



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MERIDIAN
Physician Assistant Studies

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program

Mississippi State University-Meridian
Riley Campus
2214 5th Street
Meridian, Mississippi 39301
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pa@meridian.msstate.edu

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Mississippi State University Master of Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program. The faculty and staff look forward to participating in your education. While you are a student here, please take advantage of all of the excellent experiences offered at Mississippi State University-Meridian. 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 and correct information at the time of publication, the Program and clinical team reserve the right to make changes as necessary to ensure accuracy and alignment with Program and University standards. If changes are made, all students, faculty, and staff will be informed, and an updated handbook will be provided as a PDF file available for download. 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, they 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 Head of Campus.

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 5th Street
Meridian, Mississippi 39301
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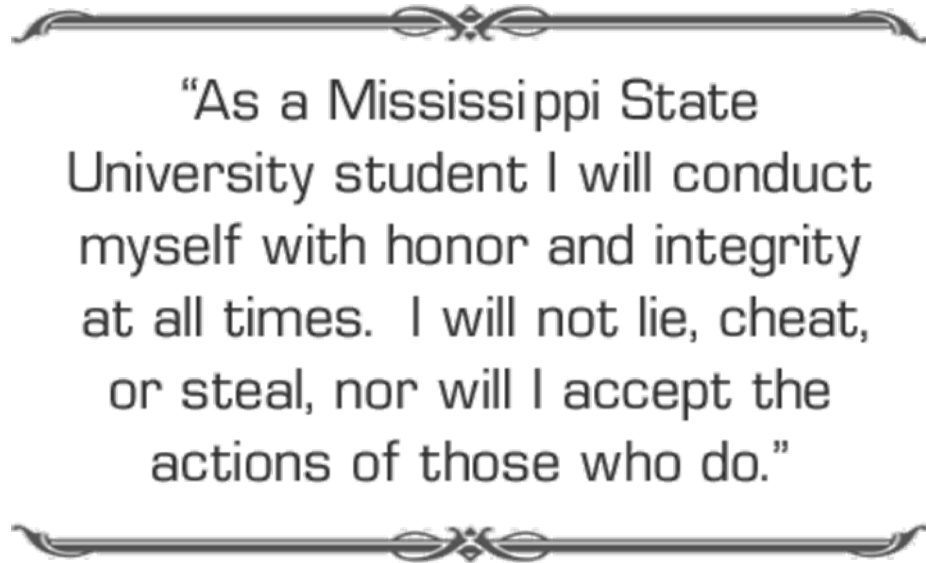
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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE



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 due process of the University.

[Home | Honor Code \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.msstate.edu/honorcode)

STUDENT RIGHTS

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of current and former student's educational records and afford students certain rights with respect to their education records. The PA Program follows the University policy related to FERPA, which can reviewed in detail here: **[3.20]**

<https://www.msstate.edu/students/publications-policies/ferpa/>

Students will be requested to sign consent releasing necessary health information as required by clinical sites to facilitate clinical placement. **[3.21]**

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 \(FERPA\)](#)

Reporting 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.

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.

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.

Reporting to the University

Whom should I contact?

The University's Title IX Coordinator is responsible for overseeing compliance with Title IX and other laws that address sexual misconduct and discrimination. The coordinator 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 Title IX Coordinator:

Brett Harvey, Title IX Coordinator

Email: titleix@msstate.edu

Phone: **662-325-8124**

If a person does not wish to report directly to the Title IX Coordinator, they are encouraged to contact one of the following officials, who also can provide prompt assistance:

Kevin Entrekin, Coordinator of Career Services and Meridian Title IX Liaison.

Meridian College Park Campus -Advisement and Career Services Suite

Email: kentrekin@meridian.msstate.edu Phone: 601-484-0244.

Thomas Bourgeois, Dean of Students. Allen Hall Room 608

Email: thomasb@saffairs.msstate.edu

Phone: 662-325-3611

Joy Graves, University Compliance Officer

Email: jgraves@legal.msstate.edu

Phone: 662-325- 8131

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 "Responsible Employees" and their duties are discussed below. Whenever possible, however, incidents of sexual misconduct should be reported to one of the individuals listed above to provide the most prompt and direct response.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The MSU Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program complies with institutional policy addressing the Americans with Disability Act. Mississippi State University Policy is located:

<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/60123>

<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91122.pdf>

Disability Support Services

Students who need academic accommodations based on a disability should visit the Office of Student Services, College Park Campus (601) 484-0234, or visit the web site at <https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/student-services/>. Disability Support Services' staff reviews the documentation, assesses the needs of the students with disabilities, and recommends appropriate academic accommodations to the faculty and the University based on those needs. The department serves as a resource and clearing house for dissemination of information related to disabilities and compliance with section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students who are denied accommodations and/or services should seek assistance from Disability Support Services regarding the appeal process.

Equal Opportunity Statement

<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/0302.pdf>

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.

APPLICATION

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.

With respect to employment in particular, this policy applies to all employment decisions including, but not limited to, recruitment, employment, training, promotion, compensation, benefits, disciplinary actions, and termination. All personnel actions are administered without regard to the above factors and are based only on valid job requirements.

The procedures for reporting and resolving complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation are found in University Operating Policy 3.03. Where OP 3.03 or another university policy addresses the specific application of the general prohibitions herein, the more specific policy will control.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Mississippi State University maintains an affirmative action program in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, executive orders, and other government directives. Consistent with these directives, the University takes affirmative action to recruit, employ, advance, and prevent discrimination against qualified women, racial and ethnic minorities, individuals with disabilities, and protected veterans.

The University's Affirmative Action Program is available for inspection by any employee or applicant for employment upon request during office hours at the Office of Human Resources Management, which can be reached at **662-325-3713**

TITLE IX

It is the policy of Mississippi State University to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment and assault and other forms of sexual misconduct, in the University's programs and activities.

Policies and procedures for responding to reports of sexual misconduct are found in University Operating [Policy 3.04 \(Sexual Misconduct\)](#). Concerns about Title IX or gender equity generally, should be directed to Brett Harvey, Director of Title IX/EEO Programs at 56 Morgan Avenue, Mississippi State, MS 39762, by phone at 662-325-5839, or by email at brett.harvey@msstate.edu.

DISABILITIES

Mississippi State University is committed to compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and all other applicable laws prohibiting disability discrimination. Procedures for requesting reasonable accommodations or modifications due to disability are provided in [Operating Policy 60.123 \(ADA Reasonable Accommodation in Employment\)](#) and [Operating Policy 91.122 \(Students with Disabilities\)](#)

PROHIBITION ON RETALIATION

Mississippi State University 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.

INQUIRIES OR REPORTS

Inquiries regarding the application of this statement and related policies, or reports of possible violations, should be referred to Brett Harvey, Director of Title IX/EEO Programs at 56 Morgan Avenue, Mississippi State, MS 39762, by phone at **662-325-5839**, or by email at brett.harvey@msstate.edu. Inquires or reports related to university employment may also be directed to the Office of Human Resources Management at **662-325-3713**.

REVIEW

The Director of Title IX and EEO programs will review this policy at least every four years.

Non-Discrimination Statements

The University and its departments and divisions must include appropriate non-discrimination statements on all publications.

Full Statement: Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited. Questions about equal opportunity programs or compliance should be directed to the Office of Compliance and Integrity, 56 Morgan Avenue, P.O. Box 6044, Mississippi State, MS, (662) 325-5839.

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:

- sexual harassment, such as 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;
- physical harassment, such as touching, pinching, grabbing, or brushing against another person without their consent;
- severe, pervasive, or persistent insults, jokes, or derisive comments about a person's sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other 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.

Reporting a Violation

If you experience discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in connection with any university program, service, opportunity, or activity, you should contact the Director of Title IX/EEO Programs in the Office of Compliance and Integrity. If you experience workplace discrimination or harassment, you may contact either the Director or the Department of Human Resources Management.

- The Director of Title IX/EEO Programs is Brett Harvey. He can be reached at (662) 325-8124 or at brett.harvey@msstate.edu.
- Human Resources Management is located at 150 McArthur Hall, and 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#!ct/2399,2401,2400,7257,2397,7090,7088,2402,5465,8935,16168?ce/16168>

Student Parking

Students on the College Park Campus must 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.

Disability Support Services

Students who need academic accommodations based on a disability should visit the Office of Student Services, College Park Campus, call (601) 484-0234, or visit the web site at

[Student Services | Meridian - Mississippi State University \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/student-services/disability-services/)

Disability Support Services' staff reviews the documentation, assesses the needs of the students with disabilities, and recommends appropriate academic accommodations to the faculty and the University based on those needs. The department serves as a resource and clearing house for dissemination of information related to disabilities and compliance with section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students who are denied accommodations and/or services should seek assistance from Disability Support Services regarding the appeal process.

<https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/student-services/disability-services/>

[Disability Resource Center < Mississippi State University \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/student-services/disability-services/)

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.

Bulldog Shop

The Bulldog Shop at MSU-Meridian's Riley Campus in downtown Meridian is a new 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/>

Riley Center for Education and Performing Arts

Located in the heart of historic downtown Meridian, the MSU Riley Center opened its doors in September 2006 to offer cultural, artistic, and educational experiences like no other in the region. The multifaceted center attracts 80,000+ visitors to downtown Meridian annually for conferences, meetings, and performances. The center includes a fully restored 1889 grand opera house theater that seats approximately 950, a 200-seat studio theater, and 30,000 square feet of meeting space, including a large exhibit hall, breakout rooms, and boardrooms, all equipped with teleconferencing capabilities and built-in technical features to create the optimal meeting environment.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Use of the MSU Information Technology

Users of the Information Technology infrastructure are expected to exhibit responsible behavior and comply with all federal and state laws, MSU rules and policies, terms of computing contracts, and software licensing rules. Students should not engage in any activity that jeopardizes the availability, performance integrity, or security of the IT infrastructure. For example, students should not

- Use peer-to-peer (P2P) applications that take up bandwidth for the downloading of music, games, and video
- Deliberately or recklessly overloading access links or switching equipment by using streaming media such as web radio and other mechanisms
- Accounts, passwords, and other types of authorization are assigned to individual users and must not be shared with others.
- Each user should be aware of computer viruses and other malicious computer programs and take steps to avoid being either their victim or propagator. Minimally, each user must ensure that appropriate and current antivirus software is operational on all personal computers and that virus definitions are kept current.

MSU Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure Policy and is located at

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

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.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.**

Logging in to the MSU-Meridian Systems:

- Lab workstations have a Novell login prompt with two fields: "Username" and "Password." To log in to the network, enter your NetID as determined above and your NetPassword (which you created above).

- **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 \(msstate.edu\)](#)

CANVAS

Canvas is the learning management system used for instructive purposes at MSU.

Email

Student email is handled via Microsoft Office 365. Your email address is your [netid@msstate.edu](#). Example: [abc123@msstate.edu](#). There are multiple ways to access your email 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](#) to submit a request for service or report an issue. You may also email your request to [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 Libraires 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]**

Resources and Services Available

The University Library web page enables everyone to access electronic resources, the book collection electronic reserves, subject guides, online tutorials, reference help and much more.

- **Online Catalog:** Provides access to the book and journal holdings at University Libraries, plus 55 state-wide member libraries of the Mississippi Library Partnership
- **EBSCO's Discovery Service:** Use this all-in-one search engine to find information in the online catalog and most of the Libraries' databases to find books, article, reference materials, theses and more.
- **Databases:** The library subscribes to over 500 databases, by name of the database, by broad subject category, or across subject areas through resources
- Interlibrary Loan (ILLiad): Enables borrowing of library materials owned by other universities, usually free of charge
- **Document Delivery:** Permits books and other library materials to be placed "On Hold" and transported between MSU Campuses
- **Library Assistance:** Get library assistance through **Live Chat** online reference assistance, Library Research Consultations, Lib Guides, in-person or by phone
- **Workshops:** See University Library web site for the latest workshops presented by the **DMC** and the **Library Instruction** departments. Free workshops are presented on a regular basis, and many are offered online

For Faculty

- **Library research instruction sessions** can be scheduled for library instruction in the Library or at the classroom
- **Requests for new materials** are always welcome. If you have recommendations for the book collection, a journal or a multimedia product, please contact mthomas@library.msstate.edu
- **Library Reserves** services are available for books, articles, DVDs, or other materials selected for your students' use.

[Welcome! | Meridian - Mississippi State University \(msstate.edu\)](#)

STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICES

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 and again prior to starting clinical rotations.
- b) The PA Program will provide the necessary forms and instructions.
- c) 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. <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](#)
- d) 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.
- e) 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]**
- f) Certain medical problems, as determined by the student's health care provider and MSU policies, may preclude a student's matriculation in the PA Program and/or placement in a clinical facility. Questions concerning this should be referred to the Program Director.
- g) Medical or surgical conditions may arise while a student is enrolled in the PA Program. In no case will Program requirements preempt the directions of a student's personal healthcare provider.
- h) 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 \(msstate.edu\)](#)
- i) 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 and Student Counseling

Student Health Services

1. The Longest Student Health Center is available to all MSU students. [Home | Longest Health Center \(msstate.edu\)](#)
2. The LHC provides counseling services for all enrolled students. Counseling services are free. Students may seek counseling for mild, situational issues to more serious, complex problems. The LHC may recommend referral for long-term counseling. The virtual waiting room can be found at the following link: [Home | Student Counseling Center \(msstate.edu\)](#)
3. Local to Meridian, MSU - Meridian students may seek medical care through Anderson Regional Medical Center at contracted rates. Address: 1523 22nd Ave, Suite B, Meridian, MS 39301. Phone number: 601-703-8450.

Weems Community Mental Health Center

1. Students may be referred or may self-refer to Weems Community Health Center to address personal issues which may impact student progress in the PA Program. [A3.10]
2. Agreements are established for Weems to provide unlimited mental health services for MSU-Meridian students at no cost to the student.
3. Students may schedule a confidential appointment by calling the number on the back of their ID.
4. Services are provided to all students free of charge.
5. Phone numbers: 601-483-4821 or 1-800-803-0245
6. www.weemsmh.com

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 cannot modify the requirements of the class/internship. All students are urged to get vaccinated to mitigate these risks.

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. Thereafter, students may be required by the MSU PA program and/or clinical sites to undergo repeat drug screening and criminal background checks, including but not limited to, prior to beginning clinical rotations.
 2. Students are responsible for all expenses related to meeting drug screening, student health requirements and background documentation.
- b) Students who at any point in the program delay or decline to participate in a requested alcohol and/or drug screening will have that action considered equivalent to taking and failing a drug/alcohol screening with subsequent consequences.

- c) 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 positive criminal background check 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 MSU biosafety training [A3.08]. This training is accessed online at myCourses using your netID and password.

[Biosafety Training | Environmental Health and Safety \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.msstate.edu/biosafety)

Occupational Exposure

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 program is responsible for all fees associated with occupational exposure evaluation and treatment.

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/department representative will conduct a head count for his/her class/department.
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/smoke-fire-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 \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.msstate.edu/safety/meridian)

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 \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.msstate.edu/violence-threats/violence-emergency-information)

Program Information

Vision Statement

The Mississippi State University-Meridian Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program will graduate healthcare professionals who will be leaders in the Mississippi healthcare community, dedicated to increasing access to care and to actively addressing healthcare disparities in the state.

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 is a 29-month, full time, professional program designed to prepare qualified candidates for healthcare service. PAs are highly qualified healthcare providers who are prepared through a rigorous academic and clinical curriculum to provide healthcare services under physician supervision. The PA educational curriculum is modeled on medical school curriculum, and the course of study is focused and intense. The training PAs receive prepares them to work as part of a physician-led team committed to providing comprehensive healthcare (AAPA, 2011).

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 unique physician-physician assistant team 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

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 articulate what the student will be able to do after he/she completes 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, healthcare needs, ethnicity, race, gender identity, religion, spirituality, sexual orientation, 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, behaviors, inherent population bias, 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 that covers all areas of medicine. The didactic phase of the program provides students with a firm background in basic medical science, stressing the importance of patient evaluation and teamwork in medicine through courses such as clinical medicine, patient assessment, pharmacotherapy, pathophysiology and diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

Traditional classroom lectures are supplemented with small group learning and critical thinking experiences, simulated patient interactions and mock medical procedure training and testing.

The clinical phase of the program provides students with clinical rotation educational experience. Students are placed with preceptors to assist in further educating 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 2021		
PAS 6016	Human Anatomy and Physiology	6
PAS 6026	Patient Assessment	6
PAS 6013	Introduction to the PA Profession	3
PAS 6012	The Art of Medicine	2
	Total hrs.	17
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 6204	Principles of Pharmacology	4
PAS 6208	Clinical Medicine II	8
PAS 6112	Research Methods I	2
PAS 6022	Clinical Genetics	2
PAS 6113	Health Promotion & Disease Prevention	3
	Total	19
	Total Didactic Phase	56
Semester: Spring 2022		
PAS 6203	Clinical Practice Issues	3
PAS 6102	Clinical Skills	2
PAS 6223	Clinical Specialties	3
PAS 8302	Clinical Transitions	2
PAS 6202	Research Methods II	2
		12
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 Clinical Phase Hours	52
	Total Program Hours	108

EXAMPLE WEEKLY CALENDAR

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00-9:00	Human Anatomy & Physiology	Patient Assessment	Human Anatomy & Physiology	Patient Assessment	Human Anatomy & Physiology
9:00-10:00					
10:00-11:00					
11:00-12:00	The Art of Medicine	ADVISING HOUR	The Art of Medicine	Director's Hour	
12:00 NOON					
1:00-2:00	Patient Assessment group A	Introduction to the PA Profession	Patient Assessment Group B	Introduction to the PA Profession	Faculty Meeting
2:00-3:00					
3:00-4:00					Remediation Time
4:00-5:00					

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

MSU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and has determined that prospective candidates and students must meet certain technical standards. A candidate for the MPAS degree must possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in the five areas discussed below. Reasonable accommodation will be made for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. All individuals must be able to perform these functions independently; therefore, third parties cannot be used to assist students in accomplishing curricular requirements in the five skill areas 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 speak, hear, and 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 sit, stand, and move 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.

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 physical and emotional capacities to meet the requirements of the school's curriculum and to graduate as skilled and effective practitioners of medicine. Therefore, the following technical requirements apply.

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 of 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

These technical standards are identical to the technical standards required of students matriculating in accredited U.S. medical institutions.

Applicants and students must be able to meet the demands and performance expectations required of the MSU PA student.

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 certain discrepancies may 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. The Program Director is assigned to the Program on a 12-month full time basis. At least 80% of their time will be devoted to academic and administrative responsibilities in support of the Program. The Program Director must be a PA or Physician with appropriate licensure or certification. **[A2.02, A2.06]**
- 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 Demographics

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. Students may be issued laptops that are MSU property and are maintained by the university's IT staff. In the event that a laptop is lost or stolen, the student will be responsible for replacement costs.
- 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. Inappropriate, threatening, anonymous, 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
 - Legal Information: legal issue, legal case, or attorneys
 - Images or recordings of academic or clinical activities
 - Intellectual or written materials owned by another entity or individual: Do not share copyrighted publications, logos or other images that are trademarked

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 or function as instructional faculty (didactic or clinical). However, students will be encouraged to share their prior knowledge, experiences, and skills to assist the learning of other students. This is clearly stated in the materials provided to clinical preceptors regarding the clinical rotations (Preceptor Manual). No student may be a course instructor of record for any component of the curriculum. [A3.04, A3.05, A3.06]
 - Does not permit students to substitute for 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 suggestions and contact information for potential clinical rotations, but this will not be required. All supervised clinical practice experiences will go through the same clinical site and preceptor evaluation procedures prior to sending a student to that site. [A3.03]
- d. The PA Program may 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 Physician Assistant Program are assigned as below. This will be standard in all courses in the Program and will be detailed in each individual course syllabus.

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 and noted on the course syllabus.

- 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 posted time. If the student should miss an examination for an **excused absence**, a makeup exam will be given. 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 an 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 the school provided laptop computer, must be placed in the front of the room.
- All electronic devices must be powered off for the duration of the exam and in the front of the room.
- Scratch paper il be provided by the instructor. 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 course instructor by raised hand if computer problems occur.

- Only the exam window (fully maximized) should be open during the test, 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 leave quickly and quietly, respecting others. The students should exit the floor on which the assessment is administered.
- Students must not congregate outside the classroom to discuss the material after the test, as it may disturb others.

**Failure to comply with these procedures will result in failure of the assessment.

ii. SCANTRON ASSESSMENT

- Scantron assessments may be utilized at the discretion of the course instructor.

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

- a. A student must complete all PA Program courses in each semester with a Cumulative GPA ≥ 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 referral to the Promotions Committee for review and disposition. 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.
- c. Professionalism violations may also affect progress in the program. See 7.4 Probation and Dismissal.
- d. 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>

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 Remediation Coordinator via MSU email within 1 business day of grade release to schedule a meeting.

1. **Meeting:**

- i. Discussion with the Remediation Coordinator to identify root cause and/or knowledge deficits
- ii. Develop action plan for future success
- iii. Outline Remediation Assignment with criteria for submission and due date
Unsatisfactory completion of a remediation assignment will be treated as a professionalism violation and disqualify the student for reassessment.

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

- i. Reassessment methods may include but are not limited to retesting through a multiple-choice examination, an oral examination, or a proctored written assessment
- ii. Two (2) reassessments are permitted for courses ≥ 5 credit hours
- iii. One (1) reassessment is permitted for courses < 5 credit hours
- iv. Three (3) reassessments are permitted per semester across all courses
- v. Timing:
 1. All grade change reassessment must be completed prior to finals week of any semester.
 2. Finals week reassessment: 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.
- vi. Grade Change Procedure
 1. The student must achieve a minimum score of 80% on reassessment to be eligible for grade change.

2. Gradebook entry of any reassessment scoring 80% or above will be 80%.
3. 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. 1st Early Concern Note: Meet with Program Faculty
 - i. The student will be required to meet with the Faculty Advisor 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. 2nd Early Concern Note: Meet with Head of Campus
 - i. The student will be required to meet with the Head of Campus and/or the Faculty Advisor to discuss the violation 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. 3rd Early Concern Note: Review before Promotions committee
 - i. The student will be required to meet with the Promotion and Retention committee to discuss the violation
 - ii. Remediation assignments as discussed above will be required.
 - iii. The student may be placed on academic probation for professionalism violation.³
 - iv. The student may be removed from clinical rotations.
 - v. The student may be dismissed.
4. Severe and/or egregious professionalism violations which may violate any policies, procedures, laws, or the safety, security or rights of self or others may require skipping any level of Early Concern Note and warrant probationary action or dismissal.

7.4 Probation

A student will be based 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. Failure of one (1) rotation requiring remediation.
- d. Professionalism violations failing remediation.
- e. Egregious professionalism violation.

Probationary status 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, as well as no additional offenses. Students who incur additional academic or professional offenses while on probation will be referred to the Promotion and Retention Committee for consideration of dismissal.

7.5 Deceleration

- a. If a student receives two final cumulative course grades of “C” or less, fails to successfully remediate any course by completing all required Remediation, receives a final cumulative course grade of “F” in any PA Program course or fails a PA Program course for any other reason during the didactic or clinical year, they will be referred to the Promotions Committee. 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 will be required to meet with the PA Program as soon as they are able to do so to discuss their status within the Program. The decision to grant deceleration will still be made on a case-by-case basis. The restart date for that student will be determined by the Program and may require the student to repeat or audit prior courses to ensure proficiency and readiness to rejoin the cohort. At the discretion of the faculty, the student may be required to demonstrate competencies (e.g., didactic and or clinical skills) and/or take a proficiency exam before restarting the Program. The student must receive 80% or higher on any evaluation in order to proceed in the Program.

7.6 Dismissal

- a. Dismissal is warranted for any one or more of the terms listed below. The Program will refer students to the Promotion and Retentions Committee for complete review of the academic record, progression, professionalism render a final disposition decision. The Promotions Committee will make the final disposition recommendation to the Program Director. **[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
 - After the second course grade of less than “B,” the student may elect to attempt to pass a comprehensive exam of the course in question within 7 days of grade release. The promotions committee will consider performance on this exam for disposition recommendation.
 - 3. Two C’s in a single clinical rotation and/or a C in a second clinical rotation.
 - 4. Failing to meet GPA requirements to enter the clinical phase.
 - 4. Final cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 at the conclusion of the PA Program Curriculum.

5. Failure to successfully complete and pass (80%) the end-of-program Summative Evaluation, including the Capstone Project (PAS 8322) and the Summative Experience (PAS 8312).
 6. Egregious unprofessional behavior at any point while matriculating through the PA Program, including but not limited to
 - Refer to Mississippi State University Policy <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91100.pdf>
 - Behaviors outlined in Mississippi State University Policy <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91100.pdf>
 - Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while participating in any PA Program activity or while present in any facility where PA Program activities occur.
 - 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.
 7. Persistent unprofessional behavior refractory to remediation.
- b. 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>
 - c. 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/>
 - d. 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. A readmitted student will restart the PA Program and repeat all courses from the beginning of Semester One (1) of the Program.

7.7 Summative Evaluation [C3.04]

- a. Prior to their 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 complete each course set forth in the Program's curriculum outline, attain supervised clinical practice experience, and successfully complete the Summative Experience course with a passing grade. [C3.04]

In addition, a student must have a cumulative GPA > 3. [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 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
 - 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
 - Successful and satisfactory completion of Clinical Transitions Course with Clinical Orientation

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 the following: Failure to complete training may result in a hold on future registration, clinical rotations and/or program activities.

- a. Sterile technique
- b. HIPAA compliance
- c. OSHA
- d. Blood-borne pathogen training
- b. 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.
- c. 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 Director at Orientation. This schedule will be distributed to all students.
- b. Director's Hour Attendance is mandatory. This weekly meeting is scheduled for students to meet with the department chair and faculty.
- c. The Clinical Phase calendar for the MSU MPAS Program is different from that published by the university and is provided to students by the Program Director at Clinical

Orientation during the Clinical Transitions course. This schedule will be distributed to all students. 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
- c. For classroom instruction, students are expected to be in their seats in the classroom, before the course starts and to remain for the duration of each class.
- 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 (e.g., Department Head or higher). 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) upon returning to class.
- f. Arriving late or departing early more than 15 minutes without permission from the course director, 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.

- 1st incident – verbal warning with email follow-up
 - 2nd incident – written warning and a meeting with the student’s advisor
 - 3rd incident – second written warning and a meeting with the student’s advisor
 - 4th incident – meeting with the Associate Program Director. This may be documented in the student’s academic file as an incident of unprofessional behavior and impact the student’s professionalism evaluation.
 - 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 have a significant effect on the student’s Professionalism Assessment and may be 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.
- 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 twelve (12) weeks in advance. Failure to meet this deadline will result in the denial of a request. 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 examination or complete a missed assignment the first class/business 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. Chronic absenteeism and/or tardiness to educational activities is a professionalism violation, and the professionalism remediation may be required.

15.0 Weather / School Closing Policy

- 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.
- 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. Conditions will be determined individually according to the merits of each case.
- e. Students will not be granted a leave of absence for a period longer than three (3) consecutive calendar months unless the time period of the leave is beyond the student's control and is considered acceptable by the Program.
- f. If a leave of absence is granted equivalent to or greater than one semester, the student must notify the Program Director in writing of intent to return.
- g. If there is a significant amount of time between the start of a leave of absence and the student's re-matriculation into the PA Program, the student will be required to demonstrate competencies (e.g., didactic and or clinical skills) and/or take a proficiency exam before restarting the Program. The student must receive 80% or higher on any evaluation in order to proceed in the Program.

17.0 Withdrawal [A3.17e]

- 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 withdrawing from the PA Program, unless the student submits sufficient justification to the PA Program Director and applies for a 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 follow the stated admissions requirements and procedures if they wish to be re-admitted. Applicants for re-admission are evaluated once annually, along with new applicants.

18.0 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>.

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.
- b. Students should have excellent daily hygiene that includes clean teeth, hair, clothes, and body, including use of deodorant.
- c. Clothing should be clean, pressed, and in good condition.
- d. Professional Attire:
 - 1. 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 during clinical rotations).
 - 2. Professional dress includes conservative fashion and nametag as noted in the "Identification" policy above.
 - 3. All shoes must be closed toe and heel.
 - 4. Hair longer than shoulder length must be pulled back and contained in a suitable manner.
 - 5. Hair should be clean and arranged not to interfere with patient care activities.
 - 6. Facial hair must be neatly groomed.
 - 7. Shoes must be clean and in good condition.
 - 8. Heels should be no higher than two inches.
- e. All students must be fragrance-free (includes abstaining from wearing cologne/perfume).
- f. All body art and piercings must be concealed.
- g. 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. This is for your protection.
- h. Fingernails should be kept clean and trimmed, and not 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.
- i. Hospital Scrubs are not to be worn in clinical areas with the exception of the operating room unless approved by the clinical preceptor.

20.0 Faculty Advising

- a. Each PA student will be assigned a principal faculty member (or Program Director) 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
 - 1. Advisee meetings in the didactic phase should be scheduled at least one (1) meeting each semester.
 - 2. It is the responsibility of the student to contact their advisor to initiate routine meetings.
 - 3. The principal faculty and Program Director are all responsible for the academic advising of students in the program
 - 4. An initial advising appointment occurs in the first three (3) weeks of the first semester.
 - 5. 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.

1. Weems Community Mental Health Counseling Services are provided to all students free of charge.
2. Contact information is found on the back of all MSU Meridian ID Badges. Weems Community Mental Health Center [601-483-4821](tel:601-483-4821), or [1-800-803-0245](tel:1-800-803-0245) www.weemsmh.com [A3.10]
3. 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):

- Program evaluations
- [Graduate surveys](#)
- Employer 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

- a. 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]
- b. Employment responsibilities are not considered an acceptable excuse for violation of the Attendance policy.
- c. 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.
- d. 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]
- e. 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

- a. 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:
 1. Program during office hours ([601-696-2320](tel:601-696-2320))
 2. Program Director ([601-696-2345](tel:601-696-2345))
- b. 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 \(msstate.edu\)](https://www.msstate.edu/office-of-compliance-and-risk-management/incident-reporting-liability-claims)
- c. Once the student has received proper medical care 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.

- c. 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.

15.0 Weather / School Closing Policy

- 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. Mississippi State University is committed to fulfilling its instructional obligations, so it is MSU's intent to conduct classes as long as it can maintain reasonable conditions on campus and the roads in the immediate areas are reasonably passable. For more details, refer to the University Maroon Alert website <https://www.emergency.msstate.edu/>
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- c. In no case 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. If the student is in good academic standing at the time of request, the Program Director in consultation with the Program Faculty, may grant or the Leave of Absence request. Conditions will be determined individually according to the merits of each case, and the faculty may recommend withdrawal or dismissal.
- e. Students will not be granted a leave of absence for a period longer than three (3) consecutive calendar months unless the time period of the leave is beyond the student's control and is considered acceptable by the Program i.e. active duty military orders.
- f. If a leave of absence is granted equivalent to or greater than one semester, the student must notify the Program Director in writing of intent to return.
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may occur outside the commutable area, and the student is responsible for associated housing expenses.

23.0 Outside Employment

- a. 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 that during the clinical year she/he may have there may be requirements for evening, night, or weekend, or emergency duty/call, and that some rotations involve changing shifts frequently program activities. [A3.14h]]
- b. Employment responsibilities are not considered an acceptable excuse for violation of the Attendance policy.
- c. 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.
- d. It is not permissible for students to receive payment 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]
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- a. 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:
 1. Program during office hours (601-696-2320)
 2. Program Director (601-696-2345)
- b. Patients, in their care environment, and students, faculty and staff, in their study and work environment, must feel safe. Anything overt or hidden that may be construed as making a reasonable individual uncomfortable or less than safe feel unsafe is explicitly prohibited. c. Please refer to the MSU OP 91.120: <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/91120> Possession of Firearms, Explosives, or Other Devices, Substances, or Weapons: <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/sites/www.policies.msstate.edu/files/91120.pdf>
- c. While off-campus at clinical rotations, the policies of the institution supersede the policies of the University and should be strictly followed.

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, in their care environment, and students, faculty and staff, in their study and work environment, must feel safe. Anything overt or hidden that may be construed as making a reasonable individual uncomfortable or less than safe is explicitly prohibited.
- c. Please refer to the MSU OP 91.120: Possession of Firearms, Explosives, or Other Devices, Substances, or Weapons:
<https://www.policies.msstate.edu/sites/www.policies.msstate.edu/files/91120.pdf>
- 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 these Rules and Regulations or 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. As far as possible, each concern will receive thorough review and managed with in a manner comparable to similar conditions described in this document 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. The Program will determine if appropriate accommodations are feasible.
- c. These Rules and Regulations may be amended periodically by the Program.

29.0 Requirements of Accepted Applicants

Prerequisite Screenings

- Accepted applicants must pass, with standards acceptable to medical facilities, a Background Check and Urine Drug Screen.
- Students who do not complete, falsify, or do not pass screening will forfeit their seat, and seat deposit will not be refunded.
- Students are responsible for all costs related to screening.
- Applicants who have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor may be denied certification or licensure as a health professional. Information regarding eligibility may

be forwarded to appropriate credentialing boards. Clinical rotation sites may not permit participation in the clinical experience precluding satisfactory completion of the program. The candidate should consider this seriously prior to application and matriculation. Applicants 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 prior to the start of the program can result in seat forfeiture. 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 those requirements, and the inability of the PA program to place the student at another approved location within a reasonable time period, may result in the student having to complete another rotation after their clinical rotation assigned sequence, resulting in a delay in their graduation.

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 personal health insurance and maintain the insurance throughout the entire program. 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.
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 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 BLS and ACLS - American Heart Association 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 outside of program activities. I will check my MSU email account on a daily basis and respond in a timely manner. 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