request criminal offender record information (CORI) from the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board or New Hampshire State Police, sex offender record inquiries (SORI), and/or Level I background checks on candidates for employment, volunteer, or training positions and to review the information to determine if the candidate is appropriate. The majority of the clinical training and service-learning sites at which the College places students for experiential education experiences must comply with these laws. In order to be eligible for clinical placements or service-learning experiences, students must have been cleared through a CORI (and sometimes SORI or Level I) check. Sites may require their own background checks, and students may be asked to complete several forms to permit the checks. In cases where the site does not pay the fee for a background check, the student is responsible for paying the fee. If a site requires but does not provide for obtaining CORI, SORI, or Level I checks, students can obtain them through the College's Office of General Counsel. Without clearance from a required background check, students may not be permitted to begin clinical or service-learning placements, and therefore, may be unable to meet program requirements for graduation.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is committed to a policy of affirmative action, equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and diversity. In addition, the College is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment which values the diverse backgrounds of all people. Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, marital status, or national origin. The College is additionally committed to a policy of affirmative action to provide for the access and advancement of minorities, women, and persons with disabilities with respect to employment and enrollment opportunities.

## Sexual Harassment

Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the 1972 Amendments to the Higher Education Act specifically prohibits sexual harassment. All members of the college community, including faculty, administration, students, and staff have a right to be free from sexual harassment by any other member of the college community. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- Such behavior has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational atmosphere;
- or**
- Submission to such conduct is made an express or implied condition of an individual's employment or academic standing;
- or**
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such an individual.

Any member of the MCPHS community who has a complaint or concern about sexual harassment should contact the Vice President for Finance and Human Resources. The Dean of Students will explain the resolution process and assist the individual in dealing with/responding to the incident(s). When an investigation reveals that sexual harassment has occurred, the College will take appropriate action. This action may include disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal of any individual who has violated the terms of this policy.

No member of MCPHS has the right to sexually harass another member of the community. Retaliatory action of any kind against any individual who brings forth a complaint of sexual harassment is prohibited and will be regarded as a separate violation of this policy and responded to with severe disciplinary action.

## Occupational Health and Safety Master Plan

MCPHS strives to provide a learning, teaching, working, and research environment free from recognized health and safety hazards. Pursuant to the requirements of the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the City of Boston, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, MCPHS has established an Occupational Health and Safety Master Plan to protect its students and employees from potential occupational, health, safety, and radiation hazards. For further information about the Master Plan, please contact the Director of Environmental Health and Safety at 617.732.2861.

## Student Records

Questions regarding student records should be directed to the Program Director. Files on students are maintained by the following departments:

1. The PA Program – admissions criteria, academic performance, disciplinary actions, faculty advisor records, malpractice and health care insurance documentation, health & immunization verification, BLS and ACLS Health Care Provider certifications.
2. The Registrars Office – application, official transcripts

It is the responsibility of the student to keep students records current. If you have a change in any of the following items, notify the PA program and the Registrar immediately:

- legal name
- home address
- home telephone number
- cell telephone number
- person to call in case of emergency

You may review the information that is kept locked in the Program Director's office with permission of the Program Director.

## Health Insurance

Massachusetts's law requires that all students have health insurance. College policy extends this requirement (insurance coverage) to enrolled students at each campus. In order to comply with state law and College policy, MCPHS makes available a Student Health Insurance Plan to all students enrolled at the College. Only those students with comparable coverage can be exempted from the College health insurance policy. Information on the procedure for waiving the College policy can be obtained from Student Financial Services. Waiver cards must be signed and returned to Student Financial Services by the deadline or the student will be charged for health insurance. Students on F-1 Visas must purchase the Student Health Insurance Plan. Please refer to the MCPHS website under Student Life/Student Health (by campus) for more information regarding the Student Health Insurance Plan.

## Health Services

For routine health care while on the Boston campus, MCPHS students utilize the Wentworth Institute of Technology/Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates (WIT/HVMA) Student Health Services in Watson Hall on the WIT campus. Students utilize their personal health insurance for these visits. WIT/HVMA accepts a large number of health insurance plans. For more information about the array of medical services, directions and the small list of non-accepted health insurance plans at WIT/HVMA, please visit:

[http://www.mcphs.edu/campuses/boston/student\\_life/student\\_health\\_health/index.html](http://www.mcphs.edu/campuses/boston/student_life/student_health_health/index.html)

Health Services for Worcester and Manchester students are available through the many providers in the local areas.

## Immunization Requirements

In accordance with Massachusetts state law (Boston and Worcester campuses) and College policy (Boston, Manchester, and Worcester campuses), students must show proof of the following immunizations:

A booster dose of tetanus diphtheria within the past 10 years; two doses of measles vaccine (or MMR #1 and MMR #2) given at least one month apart at or after 12 months of age, or laboratory evidence of immunity; at least one dose of mumps and rubella vaccine(s) or laboratory evidence of immunity, and Hepatitis B vaccine series (three doses).

### **Additional requirements for all MCPHS students include:**

Tuberculosis skin test (within the past year) or normal chest X-ray prior to admission (Note: An updated tuberculosis skin test is required annually after a student is enrolled. A negative skin test, normal chest X-ray or health care provider documentation of being symptom free is required each year a student is enrolled.)

Varicella (chickenpox) positive titer result or vaccination(s) of varicella (one shot if thirteen years of age or younger and two shots if over thirteen years of age with a one month interval between vaccinations) is also required.

**Additional requirements for Dental Hygiene, Nursing, Physician Assistant Studies, and Radiologic Sciences students are as follows:** Hepatitis B positive titer and Rubella positive titer. All new entering MCPHS students must provide documentation of having received a meningococcal vaccine (within the last 5 years) unless they qualify for one of the exemptions allowed by the law.

Students may begin classes without a certificate of immunization against meningococcal disease if: 1) the student has a letter from a physician stating that there is a medical reason why he/she can't receive the vaccine; 2) the student (or the student's parent or legal guardian, if the student is a minor) presents a statement in writing that such vaccination is against his/ her sincere religious belief; or 3) the student (or the student's parent or legal guardian, if the student is a

minor) signs a waiver stating that the student has received information about the dangers of meningococcal disease, reviewed the information provided and elected to decline the vaccine.

Certain health care agencies, clinical training, and service-learning sites may have additional immunization requirements. In order to be eligible for clinical placements or service-learning experiences, students must meet all College immunization requirements and any additional site requirements. In cases where the site does not pay for the completion of additional immunization requirements, the student is responsible for paying any associated fees, if this is not covered by their personal health insurance. Without clearance of all College and site immunization requirements, students may not be permitted to begin clinical or service-learning placements, and therefore, may be unable to meet program requirements.

**Inability to provide proof of immunization by the start of the first academic term of enrollment (and any subsequent terms) will result in a late fee charge.**

MCPHS works with FileMD of Americare Services, Inc., a confidential health information service. FileMD maintains and processes all student immunization records and monitors compliance with state law immunization requirements. Students may contact FileMD/Americare Services, Inc., 2601 Network Blvd., Ste. 101, Frisco, TX 75034, or call 800.633.4345, or fax: 817.251.9593. Medical information is released only upon a student's written request, court subpoena, or as required by law. *\*Students enrolled in part-time, graduate level programs without clinical placements or in online programs without clinical placements are not required to submit immunization information.*

## Attendance Policy

Class, laboratory and examination attendance is mandatory and attendance will be taken. Students are expected to be present and on time for all classes. If students anticipate being late, students must call the PA Program Administrative Assistant prior to the start of class, who will notify the Course Coordinator. **Failure to do so may result in students being denied entrance to the class or laboratory, if students are late.**

### Absence Definition

An absence is defined as missing **any** part of a scheduled class, laboratory, or examination in any one day.

### Absence

If a student is unable to attend a class, it is the student's responsibility to notify the PA Program Administrative Assistant, prior to the absence, who will notify the Course Coordinators.

All excused absences must be approved by the Office of Academic Support within 5 days of the absence. Policies for absence due to bereavement, illness, and religious beliefs are outlined in the College Catalog. Absences for reasons other than those mentioned above must be approved by the PA Program Director in advance of the absence.

Additionally, excused absences for the participation in college sponsored activities may be granted by the Program Director when advance notice is given.

### **Examination Attendance Policy**

If students are unable to attend an examination students must notify the Course Coordinator directly, preferably twenty-four hours prior to the examination, but in no case more than twenty-four hours after the examination has been administered. Failure to notify the Course Coordinator of students' absence within this time frame will result in a grade of zero for the specific examination that students missed.

Students with an approved absence at the time of an exam will be given an equivalent examination. Students who miss an examination for reasons, which are deemed not to constitute an approved absence, will receive a grade of "0" for the examination in question. Administration of all make-up exams must occur within one week from the date of the initial administration of the exam. The date and time will be set by the Course Coordinator.

### **Absence Allowance and Penalties**

Following the stated number of unexcused absences in course syllabi, three (3) points will be deducted from the final course grade. Each additional absence (after 3) will result in a further one (1)-point deduction from the final course grade for each additional absence. Courses that are laboratory or experiential in nature **will not allow any unexcused absences** due to the complicated nature of scheduling these experiences. Each unexcused absence from these courses will result in a three (3)-point deduction of the final grade.

### **Leave of Absence**

The College recognizes that there are situations when a student may require a leave of absence. A student must be in good academic and financial standing to apply for a leave of absence. Such leaves are granted for a maximum of one semester. However, request for leaves beyond one semester may be granted by the Dean of Students due to extenuating circumstances. The student must complete a Leave of Absence Form, which calls for the signatures of the a) student, b) Director of Academic Support Services, and c) Student Financial Services. The student must submit the Leave of Absence Form with all signatures to the Director of Academic Support Services who will forward the form to the Office of the Registrar and all other necessary parties. A student who fails to return within the designated time must reapply for admission.

### **Academic Probation**

Each student's academic status will be reviewed at the end of each academic term, and each student's professional (if applicable) and cumulative GPAs will be determined. A student with a professional and/or cumulative GPA below the requirement for the MPAS major, shall be placed

on Academic Probation and receive a letter from the Academic Standing Committee stating such. This written notice of probationary status will also include a notice that failure to reach the required GPA by the end of the designated academic term may result in his/her dismissal from the College.

Probationary status may remain in effect for two consecutive academic terms, defined as two semesters, or two clinical clerkships, depending upon the student's year. It is expected that students on probation make progress toward good academic standing at the conclusion of each academic term. Failure to demonstrate improvement at the end of the first probationary period may result in dismissal. At the conclusion of the second consecutive academic term, the student must have achieved Good Academic Standing; failure to do so will result in dismissal. Upon completion of each academic term, a student on academic probation will receive in writing, from the Academic Standing Committee, a notice of his/her current standing.

## Withdrawal Policies

Withdrawal from the College and/or courses is described in the MCPHS College Catalog.

## Academic Honesty

The College presumes that students will assume personal responsibility and maintain personal integrity in all aspects of their education. Dishonest actions in the execution of an examination, report, or paper are academic violations and are subject to disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty exhibited by a student in connection with evaluations and examinations includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest practices such as:

- Obtaining or attempting to obtain an examination prior to its administration.
- Referring to devices, materials or sources not authorized by the instructor.
- Receiving assistance from another person when not authorized by the instructor.
- Providing assistance to another person when not authorized by the instructor.
- Taking an examination for another person.
- Obtaining or attempting to obtain another person to take one's own examination.
- Being disruptive during an examination or during class so as to infringe on the rights of other students.
- Plagiarizing, that is, submitting another person's work as one's own without proper acknowledgement of source, or using the words or ideas of another without crediting the

source of those words or ideas.

- Falsifying laboratory results or copying another person's laboratory results.
- Falsifying or attempting to falsify the record of one's grades or evaluation.
- Falsifying actions, findings, or documentation in clinical settings.
- Presenting fictional patient cases as real or falsely presenting pieces of real patient cases in a single composite case.

### **Plagiarism Prevention Service**

Students are expected to abide by the College's Academic Honesty Policy as outlined. Plagiarism, as defined above, is considered a violation of this policy. In order to deter plagiarism and ensure appropriate use of resources in student research and learning, the College subscribes to a plagiarism prevention service, [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Faculty may **require** students to submit their written work electronically in order to verify that when ideas of others are used they are cited appropriately. The course syllabus identifies student work that must be submitted electronically for such review.

### **Implementation of the Academic Honesty Policy**

1. The Academic Honesty Policy will be provided to all members of the MCPHS community on-line through the MCPHS Student Handbook.
2. The Dean of Students, or designee will review the Academic Honesty Policy, issues of dishonesty, and consequences of violating the Academic Honesty Policy during new student orientation.
3. All new students will be expected to sign a statement indicating they have received and will abide by the Academic Honesty Policy. Refusal to do so will prohibit the student from continued enrollment.
4. In specific evaluation situations, students may be required to present their MCPHS ID cards.
5. Each instructor is responsible for informing students of the standards of behavior expected of students during laboratories, experiential locations, tests, and examinations in a given course and for consistently enforcing such standards.
6. Faculty will require that students sign an academic honesty statement for exam and written graded assignments.

## Student Code of Conduct & Student Discipline System

Student Code of Conduct (MCPHS Student Handbook)  
Student Discipline System (MCPHS Student handbook)  
([www.mcphs.edu/academics/student\\_handbook/](http://www.mcphs.edu/academics/student_handbook/)).

## Grievance Procedure

Disabilities Grievance Procedure (College Catalog).  
Discrimination Grievance Procedure (College Catalog).  
Grade Appeals (College Catalog).

## How to Resolve Problems

A student who has any classroom or program concerns should address them in a professional manner.

1. If it is a question or concern about a class, you should first talk with the course coordinator.
2. If the Course Coordinator feels that the situation needs further review or you do not feel that the question/problem has been addressed, it will then be presented to the Program Director.

Do not allow small problems to turn into large problems. Address those issues immediately so that the issue can be resolved quickly.

## E-Mail Policy

All MCPHS students are required to open, utilize, and maintain (i.e. keep storage within the maximum set by the Information Services) an MCPHS e-mail account. Official college communications and notices are sent via MCPHS e-mail accounts. All students are responsible for regularly checking their MCPHS e-mail and for the information contained therein. ONLY MCPHS accounts will be used in all matters related to academics, student life, and college notifications. The college does not forward MCPHS e-mail to personal e-mail accounts.

## Financial Aid

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Office of Student Financial Services at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences for information on comprehensive education financing counseling. The FA staff will assist you in answering questions regarding the financial aid process. (See the College Catalog).

## **Housing**

There is no on-campus housing available for graduate students. The Office of Admission has contact information for possible housing, but it is the responsibility of each student to find housing.

## **Classroom Hours**

Regular class hours are generally M-F, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, but there will be some evening and/or weekend classes. You will be given as much notice as possible for such assignments so that you can make arrangement to attend. Class attendance is mandatory. See Attendance Policy.

## **Fax and Office Phones**

The fax machine and phone(s) in the PA Program Office are for Faculty and Staff use only. The PA staff will assist you if you are required to make copies of a presentation for students, fellow students or the faculty.

## **Confidentiality**

Students, preceptors, and patients trust the program and the students with important information relating to their lives, practices, and medical problems. The physician assistant profession requires that you maintain all issues of confidentiality and it is the program's responsibility to safeguard the information. This professional behavior earns the respect and trust of the people that the program and you will be dealing with.

When you matriculate into the PA Program, you have an obligation to maintain confidentiality, even after you leave the program. Any violation of confidentiality seriously effects the PA Program's reputation and effectiveness. Casual remarks may be misinterpreted and repeated, so please learn to develop the personal discipline needed to maintain confidentiality.

Breach of confidentiality will be considered improper professional behavior and referred to the Program Director and Dean of Students.

## **Community Involvement**

As a member of the MCPHS PA Program, you are an ambassador for our program to the College, our clinical sites, our patients, and the public at large. The impression that the PA Program and you as individuals make will be determined by students' actions and in turn will determine their interest and willingness to work with our program. Always be courteous and

respectful and take pride in students work as you communicate with faculty, students, staff, preceptors, patients, and the public at large.

The PA Program encourages and supports student participation in service activities that contribute to the community. Please work with the student society to involve the entire class in community-based projects.

## Student Society

All students are members of the Physician Assistant Student Society (PASS) and are encouraged to be active participants. The faculty recommends that each student become an active student member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and the Massachusetts Association of Physician Assistants (MAPA).

## Identification

Students MCPHS identification badges and lanyards must be worn at all times and at all clinical activities. It is students' responsibility to inform the Public Safety if you have lost students badge. You may be required to wear additional identification at clinical facilities that you may be assigned to during students' education.

## Employment

### Outside of the College

In order to maintain good academic standing, students should be aware that the professional curricula of the Program are rigorous and demanding. Students who must be engaged in gainful employment should balance school and work responsibilities so as not to compromise their academic success. Due to the rigorous nature of the program, the demands placed on students are extremely high, particularly with respect to their clinical work schedule and associated study requirements. It is for this reason that the faculty strongly discourages students from engaging in any outside, non-program-related activities.

### Employment within the Program

Within the second professional year, the Program employs two PA students as teaching assistants within the History and Physical I and II, and Gross Anatomy courses. Eligible candidates must be full-time second year PA students in good academic standing. General responsibilities include: setting up and breaking down the laboratories, maintaining inventory counts of equipment and distributing course material. Teaching assistants do not proctor or grade examinations.

### Employment within the College

PA students within the second professional year may be employed on an hourly basis by the School of Arts and Sciences to serve as examination proctors for undergraduate courses. Employment, training, and payment are done through the Office of the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences.

## Instructional Resources

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### Textbooks and Instruments

Most courses presented in the MPAS curriculum use several resources to assist students in acquiring the knowledge and skills essential for subsequent areas of study. The faculty coordinator for each course is responsible for generating and providing a completed course syllabus on the first day of class. The syllabus includes introductory information about the course, grading and examination requirements, instructional and outcome performance objectives, lecture outlines, and assigned readings. The lecture and examination schedule for the course is also a part of the course syllabus.

During the professional phase of the Program, students can expect to spend approximately \$1000.00-\$1500.00 for books. In addition to textbooks, students will also have to purchase equipment for use in the professional phase. The list of equipment associated with performing the physical examination is listed below.

Equipment Item
Ophthalmoscope
Otoscope with pneumatic attachment
Adult BP cuff
Cardiology Grade Stethoscope
Reflex hammer
Tuning fork - 256 (vibratory sensation)
Tuning fork - 512 (auditory screening)
Flexible tape measure with centimeter markings
Penlight
Rosenbaum pocket eye chart - near vision

Depending on the type of equipment purchased, students can expect to spend between approximately \$1000.00 for these items. Students need to have this equipment for the first day of class in the second year.

## Appendix A

### Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession

#### Preamble

In 2003, the National Commission on Certification of Physicians Assistants (NCCPA) initiated an effort to define PA competencies in response to similar efforts being conducted within other health care professions and growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice. The following year, representatives from three other national PA organizations, each bringing a unique perspective and valuable insights, joined NCCPA in that effort. Those organizations were the Accreditation Review Commission for Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the body that accredits PA educational programs; the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP), the membership association for PA educators and program directors; and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the only national membership association representing all PAs.

The resultant document, *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession*, is a foundation from which each of those four organizations, other physician assistant organizations, and individual physician assistants themselves can chart a course for advancing the competencies of the PA profession.

#### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to communicate to the PA profession and the public a set of competencies that all physician assistants regardless of specialty or setting are expected to acquire and maintain throughout their careers. This document serves as a map for the individual PA, the physician-PA team and organizations that are committed to promoting the development and maintenance of these professional competencies among physician assistants.

The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Professional competencies<sup>1</sup> for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, systems-based practice, as well as an unwavering commitment to continual learning, professional growth, and the physician-PA team, for the benefit of patients and the larger community being served. These competencies are demonstrated within the scope of practice, whether medical or surgical, for each individual physician assistant as that scope is defined by the supervising physician and appropriate to the practice setting.

<sup>1</sup> In 1999, the Accreditation Council for Graduation Medical Education (ACGME) endorsed a list of general competencies for medical residents. NCCPA's Eligibility Committee, with substantial

input from representatives of AAPA, APAP and ARC-PA, has modified the ACGME's list for physician assistant practice, drawing from several other resources, including the work of Drs. Epstein and Hundert; research conducted by AAPA's EVP/CEO, Dr. Steve Crane; and NCCPA's own examination content blueprint.

## **Physician Assistant Competencies**

### **Vers. 3.5 (3/22/05)**

The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes required and provides educational experiences as needed in order for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies.

## **MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE**

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

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

## **INTERPERSONAL & COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

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

- create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- use effective listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning, and writing skills to elicit and provide information
- appropriately adapt communication style and messages to the context of the individual patient interaction
- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
- apply an understanding of human behavior
- demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
- accurately and adequately document and record information regarding the care process for medical, legal, quality and financial purposes

### **PATIENT CARE**

Patient care includes age-appropriate assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of wellness. Physician assistants are expected to:

- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care
- demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
- gather essential and accurate information about their patients
- make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment
- develop and carry out patient management plans
- counsel and educate patients and their families
- competently perform medical and surgical procedures considered essential in the area of practice
- provide health care services and education aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health

### **PROFESSIONALISM**

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. Physician assistants must know their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PAs practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency, or mental illness. Physician assistants must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity

to a diverse patient population and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Physician assistants are expected to demonstrate:

- understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
- professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
- respect, compassion, and integrity
- responsiveness to the needs of patients and society
- accountability to patients, society, and the profession
- commitment to excellence and on-going professional development
- commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
- sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' culture, age, gender, and disabilities
- self-reflection, critical curiosity and initiative

### **PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT**

Practice-based learning and improvement includes the processes through which clinicians engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, medical literature and other information resources for the purpose of self-improvement. Physician assistants must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices. Physician assistants are expected to:

- analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team
- locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health problems
- obtain and apply information about their own population of patients and the larger population from which their patients are drawn
- apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
- apply information technology to manage information, access on-line medical information, and support their own education
- facilitate the learning of students and/or other health care professionals
- recognize and appropriately address gender, cultural, cognitive, emotional and other biases; gaps in medical knowledge; and physical limitations in themselves and others

### **SYSTEMS-BASED PRACTICE**

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which health care is delivered. Physician assistants must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that is of optimal value.

PAs should work to improve the larger health care system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:

- use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
- effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
- understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
- practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
- advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
- partner with supervising physicians, health care managers and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery of health care and patient outcomes
- accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care
- apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide more effective, efficient patient care
- use the systems responsible for the appropriate payment of services

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***DECLARATION OF UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE***

I have read and understand the document entitled STUDENT MANUAL containing requirements, rules and regulations, policies and procedures, and expectations of students enrolled in the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program. I further understand that all of these policies will be applied to all phases of student education and evaluation and accept to uphold all the policies stated herein for as long as I am enrolled as a student in the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program.

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

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

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

Program Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES  
REGARDING HEALTH AND PATIENT CARE***

I affirm that I understand the importance of recognizing personal medical conditions, which might potentially endanger the health of patients and others.

I understand that compliance with universal precautions is necessary when interacting with patients.

I understand the importance and necessity for promptly seeking medical attention if, during my contact with patients or others, I suspect I may have developed a condition which potentially endangers others.

I understand that I should restrict my interactions with patients and others, pending medical evaluation of any potentially transmittable disease condition, which I might incur.

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Student Signature

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Student Name

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Date

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY***

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge my responsibility under federal applicable law and the affiliation agreement between the clinical training facility and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences to keep confidential any information regarding facility patients, as well as all confidential information of the facility. I also agree, under penalty of law, not to reveal to any person or persons except authorized clinical staff, associated personnel and faculty any information regarding any patient, and further agree not to reveal to any third party any confidential information of the facility.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS AS HUMAN SUBJECTS***

Functional anatomy and physical diagnosis are best learned through the study of living subjects. After gross anatomy course, the only anatomy most students will ever see again will be that of their live patients.

The Program requires the participation of students as simulated patients, as well as examiners (in an interchangeable fashion). The Program expects all students to participate in all aspects of physical exam practicum in a professional, cooperative manner.

Generally, students learn these examination techniques and skills in teams of two or three with the guidance of an experienced instructor. Students are encouraged to come to these laboratory sessions prepared to partially disrobe.

Thus, when working on the lower extremities, all students should come prepared by wearing athletic shorts. For the upper limb, thorax and abdomen exams, male students should simply shed their shirts; women should wear a sports bra beneath easily shed shirts.

This participation does not include the genitalia and breast examinations. The students learn to examine and evaluate these anatomical areas using simulators and with professional patients.

It should also be understood that we expect all students to participate in these learning activities by dressing as outlined above and by submitting to inspection, palpation, percussion, and auscultation by their classmates.

By signing below you are hereby signifying that you understand this policy and agree to abide by it.

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***RELEASE OF HEALTH INFORMATION CONSENT***

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby grant the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program the ability to provide the health care training facility (preceptor and administrative personnel) the required health and immunization status from my medical record as stated within the rules, regulations, and contractual affiliation agreement of the facility and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. My signature below acknowledges my understanding and agreement to provide the above stated information.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***TECHNICAL STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE FOR APPLICANTS***

I have read and understand the Technical Standards of Performance for Applicants, pages of the Student Manual and on the web, [www.mcphs.edu/academics/college\\_catalog/](http://www.mcphs.edu/academics/college_catalog/) . I declare that I have the abilities and skills described in the Technical Standards of Performance of observation, communication, motor, intellectual, and behavioral and social attributes.

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

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

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

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***DISCLOSURE STATEMENT***

The Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program meets the standards set forth by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education of the Physician Assistants (ARC-PA) and the Massachusetts Board of Education.

As a student of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences PA Program, I understand and agree that I will engage in timely surveys of graduates, employers, and colleagues on my development as a physician assistant, employment settings, scope of practice, and knowledge base.

As a student of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences PA Program, I understand and agree to allow the PA Program to use all of my evaluation criterion information for the use of continued evaluation of the program. This material includes, but is not limited to, admission criteria, didactic and clinical phase performance measures, Physician Assistant National Certification Exam (PANCE), and any other summative instrument.

As a student of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences PA Program, I hereby grant permission to the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program to photograph and/or videotape me, or my minor child, and/or to supervise any others who may do the photography and/or videotaping.

As a student of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences PA Program, I hereby grant permission to the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program to submit my immunization records and drug screen results to clinical sites as appropriate.

I also authorize the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program to use and/or permit others to use the aforementioned images in educational, informational, and promotional activities without compensation.

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

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

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

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***Emergency Contact and Health Insurance Form***

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

***EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION***

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RELATION \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK/CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

***INSURANCE INFORMATION***

POLICY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

INSURANCE COMPANY TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF INSURED: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN THIS FORM, ALONG WITH A COPY OF STUDENTS HEALTH  
INSURANCE CARD TO THE PA OFFICE.**

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

***Update Address Form***

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

Primary Mailing Address

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address2: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF STUDENTS ADDRESS HAS CHANGED, PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU UPDATE STUDENTS  
ADDRESS WITH THE REGISTRAR SEPARATELY.**