



# MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™ MERIDIAN

## Physician Assistant Studies

### STUDENT HANDBOOK Class of 2026

#### Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program

Mississippi State University-Meridian  
Riley Campus  
2214 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Meridian, Mississippi 39301  
601-696-2320  
[pa@meridian.msstate.edu](mailto:pa@meridian.msstate.edu)

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to the Mississippi State University Master of Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program. This handbook provides important information relating specifically to the PA program. You will find the MSU General Catalog and the MSU Graduate Catalog to be the official source of MSU student related policies and procedures. You can access this information at the following sites:

<http://catalog.msstate.edu/>

<http://catalog.msstate.edu/graduate/>

## **Disclaimer**

The information contained in this handbook is an overview of current policies, procedures, and requirements of the MSU-Meridian Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program. This handbook is reviewed and updated annually for each cohort. While every effort is made to provide accurate information at the time of publication, the Program and clinical team reserve the right to make changes as necessary. If changes are made, all students, faculty, and staff will be informed, and the most recent version will be published on the program website. Please be aware the program does not intend for this handbook to represent an exhaustive list of possibilities that can arise. Be assured that should unique situations present, each situation will be handled in a manner that ensures fairness and mutual respect. All policies apply to all students. All final decisions are at the discretion of the Program Director and Associate Vice Provost, except where university policies apply otherwise.

## **Mississippi State University-Meridian**

### **Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program**

This is the *official* student handbook for the Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program at Mississippi State University-Meridian. It is located on the PA website,

<https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/academics/physician-assistant/>

## **Program Address:**

Mississippi State University Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program

MSU-Meridian Riley Campus

2214 5<sup>th</sup> Street

Meridian, Mississippi 39301

Phone Number: 601-696-2320

Email: [pa@meridian.msstate.edu](mailto:pa@meridian.msstate.edu)

## **Principal Faculty and Staff**

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Principal Faculty

Principal Faculty

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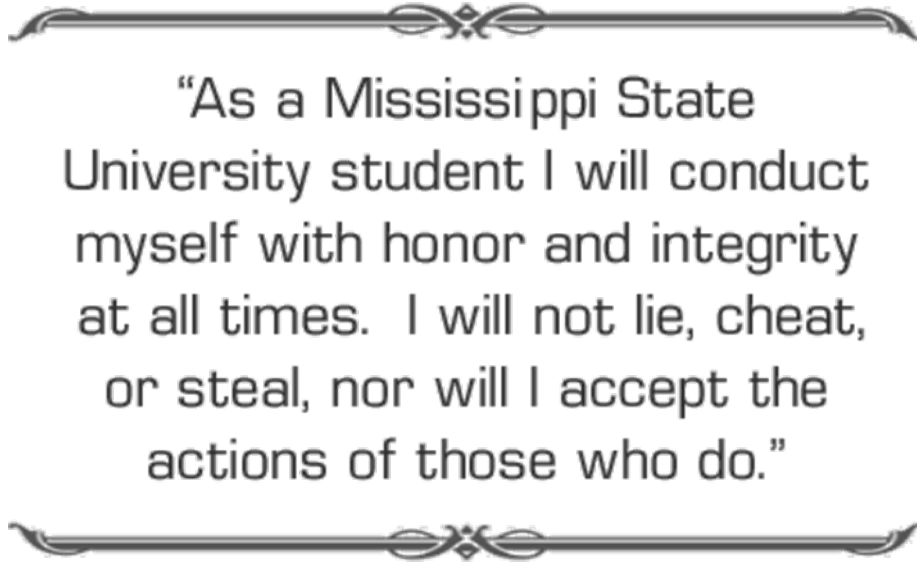
Information Technology Specialist

Administrative Assistant

## HONOR CODE

### MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE

[Home](#) | [Honor Code \(msstate.edu\)](#)



The Mississippi State University Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program fully supports the Student Honor Code. PA students are expected to review and adhere to the Honor Code at all times. The Honor Code Office will be consulted for concern or suspicion for Honor Code violation. The program will follow procedures dictated by university policy. Any responsible party for Honor Code violation will be dismissed from the program.

## STUDENT RIGHTS

The PA Program faculty, staff and students will comply with university policy and procedures with respect to the following:

### Policies

- [Non-Discrimination Statement \(OP 3.02\)](#)
- [Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment \(OP 3.03\)](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct \(OP 3.04\)](#)
- [Whistleblower Policy \(OP 1.07\)](#)
- [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\) \(OP 30.02\) \(A3.20\)](#)
- [Students With Disabilities \(OP 91.122\)](#)

Students will be requested to sign consent releasing necessary health information as required by clinical sites to facilitate clinical placement. **[A3.21]. Student health records, criminal background check and urinary drug screen records are housed in the secure EXXAT Approve software database to which the program subscribes, and the students independently maintain personal records.**

## **Disability Support Services**

### **Disabilities And Accommodations**

Mississippi State University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) for Mississippi State University collaborates with students who have disabilities to arrange reasonable accommodations.

#### **a. Applying for Accommodations**

The best first step in many cases is to submit your accommodation request by visiting [www.drc.msstate.edu](http://www.drc.msstate.edu) and click on the “Apply for Accommodations Here” link.

If you would like to talk with a staff member about any, please contact the DRC by emailing [drc@msstate.edu](mailto:drc@msstate.edu) or by calling 662-325-3335. You may contact the Director, Chris Dallager at [cjd474@msstate.edu](mailto:cjd474@msstate.edu) or call 662-325-7924 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, conditions related to mental health, chronic health, attention, learning, autism, brain injury, vision, hearing, mobility, speech, or intellectual disabilities. In the case of short-term disabilities (e.g., broken arm), students and instructors can often work to minimize barriers. If additional assistance is needed, please contact the Disability Resource Center.

The DRC staff, through an interactive process with the student and often with instructors, determine classroom accommodations that are appropriate for students with disabilities. It is important for students with approved accommodations to submit their notification of the accommodations to instructors each semester and to have a conversation with them to ensure there is understanding on how the accommodations will be provided. Examples of classroom and testing accommodations are varied, but may include: Adapted testing arrangements, extended time on tests, testing in a reduced distraction environment, and assistance with alternative formats of textbooks.

#### **b. Student Responsibilities**

- Submit the online notification of accommodations to instructors each semester. Directions are at [www.drc.msstate.edu/students/academic-accommodations/notification-letter](http://www.drc.msstate.edu/students/academic-accommodations/notification-letter)
- The online notification must be provided before a professor/instructor can provide an accommodation.
- Plan and schedule accommodations with instructors with good communication.
- Maintain communication with instructors throughout the semester regarding accommodations as needed.
- If there are any concerns regarding an accommodation not being provided and you need to discuss it with the DRC, please contact Chris Dallager at [cjd474@msstate.edu](mailto:cjd474@msstate.edu) or call 662-325-7924.

## **Sexual Misconduct**

The University strongly encourages anyone who has experienced sexual misconduct to report the incident through the procedures reporting under MSU Operating Policy 3.04. Properly reporting the incident allows the University to take steps to ensure the safety of the complainant and others and to provide support services. Any person may submit a report against any other person for sexual misconduct on a MSU campus, in connection with any MSU program or activity, and/or involving a member of the University community. There are alternatives to reporting sexual misconduct to the University. For example, a person may choose to

Speak confidentially to a counselor, a victim advocate, a health care professional, or certain others on campus. Likewise, a person always retains the right and is encouraged to report misconduct to any law enforcement agency, regardless of whether they have reported to the University or not. In short, it is important for all members of the University community to familiarize themselves with all their options for seeking assistance.

**a. Emergency Assistance**

If you are in immediate physical danger or need emergency medical care, CALL 911. Your safety is the priority. The options for assistance listed below can provide a quick response, but they cannot provide the immediate physical presence necessary to assist you if you are in danger. If you believe you are in immediate physical danger or if you need immediate medical assistance, call 911. Police and/or an ambulance will be dispatched to assist you as necessary. University officials, if not alerted by your 911 call, can be alerted once you are safe.

**b. Confidential Reporting**

If you are not in immediate physical danger, call the **MSU Safeline at 662-325-3333**. If there is no immediate threat and you do not need immediate medical care, the MSU Safeline is the quickest, most direct way of reporting sexual misconduct and getting help. Calling the Safeline will notify one of MSU's Sexual Assault Advocates, who are trained to help you obtain support, which may include, as necessary, medical care, housing accommodations, academic accommodations, or counseling.

**c. Formal Reporting to the University**

The University's Office of Civil Rights Compliance is responsible for overseeing compliance with Title IX and other laws that address sexual misconduct and discrimination. The Office oversees investigations and disciplinary proceedings in cases of sexual misconduct, as well as the interim accommodations and assistance for those who report such misconduct. The simplest and most direct route to submit a formal report to the University is to contact the Office of Civil Rights Compliance at 662-325-5839 or at [titleix@msstate.edu](mailto:titleix@msstate.edu). Additionally, formal

Alternatively, to seek assistance directly at MSU-Meridian, you may contact the university's Meridian Title IX Liaison, Kevin Entrekin at 601-484-0244 or [kentrekin@meridian.msstate.edu](mailto:kentrekin@meridian.msstate.edu).

In addition to these officials, many MSU personnel are trained to convey reports of sexual misconduct to the proper authorities on campus. These personnel are called "Mandatory Reporters," and their duties are discussed below. Whenever possible, however, incidents of sexual misconduct should be reported via one of the avenues listed above to provide the most prompt and direct response.

**Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination**

**a. University Policy on Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation**

Mississippi State University does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, pregnancy, gender identity, status as a U.S. veteran, and/or any other status protected by applicable law. The University will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation and is committed to preventing or stopping them whenever they may occur at the University or in its programs.

Further, it is the policy of Mississippi State University to comply with applicable civil rights laws, regulations, and orders, including but not limited to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Executive Order 11246, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veterans' Adjustment Assistance Act, the

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

The university also strictly prohibits retaliation against individuals who report discrimination, harassment, retaliation, sexual misconduct, or any violation of applicable civil rights laws, or who participate or assist in an investigation of the same.

This policy applies to all University programs, services, opportunities, or activities, including without limitation all employment, academic, educational, research, extracurricular, athletic, housing, and other programs, regardless of where they may occur.

For additional information on university policies and procedures addressing discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, please see MSU Operating Policy 3.03.

**b. Definitions**

**Discrimination** is intentional differential or negative treatment of an individual based on any protected characteristic, where such treatment would deny or limit a reasonable person's ability to participate in or benefit from university programs, services, opportunities, or activities.

**Harassment** is conduct that is unwelcome, based on a protected characteristic, and directed at a specific individual or individuals. Harassment can include but is not limited to verbal or non-verbal communication, written or graphic communication, electronic communication, and/or physical contact.

**Harassment** violates university policy when it is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it would deny or limit a reasonable person's ability to participate in or benefit from university programs or activities. Whether harassment is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to violate policy is a question university officials must answer after an investigation. Thus, reporting of any unwelcome conduct based on a protected characteristic is encouraged. Examples of prohibited harassment may include, but are not limited to:

Harassment can include but is not limited to verbal or non-verbal communication, written or graphic communication, electronic communication, and/or physical conduct. Examples of prohibited harassment may include, but are not limited to (a) repeated and unwanted sexual or romantic solicitations, displaying sexual images in the workplace, or conditioning favorable treatment in connection with a University program upon sexual favors; (b) physical harassment, such as touching, pinching, grabbing, or brushing against another person without their consent; and (c) severe, pervasive, persistent and objectively offensive insults, jokes or derisive comments relating to a person's protected characteristic.

**Retaliation** is any adverse action that would deter a reasonable person from reporting, testifying, or otherwise cooperating with an investigation or proceeding. Depending on the circumstances, retaliation might include formal employment action, adverse academic decisions, or other conduct in response to a person reporting discrimination or harassment.

**c. Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation**

If you feel you have experienced discrimination or harassment based on any protected characteristic, or retaliation for reporting a violation or any other protected activity, you should contact the Office of Civil Rights Compliance (OCRC) at 662-325-5839.

Alternatively, if the discrimination, harassment, or retaliation is in connection with your employment with MSU, you may contact either ORCR or the Department of Human Resources Management, which can be reached at 662-325-3713.

## **STUDENT SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

### **Campus Map**

Meridian Riley Campus Map Located at:

<https://map.msstate.edu/map/?id=233#lct/2399,2401,2400,7257,2397,7090,7088,2402,5465,8935,16168?ce/16168>

### **Student Parking**

Students on the College Park Campus should park in the area designated as Student Parking and will be ticketed for parking in the Faculty/Staff Parking. Fines may be paid in the MSU-Meridian Office of Student Services.

Students on the Riley Campus should park in the Meridian Arts District Parking garage.

### **Housing**

The MSU-MPAS program does not supply housing for any portion of the program. Students are responsible for securing housing for themselves during the didactic and clinical portions of the program. Local housing options can be reviewed at <https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/academics/physician-assistant/housing/>. Costs for transportation to and lodging at distant clinical sites during the clinical phase of the program may be required to meet program requirements in addition to local housing arrangements.

### **Bulldog Shop**

The Bulldog Shop at MSU-Meridian's Riley Campus in downtown Meridian is a campus store that brings a taste of Mississippi State heritage to Meridian. In addition to the latest in MSU apparel and gifts, the shop offers fresh sandwiches, coffee, snacks and renowned MSU ice cream and cheese.

<https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/campus-services/bulldog-shop/>

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

### **Use of MSU Information Technology**

It is the policy of Mississippi State University to protect critical information in all forms for which it is the custodian and to maintain a robust, proactive, and evolving information security program. This includes protection from a variety of threats such as fraud, embezzlement, sabotage, terrorism, extortion, privacy violation, service interruption, pandemic, and natural disaster. 2 OP 01.10 Information security is the responsibility of all individuals who access and maintain Mississippi State University information resources, i.e. students, employees, alumni, affiliates, contractors, retirees, and others as appropriate. Each individual must be aware of, committed to, and accountable for their role in the overall protection of critical information.

### **MSU Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure Policy**

Any individual or organization having access to the Internet through MSU, to the MSU campus network, or to MSU servers is bound to abide by all MSU policies and applicable state and federal legislation governing use of the Internet and MSU IT resources. Any violation of applicable laws or policies may result in termination of service which would inhibit program completion.

<https://www.its.msstate.edu/about/policies/>

### **Net ID**

- Each student will be responsible for activating and maintaining their NetID and NetPassword.
- Your username is your NetID. Each MSU Student, Faculty, and Staff member is assigned a distinct NetID.
- To setup your NetPassword, using a computer connected to the Internet, follow the instructions below:
  - Open up an Internet browser
  - Go to <https://www.netpassword.msstate.edu>
  - Select "Set your initial NetPassword" and follow the steps.
  - Use the same link to change password.
- Your NetID and NetPassword is also used to access the MSU online portals.

### **myState**

This is the main MSU portal that offers single sign-on access to such Web services as Banner, myCourses, and BullyMail. myState is designed to enhance personal productivity by providing customized and personalized access to a variety of university systems and information. MyState log in tips:

[Article – myState: Information and FAQ \(msstate.edu\)](#)

### **Email**

Student email is handled via Microsoft Office 365. Each email address is derived from each unique NetID: [netid@msstate.edu](mailto:netid@msstate.edu). Email is the primary means of communication for the program, and the student is responsible to check email daily. Account such as via web, the Outlook client, or on your smartphone; setup and access information can be found here: [Knowledge Base - Setup & Access \(msstate.edu\)](#).

### **Service Desk Requests**

- a) Should you require technical assistance, the Information Technology Office is located on the upper level, at the College Park Campus, in room 122.
- b) ITS normal office hours are Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- c) Please go to [servicedesk.msstate.edu](https://servicedesk.msstate.edu) to submit a request for service or report an issue. You may also email your request to [servicedesk@msstate.edu](mailto:servicedesk@msstate.edu).

### **Wireless Configuration**

- d) Students may access the wireless network, eduroam, using the **NetID** and [configuration instructions](#).
- e) The MSU wireless network is based on IEEE 802.11b/g/n (i.e. Wi-Fi) technology.
- f) In order to use the MSU wireless network, you will need a properly configured wireless 802.11 b/g network adapter for your notebook or hand-held device. Today, most notebooks and laptop computers come with built-in support for 802.11b/g/n. Specific information for configuring your computer or device can be found at the link entitled "Configuration Details."
- g) Antivirus software will help protect your computer(s) from adware, ransomware, spyware, viruses, and other malware that could impact your system's performance, cause you to lose important data, and potentially compromise your accounts and personal information. MSU Policy 01.12 states that everyone in the MSU computing community is required to take precautions to protect their computer and the MSU network from viruses. **While ITS does not provide antivirus software for personally-owned computers,**



please see the following link for no-cost antivirus options to help secure your device. [Article - Antivirus Software for Pers... \(msstate.edu\)](#)

- h) Free Software: [Article - List of ITS-provided software \(msstate.edu\)](#)

### **Libraries [A1.05]**

The goal of the Phil Hardin Foundation Librarians at MSU-Meridian's College Park and Riley Campuses is to support the reading, research and information needs of the faculty, staff and students in Meridian. The MSU-Meridian academic community has access to resources and services offered on the University Libraries website at <http://www.lib.msstate.edu/>. [A1.05]

## **STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Student Health [A 1.05, A3.07, A3.09, A3.21]**

- a) Every student is required to provide evidence of good health upon matriculation in the PA Program.
- b) Each student must meet the health requirements of each clinical site before beginning a rotation with that organization.
  1. Current vaccination record according to the CDC Recommended Vaccines for Healthcare Workers and COVID-19 vaccination record. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/hcw.html>
  2. Tuberculosis screening according to the CDC recommendations for TB Screening and Testing of Healthcare Professionals at the following link: [TB Screening and Testing of Health Care Personnel | TB | CDC](#)
- c) Some clinical sites may impose additional requirements, including but not limited to current drug screen, background check, and/or additional forms. Additional fees will be the responsibility of the student. Failure of the student to complete documentation or comply with the institutional requirements could result in forfeiture of the clinical rotation opportunity and/or delay in graduation at the expense to the student.
- d) Program instructional faculty or staff will not access or review student health records, except for immunization and TB screening results, blood, and/or body fluid exposure reports, drug screening results, criminal background checks and/or any additional information as required for clinical site placement as clearly delineated in the medical release documentation. [A3.21]
- e) Medical or surgical conditions may arise while a student is enrolled in the PA Program. The student is required to provide clearance from a medical provider upon return, attesting the student's readiness to resume healthcare training. The program will strictly adhere to the recommendations of the medical provider.
- f) Students are required to maintain comprehensive health insurance coverage and to provide evidence of such to the PA Program. The University offers a health insurance policy. Enrollment forms are available through University Health Services at the following link: [Insurance | Longest Health Center \(msstate.edu\)](#) See Section 29.
- g) A Program principal faculty, Program Director and/or the Medical Director will not participate as healthcare providers for any student in the PA Program. [A3.09]

### **Student Health Services**

MSU - Meridian students may seek medical care through Anderson Regional Medical Center at contracted rates. Address: 1523 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Suite B, Meridian, MS 39301. Phone number: 601-703-8450.

Student Counseling Services offers students the option of seeing a clinician in-person or virtual through a virtual platform, Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. To make an initial appointment for services, please click on the following link for the virtual waiting room: <https://msuscs.doxy.me/msstatevirtualwaitingroom>

- A clinician will assess and discuss your needs to determine the appropriate service for you.
- Should you be unable to utilize this platform or have additional questions about our services, please call our office at (662) 325-2091 during normal business hours.
- For after-hours support, call (662) 325-2091 to speak with a professional, on-call therapist.
- To obtain confidential assistance for sexual assault or harassment, call the MSU Safe Line at (662) 325-3333.

Students may be referred or may self-refer to Weems Community Health Center address personal issues which may impact student progress in the PA Program at no cost to the student.. [A3.10] Students may schedule a confidential appointment by calling the number on the back of the student identification card, 601-483-4821 or 1-800-803-0245

The Longest Student Health Center is available to all MSU students. [Home | Longest Health Center \(msstate.edu\)](#)

### **COVID-19 Policy**

There is an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 in any place where people are present. Participation in internship, on-campus activities, programs, work, and events may expose individuals, especially those who are unvaccinated, to a risk of contracting COVID-19 which may lead to missed classes (or internship hours). MSU cannot be responsible for that risk and, absent extenuating circumstances, will not modify the requirements of the class/internship. All students are urged to get vaccinated to mitigate risks.

## **STUDENT SAFETY AND SECURITY [A 1.03g, A3.08]**

### **Criminal Background Check and Drug Testing**

- a) Prior to matriculation, students offered a seat in the MSU Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program must complete a criminal background check and urine drug screen.
  1. A urine drug screen must be negative except as prescribed, excluding narcotics. Chronic narcotic use precludes providers from maintaining licensure in Mississippi; therefore, any positive opioid report will require prescriber attestation of short-term indication.
  2. Conviction of felony or misdemeanor may adversely affect a person's ability to obtain licensure as a physician assistant and/or to be admitted to the MSU PA Program. Applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine an applicant's suitability for the program. Additionally, subsequent conviction of a felony or misdemeanor while enrolled in the program may be grounds for dismissal.
- b) Thereafter, students may be required by the MSU PA program and/or clinical sites to undergo repeat drug screening and criminal background checks at any time.
  1. Students are responsible for all expenses related to meeting drug screening, student health requirements and background documentation required by clinical sites.
  2. Failing to meet the requirements of the background check or urine drug screen may result in forfeiture of the clinical rotation and/or delay in graduation at the expense of the student.
- c) Students who at any point in the program delay or decline to participate in a requested alcohol and/or drug screen testing will have that action considered equivalent to taking and failing a drug/alcohol screening with subsequent consequences.
- d) Applicants accepted into the MSU Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program who answered "no" to questions relating to criminal background in their CASPA application and are found to have a subsequent contradictory criminal background information will be dismissed from the program based on

misrepresentation. In the event of a reported incident, a determination about the applicant's/student's continued progress in the academic program will be made by Mississippi State University in accordance with university procedures.

### Required Training and Education

#### **Biosafety Training [A3.08]**

All students in the Physician Assistant Program are required to comply with required training, consistent with industry standard. To participate in programmatic clinical skill activities and/or clinical site experiences, the following training is required. Failure to complete the training as scheduled by the program or remain current in training may result in grade reduction, course failure, delay of clinical rotations, delay of graduation and/or dismissal from the program.

Required training is outlined below:

- Sharps Safety
- Biosafety Principles
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- HIPAA
- BLS
- ACLS
- PALS
- OSHA

#### **Infectious and Environmental Precautions [A3.08]**

The PA Program will address Universal Precautions and other methods of prevention as well as student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards before students undertake any educational activities that would place them at risk. **[A3.08]** The physician assistant program requires all students to be covered by major medical insurance as discussed in Section 29. The student should check with his/her insurance company as to the coverage provided for accidental exposure. It is important for students to realize that medical expenses for care provided by student health services or other health care providers, including laboratory procedures and emergency care are the responsibility of the student and not the physician assistant program or Mississippi State University. Any injury or accidental exposure IS NOT considered workmen's compensation since the student is not an employee of the site.

In the event the student has an exposure to infectious or environmental hazards [A3.08]:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/bbp/emergnedl.html>

- Flush the area thoroughly; wash with soap as appropriate.
- Seek other appropriate medical care (within 2 hours) including a Risk Exposure Evaluation at the site where the exposure occurred. The office to contact will vary by site, but is usually Infection Control, Employee/Occupational Health or the Emergency Department
  - Longest Student Health (662-325-4539)
  - Workforce Wellness at Ochsner Rush (601-703-4415)
  - Anderson Express Care (601-703-8450)
  - CDC (1-888-232-6348)
- Perform quick HIV test – This test is usually available at your nearest hospital ER/ Workforce wellness. The rapid HIV test should be performed on the source patient.
- Initiate prophylaxis if indicated. **\*\*Therapy should be initiated within 2-4 hours of exposure**
- Complete (in detail) an Incident Report at the site where the exposure occurred.

- Notify appropriate instructional faculty member.
- Students will complete the occupational exposure form and take this with them to the facility. This form will be placed in the Exxat Patient logging system for access during the Clinical year.
- Notify Longest University Health Services (662-325-7539) to have the student's medical record updated accordingly (if appropriate)
- Understand that the effects of infectious or environmental hazard injury or exposure may significantly affect student learning activities. This may include, but is not limited to, taking a leave of absence or withdrawing from the PA Program

### **WEATHER, EMERGENCY OR DISASTER-RELATED INCIDENTS [A1.03g]**

When there is weather, emergency, or disaster-related alerts, students should frequently check announcements that are distributed by email or on monitors in public areas around MSU-Meridian. If the campus is closed and/or evacuated, the student should leave immediately, and are expected to return to campus when MSU-Meridian announces reopening. Off-campus students should follow the weather/disaster policy of the assigned facility or site. If the facility is closed and/or evacuated, the student should leave and return when the site or facility re-opens. It is the off-campus student's responsibility to notify the program when he/she leaves as well as when he/she returns.

- Information will be available via the web at [Emergency Procedures | Meridian – Mississippi State University \(msstate.edu\)](#)
- Monitor local television and radio stations in the Meridian area or assigned clinical rotation area.

In the event of an emergency, MSU administration has the capability to transmit pertinent information through the mediums of websites, phone trees, e-mail, and text messaging to the entire spectrum of students, faculty, and staff.

Important information regarding this emergency notification system may be found at:

[Emergency Guidelines | Emergency Information \(msstate.edu\)](#)  
[The Maroon Alert System | Emergency Information \(msstate.edu\)](#)

### **Building Evacuations**

1. Try to remain with your class/group as you evacuate.
2. Avoid using elevators, if possible
3. Proceed to an outside meeting area, at least 500 feet from the building(s)
4. Once at the meeting area
  - Determine if everyone made it out safely.
  - Report any important details {missing students, causes, injuries} to University Police
  - Stay clear of emergency vehicles.
5. Everyone should stay in the meeting area until instructed by authorities.
6. Do not activate a fire alarm unless there is actually a fire.

[Emergency Procedures | Meridian – Mississippi State University \(msstate.edu\)](#)

### **Campus Evacuations Guidelines**

**In the event of a campus evacuation, Maroon Alert would provide instructions and other available information. To exit campus quickly and safely, consider the following:**

- Plan for an evacuation before an emergency occurs. You should avoid:
  - Congested areas and intersections
  - Construction zones
  - Emergency or dangerous areas

- Remain calm as you evacuate and encourage others to do the same.
- Use caution when walking & driving. Increased pedestrian traffic should be expected.
- Depending on the emergency, Contra-flow of traffic may be used. Emergency responders may be entering campus.
- Do not walk through campus to get to your car or room. Your goal should be to get out of harm's way.
- Consider walking instead of driving. This helps reduce traffic on the road and may be a faster way off campus.
- Starkville Campus- The SMART shuttles may be used to aid in an evacuation, depending on the emergency. However, do not attempt to stop a moving bus or board a bus that is full.
- Use caution at intersections. Law enforcement may be involved in emergency response and may not be available to direct traffic.
- Discuss an off-campus reunification location with family & friends.
- Be patient. You should expect delays during an emergency evacuation.

### Earthquake

#### **If indoors, Drop, Cover, and Hold On:**

- Drop – Get low to the ground
- Cover – Get under a table or desk and cover your head & neck
- Hold on – Hold on until the shaking stops.
- Do not evacuate until the shaking stops and it is safe to move.

#### **If outdoors:**

- Stay away from buildings, trees, poles, and other structures.
- Continue to keep clear of buildings and other structures. There could still be a risk of collapse.

#### **If in a vehicle:**

- Stop the vehicle away from buildings, poles, overpasses or other structures.
- Remain in the vehicle and avoid driving over bridges or other roadways that may have been damaged.

#### **After an earthquake:**

- Anticipate aftershocks.
- Be aware of other hazards (gas leaks, electrical wires, unstable structures, etc.)
- Assist others to safety.
- Do not attempt to enter a building that has been damaged.
- Report injuries and problems to 911.

### Severe Weather/Tornado

#### **The university continuously monitors weather conditions. Stay informed about current conditions:**

- **Watch** -A watch means that conditions are favorable for severe weather or tornados to develop. Monitor conditions and be ready to take action
- **Warning** -A warning means that severe weather or tornados have been identified by radar or by spotters. Immediate action is necessary.

#### **If a warning is issued:**

- Follow your building's severe weather / tornado response plan.
- Move to a room with few or small windows and on the lowest level.
- Assist others, as needed.
- Laboratories should be secured. Turn off gas burners and other equipment that could cause additional hazards.

- Do not attempt to drive during dangerous conditions. Move to a safe building and follow the instructions above.

### Sheltering in Place

#### **Sheltering from severe weather**

- Move to the lowest floor and into an interior room.
- If possible, avoid sheltering in rooms with windows.
- Stay completely in the room and cover your head & neck.

### Smoke or Fire

When a fire or potential fire is discovered in any building on campus take the following steps immediately

1. Warn others. Activate the nearest fire alarm pull box.
2. Notify the Campus Police (4-0199)
3. Campus Police or Staff will notify Meridian Fire Department.
4. Evacuate the building using the Emergency Evacuation Plan. **DO NOT USE ELEVATORS!**
5. Staff will assist students to a safe zone at least 500 ft. from the building. Each instructor/departement representative will conduct a head count for his/her class/departement.
6. Keep all roads clear for emergency response vehicles.
7. If fire can be extinguished by fire extinguisher, only those employees trained in their proper use should participate.
8. No one will be allowed into the building until fire officials deem the building safe and secure.

#### **The mnemonic RACE may help you remember what to do during a fire:**

- **R – Rescue & Remove** anyone from immediate danger from a fire. Try to keep groups/classes together.
- **A- Alarm Activate** the nearest fire alarm and call 911 with important information
- **C – Contain** Help contain the spread of the fire by closing doors in the area. Always feel of a door for heat before opening.
- **E – Extinguish** You may be able to extinguish small fires (about the size of an office trashcan). Do not waste evacuation time or put yourself in danger by trying to extinguish a fire. Evacuate for all fires & fire alarms.

Once you are a safe distance from the building, reunite with your group to make sure everyone is safe. Do not attempt to reenter a building.

#### **To operate a fire extinguisher, remember PASS:**

- **P – Pull** the pin
- **A – Aim** the extinguisher at the base of the fire
- **S – Squeeze** the handle
- **S – Sweep** from side to side at the base of the fire

[Smoke or Fire | Emergency Information \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.msstate.edu/safety/emergency-information)

### Suspicious Devices or Substances (gas leaks, bomb threats, drones)

#### **If you find a suspicious device or substance**

- Clear the area and call 911 from a safe distance.
- Do not use phone or radios near the area
- Follow instructions from police for possible evacuations

- If you see a drone / UAS flying over campus, please call University Police. If it lands, do not approach or try to capture it.

#### **If a bomb threat is phoned in**

- Obtain as much information as possible from the caller. Use the Bomb Threat Information Checklist to help you.
- Try to signal someone to call 911 while you continue taking notes.
- Relay important information to University Police. This may include background noises, voice tone, specific wording, etc.

### **Violence and Threats of Violence**

#### **Quick Safety Tips**

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times including exit locations.
- Always keep your doors locked.
- Store valuables out of sight in your vehicle.
- Obey all traffic signs on campus.
- Watch out for pedestrians.
- Mark/identify belongings brought to campus, such as computers, thumb drives, umbrellas, etc.
- Lost & Found is located in the Police office on the upper level.
- No weapons are allowed on campus.
- We are a smoke free campus

[Safety Tips | Meridian – Mississippi State University \(msstate.edu\)](#)

#### **Threats of violence or dangerous items**

- Leave the area and get to safety.
- Call 911 and describe the incident and those involved.
- Do not put yourself in harm's way to break up an argument.

#### **Hostage Situations**

- Contact the police, if possible.
- Avoid actions that could result in further harm of you or others.
- Don't speak unless spoken to.
- Position yourself away from windows and doors.
- Remain calm and make mental notes of the suspects.

#### **Active Threats**

**An Active Threat may be someone with a gun, knife, care, or other weapon. The person is indiscriminately attacking targets of opportunity. Mississippi State University recommends remembering Avoid, Deny, and Defend to help your response.**

- Avoid – Get away from the threat.
- Deny – If you cannot escape, lock or block yourself into a room. Turn off lights and your cellphone ringer.
- Defend – If you are unable to Avoid or Deny, you may need to defend yourself from an attacker. Coordinate with others and use any objects around you as weapons.

[Violence & Threats of Violence | Emergency Information \(msstate.edu\)](#)



## Program Information

### **Mission Statement**

The Mississippi State University-Meridian Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program will educate highly qualified, competent, healthcare providers who will increase access to care and provide primary care services to the diverse citizens of Mississippi.

### **Program Goals**

The PA faculty, guided by their values and principles, has developed the curriculum to reflect their commitment to the following:

- Recruit highly qualified applicants for enrollment as students in the MSU Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program
- Obtain Accreditation-Continuing status, develop and maintain a standard of excellence for the program
- Develop and maintain a curriculum that promotes a 90% or better graduation rate for students entering the MSU Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program
- Develop and maintain a curriculum that produces a PANCE first-time pass rate above the national average

The MSU Master of Physician Assistant Program goals and objectives, the strategic plan, and the mission and vision statements are reviewed annually and revised as needed by the program in order to ensure continuous program assessment and improvement are maintained and are consistent with that of Mississippi State University.

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Mississippi State University Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program focuses on preparing healthcare providers who will augment and extend healthcare provided by physicians. The program emphasizes the optimal team practice concept of providing accessible, affordable, quality healthcare.

### **ACCREDITATION**

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) is the recognized accrediting agency that protects the interests of the public and PA profession by defining the standards for PA education and evaluating PA education programs within the territorial United States to ensure their compliance with those standards. The ARC-PA encourages excellence in PA education through its accreditation process, by establishing and maintaining minimum standards of quality for educational programs. It awards accreditation to programs through a peer review process that includes documentation and periodic site visit evaluation to substantiate compliance with the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education. Source: [www.arc-pa.org](http://www.arc-pa.org)

The program has achieved Accreditation – Provisional status. Accreditation – Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program's ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding accreditation-provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.



The ARC-PA is an independent accrediting body authorized to accredit qualified PA educational programs leading to the professional credential, Physician Assistant (PA). Accreditation is a process of quality assurance that determines whether the program meets established standards for function, structure, and performance.

Only graduates of programs accredited by the ARC-PA or its predecessors are eligible to take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) offered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

Certification is required to be eligible for licensure to practice as a Physician Assistant. For details about accreditation as it relates to the MSU MPAS Program, please reference the MSU MPAS Program Accreditation webpage. ARC-PA Standards that apply to specific topics included in the MSU MPAS Student Handbook are denoted by brackets [ ] and superscript font with the associated Standard noted between the brackets.

## **PROGRAM DEFINED EXPECTATIONS FOR GRADUATES**

### **MSU MPAS Student Learning Outcomes**

MSU has adopted nationally recognized PA Professional Competencies as the basis for the Program Student Learning Outcomes. They outline the knowledge, skills and abilities of graduates at the completion of the program.

#### **Program Learning Outcome 1 (PLO 1): Medical Knowledge**

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. PA students must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care. Graduate PAs are expected to:

**PLO 1.1:** Apply the medical, behavioral, and social science knowledge necessary to effectively evaluate, treat, and manage patients across the lifespan taking into consideration the patient's personal, social and cultural values as well as social determinants of health.

**PLO 1.2:** Recognize, assess, diagnose, and longitudinally manage medical conditions in patients across the lifespan with various types of presentations evaluated in various practice settings.

**PLO 1.3:** Provide counseling, patient education, interventions, and appropriate referral for optimal health with health promotion, maintenance, and restoration.

#### **Program Learning Outcome 2 (PLO 2): Interpersonal and Communication Skills**

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass the verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic exchange of information. PA students must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients' families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system. Graduate PAs are expected to:

**PLO 2.1:** Demonstrate communication and skills which facilitates the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and other health professionals through a sensitive and respectful manner.

**PLO 2.2:** Utilize verbal and nonverbal communication skills in a compassionate and culturally responsive manner to accurately assess patient presentation and effectively deliver the management plan through oral and written methods.

**PLO 2.3:** Exhibit professional and ethical behaviors and attitudes becoming of a medical care provider.

#### **Program Learning Outcome 3 (PLO 3): Patient care**

Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. PA students must demonstrate effective, safe, high quality, equitable health care practice. PA students must obtain a relevant medical history, adequately perform physical examinations, and implement treatment plans on patients of all age groups, appropriate to the patient's condition. In addition, PA students must demonstrate proficiency in technical procedures and health care that are effective, patient-centered, safe, compassionate, and culturally appropriate for the treatment of medical problems and the promotion of health. Graduate PAs are expected to:

**PLO 3.1:** Collaborate effectively within interprofessional teams to provide high quality, multi-disciplinary, patient-centered health care for all patients.

**PLO 3.2:** Develop patient-centered diagnostic and therapeutic intervention plans based on patient care preferences, current scientific evidence, social determinants of health and informed clinical judgment.

**PLO 3.3:** Perform procedural and technical skills required for entry-level PA practice.

#### **Program Learning Outcome 4 (PLO 4): Professionalism**

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals in the delivery of health care.

Professionalism involves prioritizing the interests of others above one's own. PA students must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism requires that Pas practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency, or mental illness. PA students must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to diverse patient populations, and strict adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Graduate Pas are expected to demonstrate:

**PLO 4.1:** Foster ethical relationships with all members of an interdisciplinary healthcare team, while acknowledging professional and personal limitations.

**PLO 4.2:** Describe the role of a physician assistant including ethical and profession standards, as well as, legal and regulatory requirements governing PA practice.

**PLO 4.3:** Demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' disability status, special healthcare needs, and social determinants of health in all interactions.

#### **Program Learning Outcome 5: Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**

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

**PLO 5.1:** Critically evaluate published practice guidelines and research literature to advance medical knowledge and improve patient outcomes.

**PLO 5.2:** Engage in self-assessment of medical knowledge, professionalism, social interactions and physical limitations to guide on-going professional development and improve patient care.

#### **Program Learning Outcome 6: Systems-Based Practice**

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which health care is delivered. PA students must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost, while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient. Pas should work to improve the health care system of which their practices are a part. Graduate Pas are expected to:

**PLO 6.1:** Identify components and utilize resources of the healthcare system to support evidence-based patient care and the application of public health and preventative care practices.

**PLO 6.2:** Demonstrate knowledge of Mississippi healthcare disparities and social determinants of health to develop evidence-based healthcare strategies to reduce these disparities for individuals, communities, and the state.

#### **CURRICULUM**

The MSU-MPAS Program consists of seven (7) continuous semesters of rigorous graduate level training, covering all areas of medicine. The didactic phase of the program provides students with a strong background in basic medical science, stressing the importance of patient evaluation and teamwork in medicine such as clinical medicine, patient assessment, pharmacology, pathophysiology and diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

Traditional classroom lectures are supplemented with case-based learning, team based learning, group projects, simulated patient experiences, interprofessional education and medical procedure training.

The clinical phase of the program provides students with clinical rotation educational experience. Students are placed with preceptors to mentor the PA student through actual patient interaction. The focus of the clinical rotations is to provide students with experiences to succeed as excellent primary care medicine providers upon graduation.

Primary clinical rotation areas include pediatrics, behavioral medicine, general surgery, women's health, emergency medicine, family medicine, and internal medicine. Students will also have one (1) elective and one (1) preceptorship rotation which will be selected from various medical and surgical subspecialties. Following schematics include a curriculum plan for the entire PA program and a sample week from one semester of the program. [A3.14 d,e]

**COURSE CURRICULUM [3.14 d,e]**

Physician Assistant Curriculum Mississippi State University		
Year One: Didactic Phase (14 months)		
Course		Credit Hours
Semester: Spring 2023		
PAS 6016	Human Anatomy and Physiology	6
PAS 6026	Patient Assessment	6
PAS 6013	Introduction to the PA Profession	3
PAS 6204	Principles of Pharmacology	4
	Total hrs.	19
Semester: Summer		
PAS 6107	Clinical Medicine I	7
PAS 6023	Clinical Diagnostic Methods	3
PAS 6103	Clinical Decision Making	3
PAS 6213	Behavioral Medicine	3
PAS 6104	Pathophysiology	4
	Total hrs.	20
Semester: Fall		
PAS 6208	Clinical Medicine II	8
PAS 6112	Research Methods I	2
PAS 6022	Clinical Genetics	2
PAS 6113	Health Promotion & Disease Prevention	3
PAS 6102	Clinical Skills	2
PAS 6012	The Art of Medicine	2
	Total	19
Semester: Spring 2022		
PAS 6203	Clinical Practice Issues	3
PAS 6223	Clinical Specialties	3
PAS 8302	Clinical Transitions	2
PAS 6202	Research Methods II	2
		10
Year Two: Clinical Phase (15 months)		
Clinical Rotations (March)		
PAS 8313	Women's Health Rotation	3
		3
Semester: Summer		
PAS 8301	Seminar I	1
PAS 8308	Family Medicine Rotation	8
PAS 8323	General Surgery Rotation	3
	Total	12
Semester: Fall		
PAS 8343	Behavioral Medicine Rotation	3
PAS 8353	Emergency Medicine Rotation	3
PAS 8303	Pediatrics Rotation	3
PAS 8333	Internal Medicine Rotation	3
PAS 8321	Seminar II	1
		13
Spring 2023		
PAS 8332	Seminar III	2
PAS 8363	Elective Rotation	3
PAS 8322	Capstone Project	2
PAS 8312	Summative Experience	2
PAS 8403	Clinical Preceptorship	3
	Total	12
	Total Program Hours	108

# EXAMPLE WEEKLY CALENDAR

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00-9:00 AM	Assessments Advising	PE Checkoff	Patient Assessment Intro and History	Patient PE Practice	
9:00-10:00 AM					PA Profession
10:00-11:00 AM				Writing Bootcamp	
11:00-12:00PM	Director's Hour	Faculty Meeting	Physical Exam Lecture		
NOON					
1:00-2:00 PM	Gross Anatomy	Physiology	Pharmacology	Pharmacology	Admin/ Remediation
2:00-3:00 PM					
3:00-4:00 PM		Gross Anatomy	Physiology		
4:00-5:00 PM					
	PA Excel Tutoring 5-8				



## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **PAS 6016 Human Anatomy and Physiology for the Physician Assistant**

[6 Credits] Instruction in clinical gross anatomy and physiology for the physician assistant student. The course provides essential knowledge of the major anatomical regions, structures of the body and the physiologic functions related to health and disease.

### **PAS 6026 Patient Assessment for the Physician Assistant**

[6 credits] Instructs students in the methods of performing a history and physical examination. Students develop the knowledge and skills essential for performing a comprehensive medical history and physical examination. The course emphasizes patient interviewing, acquiring a medical database, and performing a comprehensive physical examination.

### **PAS 6013 Introduction to the Physician Assistant Profession**

[3 credits] Instructional course designed to introduce the entry-level physician assistant student to the unique origins, development, practice laws, and workforce trends of the profession. This course allows the student to develop a thorough understanding of the role of the physician assistant.

### **PAS 6023 Clinical Diagnostic Methods for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Lecture course with three components: radiologic study ordering and interpretation, ECG interpretation, and laboratory study ordering, performance, and interpretation. This course provides skills in ordering/interpreting lab values from chemistry, hematology, immunology, microbiology, parasitology, virology, genetics, and mycology testing for use in clinical practice.

### **PAS 6012 The Art of Medicine for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Introduces students to clinical ethics, health disparities, and cultural competence as they influence the practice of medicine. The course emphasizes the human factors that affect the delivery of culturally appropriate, patient-centered healthcare for patients across the lifespan.

### **PAS 6022 Clinical Genetics for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Lecture-based course designed to provide the entry-level physician assistant student with a basic understanding of medical genetics. The course will review basic molecular genetics, molecular terminology, and inheritance patterns. The student will receive instruction in various diagnostic techniques associated with medical genetics.

### **PAS 6107 Clinical Medicine I for the Physician Assistant**

[7 credits] Introduces the student to human disease processes, their origins, mechanisms of action and effects on the human body with emphasis on the clinical manifestations of the disease process. Students will integrate knowledge from Patient Assessment and the basic sciences.

### **PAS 6103 Clinical Decision Making for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Designed to build upon the skills developed Patient Assessment. The course will utilize problem-based learning techniques, allowing the participant to apply the developing skills of critical thinking, clinical reasoning and problem solving. The course will provide instruction in the development of a thorough, patient appropriate, differential diagnosis.



**PAS 6113 Health Promotion & Disease Prevention for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Lecture-based, active learning course where the student is given the opportunity to value prevention as a major aspect of healthcare and to develop skills that integrate health promotion/disease prevention into the role of a physician assistant.

**PAS 6104 Pathophysiology for the Physician Assistant**

[4 credits] Introduces the student to human disease processes, their origins, mechanisms of action and effects on the human body with emphasis on the clinical manifestations of the disease process. Students will integrate knowledge from Patient Assessment and the basic sciences.

**PAS 6112 Research Methods I for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Introduction to basic research techniques needed for clinical practice. Students will develop proficiency in searching, interpreting, and applying evidence-based research in the clinical setting. Students will be instructed in appropriate tenets of intellectual honesty in the academic and professional setting.

**PAS 6102 Clinical Skills for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Students are introduced to common skills used in the clinical practice of medicine. This course is designed to prepare the student for supervised clinical practice by introducing procedures commonly performed in the clinical setting.

**PAS 6204 Principles of Pharmacology for the Physician Assistant**

[4 credits] Basic introduction to the principles of pharmacology and to drug classes of particular relevance to the physician assistant. The course provides the student with a fundamental knowledge of basic pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetic and pharmacogenomics principles, basic properties, mechanisms, uses, adverse effects and interactions of relevant drugs.

**PAS 6208 Clinical Medicine II for the Physician Assistant**

[8 credits] Continuation of Clinical Medicine I, designed to prepare the student for supervised clinical practice.

**PAS 6203 Clinical Practice Issues for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] The course instructs students in advanced clinical practice issues affecting the physician assistant profession. Topics include billing and coding, the Medicare/Medicaid system, credentialing, clinical professionalism, prescriptive rights, interdisciplinary healthcare practice and state/national licensure, and certification.

**PAS 6213 Behavioral Medicine for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Provides students with the ability to explore the psychological parameters of human behavior and identify the relationship of psychological distress to physical illness. Students study the processes underlying human growth and development across the lifespan and how they apply to healthcare.

**PAS 6223 Clinical Specialties for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Introduces the physician assistant student to the clinical specialties of surgery, pediatrics, and women's health. Students are instructed in the foundations of these specialties to prepare for clinical practice. Students learn basic knowledge and clinical skills unique to these practices.

**PAS 6202 Research Methods II for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Designed to continue the physician assistant student's proficiency in research. This course will refine skills in literature analysis and the formatting of conclusions for the evidence-based practice of evaluation and management of disease processes.

**PAS 8302 Clinical Transitions for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Physician assistant students gain knowledge and skills that facilitate the transition from the academic to clinical environment and promote high quality clinical education experiences. Practical learning that simulates the diversity of healthcare disciplines and services encountered during clinical training.

**PAS 8308 Family Medicine Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[8 credits] Designed to give students exposure to the spectrum of family medicine outpatient and/or medical practice. Students will learn the principles of routine (well) care, management of acute illnesses, and management of chronic/multiple diagnoses for patients across the lifespan.

**PAS 8333 Internal Medicine Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Designed to give students exposure to understand and manage patient problems in an internal medicine practice setting.

**PAS 8303 Pediatric Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Designed to give students exposure to the spectrum of pediatric practice, including care of infants, children and adolescents in routine well-child care, inpatient and/or outpatient care and care of acute and chronic illnesses.

**PAS 8313 Women's Health Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Designed to give the student practical experience in the diagnosis, evaluation, and management of problems and issues associated with women's health care.

**PAS 8323 General Surgery Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Designed to give students experience in the care of patients undergoing elective or acute surgical procedures. The student will perform preoperative history and physicals; assist in the operating room; be involved in immediate postoperative care and stabilization; and assist with postoperative care.

**PAS 8343 Behavioral Medicine Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Designed to give practical experience in the diagnosis and management of patients needing behavioral therapy in the clinical setting. Students will develop their ability to recognize psychiatric diagnoses in both the outpatient and/or inpatient settings.

**PAS 8353 Emergency Medicine Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] Designed to introduce the student to health care in Emergency Medicine. The student is given the opportunity to understand and manage patient problems across the lifespan in an emergency care setting.

**PAS 8363 Elective Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] The elective is designed to give the student additional clinical exposure in a medical/surgical area of their choosing. May be completed in any specialty or subspecialty chosen by the student and approved by the Clinical Coordinator.

**PAS 8403 Preceptorship Rotation for the Physician Assistant**

[3 credits] The preceptorship is designed to give the student additional clinical exposure in a medical/surgical area of their choosing. This opportunity is often used by preceptors to assess the student for possible employment. May be completed in any specialty or subspecialty chosen by the student.

**PAS 8301 Seminar I for the Physician Assistant**

[1 credit] This discussion-based course meets when students return from clinical rotations. Students present clinical cases, reflect on clinical experiences, and prepare for the next clinical experience.

**PAS 8321 Seminar II for the Physician Assistant**

[1 credit] This discussion-based course meets when students return from clinical rotations. Students present clinical cases, reflect on clinical experiences, and prepare for the next clinical experience and transition into clinical practice.

**PAS 8332 Seminar III for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] This discussion-based course meets when students return from clinical rotations. Students present clinical cases, reflect on clinical experiences, and prepare for the next clinical experience and transition into clinical practice.

**PAS 8312 Summative Experience for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Course curriculum required by accrediting body. The program must conduct and document a summative evaluation of each student within the final four months of the program to verify that each student is prepared to enter clinical practice.

**PAS 8322 Capstone Project for the Physician Assistant**

[2 credits] Course provides opportunity for completion of a Capstone project with tools and strategies addressed in Research Methods I and II.

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

A candidate for the MPAS degree must possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in the five areas, along with the technical requirements, discussed below. Reasonable accommodations will be made for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. All individuals must be able to perform these functions independently, with or without a reasonable accommodation. Generally, unless a specific accommodation is approved that does not fundamentally alter program requirements, third parties cannot be used to assist students in accomplishing curricular requirements in the five skill areas or the technical requirements specified below.

Applicants and students must meet and maintain the following technical standards necessary to complete the MSU MPAS curricula. [3.15e]

### Observation and Sensation

The MPAS student must possess sufficient visual, auditory, and tactile sensation to receive appropriate information in the classroom, laboratory, and other educational and clinical settings. Sensation must be satisfactory to receive verbal and nonverbal communications from patients and others, and to perform inspection, auscultation, and palpation techniques during the physical examination.

### Communication

The MPAS student must be able to effectively communicate with and effectively observe patients, family members, and other clinicians. This includes expressive and receptive modes of verbal, nonverbal, and written communication. The student must have the ability to accurately assess receptive communication in order to make appropriate and timely responses. The student must be able to communicate attentively, effectively, and sensitively to others.

### Motor Functions

Students must have sufficient strength and coordination to perform the activities required of a physician assistant. These include but are not limited to performing a physical examination utilizing diagnostic instruments and techniques in palpation and percussion. Students must have sufficient stamina to move safely within classroom, laboratory, examination rooms, treatment rooms, and operating rooms for long periods. The student must have sufficient coordination to move about patient care environments, and sufficient dexterity to use common medical instruments. Students must be able to arrange for transportation between educational and clinical settings.

### Intellectual Capability

Clinical problem solving and reasoning requires these intellectual abilities and encompass those to accurately measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, learn, and retain information and make decisions in a timely manner. Students must be able to comprehend two and three-dimensional structures and must be able to understand diagnostic testing and treatment regimens.

### Behavioral and Social Attributes

PA students must possess the emotional health required for the use of their intellectual and mental abilities, including logical thinking, good judgment, impulse control, empathy, interest, and motivation. These abilities should be sufficient to assure the development and maintenance of therapeutic relationships with patients and those who care for them. Individuals must be able to maintain emotional health despite stress, uncertainty, and physically taxing workloads and to adapt to changing situations while handling the responsibilities associated with medical education and patient care.

### Technical Requirements

MSU MPAS will consider for admission, progression, and graduation individuals who demonstrate the knowledge and the ability to perform or learn to perform the skills described in this document. Individuals

are assessed not only on their scholastic accomplishments, but also on their skills, knowledge, and ability to achieve the [learning outcomes](#) of the program's curriculum and to graduate as skilled, safe and effective practitioners of medicine.

Therefore, students must demonstrate competency in the following technical requirements:

1. The applicant/student must have ability to observe and participate in experiments in the basic sciences.
2. The applicant/student must have ability to analyze, synthesize, extrapolate, solve problems, and reach diagnostic and therapeutic judgments in a timely manner.
3. The applicant/student must have sufficient use of the senses such as vision, hearing, and the somatic sensation necessary to perform a physical examination.
4. The applicant/student must have ability to establish and maintain professional relationships with patients, faculty, and peers.
5. The applicant/student must have ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with patients, and colleagues.
6. The applicant/student must have ability to perform routine laboratory tests and diagnostic procedures.
7. The applicant/student must have ability to perform appropriately in emergencies.
8. The applicant/student must have ability to display good judgment in the assessment and treatment of patients.

### Program Performance Expectations

The Master of Physician Assistant Studies program at Mississippi State University is a full-time professional program designed to prepare qualified candidates for healthcare service under physician supervision via a rigorous academic and clinical curriculum. The course of study is focused and intense. As such, it is important for prospective students to understand the demands of the program in advance in order to assess their ability to successfully complete it.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of skills and competencies considered essential for success in the program. As discussed below, MSU is committed to the full integration of individuals with disabilities or other unique needs into its programs. Thus, as discussed below, the specific methods of instruction or assessment for the skills listed herein may be varied in response to a timely request for a reasonable accommodation. However, these expectations are considered essential and each student is responsible for successfully meeting them, either with or without a reasonable accommodation.

#### **1. Medical Knowledge**

- Performance on timed, multiple choice written examinations, including interpretation of images, laboratory values and complex calculations.
- Performance on timed objective structured clinical examinations, including but not limited to responding to written and oral prompts to conduct appropriate history and/or physical examination, order and/or interpret diagnostic studies, recommending rescue and longitudinal treatment plans, and providing patient education which may include information recall or accessing and applying evidence-based guidelines.

Examples: interpretation of urinalysis, arterial blood gases, routine blood chemistry, magnetic resonance imaging, computed tomography, ultrasound, radiographs, electrocardiographs, echocardiograms, body fluid analysis, body fluid cultures, pulmonary function tests, nuclear medicine studies

- Work in clinical settings external to MSU and MSU-Meridian, which requires transportation, timely arrival, and the ability to physically navigate clinical and office settings.
- 2. Interpersonal and Communication Skills**
- Demonstrate general English language proficiency in speaking and writing.
  - Present formal and informal presentations as an individual and collaborative in a group
  - Upholding professional communication standards during patient, faculty, staff, and peer interactions
  - Providing oral presentations regarding patient presentation, evaluation and management of mock and/or live patients to faculty and/or preceptors
  - Exhibiting written communication and technical writing skills becoming of a graduate medical education student
  - Accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes
  - Demonstrate oral communication skills to mock or live patients of diverse backgrounds which establish therapeutic relationship and evoke positive change in patient behavior.
  - Maintains demeanor, behavior, verbal and nonverbal communication becoming of a healthcare provider.
  - Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety.
- 3. Patient Care**
- Effectively engage in optimal team-based practice to include various specialties, ancillary services and community resources
  - Demonstrate compassionate and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families.
  - Obtain essential and accurate information about their patients through all senses and lines of questioning.
  - Make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient.
  - Safely perform medical and surgical procedures, including:
    - o Incision and drainage of an abscess
    - o Provide safe retraction intra-operatively.
    - o Suture surgical and traumatic wounds
    - o Access and cannulate peripheral and central venous systems.
  - Interpret diagnostic images, including radiographs, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, ultrasound, and nuclear medicine studies.
  - Demonstrate sensitivities and responsiveness to the culture, age, gender and abilities of individuals.
- 4. Professionalism**
- Discern complex medical legal scenarios, demonstrating fair and equitable judgment in consideration of current applicable guidelines and laws.
  - Discern complex ethical scenarios respecting patient autonomy with an attitude becoming of a medical professional.
  - Interact with patients, patient families, peers, preceptors, faculty and staff with and without university affiliation, demonstrating cultural competence.
- 5. Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**
- Survey published medical journal articles and current guidelines to guide safe and effective medical decision-making.
  - Reflect on academic, clinical, and professional performance to create action plans and achieve desired outcomes.

- Utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education.
- Recognize and appropriately address personal psychosocial limitations, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others.

#### **6. Systems Based Practice**

- Effectively utilize information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education.
- Partner with supervising physicians, healthcare managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of healthcare 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.

#### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

As noted above, MSU is committed to the full integration of individuals with disabilities or other unique needs into its programs. The university does not discriminate based on any protected status including disability and will provide reasonable accommodations in response to timely requests.

The above listed skills and competencies are considered essential standards of the PA program. This means that each prospective PA program student must be capable of performing them, either with or without a reasonable accommodation for a disability. Prospective students are therefore strongly encouraged to review the list above, carefully consider whether any of these skills or competencies are likely to present an obstacle for them and contact the Program Director with any questions or concerns. Requests for accommodations should be made as far in advance as is reasonably possible, pursuant to MSU policies. Requests may be submitted to the university's Disability Resource Center, which can be reached at [drc@msstate.edu](mailto:drc@msstate.edu) or at 662-325-3335.

Whether and when to disclose a disability or request an accommodation is solely the decision of the student or prospective student. However, one factor in determining the reasonableness of a given accommodation will be the time frame needed for implementation. In cases involving clinical placements, for example, the university may reasonably require significant time to arrange certain accommodations with providers and/or to attempt to secure alternative arrangements.

Consequently, given the intense and demanding nature of the program, students and prospective students are strongly urged to communicate potential needs as far in advance as possible.

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **1.0 Rules, Regulations, and Policies of the University and Affiliate Institutions [A3.01, A3.02]**

- a. Program Rules and Regulations apply to all students, principal faculty, and the Program Director (PD) regardless of location, except in circumstances where differences exist between program policies and those established at clinical rotation sites. [A3.01]
- b. In addition to the rules and regulations contained here within, students are expected to adhere to the rules and policies of Mississippi State University, and to the rules, regulations, and policies of any other institution or facility where they may be assigned. Any conflicting policies should be reported to the Program Director. All information herein is subject to change with timely notification to students in writing. [A3.02]

## **2.0 Definitions**

- a. Program Director (PD) is responsible for managing and coordinating the PA Program for the students, faculty, and staff.
- b. Academic Coordinator is the PA Program faculty member serving as a leader for the didactic portion of the Program.
- c. Clinical Coordinator is the PA Program faculty member serving as a leader for the clinical portion of the Program.
- d. Principal Faculty are those faculty working at least 50% FTE with primary academic responsibility assigned to the PA program who report to the program director.
- e. Instructional Faculty are the individuals providing instruction or supervision during the didactic and/or clinical phases of the Program, regardless of length of time of instruction, faculty status or rank.
- f. PA Program course is one listed in the Program curriculum sequence and deemed integral to student preparation for the PA profession.

## **3.0 Student Information**

Any change in a student's name, address, telephone number, and/or emergency contact phone number(s) must be reported immediately to the Program Administrative Assistant via MSU email account. This is in addition to reporting changes to the University through Banner.

## **4.0 Professionalism [A3.17d, A3.17g, C.3.02]**

- a. Each student is subject to the Mississippi State University Code of Conduct. Refer to the policy for further detail: [A3.11, A3.17d, A3.17g] <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/0304.pdf>  
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91100.pdf>
- b. As future medical providers, Physician Assistants students are expected to achieve and maintain high standards of conduct and behavior. As the student practices and prepares to become a healthcare professional, these standards of conduct and behavior are an integral part of the student assessment, promotion, and completion of the curriculum. In the academic, clinical and associated settings, the MSU PA Program student is expected to exhibit the following behaviors and/or characteristics:

### **A. Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others**

- 1. Acts with integrity in all situations
- 2. Displays academic honesty
  - i. Avoids sharing or receiving evaluation information or materials.
  - ii. Avoids plagiarism and cheating.
  - iii. Submits true and accurate reports.
  - iv. Completes evaluations objectively and honestly.
- 3. Follows rules and procedures of all associated organizations.
- 4. Encourages other to behave honestly and ethically.
- 5. Assumes responsibility for personal actions and performance.
- 6. Exercises prudent judgement in decision-making.

### **B. Personal Improvement and Achievement**

- 1. Demonstrates initiative to engage in and improve learning.
  - i. Present in class and related activities.
  - ii. Punctual to class and related activities.
  - iii. Prepared for participation and assessment for class and related activities.
- 2. Demonstrates initiative to improve competence.
- 3. Participates in classroom and self-directed learning.
- 4. Solicits feedback and guidance with poise.



5. Performs self-reflection for personal improvement.

**C. Respect to Self and Others**

1. Actively engages, listens, and participates in activities.
  2. Speaks respectfully to and about peers, faculty, staff, and patients.
  3. Avoids and disparages vulgar, abusive, or threatening comments or behavior.
  4. Present and punctual for all activities and events.
  5. Works in collaboration with others.
  6. Maintains strict confidentiality of patient records or patient encounters (including but not limited to all HIPAA rules and guidelines).
  7. Displays cultural sensitivity.
  8. Respects the privacy and property of others.
- c. Each student must report to either the Program Director or the Clinical Coordinator any incident of which they are cognizant, and which appears to be unethical or of questionable nature, or in violation of the PA Program Rules and Regulations. Each student must inform the appropriate responsible person(s) and seek guidance if any such incident occurs.

**5.0 Electronic Devices and Social Media Policy**

- a. The MSU PA Program requires laptop computer for enrollment; tablets and iPads are not compatible with all software and programs used by the program.
- b. Electronic devices and social media include all electronic-based technologies used as a means of communication and interaction among its users. Examples include, but are not limited to texting, emailing, and social networking. Students must maintain appropriate standards of conduct as it relates to the PA Program and professionalism as a physician assistant student. Failure to uphold these policies can be addressed as a professionalism violation.
- c. Each student must take responsibility and use prudent judgment related to all forms of social media. Threatening or harassing communication is strictly prohibited.
- d. Each student must not share any identifiable information about patients, other MSU students, faculty, employees, preceptors, or clinical affiliates via electronic means.
- e. All electronic communication with the MSU MPAS Program must be conducted via the free, University-supplied email account.
- f. By using a computer on the MSU IT infrastructure, students acknowledge that they are subject to the terms of the MSU IT policies and that they give their unrestricted consent to the monitoring, copying, and unrestricted distribution of any transmission/communication or image generated, received by, sent by, or stored in the computer. Noncompliance could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from an academic program, and civil or criminal liability.  
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/0112.pdf>  
<https://www.its.msstate.edu/about/policies/>
- g. A student should exercise prudent judgement when communicating through all forms of electronic communication and social media. Students should be cautious not to place themselves in any position that may compromise, embarrass, or harm themselves, patients, clinical supervisors or staff, faculty, peers, clinical sites, the PA program, or the University. The following information should never be shared through electronic communication or social media:
  - Confidential MSU information
  - Patient information, specific or non-specific
  - Images or recordings of academic or clinical activities
  - Intellectual or written materials owned by MSU and our partners

## **6.0 Student Role in Classroom and Clinical Site**

- a. The role of the physician assistant student during the course of their studies is that of a learner. Therefore, students are not permitted to assume functions that should be fulfilled by organizational employees. The PA Program does not allow students to substitute for:
  - instructional faculty (didactic or clinical). No student may be a course instructor of record for any component of the curriculum. [A3.04, A3.05, A3.06]
  - clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs). This is outlined in the PA Program Preceptor Manual that is provided to clinical preceptors. [A3.06]
- b. There are multiple physical examination and skill activities that occur throughout the program. In addition to training students in the role of practitioner, having students fill the role of patients during these activities helps them to become sensitive to the patient perspective. Additionally, active participation and repetition reinforce learning. Therefore, the PA Program:
  - Requires the participation of students as human subjects during selected courses. It is the expectation of the Program that each student willingly participates in all aspects of the physical exam and technical skills training in a professional and cooperative manner. At various times, students will be asked to wear clothing that will easily allow physical examination by another student.
  - When appropriate, a student may be asked to wear a modestly appropriate tank top and shorts.
  - Appropriate draping will be available during training.
- c. The PA Program does not require students to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors and does not require students to coordinate clinical sites and preceptors for program-required rotations. Students may provide contact information for potential clinical rotations, but this will not be required. All supervised clinical practice experiences will undergo the same clinical site and preceptor evaluation procedures prior to sending a student to that site. [A3.03]
- d. The PA Program will record student encounters with each other and/or standardized patients for the purposes of learning. Students are expected to participate in videotaped encounters and agree that such are for use of the PA Program's educational efforts solely and will not be utilized outside of class for any reason. Posting class related videotapes on the internet is a violation of professionalism and could result in dismissal from the program.

## **7.0 ACADEMIC POLICIES [A3.11; A3.17a, c- f]**

### **7.1 Program Assessment [A3.17d]**

- a. Each student is subject to the Mississippi State University Code of Conduct. Refer to the policy for further detail: [A3.11, A3.17d, A3.17g] <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/0304.pdf>  
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91100.pdf>
- b. According to the MSU MPAS Grading System: Only grades of "A" and "B" indicate satisfactory graduate work. A grade of "C" is considered unsatisfactory graduate work. See further discussion in [Probation](#) and [Dismissal](#).
- c. To remain in good academic standing in the PA Program, a student must be able to demonstrate the possession of the following:
  - a current cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0
  - satisfactory completion of PA Program administrative requirements
  - satisfactory evidence of acceptable professional conduct
- d. **Grading System**
  1. Letter grades in the didactic phase of the Physician Assistant Program are assigned as below.

#### **Letter Grade**

A (89.50-100.00)

B (79.50-89.49)

C (69.50-79.49)

F (less than 69.50)

2. The grade of “F” indicates failure in a course.
3. The grade of “I” or “NG” is recorded for a student whose work is satisfactory but for reasons beyond the student’s control, is incomplete at the time grades for the course are reported.
4. Scores of individual assessments will not be rounded. Final grade calculations will be rounded if greater than 0.50.

A graduate student who wishes to appeal a grade should refer to the MSU Grade Appeals Policy, Academic Operating Procedure (AOP) 13.14 [Grade Appeal & Academic Review Board | Policies \(msstate.edu\)](#) and appeal to the Academic Review Board.

- a. As part of the University’s grade appeal policy, faculty members are required to keep records on grades, examinations, projects, term papers, and other pertinent material not returned to the students on file for a minimum of six months.
  - 1) Grading policies and evaluation (test question, etc.) challenges for Program courses will be determined by the faculty.
  - 2) The PA Program follows the University Grade Grievance Policy. For more details on the University Grade Grievance Policy, refer to the MSU Graduate Student Catalog: Grade Grievance Procedure for Mississippi State University [A3.17d]  
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/1314.pdf>

e. **Examinations**

1. The Program Director has the option to re-examine any student at any time or administer any additional test or tests other than those regularly scheduled with the object of arriving at a more accurate evaluation of the student’s academic performance.
2. Examinations will not be administered prior to the scheduled time. If the student should miss an examination for an **excused absence**, a makeup exam will be given as the program schedule permits. The rescheduled exam may be different in format than the original exam, but it will assess the same content. Exams will not be rescheduled for an unexcused absence.
3. Students who arrive late for an assessment will not be given extra time to complete the assessment; a student will not be permitted to enter a testing location to begin an exam after another student has completed the exam and exited the testing location.
4. Examination feedback may be given to students in a variety of methods, at the discretion of the course instructor. No exam reviews will be permitted in the week scheduled for final exams.
5. Assessment delivery will vary and may include written, electronic, practical or a combination.
6. Students who wish to request a testing accommodation or modification must first review policy at <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91122.pdf>. Students requiring University-authorized accommodations should provide a written copy of the University authorization to course directors at the beginning of the course or upon determination of need.
7. Informal requests for undocumented disabilities or an individual student preference cannot be honored.

i. **COMPUTER/ELECTRONIC ASSESSMENTS**

- All personal belongings, (cellphones, books, backpacks, handbags, etc.) except a laptop computer, must be placed in a designated area 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time for the examination..
- All electronic devices must be powered off for the duration of the exam.
- Scratch paper may be provided by the proctor. If so, this must be turned in at the completion of the exam with the students name clearly identified.
- No exam content questions are permitted during the examination.
- Notify the proctor by raised hand if computer complications occur.
- Only the exam window (fully maximized) should be open during the test time; no exceptions unless instructed by the course instructor.
- Students are not permitted to leave the testing area prior to final submission, unless specified by the instructor. The student should report an emergent situation to the proctor and must be proctored while outside the testing area.
- After completion of the exam, students must exit quickly and quietly, respecting others. The students should exit the floor on which the assessment is administered.
- Students must not congregate outside the classroom.
- If a student arrives late for an assessment, the number of minutes late will be deduced from the total allowed time on the assessment.

**\*\*Failure to comply with these procedures will likely result in a score of zero on the assessment.**

### **7.2 Progression [A3.17a-c; C3.04]**

- a. A student must complete all PA Program courses in each semester with a Cumulative GPA  $\geq 3.0$  to qualify for progression in good academic standing.
  1. The first final course grade of "C" will result in the student progressing on Academic Probation. See [7.4 Probation](#).
  2. The second final course grade of "C" will result in dismissal from the program. See [Dismissal](#).
- b. Each course within a given semester must be successfully completed prior to progression to the next semester. All curricular components and other PA Program completion requirements must be completed within a 40-months timeframe from the date of matriculation into the program. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Program Director.
- c. Professionalism violations may also affect progress in the program. See [7.4 Probation](#) and [Dismissal](#).

### **7.3 Remediation [A2.05f, A3.17f, A3.19d,e C3.03,]**

Students are assessed on the program's established competencies, professionalism, and performance on an ongoing basis. The faculty may identify the at-risk student at any time through review of exam grades, advisory sessions, faculty meetings, and/or any other observable behavior. Formative assessments are useful for monitoring a student's learning and provide feedback to the student to improve their understanding of the material. Summative assessments evaluate a student's learning at the end of an instructional unit/module and/or course. Formative and Summative assessments are outlined in each course syllabus.

### **Didactic Courses**

- a. **Formative assessment:** if a student scores less than 80% on a **formative** assessment, the student is encouraged to contact the course director for content clarification and informal remediation to include identification of areas of strengths and weaknesses.
- b. **Summative assessment:** if a student scores less than 80% on a **summative** assessment, the student **must** contact the course director via MSU email within 48 hours of grade release to establish a remediation plan, which may include the following.
  - i. Root cause analysis
  - ii. Identification of knowledge deficiencies
  - iii. Develop action plan for future success
  - iv. Outline Remediation Assignment with criteria for satisfactory completion and due date. Unsatisfactory completion of a remediation assignment, including timely submission, will be treated as a professionalism violation and disqualify the student for reassessment.

**Grade Change Reassessment:** The student **may** elect to reassess upon successful completion of a remediation assignment

- v. Reassessment method and format may vary
- vi. Two (2) reassessments are permitted for courses  $\geq 5$  credit hours
- vii. One (1) reassessment is permitted for courses  $< 5$  credit hours
- viii. Three (3) reassessments are permitted per semester across all courses
- ix. Timing:
  1. The program will publish reassessment date options.
  2. All grade change reassessment must be completed prior to finals week of any semester.
  3. Grade change reassessment of an assessment occurring during finals week will be permitted only if a student has a final course grade of less than 79.5%. Remediation and reassessment must occur within 7 days of finals week assessment grade release.
- x. Grade Change Procedure
  1. The student must achieve a minimum score of 70% on reassessment to be eligible for grade change, and the maximum recoverable score is 80%.
  2. If a student scores in 70-79.99%, the raw score will be entered in the gradebook
  3. If a student scores  $\geq 80\%$ , a grade of 80 will be recorded in the gradebook. Gradebook entry of any reassessment scoring 80% or above will be 80%.
  4. The original score will remain in the gradebook for any student who scores less than 80% on reassessment.

**"Supervised Clinical Practice Experience: Remediation policies will be outlined in detail in the clinical handbook Professionalism**

Professionalism is a graded component of multiple courses and part of the competency each student is required to attain for completion of the program. The program utilizes early concern notes for tracking and documenting deficiencies and concerns related to professionalism violations and/or deficiencies. [See 4.0 Professionalism \(A3.17d, A3.17g, C.3.021\)](#)

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Early Concern Note: Meet with Program Faculty
  - i. The student will be required to meet with the a faculty member and/or Program Director to discuss the violation and strategies for improved professional behavior.
  - ii. Remediation assignments may be required including but not limited to
    - a. Reflective journaling

- b. Essay assignments
  - c. Role play exercises
- 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Early Concern Note: Meet with Program Director
  - i. The student will be required to meet with the Program Director to discuss the unprofessional behaviors and additional strategies for improved professional behavior.
  - ii. Remediation assignments as discussed above will be required.
  - iii. The student may be placed on academic probation for professionalism violation.
  - iv. The student may be referred to the Promotion and Retention committee for review and recommendations.
- 3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Early Concern Note: Review before Promotions committee
  - i. The student will be required to meet with the Promotion and Retention committee to discuss unprofessional behaviors.
  - ii. Remediation assignments as discussed above will be required.
  - iii. The student will be placed on academic probation for professionalism violation.
  - iv. The student may be removed from clinical rotations with delay of graduation.
  - v. The student may be dismissed if the student exhibits unprofessional behavior refractory to counseling and remediation.
- 4. Severe and/or egregious professionalism violations which violate any policies, laws, or the safety, security or rights of self or others will require skipping any level of Early Concern Note and warrant probationary action or dismissal.

#### **7.4 Probation**

A student will be placed on probation for any of the following.

- a. Any course grade < 80 % or “C” after completed remediation.
- b. Any course grade < 80 % or “C” earned after remediation attempt allowance has been met.
- c. Professionalism violations refractory to remediation efforts with with unsatisfactory remediation efforts.
- d. Egregious professionalism violation.

Probationary status for academic reasons must be removed by the end of the following semester by earning a GPA of 3.0 or above or completion of a failed rotation. Probationary status for professionalism reasons will be removed as outlined in the probationary letter. A student who incurs additional academic or professional offenses while on probation will be dismissed from the program. After a student has been removed from probation, any academic or professional offense warranting probationary status for a second time will result in dismissal from the program.

To protect the success of the student, individuals who are on probation for academic or professional reasons will be relieved of their programmatic extra-curricular activities, including relief of student government roles.

#### **7.5 Deceleration**

- a. The MSU MPAS Program does not permit deceleration for academic reasons. [A3.17f]
- b. Students who take a leave of absence for extenuating life events may be granted deceleration on a case-by-case basis. The student is strongly encouraged to meet all program requirements as scheduled. The restart date for that student will be determined by the Program.

## **7.6 Dismissal**

- a. The following will result in dismissal from the program. **[A3.17e]**
  1. Final cumulative grade of F in a PA Program course, or failure of a course for any other reason.
  2. Second final cumulative grade of less than “B” (80%) in any PA Program course
  3. Failure to achieve letter grade B in a clinical rotation course and/or incomplete performance in a second clinical rotation course.
  4. Failing to meet GPA requirements to enter the clinical phase.
  5. Final cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 at the conclusion of the PA Program Curriculum.
  6. Failure to successfully complete and pass (80%) any component of the end-of-program Summative Evaluation, including the Capstone Project (PAS 8322) and the Summative Experience (PAS 8312).
  7. Egregious unprofessional behavior at any point while matriculating through the PA Program, including but not limited to
    - Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while participating in any MSU PA Program sponsored educational activity or while present in any facility where PA Program spaces.
    - Conviction of a felony or offense involving moral turpitude while a PA student.
    - Failure to adhere to these rules or to relevant policies of Mississippi State University or the MSU MPAS Program.
  8. Persistent unprofessional behavior refractory to remediation.
  9. Second academic or professional offense warranting academic probation.
  10. Failure to comply with program or clinical site administrative assignments.
  11. Considering the public responsibility of a Physician Assistant, violations of the Code of Student Conduct and/or Student Honor Code are not tolerated. Allegations, including academic dishonesty of any kind, will be referred to the appropriate office as outlined in the policy for due process. If the student is found to be a responsible party for violation of either policy, the student will be dismissed from the program and ineligible for readmission. Refer to the following MSU policies. A student will not be permitted to transition to the clinical phase of the program until a decision is reached, which may result in delay in graduation.  
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/1207>  
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/sites/www.policies.msstate.edu/files/91100.pdf>
- b. Should a student dispute the dismissal, they can consult the University Disciplinary Procedures section of the MSU Graduate Catalog: <http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/academic-probation-dismissal-appeal/>
- c. Any student who is dismissed may reapply. Applicants must follow the stated application procedures to be considered for re-admission. Applicants for re-admission are evaluated, once annually, along with new applicants..  
The approval and terms of readmission are solely in the discretion of the program faculty. Where readmission is granted the normal practice will be for the student to repeat all courses beginning with Semester One of the Program. In exceptional cases where the program faculty determine circumstances warrant, a student may be permitted to rejoin the program at a later stage, provided they have completed all academic prerequisites.



### **7.7 Summative Evaluation [C3.04]**

- a. Prior to graduation, students in the PA Program will be required to pass the Summative Evaluation, including the Summative Experience course (PAS 8312) and Capstone Project (PAS 8322) to verify that each student has attained the competencies to enter clinical practice. This will consist of topics such as patient care skills, diagnostic interpretation, medical decision-making, interpersonal skills, and professionalism.
- b. The Summative Evaluation will include multiple evaluative components including an End of Curriculum Exam, skills assessments, and Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs). [C3.04]
- c. The Summative Experience will occur within the final four months of the clinical year, prior to graduation.

### **7.8 Program Completion**

In order to complete the PA Program, a student must satisfactorily meet the following guidelines. [C3.04]

- a. Be in good academic standing
- b. Cumulative GPA  $\geq 3.0$
- c. Meet MSU graduate school standards for graduation
- d. Satisfactorily complete each course set forth in the program's curriculum
- e. Attain supervised clinical practice experience
- f. Satisfactorily complete the summative evaluation, including successful completion of Summative Experience (PAS 8312) and Capstone Project (PAS 8322) with a minimum grade of "B." [A3.14d, A3.17a, A3.17c]

### **7.9 Student Evaluation and Input**

Student input is valued by the PA Program, and it is crucial for the continual growth and improvement of the program and faculty. At various points in the program, the student will be asked to complete surveys on curriculum, program policies, effectiveness of activities, and other program aspects. Participating in these surveys is expected and is an important part of the participation in the MSU MPAS Program and the evolving professionalism of the student. Honest, objective feedback is expected.

### **8.0 Clinical Phase Requirements**

To enter the clinical year and begin supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs), the student must:

To enter the clinical year and begin supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs), the student must:

- Successfully completed all components of the didactic phase with cumulative GPA  $\geq 3.0$ .
- Successful and satisfactory completion of Clinical Transitions Course with Clinical Orientation
  - OSCE: The student performance on the OSCE will be graded by rubric; a final score  $\geq 80\%$  is required to pass the course to proceed on clinical rotations.
  - Clinical handbook examination is a summative assessment which will be graded for accuracy; a final score  $\geq 80\%$  is required to pass the course to proceed on clinical rotations.
- Successful and satisfactory completion of required safety training
- Meets Technical Standards
- Current on all university tuition and fees
- Provided documentation of the following:



- Background Check acceptable to clinical sites
- Drug Screen acceptable to clinical sites
- Child abuse clearance
- Medical Clearance
- Immunization record based on current CDC guidelines for healthcare workers and site-specific requirements [A3.07]; additional vaccination or health requirements specific to clinical sites-
- Proof of current health insurance
- Copy of current government identification
- BLS and ACLS certification

### **9.0 Clinical Year Policies**

Clinical year policies will be outlined in the Clinical Handbook

### **10.0 Compliance Training and Certifications**

Students are required to complete industry-specific training throughout the program. Failure to complete training may result in a hold on future registration, clinical rotations and/or program activities. The requirements are including, but not limited to:

- Biosafety training
- HIPAA compliance
- OSHA
- Blood-borne pathogen training
- Current BLS certification from an American Heart Association (AHA) sponsored organization is required for matriculation in the department. The student is responsible for maintaining active BLS certification throughout the entirety of the program.
- ACLS and PALS are requirements for all clinical year PA students. An opportunity to obtain this will be provided in the curriculum. If the student does not obtain this during the curriculum, the student is responsible to obtain prior to beginning clinical rotations.

### **11.0 Identification [B3.01]**

- a. Each PA student must be readily identifiable at all times in all supervised clinical practice experience areas during the didactic and clinical phases. This is achieved through the following:
  - Display of program-approved nametag, identifying the wearer as a MSU Physician Assistant Student
  - Display of program approved patch on the white coat worn during clinical training
  - Verbal introduction of self as a "Physician Assistant Student"
  - Clinical site issued identification
- b. While participating as a student of the MSU PA Program, the student must identify self as such and is prohibited to identify by any other title, profession or practice under any other professional license.

### **12.0 Liability Insurance**

The University will purchase liability insurance on behalf of each student after receiving payment from the student for such coverage. This coverage will extend to claims made against the students during their supervised clinical practice experiences. This policy does not cover a student for clinical or other activities that are not directly associated with the PA Program or assigned supervised clinical practice experiences. The student should request further information from the University's Risk Management Officer if they have any questions related to liability insurance. MSU is a self-insured entity.

### **13.0 Program Schedules**

- a. The academic calendar for the MSU MPAS Program is different from that published by the university and is provided to students by the program. This schedule will be distributed to all students and is subject to change.
- b. Director's Hour Attendance is mandatory. Late arrival, unexcused absence, or will result in professionalism violation.
- c. The Clinical Phase calendar for the MSU MPAS Program is different from that published by the university and is provided to students during the Clinical Transitions course. This schedule will be distributed to all students. The schedule is subject to change. Each student will also receive individualized rotation schedules which are subject to change.

### **14.0 Attendance / Participation**

- a. Attendance and participation in all program educational experiences are mandatory.
- b. Please note that at times there will be additional PA Program learning activities outside of regularly scheduled courses. All students are expected to attend and participate in these events. Students will be given advanced notice regarding activities outside the regular schedule. Excused absence policies will apply. Unexcused absences may result in point deductions in specific courses may apply per syllabus.
- c. For classroom instruction, students are expected to be in their seats in the classroom, before the course activities start and to remain for the duration of each class. Students are expected to promptly return from breaks. Returning to class late from breaks will be treated as late arrivals, and professionalism standards and attendance policies will apply.
- d. The program will follow MSU OP12.09 <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/1209>
- e. Excusable absences are defined in MSU OP 12.09:
  - These approved excused absences are not subject to instructor discretion in course attendance penalties:
    - Participation in an official university activity with authorization from an appropriate administrator sponsoring the activity. If the validity of the activity is questionable, the matter should be referred to the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for final resolution.
    - Death in a student's immediate family to include a student's parent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted and/or in-law children.
    - Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
    - Religious holy day.
    - Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
    - Required participation in military duties.
    - Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school that cannot be rescheduled.
  - Documentation of the above excusable absence requires signed documentation from the appropriate source (e.g. medical provider, court agent, military supervisor, religious calendar etc.) verifying the student's absence. All documentation must be submitted to each course instructor(s) and program administrative assistant upon returning to class.
- f. Arriving late or departing early more than 15 minutes, unexcused absences, and/or improper notification regarding absences will result in intervention by the faculty and may have consequences for a student's continuation in the program. Each of these is counted separately (e.g. a student with

one tardy and one improper notification will receive a verbal warning for each infraction, but will be tracked across all courses and across terms for patterns.

- 1<sup>st</sup> incident – written warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> incident – meeting with course director or student advisor
- 3<sup>rd</sup> incident – referral to the Program Director
- 4<sup>th</sup> incident – meeting with the Program Director with professionalism violation.
- Individual courses also track professionalism, including timeliness. These timeliness guidelines for course monitoring are at the discretion of the course director.

g. Reporting Absences

1. All absences must be reported to all appropriate course instructors and program administrative assistant.
  2. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructors via email by 10:00am on the day of the absence.
  3. Extenuating circumstances will be considered at the discretion of the program.
  4. Not reporting an absence will be regarded as an unexcused absence.
  5. Abuse or fraudulent documentation of the Attendance and/or Reporting Absences policies will be considered as an egregious professionalism violation and is grounds for dismissal from the program.
- h. If a class session or laboratory is canceled due to inclement weather or instructor absence, students are still responsible for all the readings and assignments listed on the syllabus or communicated from the instructor via MSU email or Canvas.
- i. Absence from course work or clinical assignments due to attendance at national conferences, state conferences, or other such professional meetings is at the discretion of the PA Program. Students serving on an AAPA board or committee must submit a schedule of their activities a minimum of six (6) weeks in advance. If there is a documented "emergency meeting," approval will be considered on an individual basis.
- j. Regardless of the reason for the absence, a student will be required to take a missed assessment, formative or summative, on the first day upon return or as previously arranged with the course instructor. The exam/assignment may not be in the same format, but it will cover the same content.
- k. Regardless for the reason of absence, a student will be required to submit missed assignments on the published due date unless arranged with the course instructor prior to the due date. Such requests must be made 24 hours prior to the due date.
- l. Chronic absenteeism and/or tardiness to educational activities is a professionalism violation, and the professionalism policies apply.

**15.0 Inclement Weather and Program Activity Cancellation**

- a. For the didactic portion of the curriculum, if severe weather threatens the University, MSU Meridian's executive vice president and head of campus will decide if the University will close or will remain open. For more details, refer to the University Maroon Alert website <https://www.emergency.msstate.edu/>
- b. For the clinical portion of the curriculum, if severe weather threatens the clinical rotation site, the appropriate individual(s) will decide if the clinical site will open or will remain open. If the site is closed, the student should regard this in the same manner as if the University was closed. The student should immediately report the closing to the Clinical Coordinator via email.

## **16.0 Leave of Absence**

- a. In the event a matriculated student in the PA Program encounters a situation that requires a prolonged absence from the program, the student may either withdraw from the program or request a leave of absence.
- b. A request for a Leave of Absence must be submitted in writing to the Program Director with adequate information to explain the situation. At minimum, the request should outline the circumstances, outline a timeline in which the student expects the circumstances to change, outline the student's plan to return with specific dates.
- c. In no instance will a student be granted more than one leave of absence as a matriculant of the program. In the event the student is indisposed, the written requirement may be waived, or the Program Director may initiate the action independently.
- d. The Program Director in consultation with the Program Faculty, may grant or deny the Leave of Absence request. In an effort to keep the student on track with their cohort and to support student success, conditions will be determined individually and changes to the plan of return may be proposed by the Program Director.
- e. If a Leave of Absence is taken for medical reasons, a new medical clearance form must be provided to continue in the program.

## **17.0 Withdrawal**

- a. A student wishing to withdraw from a course or the program must follow MSU guidelines [A3.17e], as established in the MSU Catalog:  
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/1202.pdf>
- b. Should a student withdraw from any PA Program course, that student will be considered as withdrawn from the PA Program, unless the student submits sufficient justification to the PA Program Director and receives approval for Leave of Absence.-
- c. A student may voluntarily withdraw from the PA Program at any time.
- d. Any student who withdraws or is dismissed from the PA Program must meet the published admissions requirements and procedures for the cohort intended to join and participate in the application process, reapplying through CASPA. Applicants for re-admission are evaluated in the same manner as all other new applicants.

## **18.0 Disciplinary Procedures**

All other disciplinary matters are handled pursuant to typical MSU operating policies. These can be reviewed at <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91100.pdf>.

## **19.0 Dress Code**

- a. Students are expected to be well-groomed and appropriately dressed in a manner consistent with the responsibilities of ambassadorship and professionalism necessary to represent the MSU MPAS Program with integrity. Business casual is expected for routine classroom activities; program scrubs will be permitted as directed by course instructor.
- b. Students should have excellent daily hygiene that includes clean teeth, hair, clothes, and
- c. Professional attire is mandatory for students when participating in all circumstances in which a student will have contact with patients (simulated, standardized and those encountered body, including use of deodorant.
- d. Professional Attire is required except when outlined by the program or course director:

1. during clinical rotations) Clothing should be conservative fashion with nametag as noted in the "Identification" policy above.
2. Clothing should be clean, pressed, and in good condition.
3. Shoes must be clean and in good condition.
4. Shoes must be closed toe and heel.
5. Heels of shoes should be no higher than two inches.
6. Facial hair must be neatly groomed.
7. All students must be fragrance-free (includes abstaining from wearing cologne/perfume).
8. All body art and piercings must be concealed.
9. During any live or simulated patient encounter or assessment
  - Wear minimal jewelry (limit of 2 earrings per ear, no facial or visible body jewelry)
  - No pins, bracelets, long necklaces, dangling earrings or large rings
  - Fingernails should be kept clean and trimmed not to exceed ¼ inch past the end of the finger.
  - Nail polish, artificial nails/wraps or acrylic overlays are not permitted for reasons of infection control.
  - Hair longer than shoulder length must be pulled back and contained in a suitable manner.
- e. Hospital Scrubs are not to be worn in clinical areas unless approved by the clinical preceptor.

## **20.0 Faculty Advising**

- a. Each PA student will be assigned a faculty member to serve as an advisor. Students are encouraged to meet regularly with their advisors, and advisors may request additional meetings with students as they deem necessary.
- b. Meetings
  - Advisee meetings in the didactic phase should be scheduled at least one (1) meeting each semester.
  - It is the responsibility of the student to contact their advisor to initiate routine meetings.
  - The principal faculty and Program Director are all responsible for the academic advising of students in the program.
  - During the clinical phase, advising appointments should be scheduled by the student.
- c. Each mentor or faculty member must provide timely access or referral of students to services addressing personal issues, which may affect their progress in the PA Program.
  - Weems Community Mental Health Counseling Services are provided to all students free of charge.
  - Contact information is found on the back of all MSU Meridian ID Badges. Weems Community Mental Health Center 601-483-4821, or 1-800-803-0245 [www.weemsmh.com](http://www.weemsmh.com) [A3.10]
  - Virtual counseling services are offered through the following link:  
<https://www.counseling.msstate.edu/>.

## **21.0 Gathering Student Data**

The MSU MPAS Program is committed to developing and maintaining an excellent learning experience. Therefore, the program will collect and analyze data for continuous self-assessment. This may include, but is not limited to, the following. Student participation is expected as part of professionalism obligations.

- Program evaluations
- Graduate surveys

- Course and instructor evaluations
- Preceptor and clinical site evaluations

### **22.0 Transportation and Housing**

During their tenure in the PA Program, each student is responsible for their own housing and transportation to and from all assigned program activities. Required rotations can occur outside of the region or state. In addition, each student is also responsible for any expenses incurred during all program activities including food, parking, and any other incidentals. Clinical rotations may occur outside the commutable area, and the student is responsible for associated housing expenses.

### **23.0 Outside Employment**

- Students are strongly cautioned against accepting any outside employment while enrolled in the MSU PA Program. The rigor and continuity of the Program is such that employment may detract from course responsibilities and impair academic and/or clinical performance. Each student should also realize there may be requirements for evening, night, or weekend program activities. [A3.14h]
- Employment responsibilities are not considered an acceptable excuse for violation of the Attendance policy.
- A potential conflict of interest may occur when a clinical training site is also the student's place of employment. In such cases, the student must notify the PA Program prior to beginning the clinical rotation. At the Program's discretion, the student may be reassigned to an alternate clinical experience. In no instance may a student's training overlap with employment.
- It is not permissible for students to receive payment by their preceptor for the tasks they perform while on clinical rotations. While on clinical rotation, students may not provide services within the clinical supervisor's practice apart from those rendered for their educational value and as part of the clinical instruction experience. [A3.04]
- Students are not permitted to perform clerical, instructional, or administrative work for the program or supervised clinical practice experiences during the didactic or clinical years [A3.04, A3.05, A3.06]

### **24.0 Indebtedness**

All financial indebtedness incurred at MSU must be paid in full before the University awards the Master of Physician Assistant Studies Degree. Students with outstanding debts to MSU may be prevented from registration in subsequent semesters. This does not include student educational loans secured through the Financial Aid Office.

### **25.0 Incident or Injury**

- In the event of an incident that may place a PA Student in harm's way, but no injury has occurred, the PA student must notify the Program as soon as possible. In case of emergency, call 911 immediately. Contacting the PA Program can be accomplished by:
  - Program during office hours (601)-696-2320
  - Program Director (601)-484-0196
- In the event of an incident resulting in an injury to a PA Student occurring during a PA Program activity, the appropriate PA Faculty member must complete the Incident Report Form. The University Incident/Liability Claim Reporting Form which can be found here: [Incident Reporting & Liability Claims | Office of Compliance and Risk Management \(msstate.edu\)](#)
- Once the student is received proper medical cared as sought by the student, the PA Program is to be notified within 24 hours.

## **26.0 Weapons**

- a. It is the policy of the MSU Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program to follow the safety guidelines as determined by [MSU policy](#). Except when carried by law enforcement, weapons of any kind are inappropriate in a healthcare setting, and this includes healthcare educational programs.
- b. Patients, students, faculty and staff must feel safe. Anything overt or hidden that may be construed as making a reasonable individual uncomfortable or feel unsafe is explicitly prohibited.
- c. Please refer to the MSU OP 91.120: <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/91120>
- d. While off-campus at clinical rotations, the policies of the institution supersede the policies of the University and should be strictly followed.

## **27.0 Student Grievances [A3.11, A3.17d, A3.17g]**

Any student issue not addressed elsewhere in University Policy (such as Sexual Harassment and Grades), that cannot be satisfactorily resolved under the student's own power, the grievance should be addressed with the Office of the Dean of Students <https://www.students.msstate.edu/> or The Graduate School <http://catalog.msstate.edu/graduate/other-information/student-grievances/>

## **28.0 Other Situations**

- a. Any other situation or condition not clearly addressed in the Student Handbook should be brought to the attention of the Program. Each concern will be considered independently according to the merits of the case. Each concern will receive thorough review and managed in a manner as closely aligned to the policies and procedures of the program and university as possible.
- b. If any of the PA Program Rules and Regulations comes into conflict with the student's religious or other beliefs, it is the responsibility of the student to communicate their concern with the appropriate Program Faculty or Program Director immediately. These Rules and Regulations may be amended periodically by the Program.
- c. In an effort to provide the highest quality education opportunity, these Rules and Regulations may be amended by the Program with written notification to the student.

## **29.0 Disciplinary Procedures**

All other disciplinary matters are handled pursuant to normal MSU operating policies. These can be reviewed at <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91100.pdf>.

## **Requirements of Accepted Applicants**

### **Prerequisite Screenings**

- Accepted applicants must pass, with standards acceptable to medical facilities, a Background Check and Urine Drug Screen.
- New convictions while enrolled in the program, misdemeanor or felony, will result in dismissal from the program.
- Students who do not complete, falsify, or do not pass screening will forfeit their seat, and the seat deposit will not be refunded.
- Students are responsible for all costs related to screening.
- Students are advised that results of criminal background checks and other required background screening will be released to third parties involved in their clinical education.



## **Medical Clearance & Immunizations**

Applicants offered a seat in the MSU MPAS program must undergo a physical examination, immunizations and/or titers, TB testing, and completion of Health Forms prior to the start of the program. Requirements are based on current CDC guidelines for healthcare workers including immunizations. [Recommended Vaccines for Healthcare Workers | CDC](#)

Failure to comply with the timeline provided by the program without written permission and compliance plan, will result in seat forfeiture or dismissal from the program. Failure to comply during the course of the program may result in delayed graduation and/or dismissal due to failure to comply with program requirements. Under no circumstance will students be permitted to participate in clinical experiences without medical clearance. Students are required to comply with clinical site requirements where clinical experiences are gained during the didactic and clinical phases. There are wide variations of requirements regarding testing, screening, and vaccinations. The inability of the student to meet clinical site requirements, and the inability of the PA program to place the student at another approved location within a reasonable time period, may result in rescheduling the clinical experience and/or delay in their graduation. Additional expenses are the responsibility of the student.

Most clinical sites have COVID-19 vaccination requirements. The mandate may apply to all full-time and part-time workers, vendors, medical and allied health students, contract employees, agency nurses, and volunteers. Students may be required to demonstrate proof of vaccination before participating in activities which occur in these facilities.

## **Health Insurance**

Applicants offered a seat in the MSU MPAS program must provide proof of major medical insurance. Insurance may be acquired through a family major medical policy or through a private insurance agency. It is highly advisable that the insurance plan chosen offer appropriate, comprehensive coverage throughout the state of Mississippi. The student should check with his/her insurance company as to the coverage provided for accidental exposure. It is important for students to realize that medical expenses for care provided by student health services or other health care providers, including laboratory procedures and emergency care are the responsibility of the student and not the physician assistant program or Mississippi State University. Any injury or accidental exposure IS NOT considered workmen's compensation since the student is not an employee.

The physician assistant program strongly advises all students to acquire disability insurance, to provide protection in the event of a long-term illness or injury

Failure to comply prior to the start of the program can result in seat forfeiture. Failure to comply while in the program can result in a delay in graduation or dismissal from the program.



## Appendix A Classroom Etiquette

### **Classroom Etiquette**

1. Electronic devices such as computers, cell phones, PDA's, tablets, etc. in the classroom environment must be used for note taking or instructor approved activities only. Web surfing, instant messaging, texting, etc. are not permitted.
2. Cell phone must either be switched off or kept in the silent mode during class sessions. Text messaging or taking calls during class or clinic is not allowed.
3. Students should take advantage of formal breaks offered during lengthy classes. Only in rare instances, should it be necessary for a student to leave and return to the classroom. Attendance policies for early departure and late arrival will apply per course syllabus.
4. Students should be punctual to class and remain present for the duration of the session. If the student is going to be late or needs to leave early, arrangements must be made with the instructor prior to class. See [absentee section](#) for more information.
5. The program has a no guest policy. This is in keeping with the MSU policy that states that students who are not enrolled in the course may not audit or attend classes.
6. If students have questions, they should ask them at appropriate times and should avoid talking and participating in other conversations during classes.
7. Posting of PowerPoint slides before, and/or after a lecture is not required of instructors. If available, the instructor may post to CANVAS. However, if changes are made to an advanced posting, it is your responsibility to incorporate those updates as necessary.
8. Real-time lecture recording is often provided; however, it does not replace class attendance. Lecture capture is provided for review and clarification of content and provides a repository for course material in the event of unexpected school closure.

## **Student Handbook**

### **Statement of Understanding [A3.02, A3.17]**

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

#### **A. Working with Diverse Groups**

I understand that as part of the educational experience in the MSU MPAS Program, I will work with individuals representing a variety of cultural, religious, ethnic, racial, sexual orientation and socio-economic backgrounds. I agree to participate in such educational experiences with individuals regardless of their background.

#### **B. Health Status**

I have reviewed the MSU MPAS Program Technical Standards, and, to the best of my knowledge, I do not have any condition (physical or mental) which will compromise my ability to perform the duties expected of me as a student in this program.

#### **C. BLS & ACLS Certification**

I understand that current American Heart Association BLS and ACLS certifications are required prior to beginning the clinical phase of the program and that it is my responsibility to maintain certification during the entire clinical curriculum and will provide the appropriate documentation.

#### **D. Clinical Rotations Agreement**

I understand that the MSU MPAS Program assigns all clinical rotations and that there is no guarantee I will be assigned to a specific location or preceptor. I also understand that clinical rotation sites are subject to change, sometimes without advanced warning. During the clinical curriculum, PA students may have to relocate for periods of time due to availability of clinical sites. Students are expected to provide their own transportation and housing.

#### **E. Communications**

I understand that email is the primary means of communication for the MSU MPAS Program. I will check my MSU email account on a daily basis and respond in a timely manner. Course-related communication may occur in CANVAS or via MSU email. Furthermore, I understand that I may be subject to disciplinary action for failure to respond to faculty or staff communications in a timely manner.

#### **F. PA Program Student Handbook**

I know how to access the online version (pdf) of the MSU MPAS Program Student Handbook, have reviewed it in its entirety and have had all my questions satisfactorily answered. Furthermore, I attest that I understand and agree to comply with all provisions outlined in the Student Handbook

**By my signature, I indicate that I have reviewed and know how to access a final copy of the Student Handbook. I understand the contents. I understand I am bound by the policies and procedures provided in the Student Handbook, current graduate school catalog, and university policy.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date