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Foreword

The Physician Assistant Studies Student Manual is a reference for physician assistant students and others seeking information concerning the formal administrative policies, rules and regulations of Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) and the School of Physician Assistant Studies. Some topic areas in this manual may overlap with subjects covered in the current MCPHS College Catalog and the MCPHS Student Handbook. Periodically, additional policies or procedures may be established for which the student will be held accountable. The MCPHS Physician Assistant Studies department reserves the right to alter its curriculum, policies, or procedures. All changes or additions will be made in the online handbook. Any changes apply to all current and prospective students. It is the responsibility of each student enrolled in the School of Physician Assistant Studies to read and abide by the regulations and policies outlined in this manual and within MCPHS publications.

The MCPHS College Catalog and Student Handbook can be found online at: http://www.mcphs.edu/academics/.

Accreditation

The Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission for PA Education. Students can access more information about this group online at http://www.arc-pa.org.
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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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 individuals 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 Statement
The mission of the MCPHS PA Program is to provide each student with the knowledge, skill, 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.

Program Goals and Core Values
The specific goals of the faculty teaching in the MPAS program are to:

1. Develop within students a strong foundation in the basic and clinical sciences enabling them to provide high quality illness prevention and disease management services in a wide variety of practice settings.
2. Facilitate active learning and independent judgment regarding disease prognosis, diagnostic testing, and disease management by developing skills of critical assessment.
3. Foster within each student the interpersonal qualities essential to providing patient care in an ethical and professional manner.

Technical Standards for Admission, Progression, and Graduation
A candidate for the MCPHS-Boston Physician Assistant Studies program must have, at a minimum, skills in five categories: observation, communication, motor, intellectual, and behavior/social. Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis, but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. The following skills are required with or without accommodation.

Observation
Candidates must have sufficient capacity to observe in the lecture hall, the laboratory, the outpatient setting, and the patient’s bedside. Sensory skills to perform a physical examination are required. Functional vision, hearing and tactile sensation are required to properly observe a patient’s condition and to perform procedures regularly required during a physical examination such as inspection, auscultation and palpation.

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, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. Candidates must be capable of completing, in a thorough and timely manner, appropriate medical records and documents and plans according to protocol.

Motor
The ability to participate in the basic diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers and procedures (e.g., palpation, auscultation) is required. Candidates and students must have sufficient motor function to execute movements
reasonably required to properly care for all patients. Candidates must be able to move freely about patient care environments and must be able to move between settings such as clinics, classroom buildings and hospitals.

In addition, physical stamina sufficient to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study is required.

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. Candidates must be able to function effectively under stress and have the ability to accept constructive criticism.
# MPAS Program Curriculum

## Didactic Phase - Year I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS 514 Ethics and Professional Issues in PA Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 515 Genetics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 517 Human Physiology and Pathophysiology I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 516 Primary Care Psychiatry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 518 Clinical Pharmacology I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>PAS 535 Electrocardiography</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 524 Gross Anatomy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 527 Human Physiology and Pathophysiology II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 529 Research Methods for Physician Assistants</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 520 Clinical Pharmacology II</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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## Didactic Phase - Year II

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS 531 Primary Care Medicine I</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 532 Manifestations and Management of Disease I</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 536 Patient Assessment I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 537 Clinical Therapeutics I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 538 History and Physical Examination I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 538L History and Physical Examination I – Lab</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PAS 541 Primary Care Medicine II</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAS 542 Manifestations and Management of Disease II</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAS 546 Patient Assessment II</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>PAS 547 Clinical Therapeutics II</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAS 540 History and Physical Examination II</td>
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<td>PAS 540L History and Physical Examination II – Lab</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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## Clinical Phase – Year III

For orientation purposes, below is an example of how the students’ final clinical curriculum may be set up. The order of clerkship placement varies among students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS 600 Internal Medicine Clerkship</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 601 Pediatrics Clerkship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 602 Psychiatry Clerkship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>PAS 603 Surgery Clerkship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 604 Emergency Medicine Clerkship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 605 Women’s Health Clerkship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS 606 Ambulatory Clerkship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 607 Geriatrics/Rehabilitation Clerkship</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 608 Elective</td>
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**Total Credits for Physician Assistant Program: 111**

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

During the second 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.
Medical Terminology Competency
Each student is required to complete the medical terminology competency prior to entry into the first year. Details about the medical terminology competency will be provided after acceptance into the program. Student must pass the medical terminology competency with a grade of 73% or greater.

Library Modules
All students in the PA Program must complete the three library modules by the end of the fall semester of year one. Students can access the library modules through BlackBoard. The library module courses are: INF.101.A – Intro to Library & Resources, INF.102.A – Research Methods & DB Search, and INF.103.A – Advanced Research Methods. Any student who has trouble accessing the courses should contact either the administrative assistant of the PA Department or Library Services.

Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)
All students in the Physician Assistant Program must present proof of BLS Health Care Provider certification prior to entry into the second professional year. Students must maintain this 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 certifications are required for clinical clerkships.

Faculty Advisors
Each student will be assigned to a faculty advisor upon entering the professional program. The faculty advisor will be available to the student throughout the course of the program. Each advisee is required to meet with their advisor once per semester during all three years of the program.

Certification Examination
The national certification examination is managed by the National Commission for Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Passing this entry-level examination entitles the successful candidate to use the initials PA-C (Physician Assistant, Certified). The Physician Assistant National Certification Exam (PANCE) is in computerized form and students are eligible to sit for the exam two weeks after graduation.

National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants
12000 Findley Road
Duluth, GA 30097
678-417-8100
http://www.nccpa.net

Licensure
Once a student has graduated it is their responsibility to determine the licensure laws for the state in which the student chooses to work. The majority of states now require a license to practice. Each state has different procedures for obtaining licensure. For more information about licensing, please visit the AAPA website at: http://www.aapa.org/advocacy-and-practice-resources/state-government-and-licensing
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 settings, 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 must be able to:

- Perform accurate and comprehensive medical history and physical examination for patients of all ages, in any health care setting.
- 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 interpretation by other clinicians 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 must 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 clinical practice.
C. Diagnostics
The graduate must 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 must 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.
- Manage and care for patients with common medical issues, assist surgeons, and assist in the management of complex illnesses and injuries.
- Initiate 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 must 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 must 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 prognois, 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

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 an individual studies and learns.

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 physician assistant studies 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 business casual attire in the classroom. 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 preceptors 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 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 Division of Health Sciences 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 professional phase courses prior to progressing further in the curriculum.

- Students who have replaced professional phase courses and still do not have the requisite course grade and/or the professional GPA will be referred to the Division of Health Sciences 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.

- 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
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 less than 73% 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 the College Catalog). Students who miss an examinations for reasons that do not constitute an approved absence will receive a grade of “0” for the exam missed (refer to the College Catalog).

Testing Policies
The policies and procedures 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 turn 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. 
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 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 no 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 will be 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 will 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 examination.
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, and other communication devices, or communication with other individuals is **NOT** permitted unless otherwise authorized by the proctor. Having any of the aforementioned items in the test area or on the 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 will be 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, including 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 complete course and instructor evaluations. These evaluations will be completed on-line at the end of each semester. Students will complete guest lecturer evaluations in written form following their presentation.

Identification Policy

For reasons of safety and security, all students must be readily identifiable while they are on campus and/or engaged in required off-campus activities, including internships and clinical rotations. Therefore, any head covering that obscures a student’s face may not be worn, either on campus or at clinical sites, except when required for medical or religious reasons. In addition, all students are required to wear their College-issued I.D. at all times when on campus and/or engaged in required off-campus activities, and to show such upon request of a properly identified official or member of the MCPHS staff, and to remove any coverings that obscures a student’s face in order to verify a student’s identity for security purposes. Loss of an ID card should be reported immediately to the MCPHS Department of Public Safety. The fee to replace an I.D. card—for any reason—is $10; application and payment for replacement is made at the Office of the Registrar. The I.D. card also serves as the College library card.

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the College 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 Associate Director of Disability Support Services (Boston) 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 Resource Center (Boston) and Academic Support Services (W/M). The assessment should include recommendations made by the service provider. All information related to disabilities will remain confidential.
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 to be hired. 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.

Affirmative Action Policy and 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 individuals. 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

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences prohibits any member of the College community, male or female, from sexually harassing another employee, student or other person having dealings with the institution. Sexual harassment is a form of behavior that fundamentally undermines the educational and employment goals and philosophy of MCPHS. By definition, sexual harassment is a form of discrimination which consists of unwelcome verbal, non-verbal and/or physical contact of a sexual nature which has the effect of interfering with student or employment status by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or learning environment. Such behavior constitutes sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment or education;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment, educational or living environment.

Examples of harassment may include but not be limited to: verbal harassment or abuse; subtle pressure for sexual activity; sexist remarks about an individual’s clothing, body or sexual activities; unnecessary touching, patting or pinching; demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning one’s job, grades or letter of recommendation, etc.; physical sexual assault. Individuals who are aware of any incident involving harassment of any kind or who believe they are being sexually harassed, are strongly encouraged to confidentially consult with the Dean of Students and/or the Human Resource Office.
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.

Health Insurance

According to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and MCPHS policy, all matriculated students (regardless of enrollment) must be covered by a health insurance program. The College makes available a general health insurance program that meets these standards. This policy is provided by an independent carrier beginning September 1st and continuing 12 months. College student health insurance information can be located on the MCPHS webpage under Student Health. Students will be automatically enrolled in this plan unless a waiver is completed and received by Student Financial Services prior to the first day of classes. Students registering late must submit the waiver at that time. The waiver stipulates that personal coverage will be maintained during the enrollment period. If Student Financial Services does not receive the waiver prior to the first day of classes, the student will be billed for the insurance premium and will remain responsible for payment of said premium. The waiver must be renewed annually.

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

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 dose of tetanus diphtheria pertussis vaccine within the past ten 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 a tuberculosis skin test (within the past year) and a 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 include 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 five 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 and 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., P.O. Box 868069, Plano, TX 75086-8069, or call 800.633.4345, or fax: 817.251.9593 or 214-619-1830. Medical information is released only upon a student’s written request, court subpoena, or as required by law.

### 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 Department – admissions criteria, academic performance, disciplinary actions, faculty advisor records, malpractice and health care insurance documentation, BLS and ACLS Health Care Provider certifications.
2. The Registrar’s Office – application, official transcript

It is the responsibility of the student to keep student records current. If there are changes in any of the following items, notify the PA program and Registrar immediately:

- Legal name
- Home address
- Home telephone number
- Cell phone number
- Emergency contact

A student may review the information that is kept locked in the Program Director’s office with permission of the Program Director.

### 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 department administrative assistant prior to the start of class. The administrative assistant 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 Department administrative assistant prior to the absence. The administrative assistant will notify the course coordinator.

Absences must be approved by the Office of Academic Support within 5 days of the absence. Policies for absence due to bereavement, illness, or 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 “0” for the specific examination that student missed.

Students with an approved absence at the time of an examination 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 from each additional absence. Course 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, requests for leaves beyond one semester may be granted by the Dean of Students or his/her designee due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., family emergencies, lack of available courses, etc.). The student must complete a Leave of Absence Form, which calls for the signatures of the a) student, b) Assistant Dean for the Academic Resource Center (Boston) or Assistant Dean for Academic Support Services (Worcester/Manchester), and c) Student Financial Services. The student must submit the Leave of Absence form with all signatures to the Academic Resource Center (Boston) or Academic Support Services (W/M) office which 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. Students on Leave of Absence are not eligible for College Services, with the exception of academic advising three to four weeks prior to return to the College. A leave of absence often results in a change in the student’s Year of Graduation. Students who are on a leave of absence for one semester or longer from Dental Hygiene, Nursing, or Medical Imaging and Therapeutics programs must pass a competency exam and/or a directed study prior to re-enrollment.
Policy for Content/Skills Validation after Leave of Absence

This policy applies to students in the clerkship phase of the physician assistant program – Boston.

Note: This policy does not apply to students with an academic deficiency in either the didactic or clinical phase. Refer to the appropriate section of this manual for specifics related to academic deficiency.

Students who have not been in continuous enrollment during the clinical clerkships (not including the scheduled academic breaks or excused absence(s) per the PA student program/clinical manual) must validate the prerequisite knowledge and skills required for clerkships before they may reenroll in the physician assistant program.

Students planning to return from a leave of absence must be cleared to return by the designated staff in the Academic Resource Center and/or the Dean of Students prior to performing validation testing. The Academic Resource Center and/or the Dean of Students Office will ensure that any conditions for return have been fulfilled. The Academic Resource Center or Dean of Students will notify the Physician Assistant Studies Program Director when the student is eligible to attempt validation testing for reentry into the program.

The validation test will include written examination and demonstration of clinical skills or clinical program competencies. Any student planning to take this validation test should notify the Program Director at least 14 days prior to the anticipated return so that arrangements for validation testing can be made. A minimum grade of B on each portion of the determined validation testing is required. It is the student’s responsibility to prepare for the validation testing.

If a student fails the validation testing (defined as less than a grade of B in any portion), he/she must participate in a five week (equivalent to one clerkship block) Directed Study to remediate prior to reentering the program. Credits for Directed Study will be assigned on a case-by-case basis. The sequence of any preexisting clinical clerkships scheduled prior to a leave of absence is not guaranteed and subject to change. A Directed Study taken for remediation purposes during the clinical phase may delay the student’s graduation date.

Students may not participate in clinical clerkships (core or elective) concurrently with the Directed Study.

Upon completion of the Directed Study, the student will be subject to a revalidation test. After passing revalidation testing, students will be assigned to in-network clerkships (current active clerkship site established by the program) for two successive blocks. Students are not permitted to resume clinical clerkships or repeat a failed clerkship at an out of network site (i.e. clerkship established by student).

If the student fails to earn a grade of B or better on the second attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program. Students may appeal the dismissal to the Dean of Physician Assistant Studies and if denied, then to the Provost Office.

Academic Probation

Each student’s academic status will be reviewed at the end of each academic semester, 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 his/her major, shall be placed on Academic Probation and receive a letter from the chair of 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 semester will result in his/her dismissal from the College. Each student on probation is required to meet with a member of the Academic Resource Center (Boston) or the Academic Support Services (W/M) staff by the end of the second week of the probationary semester to develop and agree to—in writing—an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP). The AIP may include a reduced course load, mandatory study/advising sessions, mandatory class attendance, or other stipulations aimed at encouraging and supporting student success. A copy of a student’s AIP will be maintained in his/her advising folder and a copy will also be forwarded to the appropriate school dean.
Probationary status may remain in effect for up to two consecutive academic terms, defined as two semesters, or two clinical clerkships, depending upon the student’s year and/or campus enrollment. 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 chair of the School Academic Standing Committee, a notice of his/her current standing. Individual programs may have specific grade point requirements which students must meet in order to enter the professional years and associated clerkships of their programs. These program specific requirements pre-empt the probation process for the pre-professional years. For information about program specific requirements for the professional years, students should contact the appropriate school dean. There is no appeal process associated with Academic Probation.

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

Academic Honesty
The school deans are responsible for the proper conduct of examination in their schools and will assign faculty and graduate assistants to serve as proctors for examinations. Support staff, under the supervision of the school deans, are responsible for maintaining confidentiality in the production and reproduction of examinations.

Instructors are expected to assist in the promotion of academic honesty, through the following practices:

- limit the access/use of “recycled” exams;
- students will be required to leave all unnecessary materials (i.e., all backpacks, notebooks, texts, calculators, PDAs, cellular phones, etc.) away from their seat assignment – only required materials will be allowed at the seat assignment;
- all exams are to be proctored; and
- in specific evaluation situations, students may be asked to show instructors/proctors materials being used during the exam (PDAs, cellular phones, etc.) to ensure proper use of the allowed material and adherence to the honesty policy.

Instructors are encouraged to utilize the following exam seating practices whenever possible:

- Students entering an exam room will be randomly seated, and
- Seating assignments will be spaced throughout the exam room, allowing for adequate spaces between students.

The instructor should follow the College Policy on Academic Honesty when giving examinations and ensure the proctors are present at all examinations in compliance with this policy. At least one course coordinator for each course should be present during an examination to answer question or to clarify issues that may arise. Exceptions to his rule must be approved by the school dean.

Student Code of Conduct and Student Discipline System
Student Code of Conduct (MCPHS Student Handbook)
Student Discipline System (MCPHS 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)

http://www.mcphs.edu/academics/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, students should first talk with the course coordinator.
2. If the course coordinator feels that the situation needs further review or the student does not feel that the question/concern 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 Department of 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.

Note: All MCPHS community members can voluntarily register in the MCPHS Emergency Notification System to receive text messages via cell phones and e-mail regarding major campus emergencies and campus closings. Contact helpdesk@mcphs.edu for more information.

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 students in answering questions regarding the financial aid process (Refer to 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 Monday through Friday, 8:00AM to 5:00PM, but there will be some evening and/or weekend classes. Students will be given as much notice as possible for such assignments so that they can make arrangements to attend. Class attendance is mandatory (Refer to the Attendance Policy).

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 students 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 individuals that the Program and students will be dealing with.

When students matriculate into the PA Program, they have an obligation to maintain confidentiality, even after leaving the Program. Any violation of confidentiality seriously affects the PA Program’s reputation and
effectiveness. Causal 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, students are ambassadors for our program to the College, our clinical sites, our patients, and the public at large. The impression that the PA Program and students 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 they 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 active student members of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and the Massachusetts Association of Physician Assistants (MAPA).

**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 responsibilities so as not to compromise their academic success. Due to the rigorous nature of the program, the demands place 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 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.
Office Procedures

Books, Equipment, and Supplies on Loan
Any material loaned to a student out of the office or lab must be signed out/in by the administrative assistant or lab coordinators.

Fax and Office Phones
The fax machine and phone(s) in the PA Department office are for faculty and staff use only. The PA staff will offer assistant if students are required to make copies of a presentation.

Appointments with Faculty
Appointments with faculty members can be made with the faculty member directly.

Classroom and Laboratories
The classrooms and laboratories should be kept neat, clean and free from debris and personal articles. Food and beverages are not permitted in any of the classrooms or labs. Materials and equipment must be returned to their original places; safety precautions must be adhered to; and equipment in need of repair must be reported immediately.
Instructional Resources

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 course 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 $1,000 - $1,500 for books.

Beginning with the class of 2014, an equipment package will be included in the costs of tuition. An equipment sales meeting will be held at the end of the first didactic year. Students will have the option to upgrade their equipment from the basic package at their own cost.

The following items will be included in the basic package:

- Coaxial Ophthalmoscope
- Macroview Otoscope with Throat Illuminator
- NiCad Handle with hard case
- DuraShock Classic Hand Aneroid with Adult and Pediatric Cuffs
- Tycos Harvey Elite Stethoscope
- Otoscope Insufflator Bulb and Tip for Macroview
- Educational Value Pack (128 tuning fork, 512 tuning fork, Taylor reflex hammer, metric tape measure, LED penlight, eye chart)

Delivery of the equipment will be scheduled for the first day of classes for the second didactic year.
Appendix A

The Role of the Physician Assistant in Health Care

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.

Competencies of the Physician Assistant
- Medical Knowledge
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Patient Care
- Professionalism
- Practice-Based Learning and Improvement
- System-Based Practice

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\(^1\) 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.

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

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

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

- create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- use effective listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning, and writing skills to elicit and provide information
- appropriately adapt communication style and messages to the context of the individual patient interaction
- work effectively with 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
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 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 Signature

_________________________________________________________
Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_________________________________________________________
Date

_________________________________________________________
Program Director Signature

_________________________________________________________
Date
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 that I may have developed a condition which could potentially endanger 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.

_________________________________________________________
Student Signature

_________________________________________________________
Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_________________________________________________________
Date
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.

_________________________________________________________
Student Signature

_________________________________________________________
Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_________________________________________________________
Date
MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE of PHARMACY and HEALTH SCIENCES

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 Signature

_________________________________________________________
Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_________________________________________________________
Date
MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE of PHARMACY and HEALTH SCIENCES

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.

_________________________________________________________
Student Signature

_________________________________________________________
Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_________________________________________________________
Date
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/. 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 Signature

_________________________________________________________
Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_________________________________________________________
Date
MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE of PHARMACY and HEALTH SCIENCES

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 Signature

_________________________________________________________
Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_________________________________________________________
Date
Emergency Contact and Health Insurance Form

Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Emergency Contact Information

Name __________________________________________ Relation ______________________

Home Phone __________________________ Cell/Work Phone ______________________

Insurance Information

☐ Please check here is you will be using the College’s insurance policy.

If you are not using the College’s insurance policy, please fill out the following information:

Policy Number __________________________________________

Company __________________________________________

Insurance Company Telephone Number ______________________

Name of Insured (Whose policy is it?) ______________________

Please return this form along with a copy of your health insurance card to:
Carlina Costa, administrative assistant, G401.
MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE of PHARMACY and HEALTH SCIENCES

Update Address Form

______________________________________________________________
Name

Primary Mailing Address

______________________________________________________________
Address

______________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip

______________________________________________________________
Primary Phone

______________________________________________________________
Secondary Phone

If any of the information on this form has changed, please update your address with the Registrar’s office separately.