



**St. Ambrose University  
Master of Physician Assistant Studies  
Student Handbook  
2021-2022**

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## **Purpose of the Student Handbook**

The *Master of Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook* provides information to orient students to current policies, procedures, and regulations relevant to participation in the professional Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program at St. Ambrose University. Students are accountable and responsible for all information contained in this handbook. In addition to the policies and procedures noted in this handbook, students are also accountable and responsible for all the information contained in the *St. Ambrose University Student Handbook* found online at [www.sau.edu/student-services/documents/StudentHandbook.pdf](http://www.sau.edu/student-services/documents/StudentHandbook.pdf) and available on the Physician Assistant Program Information blackboard site.

## **Change Notice**

The Physician Assistant Program reserves the right to make changes in policies, procedures, and regulations following the publication of this handbook. Notice of changes, revisions, and additions to the handbook will be distributed to each student in writing by the Director of the Physician Assistant Program.

## **Teaching out Currently Matriculated Students**

St. Ambrose University (SAU) is committed to the academic success of all students. However, should the program lose accreditation or if there is a voluntary decision to close the program, the SAU Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program is responsible for developing a plan for teaching out currently matriculated students. The plan may include matriculating out the remaining students at St. Ambrose, or assisting the students in obtaining matriculation at another accredited institution.

## ***II. OVERVIEW OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM***

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the St. Ambrose University Physician Assistant Program is to prepare physician assistants to deliver high quality patient-centered care with compassion and respect. The program provides a supportive environment to assist students as they develop into professionals with the knowledge and skills to contribute to the health and welfare of their communities.

### **Program Goals:**

- Maintain an accredited MPAS program.
- Maintain a level of PANCE pass rate above the national average.
- Meet the primary care work force needs-especially in rural and underserved populations.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism.
- Work effectively with other members of the health care team.
- Demonstrates service or assumes a leadership role within the profession and the community.
- Recruit and retain qualified applicants.

## Graduate Functions & Tasks/Expected Outcomes

The student's acquisition of medical knowledge and skills in the program will be based on the biopsychosocial model of care. This model requires knowledge and analysis of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of health and illness and the scientific and compassionate application to human structure, function, and behavior. It also requires knowledge of the contextual and underlying factors including current medical practice concepts, clinical research in medicine and its application to clinical decision making, medical delivery and payment systems, effective utilization of communication, the values and ethics of professionalism, and self-assessment activities for continuous self-improvement and improvement of patient care. This model of care is consistent with the mission and goals of the program.

The student learning outcomes for the program are guided by the *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession*. This document defines the knowledge, skills, and professional attributes necessary for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate. This document was developed through a collaborative effort of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the Accreditation Review Commission on Education of Physician Assistants (ARC-PA), the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). They have been updated to reflect the new recommendations from the PAEA.

The SAU PA Program's education goals are to develop physician assistants who have the necessary knowledge and skill set to competently practice medicine. The program provides the training to meet the objectives and achieve the stated outcomes. To ensure the program has accomplished these goals, students will undergo multiple evaluation methods to confirm they have met the following competencies:

### St. Ambrose University PA Program Competencies – 2021

In the following domains, a graduate from the St. Ambrose PA program can do the following:

1. **Patient Care:** Provide patient centered care that is appropriate and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.
  - a. Gather a pertinent history.
  - b. Perform a pertinent physical examination.
  - c. Order appropriate laboratory tests, imaging studies, and other diagnostic studies.
  - d. Interpret laboratory data, imaging studies, and other diagnostic tests for general clinical practice.
  - e. Make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgement.
  - f. Develop patient management plans.
  - g. Counsel and educate patients and their families to empower them to participate in their care and enable shared decision making.
  - h. Perform basic diagnostic, and surgical procedures.
  - i. Provide healthcare services aimed at wellness and prevention of health problems.

2. **Medical Knowledge:** Demonstrate knowledge of established and evolving biomedical, clinical, epidemiological, and social-behavioral sciences, as well as the application of this knowledge to patient care.
  - a. Demonstrate an investigatory and analytic approach to clinical situations.
  - b. Apply established and emerging principles of biomedical science fundamentals to healthcare.
  - c. Apply established and emerging principles of clinical sciences to diagnostic and therapeutic decision making, clinical problem solving, and other aspects of evidence-based healthcare.
  - d. Apply principles of epidemiological sciences to the identification of health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for patients.
  - e. Apply principles of social-behavioral sciences to provision of patient care, including assessment of the impact of psychosocial-cultural influences on health, disease, care-seeking, care compliance, and barriers to and attitudes toward care.
  - f. Contribute to the application and dissemination of established and evolving healthcare knowledge and practices (Grand Rounds, capstone project, issues and research, counseling patient).
  
3. **Practice-Based Learning and Improvement:** Demonstrate engagement in critical analysis of one's own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and practice improvement.
  - a. Identify strengths, deficiencies, and limits in one's knowledge and expertise.
  - b. Identify and perform learning activities that address one's gaps in knowledge, skills or attitudes.
  - c. Seek and incorporate feedback that will aid in clinical practice.
  - d. Locate, appraise, and assimilate evidence from scientific studies related to patients' health conditions.
  - e. Recognize the value of monitoring quality improvement methods that analyze and change practice.
  
4. **Interpersonal and Communication Skills:** Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals.
  - a. Communicate with patients and families to respond to their needs and to deliver culturally sensitive care.
  - b. Communicate effectively with patients and families.
  - c. Demonstrate sensitivity, honesty, empathy and compassion in difficult conversations/communication with patients.
  - d. Communicate effectively with colleagues within one's profession or specialty, other health professionals, and health-related agencies.
  - e. Collaborate effectively with others on the healthcare team while maintaining a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, ethical integrity, and trust.
  - f. Maintain pertinent, timely and understandable medical documentation.
  
5. **Professionalism:** Demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles.
  - a. Demonstrate compassion, integrity and respect for others.
  - b. Balance co-existence of personal and professional responsibilities.
  - c. Demonstrate respect for patient privacy and autonomy.
  - d. Demonstrate accountability to patients, society and the profession.
  - e. Demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to a diverse patient population, including but not limited to diversity in gender, age, culture, race, religion, disabilities and sexual orientation.
  - f. Demonstrate a commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision of care and interaction with the healthcare community.
  - g. Demonstrate awareness of the importance of self-maintenance of emotional, physical and mental health..
  - h. Practice flexibility and maturity in adjusting to change with the capacity to alter behavior.
  - i. Recognize that ambiguity is part of clinical healthcare and respond by using appropriate resources in dealing with uncertainty.

6. **Systems-Based Practice:** Demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context and system of healthcare, as well as the ability to call effectively on other resources to provide optimal healthcare.
  - a. Utilize generalized training to effectively adapt to various healthcare settings and specialities.
  - b. Recognize financial aspects of healthcare decisions and delivery for patients, providers and payers.
  - c. Exhibit an understanding of the legal and regulatory environment.
  - d. Recognize the cultural, socioeconomic and environmental influences and other population-level determinants affecting the health of the individual and community being served.

## Technical Skills and Procedures

By completion of the program, each student will have been taught in the didactic phase, or have performed or observed during the clinical phase, the following technical skills and procedures:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive physical examination</li> <li>• Casting</li> <li>• Splinting</li> <li>• Intravenous access</li> <li>• Venipuncture</li> <li>• Arterial puncture</li> <li>• Injections – intramuscular, intradermal, and subcutaneous</li> <li>• Suturing – wound closure</li> <li>• Surgical knot tying</li> <li>• Wound care</li> <li>• Skin biopsies – punch, shave, elliptical</li> <li>• Urinary catheterizations</li> <li>• Nasogastric intubation</li> <li>• Endotracheal intubation</li> <li>• IV medication administration</li> <li>• Sterile technique</li> <li>• Administration of local anesthesia</li> <li>• Digital nerve blocks</li> <li>• Culture collection – blood, sputum, urine</li> <li>• Performance of urinalysis, wet mount, and KOH prep</li> <li>• Collection and interpretation of rapid strep and influenza</li> <li>• Eye irrigation</li> <li>• Epistaxis management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lumbar puncture</li> <li>• Cerumen removal</li> <li>• Pap smear</li> <li>• Colposcopy</li> <li>• Isolation procedures</li> <li>• Arthrocentesis</li> <li>• Dislocation reduction</li> <li>• Incision and drainage</li> <li>• Skin stapling/removal</li> <li>• Central line placement</li> <li>• IUD insertion/removal</li> <li>• Joint aspiration/injection</li> <li>• Cryotherapy</li> <li>• Burn treatment</li> <li>• Chest tubes</li> <li>• Epidurals</li> <li>• Anoscopy</li> <li>• Operating room – surgical scrubbing, gowning/gloving, sterile field, surgical instruments</li> <li>• Foreign body removal – eye, ear, nose, skin</li> <li>• BLS/ACLS/PALS</li> <li>• Management of emergent situations: Cardiac arrest, Trauma, Anaphylaxis, Respiratory distress</li> </ul>
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## Technical Standards

The St. Ambrose University Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program is committed to the development of providers who deliver high quality patient care with compassion and respect. In addition to academic standards, students must be able to meet required technical standards for admission, progression, and graduation from the program. A student must have adequate ability and skills in the following areas: observation; communication; sensory and motor function; intellectual, conceptual, integrative, and quantitative ability; and behavioral and social attributes.

*Students must attest to their ability to meet these standards with or without reasonable accommodations. See Appendix II.*

**General Abilities:** The student must possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, taste, and smell in order to integrate, analyze, and synthesize information in an accurate manner. The student must also have the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, position equilibrium, and movement that are important to the student's ability to gather significant information necessary to effectively assess patients.

**Observation:** The student must be able to observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to chemical, biological, anatomic and physiologic sciences, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms. Students must be able to observe demonstrations in the classroom including films, powerpoint presentations, and other forms of visual presentation. The student must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand.

**Communication:** The student must communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally to elicit information from patients and others. They must be able to describe changes in mood, activity, posture, and perceive non-verbal communications. Each student must have the ability to read and write, comprehend and speak the English language to facilitate communication with patients, family members, and other professionals in healthcare settings. Communication includes speech, writing, reading, interpreting tables, figures, graphs, and computer literacy.

**Sensory and Motor Function:** The student must be able to perform gross and fine motor movements with sufficient coordination needed to perform physical examinations utilizing the techniques of inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A student must develop the psychomotor skills reasonably needed to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medication, management and operation of diagnostic and therapeutic medical equipment utilized in the general and emergent care of patients required in practice as a physician assistant. The student must be able to maintain consciousness and equilibrium; have sufficient levels of postural control, neuromuscular control, and eye-to-hand coordination; and to possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, and physical exertion required for satisfactory performance in the clinical and classroom settings.

**Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** The student must be able to develop and refine problem-solving skills that are crucial to practice as a physician assistant. Problem solving involves the abilities to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures; to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize objective and subjective; and to make decisions that reflect sound clinical judgment. A student must be able to read and comprehend medical literature, as well as have the ability to incorporate new information from a variety of sources to formulate diagnoses and develop a therapeutic plan.

**Behavioral and Social Attributes:** A student must possess the emotional health required for full use of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment and the prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom setting as well as in the clinical environment. The development of mature, sensitive, effective and professional relationships with patients and members of the health care team is essential. Students must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Flexibility, compassion, integrity, effective interpersonal skills, and concern for others are personal qualities that are desired in a health professional.

The Physician Assistant Program Faculty will consider for admission applicants who have the ability to demonstrate the technical standards of the profession as noted in this document. The PA program must ensure the health, safety, and security of all patients. Eligibility to enter or continue in the program will be based on academic progress as well as physical and emotional capacities to perform the essential functions necessary to meet the requirements of the program's curriculum and become an effective practitioner.



## Faculty Advising System

All students in the PA Program are assigned a faculty advisor for the student's entire enrollment. The main responsibilities of the faculty advisor are:

1. To be an advocate for the student throughout the student's enrollment.
2. To oversee and monitor the student's progress through the program and assist the student to maintain satisfactory progress through the program.
3. To be available for academic advising and consultation throughout the student's enrollment in the program.
4. To advise the student about the SAU campus resources and assistance for non-academic problems or concerns.
5. To consult with the student about any program requirements, policies, expectations or concerns that may impact the professional development or academic progress of the student.

At the beginning of the first semester of program enrollment, the student is expected to make an appointment with his/her advisor for an introductory (get acquainted) session. At that time, advisors will let students know their office hours, schedules, and the preferred ways to contact them throughout the year. Advisors will also inform the student about the program's expectations concerning academic progress, professional behavior, and development throughout the student's enrollment. Faculty advisors may be consulted for any reason of the student's choosing. Faculty advisors are considered advocates for the students they are assigned and have the students' best interests and welfare as their first responsibility. Students are encouraged to get to know their faculty advisor well in order to establish a positive rapport for effective collaboration.

There are two areas of particular importance regarding academic advising that are emphasized by the program: academic progress and professionalism. With regard to academic progress, students are expected to consult with their advisors at the first indication of any academic difficulty or program such as a low or failing grade, difficulty mastering class material, or concerns with a class or course. Emotional, social, circumstantial or other personal problems may also be impediments to academic progress and can be addressed by faculty advisors or any member of the faculty with whom the student feels comfortable. If that faculty member feels it is appropriate, they should refer the student to the appropriate resource, (for example: Accessibility Resource Center or the Counseling Center). Students should know that faculty advisors are obligated to contact students for consultation in any circumstance where satisfactory academic progress may be in question. All faculty advisors want to ensure that their advisees maintain good academic standing throughout the entire enrollment in the program.

Regarding the second area, professionalism, students will be evaluated by the faculty at the end of every semester on their professional behaviors by means of the Professionalism Evaluation form. Advisors will consult with the student about the evaluation in order to promote and foster the student's professional development. Should there occur an event necessitating an "Unsatisfactory" rating on the Professionalism Evaluation form at any point in the student's enrollment, the student will be contacted by his/her advisor for consultation and remedial action. Professionalism and its development as the student progresses through the program is a primary value for every faculty advisor.

## Curriculum Design

The Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Program is 29 months in length consisting of a 14-month didactic component followed by 15-month supervised clinical clerkship component. The didactic phase is comprised of classroom instruction in advanced basic sciences, clinical skills, clinical medicine, pharmacology, behavioral medicine, ethics, and research. No advanced standing is allowed in the program, regardless of previous graduate work in healthcare. All incoming students must complete the entire PA curriculum. In general, classes are held Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The clinical phase of the program consists of 15 months of supervised clinical clerkships. Most clerkships are 4 weeks in length with some exceptions. There are eight required clerkships to include Family Medicine (2), Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics-Gynecology, Psychiatry, Emergency Medicine, and General Surgery. In addition to the required clerkships, students will choose four electives to complete the clinical phase of the program. Some rotations will require students to work on the weekends and evenings. Students are required to be available as instructed by their preceptors. Several times throughout the clinical phase, students will return to campus for end-of-rotation exams as well as other educational sessions. A separate handbook will be distributed during the clinical year orientation detailing specifics for the clinical year.

### St. Ambrose University Master of Physician Assistant Program Curriculum

Year 1 – Summer (8 weeks)		Year 1 – Fall		Year 1 – Spring	
Courses	Hrs	Courses	Hrs	Courses	Hrs
MPAS 500 Gross Anatomy	5	MPAS 510 Advanced Physiology MPAS 520 Medical Pathology MPAS 530 Clinical Laboratory Science MPAS 600 Professional Practice Issues MPAS 620 Communication in Medicine I MPAS 630 Healthcare Systems MPAS 690 Medical Ethics	5 5 2 1 2 2 2	MPAS 640 Medicine I MPAS 650 Pharmacotherapy I MPAS 660 Clinical Skills I MPAS 625 Communication in Medicine II MPAS 670 Issues in Research I MPAS 680 Behavioral Medicine	8 3 2 1 3 4
	5		19		21
Year 2 – Summer		Year 2 – Fall		Year 2 – Spring	
Courses	Hrs	Courses	Hrs	Courses	Hrs
MPAS 645 Medicine II MPAS 655 Pharmacotherapy II MPAS 665 Clinical Skills II MPAS 675 Issues in Research II	11 3 2 1	MPAS 677 Research Application MPAS 700s Clinical Preceptorships	2 12	MPAS 700s Clinical Preceptorships	16
	17		14		16
Year 3 – Summer		Year 3 – Fall		Total Credit Hours: 124	
Courses	Hrs	Courses	Hrs		
MPAS 700s Clinical Preceptorships	16	MPAS 700s Clinical Preceptorships	16		
	16		16		

## Course Descriptions

### **MPAS 500 – Gross Anatomy**

This is an intense, eight-week course in the study of the human body involving cadaver dissection. A regional-based approach emphasizing the relationships of anatomical structures will be used. Students will apply knowledge of anatomy to diagnosis and clinical practice. Embryonic development and how it relates to adult anatomy will occur. Students will be introduced to cross-sectional anatomy and radiology as it pertains to medical imaging. The format of the course includes lectures, laboratories, and demonstrations. Student evaluation is accomplished through written and practical examinations.

### **MPAS 510 – Advanced Physiology**

This course is an advanced study of the fundamental principles of physiology and their clinical application to human organ systems. Emphasis will be placed on the study of cellular, neural, musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal, renal, endocrine, cardiovascular, respiratory, and reproductive physiology and their integration. Special consideration will be given to those principles which directly apply to the treatment of common human disease states and altered states of physiologic functioning.

### **MPAS 520 – Medical Pathology**

This course focuses on the pathologic changes that occur in different organ systems of the body. The underlying biochemical, cellular, and physiological changes and their relationship to human disease is examined. The course will provide an understanding of the pathologic processes that lead to clinical signs and symptoms of disease.

### **MPAS 530 – Clinical Laboratory Science**

This course will provide the student with an overview of commonly ordered laboratory tests, accurate application of the tests, and interpretation of the data. Proper laboratory technique for selected tests will also be covered along with quality control measures. Additionally, evaluation and correlation of laboratory data used in the diagnosis and treatment of common infectious disease states will be covered.

### **MPAS 600 – Professional Practice Issues**

This course will introduce the students to the physician assistant profession. Students will gain an understanding of professionalism, the role of the physician assistant, and the physician-physician assistant team. In addition, students will learn about the history of the profession, the profession's organizations, the credentialing and certification process, as well as an introduction to the healthcare system.

### **MPAS 620 – Communication in Medicine I**

This course is designed to provide students the skills necessary to become proficient in communication in the medical setting. Communication includes verbal and non-verbal forms. In addition, medical documentation is addressed and its importance in the practice of medicine is emphasized. Good communication skills are a necessary component for competent medical practice. Good communication between patient and provider improves patient outcomes. To effectively build communication skills, the course will address the basic fundamentals and integrate these skills into the clinical curriculum.

### **MPAS 630 – Healthcare Systems**

This course will provide the physician assistant student information regarding healthcare delivery systems in the United States. Students will gain an understanding of the impact healthcare policy and managed care have on patient health. Clinical management practices will be reviewed. Additional topics include coding and reimbursement, quality assurance, and risk management.

**MPAS 640 – Medicine I**

The Medicine I course is designed to introduce students to the process of clinical decision making by utilizing critical reasoning skills to diagnosis and treat illness and disease. Students will develop their knowledge base in the etiology, clinical presentation, differential diagnoses, and therapeutic approach to disease processes. This course will focus on the most commonly diagnosed medical problems. In addition to lectures and reading assignments, Problem Based Learning sessions in a small group format will allow for additional opportunities to develop critical thinking skills. Strategies for disease prevention and promotion throughout the lifespan will also be emphasized. This course will lay the foundation for Medicine II which is offered in the Summer Semester.

**MPAS 650 – Pharmacotherapy I**

This course provides the physician student the general principals of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of various classes of drugs. Drug actions on the various biochemical pathways and physiological systems will be discussed. The judicious use of drugs in physician assistant practice will be emphasized. This course will lay the foundation for the Pharmacology II course.

**MPAS 660 – Clinical Skills I**

This course is designed to provide students instruction in the fundamental clinical skills necessary for patient care. A primary focus of instruction is on performance of complete examinations of patients across the lifespan. Weekly lectures combined with small group instruction ensure students learn proper exam techniques, recognize and appropriately describe physical findings, and use the clinical data to formulate differential diagnoses.

**MPAS 625 – Communication in Medicine II**

This course allows students to build upon the knowledge and skills obtained in Communication in Medicine I and continue to increase their competency level. Patient education and counseling skills are emphasized, as is more complex communication such as giving bad news. Significant emphasis is placed on interdisciplinary communication. The skills learned in this course will be integrated into the clinical curriculum, thereby allowing the student to become more familiar with medical communication.

**MPAS 670 – Issues in Research I**

This course is the first in a two course series that covers topics relevant to clinical research and the principals of evidence-based practice. Topics include research design, sound measurement principles, basic descriptive statistics, and an introduction to the efficient use of information systems. A major portion of the course will emphasize the critical appraisal and synthesis of the findings of clinical research.

**MPAS 645 – Medicine II**

This course builds material presented in the Medicine I course and prepares students for the clinical Phase of their education. The course focuses on etiology, risk factors, underlying pathologic processes, and epidemiology for disease processes encountered in the practice of medicine. Recognition of signs and symptoms of medical conditions, appropriate diagnostic work-up, development of differential diagnoses, treatment options, patient education, and prevention are focused topics in the course. The course will follow a systems-based approach.

**MPAS 655 – Pharmacotherapy II**

This course is designed to build upon the material presented in the Pharmacology I course and will emphasize pharmacotherapeutic practice. Commonly prescribed drugs will be examined with the Focus on appropriate drug selection based on individual patients, common adverse reactions, and drug interactions. The cost and efficacy of drugs will be studied. Prescribing for special patient populations will be addressed to include pregnancy, lactation, pediatrics, and geriatrics.

**MPAS 665 – Clinical Skills II**

This course is a continuation of Clinical Skills I and the student is introduced to technical skills of increased complexity to include suturing, casting, splinting, IVs/injections, gowning, gloving, and a general orientation to the operating room. Students will learn proper sterile technique. Students are given an introduction to common minor procedures. In addition, Basic Life Support, Advanced Life Support, and Pediatric Life Support classes will be part of this course so as to certify the student prior to clinical rotations.

**MPAS 680 – Behavioral Medicine**

This course will focus on neurobiological, psychobiological, emotional, social, and cultural influences and their effect on health and illness in the practice of primary care medicine. Human development across the lifespan will be presented, as well as end of life issues. Normative and maladaptive responses to developmental tasks and life stressors in relation to physical and emotional health will be covered. Health disparities and societal issues are examined. Psychiatric disorders are covered to include psychotic disorders, personality disorders, mood and anxiety disorders. The importance of practicing biopsychosocial medicine is stressed throughout the course. In addition, preventive healthcare and patient counseling will be emphasized.

**MPAS 690 – Medical Ethics**

This course examines the application of human and professional values, judgments, and choices to selective ethical dilemmas arising in clinical practice. Students will be introduced to a structured approach for identifying, analyzing, and resolving ethical issues in clinical medicine. Topics related to patient rights, medical practice laws, professional liability, and medical malpractice are explored.

**MPAS 670 – Issues in Research II**

This course is designed to build upon the material presented in the Research Issues I course. Scientific methods, evidence-based practice principles, and clinical research will be studied in more detail. This course will focus on research design and the appropriate use and interpretation of statistical analysis related to clinical research.

**MPAS 677 – Research Application**

Students will complete a scholarly project under the supervision of PA faculty. Utilizing databases, students will review medical literature, interpret, and critically evaluate the literature and its application to patient care in order to promote evidence-based clinical practice.

## **Required Clinical Preceptorship Descriptions**

### **MPAS 700 – Family Practice Clerkship – Required**

This is an eight-week clinical experience under the supervision of a community-based primary care physician and/or physician assistant designed to acquaint the student with those aspects of the practice of medicine unique to the community setting. The student works with the preceptor in the hospital, the office, long-term care facilities, and all other areas where the preceptor works. In the hospital the student makes rounds with the preceptor and assists him in fulfilling his inpatient responsibilities. In the office the student learns about management procedures in a medical practice and helps the preceptor by providing services consistent with his individual background and clinical training. Students will observe the team practice concept of health care.

### **MPAS 701 – Internal Medicine Clerkship - Required**

This four-week clerkship will provide the student experiences in adult medicine. The student will have the opportunity to evaluate and treat problems encountered in an Internal Medicine setting including both inpatient and outpatient settings. This clerkship will allow students to learn management of more complex medical cases and further develop their critical thinking skills.

### **MPAS 703 – Obstetrics/Gynecology – Required**

This is a four-week clinical experience studying the broad spectrum of common obstetric and gynecological problems. During this clerkship, the management of pregnancy, labor, and delivery including prenatal, birth, and postnatal complications is taught. The student is responsible for taking obstetrical histories, performing obstetrical physical examinations, and following patients through labor, delivery, and the early postpartum period. The student will also gain experience in gynecologic care to include well-woman care, cancer detection, sexually transmitted diseases, and contraception. Learning to take gynecologically oriented patient histories and perform complete and accurate gynecological examinations is required to include office based procedures. In addition, the student will have operating room exposure to gynecologic surgery as well as cesarean sections.

### **MPAS 704 – Psychiatry – Required**

This is a four-week clinical experience in an outpatient and/or inpatient psychiatric setting. There will be special emphasis on the role of a physician assistant in psychiatry. Students will have the opportunity to evaluate patients, perform psychiatric interviews, assess mental status, and develop a working diagnosis. The student will develop a tentative medical management plan, make referral to a physician or community agency, and learn follow-up management with the treating physician or agency.

### **MPAS 705 – Emergency Medicine Clerkship – Required**

This is a four-week course which provides the student opportunities to gain experience in evaluating and treating common medical emergencies encountered in Emergency Medicine. The student will be under the supervision of the Emergency Department physician and staff. The clerkship will expose the student to cases of trauma, life-threatening conditions, acute illness, and injuries seen in an emergency setting.

### **MPAS 706 – Pediatric Rotation – Required**

This is a four-week clinical experience in which the student will have learning opportunities in pediatrics. The rotation will mainly consist of working in outpatient clinics, but may also have some inpatient exposure. The student will learn to manage various acute and chronic childhood illnesses and learn to evaluate normal variations of growth and development of infants and children.

### **MPAS 707 – General Surgery Clerkship – Required**

This is a four-week clerkship in which the student will learn about surgical patients and the surgical service. Students participate in the pre-operative evaluation of the patient, observe/assist during surgery, as well as care for the patient post-operatively. At the end of the four weeks students are expected to understand the course of surgical illness, be able to conduct themselves appropriately in the operating room, and to have gained the skills necessary for care of surgical patients to include intravenous access, suturing, and other appropriate procedures as required by the clerkship preceptor.

### **Accessibility Resource Center**

The Accessibility Resource Center offers a variety of services and reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Office at 563-333-6275 as soon as possible to better ensure that reasonable accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. It should be noted that services do not lower course standards or alter other degree requirements. Reasonable accommodations, when available, are intended to reduce the effects that a disability may have on the student's performance in a traditional academic setting. Additional information about the type of services available is provided in the *St. Ambrose University Catalog* and the Accessibility Resource Center website at <https://www.sau.edu/ARC>. Requests for services may be made by either calling the Office at the above number or visiting the Office located in the lower level of the St. Ambrose Library. Hours of operation are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday or by appointment. Students may access the ARC by self referral, referral from a faculty member or the program director.

### **Financial Aid**

The Office of Financial Aid provides assistance to students in finding sources of financial aid and prepares financial aid packages. Financial Aid personnel are available for personal and confidential consultation and guidance in the main office on the first floor of Ambrose Hall. Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Phone: 563-333-6314

### **Counseling Services**

The center provides counseling for a wide variety of personal and interpersonal issues. Assistance is available for common difficulties experienced by students to include anxiety, loneliness, depression, and eating disorders among others. All services are free and confidential. Phone: 563-333-6423 Students may access the Counseling Center by self referral, referral from a faculty member or the program director.

### **Student Success Center**

The center provides free academic support to students who may be struggling in their courses. Trained personnel can evaluate the student's study habits, time management skills, as well as provide writing assistance. The student may call 563-333-6331 for an appointment. Students may access the Student Success Center by self referral, referral by a faculty member or the program director.

### **III. PROGRAM POLICIES**

#### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance and punctuality is mandatory for all program courses. An excused absence is required each time a student will be absent from any class. Attendance is also an important educational and professional component of the clinical phase of the program. Students are required to be present for their supervised clinical clerkships as directed by the preceptor and clinical site. Notice may be given in person, by phone, or email.

**Illness:** If a student is ill during the didactic year, the student must contact the instructor for the course as well as the program director. All assignments must be made up as per the syllabus policy for that class. If the student is ill during the clinical year, the student must contact their preceptor as well as the clinical coordinating team. The student will be responsible for making up those hours if possible. If this is not possible, the student will be given a written assignment (s) to complete. If a student misses more than three days of a rotation, the clinical team will determine if the rotation needs to be repeated. If the student will miss a major exam, a health care provider will need to provide a note confirming the student's illness.

**Bereavement:** Students will be allowed two days for bereavement leave for a first degree relative and one day for any other relative or close family friend. The student must notify the program director during both clinical and didactic year. In addition, during the clinical year, the student must notify their preceptor and the clinical coordinating team.

**Job Interview:** During the clinical year, a student may take a maximum of 4 days off to interview with no more than 2 days/rotation. To maximize their clinical experience and minimize days missed, the student should make every attempt to schedule their interviews on a Monday or Friday. No interviews should be scheduled for the first week of a rotation. All interview days must be cleared with the student's preceptor and the clinical coordinating team. The student will be responsible for making up those hours if possible. If this is not possible, the student will be given a written assignment (s) to complete.

#### **Effective 2/7/2019**

Consequences for *unexcused* absences from courses/clerkships are:

- First occurrence – a meeting with the student's advisor to discuss prevention of further occurrences
- Second occurrence – an academic warning and a meeting with the faculty to discuss prevention of further occurrences
- Third occurrence – academic suspension
- Continued unexcused absences – absences after the third occurrence may result in academic dismissal

**Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, will require a meeting with the faculty to discuss continuation in the program.**



## Policy on Leaves of Absence

### *Regular Leave of Absence*

Students in the physician assistant program may, under exceptional circumstances, be granted a leave of absence. Any such leave of absence granted shall be solely within the discretion of the program director based upon the merits of the request, evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A leave of absence constitutes formal permission to delay progression through the program, but does not excuse the student from any course requirements. A leave of absence may be granted for a period of time mutually agreed upon by the student and the program director, but under no circumstance will a leave be granted for longer than one year. A leave of absence that extends the student's academic program beyond the usual 29 consecutive months will require the assignment of a new program completion date, new graduation date, and may require assignment to a new class. The new graduation date assigned will depend on the length of the leave and the official University graduation dates. In addition, a new completion date will delay eligibility for taking the NCCPA PANCE examination and will delay the temporary and/or permanent licensing process in various states including Iowa. **NOTE:** Any student who is experiencing academic failure, who is not in good academic standing (for example a student with failing grades on exams or clinical clerkships), or any student who is the subject of an involuntary dismissal from the program for any reason is not eligible to utilize this policy for the purpose of avoiding or delaying academic or disciplinary consequences.

For all leaves of absence, the following will apply:

The student request for a leave of absence must be made in writing and addressed to the program director. The reason for the request should be stated clearly in the letter. In most cases, the student should continue to attend classes, take examinations and fulfill any other class assignments until leave has been formally granted.

The student is responsible for initiating determination of the financial consequences of taking a leave of absence. Students must review financial arrangements with the Business Office and the Office of Financial Aid.

When a leave of absence is granted, the program may require that the student meet additional academic requirements (e.g., remedial course work) and or/submit specific documentation (e.g., certification for medical leave or a medical release to return to classes).

When a leave of absence is granted, students must notify the course coordinators of all classes in which they are enrolled of their withdrawal from course work, or the clinical preceptors of any clerkships in which they are enrolled of their withdrawal from clerkships.

A student who has been granted a leave of absence is responsible for notifying the program director in writing of his/her intention to return to classes on the appointed date no later than two months before the start of classes. If not so notified, the student's place in the class will be forfeited. Re-entry into the program will then require re-application through the usual admissions process of the program.

Upon re-enrollment following a leave of absence, the student will be subject to all rules and regulations which pertain to any new class to which he/she will be assigned.

### Military Leave of Absence

Students in the physician assistant program will not be excused from classes to attend short sessions (2-31 days) of active duty associated with their National Guard or reserve training commitments. Because of the critical nature of the educational material being presented at any given time, absence from scheduled classes or clerkships could seriously interrupt the academic progress of students.

- In the event an entire unit is called to active duty, the program will attempt to facilitate the student's continuation of their education once the military service is completed.

The following St. Ambrose University policy will apply:

St. Ambrose University recognizes that during times of national emergencies, students in the National Guard and Reserves might be called to active service. SAU has developed the following options for students in the military service called to duty.

1. Withdraw the student from classes from the current term at 100% tuition refund OR
2. If the student has completed a majority of a course(s) and arrangements are made with the individual professor/instructor for a grade or in progress work (IP grade), the registration for each individual course will remain intact. Tuition applied to course(s) will be assessed.

### **Policy on Student Work**

Program responsibilities are not negotiable, and will not be altered due to student work obligations. Students may not be hired as employees for any private or public practice, clinic, or other institution to perform any medical services during any time they are part of the physician assistant program. Students may not be given any payments, stipends, or other remuneration for medical services performed as part of the physician assistant educational program. Students may volunteer their medical services to charitable, humanitarian, or community service organizations when such services are assigned or approved within the physician assistant educational program. Students may not substitute for regular clinical or administrative staff during the didactic or clinical year.

### **Policy on Computer Use and Electronic Information Security**

The computers in the Center for Health Science and Education (CHSE) computer lab are meant to be tools that are accessible to all students in the Center. This policy will work best if the computers are used with the community in mind. The systems are not to be altered. Do not move, change, or add software, folders, icons, or subdirectories; and do not alter the organizational structure of the desktop.

Personal use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter have rapidly increased over the last several years. While this technology allows instant widespread sharing of information, basic privacy and information security requirements apply. Sharing confidential SAU or clinic information, including protected health information on personal social networking websites is strictly prohibited. Examples of prohibited disclosure include:

- Any references to patients or patient care events, even if the patient's name is not included. Under HIPPA, such information is still considered protected health information.
- Photographs of patients, even if the patient or his/her legal representative gives a copy of the picture to a student.

Under HIPPA, students can be found civilly or even criminally liable for privacy and information security violations. Patients trust students to maintain the confidentiality of their information. Any student violating confidentiality may be subject to corrective action up to and including academic dismissal.

## Center for Health Sciences Education

### Policy on Facility Access

In order to maintain the rights and safety of students in various aspects of the educational program, the following policy has been adopted:

1. Students have the right to access and use program equipment for review and practice during business hours (Monday through Friday 8:00AM to 4:30PM) and during non-business hours (evenings and weekends). Proximity key cards will be issued to all full time students. With these cards, the student will be able to enter the building between 6:00AM and 10:00PM.
2. **When working outside of business hours, the student must have at least one individual from the program with them.**
3. Laboratory rooms must be locked at all times unless occupied by departmental students or personnel. The last person to leave any area is responsible for turning off all equipment and for ensuring the doors are locked.
4. Punch codes are installed on the doors of the department's laboratories. Students must memorize this code and not give the code to anyone outside of the department.
5. The Gross Anatomy Lab in Lewis Hall will be locked at all times. The student will be provided an individual access code for the semester. This code will be changed at the end of the semester and may change during the semester, as the instructor deems necessary. If Lewis Hall is locked, the student must check-in with Security in the Rogalski Center on the hour and show their student ID. Only students enrolled in this course, and faculty directly involved with the course, are allowed access to the lab.
6. Students are encouraged to utilize scheduled practice times arranged by each course instructor. During these scheduled hours, instructors or graduate assistants will be available to observe and answer questions.
7. Facilities and equipment are for teaching and research purposes. They are not to be utilized for recreation, exercise training, or the treatment of students, friends, or family members.

***Safety- The following policies apply to both the university as well as clinical placements. All Clinical affiliation agreements include a clause about policies.***

### Fire Safety

The University or clinical site conducts periodic fire drills to promote safety in all buildings. Each fire alarm should be considered an actual alarm, and every student is required to leave the building in a safe and orderly manner. Persons who do not evacuate the building or cooperate during the fire alarm, will be fined \$50. Such offenses are in violation of state law and offenders may be referred to local authorities for further action.

Tampering with fire safety equipment, igniting fires in or on University property or at a clinical site, reporting false fire alarms, and using potentially hazardous flammable materials are prohibited. Pulling false fire alarms, expelling fire extinguishers, or tampering with smoke detectors or other safety equipment may result in a \$100 fine per incident.

Students should know the location of the nearest fire exits and equipment. In the case of a fire, isolate the fire by closing doors, pull the nearest fire alarm, evacuate the building immediately, call security to report the fire, and follow all staff instructions.

### Security Services

Campus security will include the CHSE in its evening and weekend rounds. Additionally, a campus security guard will be located at the second floor entrance between 5:00-10:00 pm Sunday through Thursday evenings during the school year. Phones have been installed in classrooms, laboratories, and throughout the building should an emergency need to be reported. Any emergency call placed within the building will be answered by campus security. Emergency phones have also been placed outside the first and second floor entrances of the building and emergency phones placed in parking lots are marked. In case of an emergency, an Emergency and Evacuation Plan is posted in each classroom. Students should familiarize themselves with security measures at their clinical sites.

Students are encouraged to walk in pairs especially on evenings and weekends. When that is not possible, please contact the Security Office for an escort. On campus, escorts are available 24 hours a day, and may be arranged by contacting the security desk at 563-333-6104. Escorts are available to and from any on-campus location. A description of other services and classes designed to promote student safety on campus is provided on the Security website at: <https://www.sau.edu/security>. The policy on Access to Facilities provides additional safety recommendations.

### Active Shooter, Violent Incident, Lockdown

**If students do not know the location of an assailant or danger, it may be unsafe to seek to escape.** Find a safe area that can be secured. Secure your area and lock or barricade the door. Turn out the lights or pull the blinds. As soon as you are in a secure location, call 911 and Security (on campus at 563-333-6104). Hide under and behind solid objects. Keep yourself, and others seeking refuge with you, out of sight of doors and windows. Turn off radios and other devices making noise, remind people to silence their cell phones. Allow others to take refuge, but be careful about opening a door. The shooter may try the door or call for help in an attempt to gain more targets. Provide first aid for any injured that are sheltering with you. Wait in a safe area until told by Security or the police that all is clear.

**If confronted by a shooter**, decide whether to defend yourself or attempt escape. If you attempt escape, have a plan in mind. If you find yourself in an open area, seek shelter. Put something between yourself and the shooter. Do not carry anything and run with your hands in sight. Obey all instructions given by the police and do not attempt to help injured along the way.

**If you are reporting a shooter**, provide your specific location, the number of people at the location, the number and type of injuries. If possible, advise the location and number of assailants, their description including gender, race, clothing, type of weapons, backpacks or bags.

### Suspicious Person or Object

Do not let any unknown person into a locked building/office or allow them to follow right behind you into a building. Do not confront the person, do not block the person's exit. Call security (on-campus at 563-333-6104) and provide as much information as possible. If you see an unknown object that appears out of place – do not touch or disturb the object. Call Security and be prepared to evacuate.

### Incident Reporting

Suspicious and criminal activity, along with safety concerns, should be reported to the Security Office or to the clinical site manager or security officer. Security can also be reached by calling 911 from any campus phone or phone in the Center for Health Sciences Education. Each classroom and laboratory in the Center has a phone available to report such incidents. The call will ring directly into the security desk and will receive an immediate response from the security staff.

Blue cap phones are located around campus to report emergencies. Activation of a blue cap phone opens a direct line between the caller and the 24-hour security desk. A strobe light on the top of the phone is also activated, directing attention to the caller. Phones have been installed at the first and second floor entrances to the Center for Health Sciences Education and an emergency phone is located in the faculty/staff parking lot just west of the Center, where students are permitted to park after 3:00PM and on weekends, and also near visitor parking on the second level.

If the incident is criminal in nature, the victim/complainant is encouraged to report the incident to the Davenport Police Department. The Security Department will assist by serving as an advocate for the victim/complainant as they complete the report filing process.

#### Campus Law Enforcement

St. Ambrose provides on-campus law enforcement through state certified peace officers who are full-time employees of the Scott County Sheriff's Department and the Davenport Police Department. They provide a high level of visibility on campus along with arrest powers as needed. During special events, additional officers are assigned proportionate to the increased number of people on campus. If an incident occurs while an officer is on campus, a police report can be filed if the victim/complainant wishes. If a reportable incident occurs when there is not an officer available, victims are encouraged to file a report with the Davenport Police Department. Any incident reported in the parking lot of the CHSE will be responded to by Genesis Medical Center Security as well.

#### Food and Drink

Food service by Sodexo will be available in the CHSE between 7:30am and 1:30pm Monday – Friday. Students will be notified of any changes in service hours.

Students are encouraged to eat meals and snacks during class breaks scheduled throughout the day. As a courtesy to our guests, we ask that you refrain from eating during class sessions with guest speakers. Consult with course instructors if you have questions about food in the classrooms. If the Student Commons is full, eating in open classrooms will be permitted provided students bringing in food items clean up after themselves. Except for special department functions (including departmental meetings), food is not permitted in the laboratories, computer rooms, or the Health Sciences Resource Room. Closed-top containers are to be used for personal beverages to minimize spills throughout the building. Spills are to be cleaned up immediately and large spills are to be reported to the department office.

#### Student Printing, Copying and Fax Services

As part of the University's Technology Fee, full time students are provided with 500 free prints per semester. After logging in to your university account, you will be able to print to the printer located in the Student Commons. Directions for printing will be provided. A copy and fax machine is available for student use in the Health Sciences Resource Room. For larger printing needs or if you need to send a fax, see department staff. The workroom located on the second floor of the Center is for use by faculty and staff. Graduate assistants may be asked to work in this room periodically. Supplies stored there are not for student use.

#### Health Sciences Resource Room and University Library

In partnership with the St. Ambrose University Library, the Health Sciences Library at the Center for Health Sciences Education supports students preparing for careers in Health and Human Services. Staff members at the Resource Center provide research, technology, and instructional support to students, faculty, and staff. While the Resource Center is a quiet study place, individuals can also receive online and in-person assistance in accessing print and electronic resources, locating information within library catalogs and electronic databases, and borrowing materials through interlibrary loan.

Staff members support the administration of the Center for Health Sciences Education by scheduling classrooms and providing assistance at events. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to take advantage of the services at the Resource Center and should consider it a welcome first-stop for both general questions and in-depth research inquiries.

Services at the Health Sciences Resource Room include access to catalogs and databases, assistance in creating a search strategy, use of resources that support your academic and professional goals, chat online or in-person with an information specialist, or check out materials. Additional information will be provided about checking out books, access to reserve materials, and hours of operation.

**University Library Reserve** – The following is a summary of the policy for reserve materials at the University Library. For additional information, please contact the library at 333-6246. Most materials (books, journal articles, video tapes) that a professor places on reserve for PA students will be housed on reserve at the Circulation Desk near the main entrance to the library. Students obtaining reserve materials must show SAU Student ID. There is no limit on the number of reserve items that may be checked out at any one time. The following are the four reserve categories.

- 1) **STRICT RESERVE** – An item may be checked out (2-hour limit) for use in the immediate library area; the item may not be removed from the library. The student must leave a photo ID at the desk. The ID will be paper clipped to the reserve checkout card and returned to the student once the item is returned to the desk.
- 2) **1-DAY RESERVE** – An item may be checked out and removed from the library for a 24-hour period.
- 3) **3-DAY RESERVE** – An item may be checked out and removed from the library for a 3-day period.
- 4) **1-WEEK RESERVE** – An item may be checked out and removed from the library for a 1-week period.

### Lockers

PA students are assigned lockers to store additional books, clothing, lunches brought from home, and other personal items. Combination locks will be provided and will be returned upon completion of the first year of the program.

### **Health Insurance and Health Services**

Health insurance is mandatory for all students during the entire length of the program. For students not covered independently, St. Ambrose University has a health plan available for students to purchase. While enrolled in the program, PA students will be provided the same free routine health services that are available to all other St. Ambrose students and employees. Among these services are assessment of illness and injury with referral as needed, dispensing of non-prescription medication, pregnancy testing, blood pressure screenings, and annual flu and meningitis clinics. In addition, two professional counselors provide assistance and referral with personal problems and mental health issues as needed.

While on clinical rotations, the student must seek out healthcare available at the site. If the condition is emergent, the student should present to the nearest emergency room. If non-emergent, the student should find an available clinic or urgent care to be assessed. Any expense occurred for student illness is the financial responsibility of the student.

No faculty member, including the program director and the medical director, are permitted to participate as healthcare providers for PA students. This includes giving medical advice, as well as physically providing healthcare. Program faculty are able to help refer students for healthcare, including mental healthcare, upon request.

## **Background Checks and Drug Screening**

Students are required to complete a background check prior to starting classes in the program. Most clinical sites require background checks. If criminal or illegal behaviors are discovered that were not previously disclosed, the student may be subject to dismissal from the program. If a student cannot complete clinical rotations because of negative items contained in the background check, the student will not be able to graduate from the program.

Clinical clerkship sites often require drug screening for students. If illegal drug use is discovered, the student may be subject to disciplinary action. Information can be located in the SAU Student Handbook, pp. 11-14 and 32-38 and located online at <https://www.sau.edu/DeanofStudents>. More information on background checks is provided in the *Castle Branch* section below.

## **Health Requirements and Immunizations**

Students are required to provide documentation of specific health requirements and immunizations prior to starting classes in the program. These requirements include a physical examination, immunization records, TB test results, proof of insurance, and an authorization to release information to clinical rotation sites. If students have an international rotation, they will follow the CDC recommendations in addition to recommendations of the Clinical Site. Please see the *Castle Branch* section below.

## **Castle Branch**

SAU has contracted with Castle Branch, a nationwide company used by many universities and colleges, for student background screenings as well as document tracking and management of student drug tests, healthcare certifications, and immunization records.

Specific immunization requirements based on the program's policies are used to develop an online "to-do" list for students which they access directly through the Castle Branch student portal. Students can upload their records and documents for the various program requirements to Castle Branch's secure website, or submit the documentation directly to the company via fax or email.

A Castle Branch representative reviews each student record and each document submitted and compares them to the specific immunization requirements provided by the program. Based on that criteria, and any additional approval guidelines the program provides, the representative determines if the documents are acceptable or if they need further attention by the program.

As records are uploaded by the student and reviewed by Castle Branch, program administrators can track student progress through the online student roster within the Castle Branch portal. It is important to note that the requirements are being tracked, no personal student health information is released to the program faculty or staff.

## **Policy on Compliance with Program Requirements for Castle Branch**

All students must be in compliance with the program requirements as outlined in Castle Branch. If a student is out of compliance the following will occur:

If the student is < 14 days out of compliance, the student will receive an email warning from the clinical coordinating team.

If the student is >14day and < 30 days out of compliance the student will have a “needs improvement” noted on their professionalism evaluation and will not be allowed back on their clinical rotation or into class until the requirements are completed.

If the student is >30 days out of compliance, the student will be placed on professionalism probation and will not be allowed back on their clinical rotation or into class until the requirements are completed. It should be noted that many jobs and licensure boards require any probation to be reported.

## **HIPPA Training**

Students must complete the initial training for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) as part of the PA curriculum. This course will be administered by the faculty and/or personnel in the SAU health sciences programs.

## **Universal Precautions**

All PA students will be required to complete training in blood borne pathogens and bodily fluid exposure on a yearly basis. This course will be administered by the faculty and/or personnel in the SAU health sciences programs.

## **Exposure Policy and Incident Reporting**

Students may be at risk of exposure to bodily fluids as part of their clinical training. Should a student be exposed, he/she will immediately report the incident to the clerkship preceptor, other site supervisor, or, if on campus, to a faculty member. The student will follow institutional infectious and environmental hazard policy, including completion of all documentation required by the institution. The student must also advise the program’s clinical coordinator within 24 hours of the incident. They will need to complete a program incident form. Should any expense be incurred as a result of an exposure, the student is responsible for all costs related to the incident. Students should be aware that an infectious or environmental hazard exposure can adversely affect student overall health and performance in the PA program.



## Phase II (Clinical Clerkship) Policies

All students must complete the clerkships designated as “required” by the program. Only clerkship sites approved by the program are eligible for student rotations. Students are not to solicit clinical sites or preceptors nor provide their own clinical sites. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate student preference on clerkship scheduling and sites. However, in ALL cases the final determination for all clerkship times, sites, and activities will be at the discretion of the clinical coordinator.

All students are required to be present for clinical duties at the times designated by the preceptor, including Saturdays and Sundays. Students shall not be required to be present on holidays designated by the official PA program academic calendar.

Students will observe a dress code when working in any clinical situation. This means a professional appearance is mandatory for all students unless otherwise specified by the clinical preceptor. **In all clinics, a white coat with a program approved name tag and the PA program patch will be worn with appropriate dress clothes.** For men, a shirt and tie with dress pants are required. For women, a skirt and blouse, dress, or dress slacks are required. Personal grooming and hygiene must be a priority. A detailed clinical rotation dress policy can be found in the MPAS clinical handbook.

Students must agree to pay their own transportation costs to all clerkship sites. **Students must agree to pay for room and board at a distant site if these are not furnished at the site.** Students must also pay all costs incurred to attend the end-of-clerkship exam and educational sessions as scheduled.

All clerkship assignments and schedules must have the approval of the clinical coordinator, and the **final authority** for the assignment of all clerkships and schedules **rests with the clinical coordinator.**

## *IV. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS*

### Program Expectations

1. All students are expected to show common courtesy to others.
2. All students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and demonstrate qualities reflecting a professional-in-training. These qualities include honesty, accountability, consideration for others, mature judgment, fairness, and academic integrity.
3. All students are expected to be cooperative with faculty and staff.
4. All students are expected to participate in class meetings and activities.
5. All students are expected to understand that, as a healthcare professional in training, they will be required at certain times to participate in educational and clinical experiences that may be outside of traditional work week hours.
6. All students eligible to graduate are expected to participate in hooding and commencement ceremonies.
7. All students are expected to strive for the highest academic and professional standards Throughout their enrollment in the program.

## Dress Code

The physician assistant program is a professional graduate program and, as such, students enrolled in the program are expected to dress in a manner consistent with the following policy. Modest, casual, and comfortable clothing such as jeans, sweats, shorts, and shirts with tasteful logos/wording may be worn. Hats, shirts with low cut neck lines, cropped shirts or low-cut pants exposing any portion of the midriff, extremely short shorts or miniskirts, and torn and tattered clothing are prohibited. Faculty may request professional dress for certain guest speakers or departmental events.

During particular laboratory or clinical education sessions where there is a possibility of exposure to blood, bodily fluids, chemicals, or any other harmful agents, students **MUST** wear appropriate clothing or will not be allowed to participate in the activity. Proper attire includes scrubs, or long pants along with shoes that cover the foot. **NO** open-toed shoes are allowed.

## Professional Evaluations

The concept of professional identity implies knowledge of professional conduct, professional attitudes, and professional growth collectively known as *professionalism*. Every student in the PA program is encouraged to move intellectually and attitudinally toward developing a greater sense of professionalism in order to realize his/her greatest contribution in the promotion of health and alleviation of suffering. In particular, the attributes of excellence, humanism, accountability, and altruism together with a sense of dedication to service and to ethical principles need to be developed if a student is to grow toward a sense of professional competence, professional identity, and the shared values which function to reinforce greater service to humanity within the PA profession. It is incumbent upon PA faculty to evaluate professional growth in students as they progress through the program. To assess professionalism, an evaluation form will be completed each semester by the faculty for each student on a continuing basis.

## V. ACADEMIC POLICY

### Overall Evaluation of Student Performance

The faculty of the St. Ambrose University Physician Assistant Studies Program is responsible for educating students as well as determining each student's capacity for professional competency and responsibility. During the length of the program, the faculty must evaluate this capacity on a regular basis and recommend whether or not the student should continue in the program. **Therefore, the faculty reserves the right and has the responsibility to recommend the academic or disciplinary suspension or dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal of a student when unsatisfactory academic progress, academic dishonesty, unsatisfactory clinical performance, unsatisfactory professional growth, impaired mental or physical health, unsatisfactory personal conduct, failure to comply with published program policies, requirements, or other factors deemed necessary for professional competency make it impractical or inadvisable for the student to continue in the program.**

If at any time during the student's course of study the student is in the position of being recommended for academic or disciplinary suspension or dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal, for any reason, the student shall be notified in writing as to the cause for such action by the program director.

## Academic Requirements for Graduation

In order to graduate from the PA program, every student must satisfactorily complete all required coursework and all letter graded and non-letter graded coursework, clerkships (required and elective), assignments and projects designated by the program as “required,” and receive “satisfactory” ratings on the professional evaluation form throughout the student’s enrollment in the program. **“Satisfactory completion” shall mean completing all non-letter graded assignments and projects with an instructor’s “pass” or “satisfactory,” completing each course and clerkship with a minimum grade of “C” AND maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 throughout the student’s entire enrollment in the program.** A grade of “C” represents quality points of 2.00 and is only acceptable as a satisfactory grade when the cumulative GPA is 2.50 or above.

All courses in the PA program are designated as “required” and must be taken by every student. No program courses will be waived, no advanced standing in the program will be granted, and no advanced credit for any previous coursework will be given even though it may be similar or identical to coursework in the program.

All clerkships designated as “required” must be taken by every student unless excused in writing by the program director.

As a requirement for graduation, all students must undergo a summative evaluation of their medical knowledge and clinical skills. The summative evaluation will consist of a comprehensive written examination, a clinical skills examination, and a professionalism evaluation. These exams and evaluations are scheduled in the last semester prior to completion of the program. In order to graduate from the program, every student must pass the summative evaluations with a grade of “C” or higher. If a student should fail either/both examinations, remediation will be arranged by the student’s advisor and will be allowed to take the examination(s) a second time. Should the student not pass the exam(s) on the second attempt, after remediation, the student is not allowed to graduate from the program. No other remediation or retakes of the exams are allowed. The student must also have a grade of meet expectations or better in all categories on the professionalism evaluation.

All written and performance assignments for all classes will be required to be performed or turned in before a class will be considered “successfully” completed by a student. Assignments turned in or performances completed past the designated due date will be penalized according to the criteria established in the course syllabus, or by the instructor unless other specific arrangements have been made with the instructor. A student, who has not completed and turned in all assignments or completed all performances by the end of the course, unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor, will receive a grade of “F” (failure) for the course.

## OSCE POLICY

Two summative OSCEs will take place. The first summative OSCE will take place at the end of the didactic year. The second will take place as part of the Summative Exam which must take place within four months of graduation. The student will have both standardized patient encounters as well as tasks to complete. In order to pass, the student must have an overall grade of “C” which is defined as  $\geq 73\%$ . If the student fails a section, appropriate remediation will take place and the student will be retested at a later date to be determined by the program director. The summative OSCEs must be passed in order to progress or graduate from the program.

If the student fails the remediation, a committee will be convened consisting of the student’s advisor, the program director and the medical director to determine if the student can progress or graduate from the program.

**Effective 10/3/2017**

### **Deceleration**

Deceleration occurs when a student fails a course or clerkship which necessitates an extension of the usual time required for a student’s completion date and a new graduation date. An approved leave of absence will also cause the student to become decelerated.

### **Evaluation of Student Academic Work**

All courses and clerkships taken by students will be evaluated by letter grade according to the following scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A+	4.00	C+	2.33
A	4.00	C	2.00
A-	3.67	C-	1.67
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.67	D-	0.67
		F	0.00

Within selected courses and clerkships, a non-letter grade evaluation may be given for designated assignments and projects. Students will be given either a “Pass/Fail” or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory” evaluation on these assignments. The method and description of the assignment will be found in the syllabus of each course utilizing these non-graded evaluations.

### **Standards of Academic Progress**

Every student must meet **all four** of the following standards of academic progress each semester and/or enrollment period in order to be designated as making satisfactory academic progress in the program and to be considered “in good standing” in the program.

#### ***Standard I***

Every student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 on a 4.00 scale throughout the student’s entire enrollment in the program. This standard shall go in to effect following the Fall semester after matriculation as the summer semester has a stand-alone class. For the purpose of calculating a cumulative GPA the initial summer semester will be calculated as part of the subsequent fall GPA.

**Effective 2/7/2019**

### ***Standard II***

All courses and clerkships will be evaluated by a letter grade. Every student must attain a letter grade of “C” or higher in each course and clerkship. Any grade below a “C” will be considered unsatisfactory and designated as a failure in the course or clerkship.

### ***Standard III***

Every student must maintain a “Satisfactory” rating in all categories of the Professional Evaluation on a continuing basis throughout the student’s enrollment in the program.

### ***Standard IV***

Every student must achieve a “Pass” or “Satisfactory” evaluation on all non-letter graded assignments or projects designated as “required.”

## **Academic and Disciplinary Probation**

If a student is unable to maintain all four *Standards of Academic Progress* (as noted above) in every semester and/or enrollment period, the student will automatically be placed on Academic Probation. Academic consequences discussed in the following section will apply with reference to each of the four *Standards of Academic Progress*.

A student will only be allowed one probationary period of any type throughout his or her entire enrollment in the program. Once a student is placed on probation and he or she successfully completes all of the requirements for the probationary period, the student will be returned to “good standing” status in the program. Any occasion for a second probation (academic, professional or disciplinary), will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

## **Academic Consequences**

### **Standard I**

Any student failing to achieve a GPA of 2.50 at the end of the second semester or cumulatively thereafter, will incur *automatic academic probation*. The period of academic probation will be for one semester and will be effective during the semester or enrollment period immediately following the semester or enrollment period in which the student failed to achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.50. During the semester of academic probation, the student must:

**Effective 2/7/2019**

- 1) Take the regular, required academic coursework as sequenced in the PA program curriculum.
- 2) Attain a cumulative GPA of 2.50.
- 3) Not receive any grades below “C”.
- 4) Receive “satisfactory” ratings in all areas on the professionalism evaluation.

Failure to achieve any of these four requirements during the probationary semester will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. Thereafter, throughout the remainder of the student’s enrollment, the student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 or better. Failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 will result in termination of enrollment via **voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal**.

## Standard II

### *Phase I Consequences*

All courses will be evaluated by letter grade. Every student must attain a letter grade of “C” or higher for each course in the program. Any grade below a “C” in any course will be considered unsatisfactory and does not meet the *Standards of Academic Progress*. Any student who receives a grade below a “C” for any course will be placed on academic probation until such a time as the failed course can be re-taken and successfully completed. The period of academic probation will be for up to one year immediately following the semester resulting in probation. The student must meet ALL of the following requirements of academic probation during the probationary period and until the repeated course has been successfully completed:

- 1) Repeat and successfully pass the course with a grade of “C” or higher at the earliest time the course is offered again. Failure to pass the course a second time with a minimum grade of “C” will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.
- 2) Complete the required academic coursework as sequenced in the PA program curriculum.
- 3) Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 for the remainder of the student’s enrollment.
- 4) Achieve a grade of “C” or higher in all courses.
- 5) Receive “satisfactory” ratings in all categories of the professional evaluation.

If the student does not satisfy ALL of the above requirements during the probationary period, the student will be dismissed from the program. Any student receiving **two grades below “C” in any semester** will have their enrollment in the PA program terminated via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

In certain circumstances, the student *maybe* allowed to advance from Phase I to Phase II if they are deemed to have the necessary knowledge and skills base to progress through the curriculum until the failed course can be repeated.

### *Phase II Consequences*

Every student must achieve a letter grade of “C” or higher in each clerkship, required or elective. Any clerkship grade below a “C” will be considered unsatisfactory and does not meet the *Standards of Academic Progress*. Any student who receives a grade below “C” for any clerkship will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one semester. Upon receiving a clerkship grade below “C”, the probationary period will become effective immediately and will remain in effect through the semester immediately following the failed clerkship which resulted in probation. The probationary period may be extended if the clerkship cannot be rescheduled in the semester immediately following the semester which resulted in probation, in which case the student will remain on probation until such a time that the failed clerkship is repeated. The student must meet ALL of the following requirements of academic probation during the probationary period:

- 1) Repeat the clerkship at a time designated by the clinical coordinator. Failure to obtain a minimum grade of “C” for the repeated clerkship will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

- 2) Complete the required academic coursework and clerkships as sequenced in the PA program curriculum.
- 3) Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 for the remainder of the student's enrollment.
- 4) Achieve a grade of "C" or higher in all courses and clerkships.
- 5) Receive "satisfactory" ratings in all categories of the professional evaluation.

Throughout Phase II of the program, only one grade below a "C" will be allowed. If, at any time during Phase II the student receives a second grade below "C" in a required or elective clerkship, the result will be termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

### **Standard III**

Every student must maintain a "satisfactory" rating in all categories of the professional evaluation on a continuing basis throughout the student's enrollment in the program. Any action, behavior, incident, or occasion at any time during a student's enrollment that results in the student receiving a rating of unsatisfactory by the faculty in one or more categories of the evaluation will result in the student being placed on academic probation immediately. The student will also be on academic probation the semester following the action, behavior, or incident which will be designated as the *probationary semester* during which the student will be expected to improve or remediate the unsatisfactory area of professionalism. At the end of the probationary semester, the student must obtain ratings of satisfactory in all categories.

If on any occasion the student is given a 'needs improvement' rating, the student will be given 30 days in which to make the necessary corrections. If, after 30 days, the student fails to achieve a satisfactory rating, then an unsatisfactory rating will be assigned. Probationary action will then be undertaken as described above. Failure to achieve satisfactory ratings in these categories at the conclusion of the probationary semester will result in recommendation for termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. Serious breaches of professionalism by a student – for example causing harm to others, academic cheating, committing a felony – will result in a recommendation by the faculty for termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. A copy of the professional evaluation form as well as the PA program model of professionalism is included in the appendix of this handbook.

### **Standard IV**

Every student must achieve a "pass" or "satisfactory" evaluation on all non-letter graded assignments and projects designated as "required." Any student who does not pass or satisfactorily complete a non-letter graded assignment will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one semester. The probationary period will become effective immediately and will remain in effect through the semester immediately following the incomplete assignment which resulted in probation. The student must meet ALL of the following requirements of academic probation during the probationary semester:

- 1) Meet with faculty to arrange the successful completion of the assignment.
- 2) Pass or complete the previously incomplete assignment to the faculty's satisfaction.
- 3) Complete the required academic coursework and clerkships as sequenced in the PA program curriculum.
- 4) Achieve a grade of "C" or higher in all courses and clerkships.
- 5) Obtain "satisfactory" ratings in all categories of the professional evaluation.

**Failure to meet any two or more of the above *Standards* in any semester or enrollment period will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.**

## **Remediation Policy**

Remediation will be available to students having difficulty achieving academic competency (based on the *Academic Standards* noted above) while attending the PA program. Deficiencies in academic knowledge or clinical skills are identified and addressed as early as possible. The Student Progress Committee, along with the Program Director ensures that each student meet the requirements for advancing into the next semester of the program. If a student does not meet the Academic Standards, the student's advisor is notified and will develop a remediation plan for the student. The remediation plan may include (but is not limited to) the following methods:

Focused reading topics	Focused exam review items
Focused written topic review	Written self-evaluation
Specific written course material review	Clinical skills review
Focused written problem based learning review	

## **Time Limitation for Completion of Requirements**

The requirements of the PA program must be satisfied from the date of matriculation into the program within a period of 5 years, not including any period of service in the Armed Forces.

## **Academic Integrity**

### **Preface**

In accordance with its mission to enable “students to develop intellectually, spiritually, ethically, socially, artistically, and physically to enrich their own lives and the lives of others,” St. Ambrose is committed to upholding moral standards in line with Judeo-Christian tradition. In its mission statement, the university seeks to “teach, learn, and work in a climate of mutual respect, honesty, and integrity where excellence and academic freedom are cherished.” All members of the community are called upon to uphold the standards of academic integrity, to avoid academic dishonesty of any kind. By accepting employment at the university or by accepting admission to St. Ambrose, faculty, staff and students affirm support of the principle of honesty in their endeavors on behalf of the institution. Each member of the St. Ambrose community is responsible for acting with integrity.

### **Forms of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty is any attempt to deceive involving academic work or records. Forms of deceit include but are not limited to the following:

#### *Cheating*

Cheating is the use or attempted use of materials such as notes, ideas, words, information, study aids, solution manuals, tests, quizzes, electronic devices (such as calculators, cell phones, or iPods) or any academic assignment in a dishonest and deceptive manner. Cheating includes any party who is knowingly involved in the deception.



### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional presentation of another's words, idea or facts as one's own. Examples include using phrases, sentences or paragraphs from a source without quotation marks, paraphrasing another's work or using information (verbal or visual), opinions, or concepts from a source without proper citation or acknowledgement, and submitting another's paper or assignment, in whole or in part, as if it were one's own.

### *Unauthorized Assistance*

Unauthorized assistance is the use of any source of information not authorized by the instructor. Examples include collaboration on completing assignments or tests without the authorization of the instructor or outside the limits designed by the instructor and allowing another such as a tutor or fellow student to complete or revise a paper or assignment specifically.

### *Multiple use*

Multiple use is the submission of the same work in more than one course without proper permission of the instructor. Examples include submitting the same papers, assignments or presentations, in whole or in part, to satisfy course requirements in more than one class.

### *Falsification or Fabrication*

Falsification or fabrication is intentionally altering or creating data in an academic exercise or record. Examples include inventing research or lab results, counterfeiting a record of a practicum experience, sabotaging another student's work such as a lab report, fabricating an excuse (e.g., an illness or accident) to justify a delay in submission of an exam or assignment, inventing a citation, altering a grade on an assignment or academic record, unauthorized altering of a returned test or paper before seeking regrading, or impersonating another student live or via electronic format.

### *Complicity*

Complicity is assisting another person in committing an act of academic dishonesty. Examples include using another person's password, allowing another student to copy from one's exam or assignment, writing or procuring an assignment for another student, taking an exam for another student, changing an academic record for another student, supplying another student or students with unauthorized copies of an exam, or exam questions or answers, or lying to students, faculty or administration on behalf of another student.

### *Abuse of Academic Materials*

Abuse of academic materials is intentionally destroying, stealing, or making such materials inaccessible. Examples include hiding or removing library resources so other students do not have access to them, destroying software or files needed in academic work, and stealing notes, assignments or exams from students or instructors.

## **Grade Appeal Policy**

### **Overview:**

When a student believes a final course grade has been assigned in error or in an arbitrary or capricious manner, he/she has the right to appeal the grade. The student should first attempt to resolve the matter with primary course instructor. If the grade dispute is not resolved at this level, the student may initiate a formal written appeal to the department Chair. A final appeal can be made to the Dean of the College that oversees the appropriate department or, when a department Chair or Dean is the instructor involved in the appeal, to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

### **Actions Permitted:**

1. Students may only appeal the final course grade. Individual assignment grades (exams, quizzes, etc.) should be discussed and resolved with the Instructor throughout the semester.
2. All recognized appeals by students and instructors should be written and delivered to the appropriate individual (Instructor, Chair, or Dean) either electronically in email format to the appropriate individual's email address at the University, or by hard copy delivered personally to the appropriate individual. The individual appealing is responsible for assuring and establishing the delivery and receipt of a timely appeal.
3. No one may substitute personal judgment for that of the Instructor in regard to the quality of the student's work; therefore, the student must show evidence of any deviation from established procedure that adversely affects the student in the assignment of the letter grade for the course.
4. Decisions at the Chair level or higher can include either denial of the appeal or upholding the appeal, at which point the final course grade will be changed. The University does not have any liability for any impact to the student for the time period preceding any change to the final course grade in the University's Records & Registration Office.

### **Procedures and Timeline:**

1. Students must first attempt to resolve the grading issue with the Instructor.
2. If the student decides to formally appeal the final grade, he/she must provide a written appeal, including the justification for the appeal, to the Instructor. If the Instructor is no longer employed by the University, the student must provide the written appeal directly to the Department Director. **TIMELINE:** The appeal must be submitted by the student to the Instructor (Or Department Chair if applicable) in electronic email format to the individual's University email address, or by personal delivery of a hard copy of the written appeal within 1 week from the grade submission due date posted by the University's Records and Registration Office.
3. Instructor should notify the student upon receipt of the appeal, but the student is responsible for assuring the receipt of the appeal. If the Instructor cannot be contacted, the student should notify the department Chair of his/her appeal and request assistance in contacting the Instructor.
4. Instructors will email-mail or mail a written decision to the student within 1 week of receiving the appeal. If the Instructor fails to provide a decision within 1 week, the student should notify the department Chair to intervene in obtaining the decision or furthering the appeal. **TIMELINE:** Within 1 week from receipt of the appeal.
5. After receiving the Instructor's decision, the student may appeal the final grade, in writing, to the Department Chair. It is the student's responsibility to provide evidence to support the appeal. The Chair will investigate the appeal. The investigation will include discussing the matter with the Instructor and may include requesting the Instructor to support the accuracy and fairness of his/her grading. The student's written appeal constitutes authorization for the Chair to have access to the student's educational files pertaining to the appeal. **TIMELINE:** Within 1 week after receiving the Instructor's decision.

6. The Chair will render a decision on the appeal and provide the decision to the student and the Instructor. TIMELINE: Within 1 week from receipt of the appeal.
7. If the Chair's decision is to deny the appeal, the student may appeal the grade, in writing, to the Dean. The student may also elect to meet with the Dean to present information directly related to the appeal. TIMELINE: Within 1 week after receiving the Chair's decision
8. The Dean will provide a final decision to the student, Instructor, and Chair.  
TIMELINE: Within 1 week from receipt of the appeal
9. If the Chair's decision is to grant the appeal, the Instructor may appeal, in writing, to the Dean. The Instructor may meet with the Dean to present information directly related to the appeal.  
TIMELINE: Within 1 week after receiving the Chair's decision
10. The Dean will provide a final decision to all parties  
TIMELINE: Within one week from receipt of the Instructor's appeal
11. If the decision is to change a student's final grade, the change will be communicated to the University's Record and Registration Office.

Exceptions:

1. If the Department Chair is the Instructor involved in the appeal, the appeal goes directly to the Dean and then to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the final decision.
2. If the Dean is the Instructor involved in the appeal, the appeal goes to the Chair and then to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the final decision.
3. Timelines may be extended by the Chair or the Dean if necessary evidence or individuals are not available, or if the University determines that additional time is necessary to process the appeal. No exceptions or extensions of time will be granted for students to initiate a grade appeal.

### **Dismissal Appeal Policy**

Students have the right to appeal to the PA program in regards to their dismissal. The student must initiate the appeal within one week of receiving written notice of the dismissal. The appeal must be in writing and directed to the PA Program Director. The appeal will be reviewed by the PA Admissions and Retention Committee. A notification of their decision will be sent to the student within 10 days of receipt of the written appeal. If the decision of dismissal is upheld, the student has the right to appeal the decision to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services.

## **Student Grievance Policy**

A grievance is a complaint arising out of any alleged unauthorized or unjustified act or decision by an individual (student, faculty, staff), which in any way adversely affects the status, rights, or privileges of a member of the student body. This policy does not supersede policies and procedures concerning students' rights and responsibilities in the St. Ambrose University Student Handbook. A student's dissatisfaction with an examination or course grade is not grounds for a grievance against the faculty member who assigned the grade. Students wishing to appeal grades must follow the University's Grade Appeal Policy. Physician Assistant student complaints or grievances should initially be addressed, if possible, by the student discussing the problem with the individual (student, faculty, or staff member) most closely related to the area of the grievance. The student may also confer with the program director.

If the problem is not resolved informally, the student may file a formal written grievance statement with the program director. The written statement should be as specific as possible regarding the action that precipitated the grievance: date, place, people involved, including witnesses, and a summary of the incident; efforts made to settle the matter informally; and the remedy sought. The submission of a written complaint in good faith will not affect the student's status, rights or privileges.

Within one week of receiving the statement, respondents, or individuals whose actions or inactions are the subject of the grievance, will receive a copy from the director and have an opportunity to respond in writing.

The director will meet with all concerned parties within two weeks of receiving the statement. The director may request both oral and written presentations and may make independent inquiries in order to arrive at a decision regarding the grievance. Within one week after such a meeting, the director will make a decision as to the merits of the statement and present an appropriate resolution of the grievance. Copies of this decision will be sent to the student, the respondents, and the dean.

If dissatisfied with the decision of the director, the student may appeal to the dean of the College. The dean shall then appoint an ad hoc grievance appeal committee that will be composed of a faculty member, a staff member, and a physician assistant student. The grievance committee shall make a recommendation to the dean as to the merits of the appeal and an appropriate resolution of the grievance within two weeks of the formation of the committee. The dean shall then render a decision to the student. The decision of the dean is final. Copies of the decision will be sent to the student, the respondents, and the director. A complaint involving the program director is sent directly to the dean.

A record of all formal grievances will be kept on file in the dean's office. The dean and the grievance committee are encouraged to view these files for patterns of misconduct.

## **General Grievance or Complaints Outside of Due Process**

Policies, procedures, and practices exist for handling complaints that fall outside the realm of due process, such as complaints from clinical education sites, employers of graduates, and the public. Records of complaints about the program, including the nature of the complaint and the disposition of the complaint are maintained by the program.

Records of student complaints at St. Ambrose University are maintained in the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research. Consistent with Higher Learning Commission philosophy, the recording of a student complaint is initiated if a student makes a written and signed formal complaint to an institutional officer who has responsibility to handle the complaint. St. Ambrose has included the Officers of Record (President and Vice Presidents), the academic deans, and the Dean of Student Services as institutional officers. Procedures for making complaints and appealing decisions are located in the *Student Handbook*. For example, procedures for filing a complaint of harassment are described within the Harassment and Discrimination Policy of the *Student Handbook*. Options for handling disputes are outlined in the Conduct Review Process in the same document. (<https://www.sau.edu/deanofstudents> pages 20-44).

Should a complaint be filed, the director would be notified by the officer who received the complaint. Appropriate departmental personnel would be assigned to help investigate the complaint. Records of the nature of the complaint would be recorded and maintained by the program director.

**St. Ambrose University  
Master of Physician Assistant Program  
1320 West Lombard St.  
Davenport, IA 52804  
563-333-5827**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS

*This form must be submitted with your acceptance letter.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that I must demonstrate mastery of the technical standards described in this document. If I have a disability and need an accommodation, I agree to provide appropriate documentation of the disability to the Accessibility Resource Center with a request specifying desired accommodations

This request must be presented in a timely manner prior to the need for accommodation to permit the request to be processed by the Coordinator of the Accessibility Resource Center. The PA program faculty will determine if any recommended accommodation will fundamentally alter the PA Program of Study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact the PA Program at 563-333-5827 if you have any questions about the Technical Standards and requirements stated above. Questions regarding disability certification and/or requests for accommodation should be directed to the Coordinator of the Accessibility Resource Center at 563-333-6275. St. Ambrose University is committed to prohibiting discrimination based on disability.

**St. Ambrose University  
Master of Physician Assistant Program  
1320 West Lombard St.  
Davenport, IA 52804  
563-333-5827**

*This form must be submitted with your acceptance letter.*

**CERTIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK FORM**

This is to certify that I have received and am responsible for the contents of the 2014-2015 St. Ambrose University Master of Physician Assistant Student Handbook as well as the St. Ambrose University Student Handbook which is online at <https://www.sau.edu/DeanofStudents>. If there are any sections that I do not understand, I realize it is my responsibility to seek clarification from my advisor, the Director of the Physician Assistant Program, or other university personnel.

---

 Print Name

Signature

Date

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

We would like to update our records to include any name changes that may have occurred during the summer, your current address, and emergency contact information. **Please keep us informed of any name or address changes as they occur throughout the school year.** If anyone anticipates a name change during the school year, please let us know at this time and the approximate time for the change.

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

Previous/Other Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Current Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please list all numbers)