



# University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

## 2025-2026 Student Catalog and Handbook

Education is a continuously evolving process. To keep pace with this process, University of Dubuque (UD) reserves the right to make changes in policies, rules, and regulations published in this handbook without obligation or prior notice. The policies, rules, and regulations within the MSPAS Student Catalog and Handbook apply to all UD MSPAS students (A3.01).

University of Dubuque does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, disability, sexual orientation, or age. Persons having inquiries may contact the Director of Human Resources, University of Dubuque, Smith Hall, 2000 University Avenue, Dubuque, Iowa 52001-5099.

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## Section I: Overview

### Preamble

This Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Student Catalog and Handbook is maintained by the University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) program. The policies and procedures herein apply to all MSPAS students and should serve as a guide throughout student academic, clinical, and extracurricular life. Whenever participating in University of Dubuque (UD) and/or MSPAS-sponsored program events on and off campus, MSPAS students must abide by the policies and guidelines in this UD MSPAS Student Catalog and Handbook.

The basic premise for these student guidelines is the understanding that individual rights are accompanied by responsibilities. By enrolling in the MSPAS program, students become members of the larger UD community and, thus, acquire rights in and responsibilities to the entire University community.

All policies and procedures described in this MSPAS Student Catalog and Handbook are subject to revision at any time and without notice. Such revisions are applicable to all MSPAS students. The policies and information contained herein take effect after notification to students. Students are informed of significant changes and updates at the time that such revisions are made and posted on the UD MSPAS website. Once notified, students are subject to any changes in policy.

Questions regarding the content of this handbook should be directed to the MSPAS program office.

## Welcome Message from the Program Director

You're joining a program rooted in academic excellence, compassionate care, and a deep commitment to service. While the landscape of medicine is constantly evolving, one thing remains unchanged: the essential need for high quality health care. We recognize the unique and vital role that PAs play in bridging gaps in health care access and delivery, particularly to underserved communities. It is within this ongoing need that the PA profession has taken shape—growing, adapting, and excelling for over 50 years. PAs have long been integral members of interdisciplinary teams, helping define today's standard of care.

Now, you begin your journey into this meaningful and demanding profession. You've earned your place in a competitive and respected field—one that will challenge you daily and, in return, offer some of the most rewarding experiences of your life. As you navigate the program, hold fast to our mission and vision. They will not only guide your education but serve as a foundation throughout your career, empowering you to make a lasting difference where it's needed most.

Congratulations on reaching this exciting milestone. We're thrilled to welcome you to the PA program!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Natalie Weber', with a stylized, cursive script.

Natalie Weber, DMSc, PA-C  
Program Director and Associate Professor  
MSPAS Program

## Message from the Dean for Academic Affairs, Graduate and Adult Studies

Over the last 30 years, the role of the PA has increased dramatically. Due to the ever-growing need for healthcare, the number of PA programs has grown by over 400% in that time span, with an estimated 12,000 students graduating from PA programs each year.

The University of Dubuque's MSPAS program has championed this call for quality healthcare education by attracting, enrolling, teaching, and ultimately graduating highly skilled and compassionate healthcare providers who are imbued to carry forth the mission of the program.

As the Dean for Academic Affairs, Graduate and Adult Studies, my role is to be:

- An Academic Leader-Ensuring adequacy of the curriculum and establishing a culture of integrity among faculty, staff, and students.
- An Administrative Resource- Providing direction, resources, and oversight to ensure the success of all academic programs
- A Valuable Connection- Communicating with the program leaders and administration to maintain accountability and readily resolve any significant issues

If you have a concern, suggestions, or just want to say HI, I will be available to meet with you. In closing, on behalf of the faculty and staff of the University of Dubuque's MSPAS program, we hope this program leads you to a successful career as a PA and ultimately to a calling that will guide you for a lifetime.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ricardo', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Dr. Ricardo Cunningham  
Dean for Graduate and Adult Studies



# **MSPAS Vision, Mission, Goals and Values**

## **Vision**

The vision of the program is to prepare students to improve patient outcomes in rural populations by developing exceptional primary care PAs by the completion of the program.

## **Mission**

Our mission is to prepare competent and compassionate PAs in a learning environment promoting Christian values, service, the pursuit of life-long education, and team practice.

We share the University of Dubuque's commitment to:

- A hospitable Christian environment which respects other faith traditions;
- Relationships which encourage intellectual, spiritual, and moral development;
- Excellence in academic inquiry and professional preparation;
- A diverse and equitable community where Christian love is practiced;
- Stewardship of all God's human and natural resources;
- Zeal for life-long learning and service.

## **Goals**

The goals of the program are to:

1. Graduate competent PAs. (PLO 1, PLO 5, PLO 6)
2. Cultivate compassionate health care providers. (PLO 2, PLO 3, PLO 4)
3. Provide a supportive and engaging learning environment. (PLO 2, PLO 4)
4. Model volunteerism and provide opportunities for service. (PLO 5)

The program will assess progress towards these goals on an annual basis with internal reports covering enrollment, exam scores, student and faculty evaluations, and a graduate survey. Measurements and benchmarks for each of these goals have been established as part of the program's self-assessment process to evaluate achievement of goals.

## **Values**

Our conduct, ideals, and ethics are based on:

- Integrity
- Diversity
- Competence
- Compassion
- Scholarship

## History and Accreditation Statement

The planning for the MSPAS program began with senior administration and University trustees in October 2011. The development process unfolded in five overlapping phases:

- Initial Program Exploration (Primary time period: October 2011– February 2012)
- Entering the ARC-PA Accreditation Process (Primary time period: February 2012 – May 2013)
- Identifying Key Leadership (Primary time period: January 2013 – January 2015)
- Gathering Evidence for the Feasibility Study (Primary time period: September 2013 – March 2015)
- Writing and Reviewing the Feasibility Study (Primary time period: January 2015 – March 2015)

The program is based on the medical education model and is a 27-month, 123-credit hour program. The initial 15-months focus on pre-clinical education, including approximately 2,000 classroom hours in the basic and clinical sciences. The following 11 months consist of approximately 2,000 hours of supervised clinical experience. The final month is spent on campus to complete clinical phase requirements including capstone presentations and a PANCE review course.

The PA program admitted its first class of 25 in July 2016, and this class graduated in December 2018 with a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies.

## Section II: UD MSPAS Program Information

### MSPAS Program Office Information

Address:	Phone:
University of Dubuque	563.589.3662
Linda Chlapaty Hall, Suite 120	Fax:
2000 University Avenue	563.589.3650
Dubuque, Iowa 52001	

### University of Dubuque Office of Graduate Studies Information

Address:	Phone:
University of Dubuque	563.589.3246
Severance Hall, Suite 121	Fax:
2000 University Avenue	563.589.3416
Dubuque, Iowa 52001	

### Professional Staff

**Program Director:** Serves as chief administrative officer of the MSPAS program. Oversees development and implementation of the MSPAS program vision and strategies, organizational and fiscal management, and review of MSPAS accreditation.

**Medical Director:** Serves as interim director in absence of the Program Director. Supports the program director in ensuring full and effective implementation of current practice standards in academic and clinical instruction and curriculum, fulfilling the MSPAS program mission, and evaluating student performance.

**Academic Director:** Oversees academic curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation.

**Clinical Education Director (CED):** Oversees clinical curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation.

**Clinical Coordinator:** Manages clinical site recruitment, credentialing and development, site visits, and student placement.

**Clinical Recruiter:** Recruits and develops clinical partnerships with hospitals, clinics, and private practices. Establishes affiliation agreements to ensure sufficient and effective clinical sites and preceptors.

**Faculty Admission Director:** Oversees a comprehensive admission and recruitment process.

**Program Coordinator and Admission Director:** Supports students, faculty, and staff of the MSPAS program. Coordinates all special events and interview days. Manages admission process and communicates with applicants and prospective students in collaboration with the Faculty Admission Director. Liaison with other University departments.

**Clinical Liaison:** Provides support to the clinical team. Point person for clinical site communication, student documentation, and student tracking software.

**Academic and Laboratory Specialist:** Provides support to academic and clinical education teams. Point person for program's learning management system. Oversees laboratory assistance and maintenance, simulation and equipment care, supply management, curriculum mapping, and survey distribution.

**Administrative Assistant:** Supports the MSPAS program in daily operations.

## MSPAS Facilities

Linda Chlapaty Hall

Key fob access is as follows:

PA Classrooms 220 and 221 and Exam Suite 222: 24 hours per day/7 days per week

PA 121 Skills Lab and Cadaver Lab: 7 AM - 11 PM Mon - Fri and 7 AM - 7 PM Sat/Sun

**PA Suite:** The PA Suite houses the offices of the MSPAS faculty and staff. Please check in at the front desk when arriving for appointments, office hours, or unscheduled visits.

**Student Lounge:** It is a privilege to have access to a student lounge. Out of courtesy, please keep this area orderly and clean. Unattended dirty dishes and utensils will be thrown away. We suggest a schedule be kept assigning students to maintain the lounge on a weekly or monthly basis. The microwave and refrigerator need to be cleaned periodically. When you are gone for breaks at the end of each term, all perishable food must be removed. To protect personal belongings, the lounge is kept locked with key fob access only by PA faculty, staff, and students.

**Lockers:** PA students are assigned lockers in the University Science Center (USC) building. These are used to store equipment, reference books, food, and other items students wish to have on hand during the didactic phase.

**Classrooms:** PA students will spend significant time in the classroom during the didactic phase of the program. It is important this room be kept clean and free of clutter. You are permitted to bring refreshments into the classroom; however, it is not a cafeteria, and students should limit this to a beverage and small snack. Any student-hosted gatherings in these rooms are the responsibility of the students to clean and move furniture/equipment back to its original location. Do not leave personal belongings in this room, as it is used by MSPAS faculty and staff, as well as other departments.

**Clinical Lab and Exam Suite:** The Clinical Lab and Exam Suite are where students practice physical exam techniques and technical skills including suturing, IV access, casting, splinting, etc. It is important these rooms be kept clean, well-supplied, and in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines. Food and drink are prohibited from the exam bays of labs. Students are responsible for maintenance of their own work areas. The following is a list of tasks that need to be completed each time rooms are used:

- Place clean table paper on exam table; straightened or new sheet on hospital bed
- Stow Mayo stand and stool at the end of each hospital bed
- Place two-three chairs in each exam bay
- Curtains should remain drawn back when clinical lab is not in use
- Ensure clean gowns and sheets (paper or cloth) in top side drawer of each exam table
- Place all trash in proper receptacles
- Dispose of all sharps in appropriate containers
- Place all hazardous materials in biohazard bags
- Ensure sink and surrounding area are clean
- Put away all supplies
- Please notify the course instructor or laboratory specialist if there are items that need to be replaced

#### **Cadaver Lab**

- Do not store personal supplies or items in the lab.
- Always keep your work area tidy and clean.
- Cadavers should be kept covered with towels, and dissection tables should be kept closed when laboratory is not in use.
- Place all trash in the proper receptacles, ensuring biohazardous material is properly disposed.
- Keep sinks and surrounding areas clean.
- Put away all supplies after completion of each lab period. Instrument trays should be stored in their designated drawer; mayo stands and biohazard buckets should be stowed under each group's designated counter space. Computers and televisions should be completely shut down.
- After lab, wipe down work area with soap or disinfectant and wash hands thoroughly. All instruments and trays should be cleaned adequately.
- Notify course director if there are items that need to be replaced.

#### **Program Hours**

The PA program office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Class times may extend beyond these hours. *Students are expected to be on campus and/or available during the program hours, outside of Tuesday morning until 10 AM, which is a designated protected time for students.* See Attendance Policy below.

## Student Contact Information

Students need to ensure their contact information is current at all times. If students have a permanent change of name or address, they must notify the program staff and the Office of the Registrar. Name changes should be completed during a term break to allow adequate time for Canvas updates and data merging.

## Communication and Announcements

As per University policy, all electronic communication must be conducted using the student's assigned UD email account. Students are expected to check their emails daily to ensure timely receipt of information. Students are also expected to reply to faculty and staff within 1 business day (or sooner, if requested for urgent reasons).

Canvas and UD Outlook email and calendar are the primary methods of communication between faculty/staff and students. Class announcements, documents, and other pertinent information will either be posted on Canvas or sent via email. The program utilizes Outlook calendar for scheduling and invitations. The class may create their own cohort calendar and designate an individual to maintain it.

### Weather-Related Closing

In the event of inclement weather, UD will update its website to reflect any delays, cancellations, or closures. The program will communicate with the student via email to reschedule missed classes. While rare, there have been times the PA program has canceled classes while the University remained open. This will be communicated to you via email. In both the didactic and clinical phases, it is expected that students are aware of weather advisories and warnings and carefully consider travel plans that would prevent them from returning to campus or clinic requirements as scheduled. If campus and/or clinics are open, students are expected to be present.

The University's [Severe Weather Policy](#) is published on the website.

### Emergency Announcements

In the event of an emergency, all classes in the didactic phase follow the University's temporary closure policy. Students assigned to off-campus clinical rotations during a local or geographically widespread emergency should contact the Clinical Education Director for specific instructions pertaining to students' instructional responsibilities. As a general rule, clinical care responsibilities are expected to be fulfilled, and students should follow the policies of the affiliate clinical site where they are currently assigned. Students on clinical rotations are expected to report to their clinical assignments unless severe weather conditions prohibit safe travel; each student should make a prudent judgment as to the possibility of safe travel. The student will contact clinical sites, preceptors, and the Clinical Education Director regarding attendance in the case of an emergency.

## Section III: MSPAS Program Overview

### Program Curriculum

The MSPAS program is a 27-month curriculum. The first 15 months of the program are dedicated to didactic/pre-clinical education, and the next 11 months are dedicated to supervised clinical rotations. The final month is spent on campus to complete clinical phase requirements including capstone presentations and a PANCE prep course.

The didactic phase of the program is based on a broad didactic curriculum. Students take courses on UD's campus covering topics of anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, physical examination, diagnostic studies, clinical medicine, behavioral health, clinical skills, public health and professional practice. Students should focus on their didactic academic work during this phase and should not concentrate on clinical rotations before the final semester of the didactic phase.

The clinical phase of the program, consisting of clinical rotations, allows students to integrate their knowledge and skills into health care practice. Students may not begin clinical rotations until successful completion of all didactic phase course work and end-of-didactic phase requirements.

Core clinical rotations are in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry/behavioral health, women's health, general surgery, and emergency medicine. In addition, students are required to complete a rural medicine rotation. One medical specialty and two elective rotations complete the set of 11 required rotations during the clinical phase. Rotation sites may vary in schedule, expectations, and assignments. Students will incur additional expenses for travel and lodging during the clinical phase of the program. Based on the campus location, students should expect to travel to rotations within the tristate area. It is not uncommon for students to drive 100 miles (or 90 minutes) to local rotations or to temporarily relocate to rotations that are farther away. To provide students diverse patient and provider experiences, all students will complete at least one rotation in the Chicago area. Costs vary depending on individual rotation schedules. During the clinical phase of the program, the course schedule/calendar may differ from that of the general UD academic calendar. Students will be subject to rotation-specific schedules.

MSPAS students will be instructed and clinically supervised primarily by physicians and certified PAs. While resident physicians may participate in the didactic and clinical education components, they will not be the primary source of instruction and/or supervision. (A2.13)

In accordance with federal regulations and policies of the Higher Learning Commission, UD is committed to "teaching out" all students enrolled in its accredited educational programs. In the unlikely event of loss of accreditation or closure of the MSPAS program, current matriculated students will be allowed to complete the program, with no new students being admitted. Should circumstances preclude the continuation of the MSPAS program (e.g., closure of the campus due to natural disaster), UD will facilitate students in enrolling in accredited programs at other institutions where they can complete their PA education.

## **Experiential Learning (A3.12)**

The MSPAS program does not give credit for prior student experience working in the field.

## **Transfer Credit (A3.12)**

The MSPAS program does not accept transfer credit from other PA programs.

## **PA Program Sample Calendar**

Courses and course descriptions can be found in Appendix B.

### **Didactic Phase (15 months):**

Fall – 1	PA 611 Anatomy (6 credits)
	PA 612 Physiology I (4 credits)
	PA 613 Clinical Assessment (4 credits)
	PA 615 Role of the PA I (1 credit)
	PA 616 Diagnostics I (2 credits)
Spring	PA 621 Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease (4 credits)
	PA 622 Physiology II (4 credits)
	PA 623 Pharmacology in Disease Pathology I (2 credits)
	PA 624 Clinical Medicine I (4 credits)
	PA 625 Clinical Assessment II (3 credits)
	PA 627 Integration into Clinical Concepts I (4 credits)
	PA 628 Diagnostics II (2 credits)
Summer	PA 626 Clinical Skills I (4 credits)
	PA 631 Pharmacology in Disease Pathology II (2 credits)
	PA 632 Clinical Medicine II (4 credits)
	PA 633 Integration into Clinical Concepts II (3 credits)
	PA 634 Behavioral Health (3 credits)
Fall - 2	PA 635 Diagnostics III (2 credits)
	PA 640 Role of the PA 2 (1 credit)
	PA 641 Clinical Medicine III (4 credits)
	PA 643 Clinical Skills II (3 credits)
	PA 644 Evidence Based Medicine (2 credits)
	PA 645 Integration into Clinical Concepts III (4 credits)
	PA 646 Pharmacology in Disease Pathology III (2 credits)
	PA 649 Didactic Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

### **Clinical Phase (11 months):**

Clinical Rotations – PA 650 to PA 660 (4 credits each)

### **Summative Phase (1 month):**

PA 662 Professional Competency Course (2 credits)

PA 663 Capstone (2 credits)

Anticipate graduation in December.



## Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

1. Apply scientific knowledge and skills during patient evaluation and treatment to identify normal and abnormal health states to compassionately and ethically treat common acute, chronic, and emergent conditions across the lifespan.
2. Provide values-based practice and culturally sensitive care.
3. Educate patients and families to promote shared decision making aligned with the patient's personal values.
4. Work interprofessionally within the scope of one's practice, collaborating with appropriate team members to lead, coordinate, and optimize patient care.
5. Provide patient-centered care aligned with national standards that demonstrates integrity and accountability to patients, society, and the profession.
6. Provide safe, evidence-based, and fiscally responsible care across the health care system.

## Program Competencies

### Clinical and Technical Skills

1. Elicit an accurate history for comprehensive and problem-focused visits
2. Perform appropriate physical exam for comprehensive and problem-focused visits using proper technique.
3. Convey important features of patient encounters to health care team members through written documentation and verbal communication.
4. Demonstrate procedural and clinical skills consistent with and essential for current professional practice.
5. Provide clear, compassionate, professional education to patients and families from diverse backgrounds.

### Clinical Reasoning and Problem Solving Abilities

1. Formulate appropriate differential diagnoses based on the assessment of the patient.
2. Interpret information gathered through diagnostic, laboratory, and imaging studies to appropriately diagnose a patient.
3. Implement patient management plans utilizing evidence based medicine to include pharmacologic therapies, non-pharmacologic therapies, relevant patient education, and referral.
4. Develop patient centered management plans with sensitivity to culture and social determinants of health.

### Interpersonal Skills

1. Demonstrate ability to communicate effectively with all members of the health care team.

2. Communicate with respect and honesty to patients, caregivers, and members of the interprofessional team.
3. Develop rapport with patients and families to inspire positive healthcare outcomes.

#### Medical Knowledge

1. Demonstrate knowledge in the medical sciences including anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology and genetics and apply this knowledge in patient care.
2. Select and analyzes diagnostic studies to develop a differential diagnosis and treatment plan for patients.
3. Integrate etiology, epidemiology, and risk factors to evaluate medical conditions.
4. Implement and monitor patient treatment plans including pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic therapies, patient education and patient counseling.

#### Professional Behaviors

1. Demonstrate honesty and integrity in the practice of medicine.
2. Effectively work as a team and collaborate with members of healthcare community to optimize patient care.
3. Respect patient dignity and privacy by maintaining patient confidentiality in written and verbal communication.
4. Demonstrate accountability and responsibility for actions while recognizing personal limitations.
5. Demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning and professional development through self-reflection and acceptance of constructive feedback.

## Grading and Evaluation

Students in the MSPAS program must earn a minimum grade of 77% or of Pass in all MSPAS courses to pass a course and progress in the program. Please refer to the [Academic Progression Policy](#). In a pass/fail course, a course grade of Pass will not affect a student's GPA; a course grade of Fail will be counted as a 0 (zero) and impact a student's GPA. An incomplete will not impact a student's GPA. All grades remain on student transcripts; however, the most recent course grade overrides the previous when calculating the GPA for students repeating a course.

Students may track their term and cumulative GPAs by viewing their transcript on MyUD.

The following grading scale will be used; any grade below a "C+" (76.50%) is considered failing:

92.50% - 100.00%	A	72.50% - 76.49%	C
89.50% - 92.49%	A-	69.50% - 72.49%	C-
86.50% - 89.49%	B+	66.50% - 69.49%	D+
82.50% - 86.49%	B	62.50% - 66.49%	D
79.50% - 82.49%	B-	59.50% - 62.49%	D-
76.50% - 79.49%	C+	0.00% - 59.49%	F

Grades are reported to the second decimal place. Rounding will not occur past this point. For example, if you receive a final grade of 76.49%, this will remain as an 76.49%, resulting in a letter grade of C.

## Written Assignments

Students should follow the late assignment policy as outlined in course materials. If no policy is outlined in course materials, then the following policy applies: any written assignment submitted past the deadline will receive a 10% grade reduction. After 24-hours past the deadline, the assignment will receive 50% credit, and, after 48 hours, zero credit will be received for the late assignment.

Unless otherwise directed, all papers must conform to the following standards:

- Typed in MS Word in standard 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 1 inch margins all around.
- Typed in Times New Roman size 12 font, double-spaced, with title page/author page.
- References following AMA style <http://libguides.dbq.edu/PA>.
- No more than 20% of the document in attributed quotes. Ellipses may be used to shorten content within quotes.
- Plagiarism is not tolerated. The program utilizes TurnItIn software to assess similarity. See the [Professional Behavior Policy](#) below and the Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence (AI) section of the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) for the complete policies.

## Incomplete Grades

### Didactic Phase

All required course assignments must be completed by the end of the term or the student will receive an Incomplete (I) for the course. Failure to complete the required course work during the specified time may result in course failure (See Section IV, [Academic Progression Policy](#)).

### Clinical Phase

A grade of incomplete may be assigned due to extenuating circumstances, which may include any missing evaluation, assignment, or examination. Failure to complete course requirements within the prescribed time may result in course failure. (See Section IV, [Academic Progression Policy](#)).

## Clinical Phase Evaluations

Preceptor(s) for each rotation are required to evaluate the student both on achievement of learning outcomes specific to the rotation and on student performance in areas of General Knowledge, Skills, and Professionalism. Each domain is rated as Displays Practice Readiness, Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Nearly Meets Expectations, or Critical Deficits. A score below Meets Expectations equates to performing below the acceptable achievement, knowledge, or performance level(s). Students must Meet Expectations or greater in **all** ques-

tions on the preceptor evaluation to pass the preceptor evaluation without remediation. Students receiving Nearly Meets Expectations, as affirmed by the Course Director, in any domain of an end-of-rotation preceptor evaluation, results in a remediation plan. The remediation plan is determined by the Course Director and outlined in a Document of Concern. Failure to meet expectations of the remediation plan as outlined in the Document of Concern results in a course grade of F. Students receiving Critical Deficits, as affirmed by the Course Director, in any domain of an end-of-rotation preceptor evaluation results in a failure of the preceptor evaluation as well as the course. Failure of any end-of-rotation preceptor evaluation results in a course grade of F.

*It is the student's responsibility to inform/remind the clinical preceptor(s) the importance of timely submissions of evaluations and that the information is part of the academic record.*

Students who believe their grade or evaluation is unjust or inaccurate have the right to an [appeal process](#). A student is obligated first to make a serious effort to resolve the issue with the course director (CED). Under no circumstances should the student dispute a final evaluation or grade with the preceptor.

## **Student Evaluations of Program, Faculty, and Courses**

At the end of each course, students are required to complete a course and instructor evaluation. Students are also required to complete evaluations at the end of the didactic phase and end of the program. Confidential compilation of the evaluations is provided to principal faculty, the Program Director, and the Dean. Evaluations are reviewed and used to make improvements in faculty teaching, individual courses, and overall curriculum. All evaluations are confidential. Therefore, constructive student feedback is extremely important, and students are encouraged to provide honest critique in a professional manner.

## **Early Identification Mentoring Program (A2.05f)**

The MSPAS program has established data-driven benchmarks throughout the program to provide guidance to students as they prepare for the PA National Certification Examination (PANCE). The program uses these benchmarks as part of its early alert program to provide mentoring opportunities to students. Students will receive a copy of the current benchmarks from their academic advisor during Term 1 midterm meetings.

Timing of benchmarks is as follows:

- End of each didactic term
- Clinical Phase (September and November call-back weeks)

Following each term, advisors review student's academic performance. If a student falls below the benchmark, the student and advisor will meet to review the Early Identification Mentoring Form, and a remediation program is initiated. This is not a disciplinary program, but rather an opportunity to provide mentoring and resources to support student progression. Didactic phase students will utilize the resources found on the "Remediation Resources" Canvas page. Clinical phase students will

complete 35 PANCE-like questions per rotation through AMBOSS, which is introduced during clinical orientation.

## **Textbooks and Equipment**

### **Textbooks**

Required textbooks are specified in course syllabi. Students may access some online textbooks and printed copies through the Charles C. Myers Library on UD's campus, in which case the purchase of a printed text is optional.

### **Required Medical Equipment and Supplies**

The following is a list of the required equipment:

- Equipment bag (ordered prior to orientation, as needed; cost borne by student)
  - Ophthalmoscope
  - Otoscope with disposable otoscope speculums
  - Stethoscope
  - Sphygmomanometer with adult cuff (blood pressure cuff)
  - Tuning forks 128 and 512 Hz
  - Reflex hammer
  - Hand-held Snellen chart (i.e., pocket eye chart)
  - Pen light
  - Ruler
  - Tape measure
- Scrubs
- University-issued laptop computer (provided during orientation)

## Section IV: Policies and Procedures

### Student Privacy

#### Student Record Policies

MSPAS retains all student educational records in accordance with federal and state requirements and UD Board of Trustees regulations.

#### Educational Records and Personally Identifiable Information (A3.17)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (U.S. Public Law 93-579; FERPA) defines educational records and governs students' rights of privacy and access to their educational records. For additional information on UD's FERPA and personally identifiable information policy, please refer to the Graduate Student Catalog and Handbook (pg. 57-58) or visit the website at <https://www.dbq.edu/Academics/Registrar/FERPA/>.

### MSPAS Program Specific

#### Student Employment (A3.02, A3.14i)

The MSPAS program discourages students from holding outside employment while enrolled in the program. Training to become a PA demands a full-time commitment. Due to the rigorous nature of the curriculum, it is recommended students not engage in outside employment. If a student chooses to work during the academic year, the work schedule must not interfere with class attendance, performance, or clinical rotation schedules. In the case that a student finds it necessary to hold outside employment while taking courses or during clinical rotations, they should speak to their assigned faculty academic advisor. Expectations, assignments, and due dates are not changed for students who are employed. Students will not be excused from a scheduled or rescheduled class, lab, or workshop that conflicts with outside employment. Students are not permitted to be employed by a clinical site at which they are training or to be compensated financially for performing the tasks of a PA or a PA student.

#### Student Work to Benefit the MSPAS Program (A3.02, A3.03)

MSPAS students are not allowed to work on behalf of the MSPAS program in any clerical, administrative, or instructional capacity. While students may be asked to volunteer for a particular task or activity, students are not obligated to do so. Students who choose to volunteer do not receive remuneration for the task completed. Some students with significant experience or skill may function as a peer tutor during laboratory sessions; however, they will not function as instructional faculty for student assessment or employment. In the clinical phase, students will be performing clinical activities typically assigned to MAs, nurses, PA's, physicians, and other providers and team members. However, these duties should be assigned as and serve as teaching experiences for the students. Students are not allowed to solely substitute for clinical or administrative staff in lieu of clinical learning experiences.

## Nepotism and Fraternization

Occasionally, students request to schedule a supervised clinical experience with a friend or relative who would serve as the primary preceptor. Due to the potential for personal relationships to interfere with the clinical evaluation process, which is both objective and subjective in nature, such rotation arrangements are prohibited.

The PA student should maintain a professional relationship with the preceptor and all clinic personnel at all times and adhere to appropriate professional boundaries. Social activities and personal relationships outside of the professional learning environment should be avoided so as not to put the student or preceptor in a compromising situation. Contact through web-based social networking sites should be deferred until the student fully matriculates through the educational program.

## Criminal Background Check and Fingerprinting Policy

### 1. Criminal background check

- The initial background check will be completed prior to matriculation through Certiphi. Additional background checks will be required prior to and throughout participation in clinical rotations as directed by the program. Students are responsible for the cost of any additional screenings not included in student fees.
- Criminal background check results that limit the program's ability to secure clinical experiences may prevent a student from matriculation, progression to the clinical phase, or recommendation for graduation.

### 2. Fingerprinting

- Fingerprint testing is done at the request of specific clinical affiliates and is time-sensitive; therefore, the program will notify the student as needed to complete this process. Students are responsible for the cost of these screenings.

During a student's tenure at UD, if the student is arrested, charged, or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, the student must immediately disclose such an event to the Program Director. The student will be placed on probation and reviewed by the SEC at the next scheduled meeting. The Program Director, in consultation with the Medical Director and Dean, will determine any immediate action necessary based on the egregiousness of the event. Failure to disclose this information may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

## Classroom Etiquette and Dress Code Policy

### Classroom Etiquette

Students should arrive at least 5 minutes prior to the start of class to get settled and prepared. Should tardiness be unavoidable, students should enter the classroom quietly. Students should not leave the classroom during a lecture. Students should not use electronic devices for anything other than note taking. Students should refrain from making noise or from participating in distractions during class. Students should not bring animals (except certified service animals) or other non-student humans to class. Students should avoid keeping food and extraneous items in the classroom and are responsible for cleaning up after themselves. Failure to do so will result in loss of privileges, including beverages and/or food in the classroom and access to the student lounge.

Failure to practice appropriate professional conduct may result in students being asked to leave the classroom or any other learning or clinical environment. Students are immediately referred for review to the SEC should any allegation be made regarding unethical or unprofessional conduct.

### **Dress Code**

As representatives of the medical profession, all MSPAS students are expected to convey a professional demeanor in behavior, dress, and appearance. A professional image conveys credibility, trust, respect, and confidence to one's colleagues and patients. In all educational settings — classroom, laboratory, and clinical environments — students are expected to be clean, well groomed, and appropriately dressed.

The dress code applies at all times when the student is on campus and to any situation in which patient-care activities occur or the occurrence of direct patient or health care professional contact can be reasonably assumed. These instances include, but are not limited to, all clinical experiences. In the absence of a stated policy for an individual course or setting, the following dress code applies:

#### **General Personal Care**

- Good personal hygiene should be maintained;
- Hair should be neat and clean. Hair longer than shoulder length should be secured if close contact with patients is anticipated.
- Beards and mustaches must be clean and well groomed. Unnatural appearing hair color is not acceptable;
- Hats should be removed when entering the classroom;
- Perfume or cologne are not permitted;
- Fingernails should be clean, neatly trimmed, and short, as longer nails will perforate surgical gloves. Acrylic nails are not permitted;
- Tattoos containing prohibited content must be covered, including but not limited to obscene, sexually explicit, discriminatory, gang or extremist group affiliation or illegal drug use; and



- Piercings are only permitted in pierced ears – jewelry is not permitted to be worn in pierced noses, lips, tongues, or any other exposed body part during OSCEs and any off-campus clinical experience.

#### **Attire for the Didactic/Classroom Setting**

- Clean, business casual clothing should be worn by all students; spandex leggings, shorts, or similar workout-style clothing should not be worn in the classroom.
- Shoes/sandals need to be worn at all times;
- Undergarments should not be visible; and
- Belts should be worn when necessary.

#### **Attire for the Anatomy Laboratory Setting**

- Clean scrubs should be worn with closed-toe shoes (with socks/stockings);
- Hair should be gathered so that it does not dangle onto patients or cadavers;
- Faculty may address additional requirements for student attire for the laboratory setting.

#### **Attire for the Clinical Laboratory Setting**

- Students may be asked to wear shorts and a tank top.

#### **Attire for the Clinical Setting**

- Short, clean, and pressed white coats with the MSPAS logo should be worn;
- Closed-toe shoes (with socks/stockings) should be worn;
- Men should wear collared dress shirts; and
- Name badges should be worn.
- Clinical sites may have additional policies.

#### **Inappropriate Attire**

- Hats, bandanas, hoods, or head scarves (except if considered as part of religious or cultural dress) are not permitted;
- Pajamas, scrubs (unless otherwise specified);
- Mesh, halter, crop or tube tops are not permitted. Low-cut, spaghetti strap, and belly shirts are not permitted;
- Inappropriately short skirts or shorts are not permitted;
- Athletic wear, including spandex leggings, shorts, or similar workout-style clothing.
- Clothing that promotes or advertises tobacco, alcohol, or controlled substances;

- Clothing that displays language, graphics, or slogans that are inappropriate, offensive, or disrespectful, including, but not limited to, content that is sexually explicit, discriminatory, violent, or profane in nature; and
- Dress leggings (not athletic/spandex) are only allowed with a shirt or dress that is long, reaching at least mid-thigh in the clinical setting.

## Testing and Exam Policy

Discussion of content on exams is at the discretion of the course director. Students are encouraged to ask questions and seek course director guidance regarding questions involving clarity or understanding of content presented; however, questions regarding specific exam content (i.e. what material will be on the exam) is not allowed.

### Scheduling

All exams must be taken on the scheduled date and time unless there is prior approval or extenuating circumstance. If a student is unable to take an exam, it is the student's responsibility to notify the course director of the absence prior to the exam date and time. Tardiness to an exam is unacceptable and considered unprofessional behavior. To minimize disturbances to other test takers, the late student will not be permitted to enter the examination room. The student may contact the course director to request consideration for a make-up exam.

Students granted an accommodation that provides them an extended time frame to complete an exam will arrive at the ASC or specified testing location at the scheduled time based on the testing accommodation (1.5x). Late arrival/tardiness to the testing center will follow the MSPAS Student Handbook Testing and Exam Policy. Any changes to a student's VISA/accommodations must go through the Accessibility Director and be received in writing by the Program Director. For more information on accessibility services, see the [Academic Success Center and Disability Services policy and procedure](#).

### Conduct

During written exams, each student may bring a laptop, writing utensil, and drink. Scratch paper will be provided and must be returned to the proctor prior to leaving the examination. All personal items are to be stowed away prior to starting the exam. Food is NOT allowed in the classroom during exams. Students are not allowed to wear hats or coats during exams.

Students should utilize the restroom facilities prior to the start of an examination. Restroom breaks are highly discouraged as they distract fellow test takers. If a restroom break is needed, only one student will be permitted to leave the room at a given time, leaving all technology in the examination room.

Once a student has completed the exam, the student must confirm receipt of the completed exam with the proctor, return their scratch paper, and leave the classroom as quietly as possible. No student will be allowed admittance once the exam has started unless previously arranged with the program.

Unless there is a formatting error, no questions are to be asked during exams. The proctor will not answer content-based questions.

Any student found cheating will be removed from the exam, receive a zero on the exam, and be referred to the Program Director for disposition.

During Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs) and lab practicums, students are not allowed to talk at or between stations.

Students are prohibited from sharing content during or following all exams. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a score of zero and a Document of Concern.

### **Post-Exam Review**

During the didactic phase, each exam item is analyzed by the course director. Please refer to the “[Test Question Review Policy](#).” Any challenges to an exam question should be submitted on test scratch paper to the proctor or by email to the course director in a professional manner within 1 hour of the exam. Once the review is completed and the student has received their score via the Canvas course gradebook, students are not permitted to challenge examination questions for a grade change.

The review session following an exam is outlined in the “Test Question Review Policy” under *Exam Item Feedback*.

All exams, including OSCEs, are the property of the MSPAS program and will remain in the program’s possession. Students may not photograph, screenshot, photocopy, or otherwise duplicate examination questions at any time including both past and present exams. Students may not use any electronic device to reproduce or make any written notes of the exam questions. Any student caught sharing exam information is subject to dismissal from the program.

### **Test Question Review Policy**

For the purposes of the UD MSPAS Program, poorly performing multiple choice test questions may be identified using item analysis/statistics. While item statistics may identify potentially problematic questions, statistics are not necessarily sufficient to consider questions poorly performing.

Once poorly performing questions have been identified using means as described below, the Course Director should determine the reason for the poor performance. The Course Director(s), working with the Academic Director if necessary, can then decide if credit should be given for more than one answer, a different answer than was initially designated for the question(s), or the question removed.

Based on question statistics alone, the following results indicate the need for question review by the Course Director if the exam questions are equally weighted. For a particular question:

1. The item should be scrutinized closely for content and/or construct validity, incorrectly keyed answer choices, questions with more than one correct answer, and lectures should be reviewed to ensure content was adequately instructed if:
  - a. The mean earned points are  $< 0.5$  on a multiple-choice question (MCQ)
  - b. The mean earned points are  $< 0.7$  and the discrimination index is  $< 0.2$  on a MCQ
  - c. A student submits a complaint regarding the question using one of the underlined criteria that follow.
2. Further review is at the discretion of the Course Director if mean earned points are 0.5-0.7 and the discrimination index is 0.2-0.3
3. Further review is not necessary if the discrimination index is  $> 0.3$ .

### **Resolving “Poorly Performing” Multiple Choice Questions**

Once poorly performing questions have been identified using means as described above, the Course Director, working with instructional faculty as needed, should determine the reason for the poor performance and follow the actions as described below:

#### **Inconsistently Taught**

The information for the question was inconsistently taught (i.e., the reading materials or other assigned materials did not match the lecture)

- Action: Give credit to all answers OR remove the question.

#### **No Single Best Correct Answer**

There is no clear “best choice” option.

- Action: Give credit to all answers OR remove the question.

#### **Multiple Correct answers**

There are multiple correct options that could be considered “best choice.”

- Action: Give credit to all correct answers.

#### **Was not Taught or Covered in Individual Learning Assignments**

The material was not taught or covered in supplemental or required text reading assignments.

- Action: Give credit to all answers OR remove the question.

#### **Mendacity**

The material was not to be included on the test but was (e.g., a lecturer says that specific information will not be on the test, and it is on the test).

- Action: Give credit to all answers OR remove the question.

To provide consistency between student appeals and this policy, students must base their appeals for poor performing exam questions on one of the criteria listed above and provide evidence to support the criterion.

### Exam Item Feedback

1. The course director, following the exam, will complete a test item review (within 7 business days) and address any poorly performing items as described above.
2. Following the test item review, grades will be released within Canvas.
3. course directors may opt to offer an exam review, following release of grades. The format of this exam review is at the discretion of the course director and may occur in one of the following formats:
  - a. The course director may opt not to offer a review of the exam.
  - b. The course director may review problematic questions or themes or address questions during a portion of a lecture period following the exam.
  - c. A formal exam review may be offered via Canvas with a proctor. For this exam review, students will have their individual exams opened for 15 minutes in Canvas with their answers available for review. *Students are prohibited from taking screenshots, having phones available, or taking notes during the review.* All students must be present for the review to be offered to avoid viewing exam material outside of the proctored environment. Following the proctored exam review, the course director may address specific questions, explain commonly missed questions/themes, and/or emphasize important concepts during the subsequent class period.
4. Exam reviews on Canvas will be scheduled on a term-by-term basis after publication of course exam times.
5. The review session is an opportunity to review the exam for learning purposes. Test item analysis has been completed and grades have been posted at the time of the review; therefore, these sessions are not to be used for challenging questions or points. *If students are unable to follow this policy, review sessions will no longer be offered.*

## Student Clinical Rotation Policies

### Student Required Documents and Training

Progression to the clinical phase requires approval of the following:

1. Background check;
2. Urine drug screen;
3. Documentation of a physical exam within the last year;
4. Documentation of current immunization and titers including an annual influenza vaccine and TB IGRA;
5. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) certification,
6. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) certification, and
7. Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS).

Students may be required to submit additional background checks, drug screens, site-specific forms and paperwork, and training required by individual rotation sites. Unless otherwise specified, students are expected to complete all site-specific paperwork and forms within one week of receiving the instructions. Failure to complete the above requirements may delay the start of clinical rotations and may ultimately delay a student's graduation. The Iowa PA Licensing Board will not license anyone with a criminal record, and local hospitals will not allow students with a criminal record to participate in clinical rotations.

### **Student Solicitation of Clinical Rotations (A3.08)**

Students are not required to solicit clinical rotation experiences. All communication regarding clinical site recruitment and placement assignments must go through the MSPAS Clinical Team. Unless instructed otherwise, students are not to directly contact affiliated and non-affiliated clinical sites.

Students may suggest a nonaffiliated site or qualified practitioner interested in precepting for the program via an online submission form to the Clinical Team no later than 100 days prior to the rotation start date. This form is updated annually and shared in Term 2. Requests made in an alternate way will not be considered. MSPAS may decline pursuing a student suggestion if a conflict of interest is identified or review of the site does not meet program requirements. A conflict of interest may include, but is not limited to, a family member or personal physician serving as a preceptor. Students on probation are not allowed special placement requests. Students submitting suggestions are not guaranteed to be placed in the clinical rotation. Affiliation depends on the MSPAS program's approval of the site, the student's education interest, and ability to secure an affiliation agreement. All affiliation agreements are subject to requirements set forth by ARC-PA and the MSPAS program. The MSPAS program ensures clinical sites provide clinical instruction, education, and experiences requisite to a master's level PA education.

### **Student Clinical Site Assignments**

Final placement at a clinical site is entirely at the discretion of the MSPAS program with consideration of a variety of factors, such as:

- Quality of the practice for educational purposes;
- Student performance;
- Preexisting student professional relationship with the preceptor;
- Potential for future clinical rotations at the site or with the preceptor;
- Student level of professionalism and conduct; and/or
- Other factors

Clinical rotations are scheduled according to site availability, site location, and program requirements. Students will have an opportunity to provide the program with preferred medical specialties and geographical locations for consideration; however, there is no guarantee students will be placed in their preferred disciplines or locations.

Any student who fails to comply with an assigned clinical rotation schedule will receive a Document of Concern and may warrant a review by the SEC. The student should also expect a disruption in their rotation schedule and potential delay in completion of the clinical phase.

### **Clinical Phase Travel, Housing, and Expenses**

Although the program strives to provide both local clinical rotations and/or clinical rotations of geographic convenience, *students should expect to be assigned to geographically diverse and distant locations throughout the clinical phase*. Per program policy, 90 miles is deemed commutable. Students may choose to find housing closer to clinical sites and are responsible for any costs incurred. Multicultural clinical experiences broaden perspectives and facilitate ways to create culturally diverse social networks. Students will travel to the Greater Chicago area for clinical experiences as urban (in addition to rural) sites enrich the students' clinical development through interactions with diverse populations to provide a well-rounded PA education. Reasonable efforts are made to accommodate student preferences for location; however, the MSPAS program cannot guarantee any or all student preferences will be honored.

MSPAS students are responsible for costs incurred for housing and transportation to and from clinical sites. The inability to travel to a particular site is not considered an acceptable reason for a request to change any rotation. Students are responsible for costs associated with site specific requirements, such as fingerprinting, additional labs, My Clinical Exchange fees, etc.

### **Changes to Clinical Rotation Assignments**

The Clinical Team ultimately determines student placement of clinical rotations including the locations and order of rotations, preceptor assignments, and the elective settings. Circumstances may arise that require changes to a student's clinical rotation schedule. Should changes be necessary, students will be informed as soon as possible; however, in rare cases advance notification may not be possible.

### **Clinical Affiliate Policies**

Clinical sites may have requirements beyond those set by UD MSPAS. For example, clinical rotation sites may require additional immunizations, drug testing, or site-specific orientation. Students are responsible for ensuring compliance and completion of site-specific requirements at their expense.

### **Student Identification (A3.04)**

Students must be clearly identified as PA students in the clinical setting at all times. Student photo ID badges will be provided prior to the clinical phase. These IDs are to be worn at all program-related activities (both on and off campus) that relate to training as a UD PA student. PA students must be clearly identified in the clinical setting to distinguish them from physicians, medical students, and other health profession students and graduates. While in

the program, students may not use previously earned titles (i.e., CMA, CNA, RN, MD, PhD, etc.) for identification purposes.

## Patient Confidentiality

MSPAS students are expected to respect the rights of patients, including the rights to privacy and confidentiality, and shall maintain the privacy and security of all patient records and information in accordance with UD and MSPAS policies, the policies of affiliated clinical hospitals and facilities, and state and federal law. As a member of the patient care team, MSPAS students have access to health information that is protected from disclosure under state and federal law, including patient medical and/or demographic information. The MSPAS program and each MSPAS-affiliated hospital and clinic is subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and has developed HIPAA privacy and security policies to prevent unnecessary and inappropriate disclosures of health information (<http://www.hhs.gov>). MSPAS students are required to abide by HIPAA privacy and security policies and receive education and training to understand the requirements of policies and law. Student participation in training is monitored by the MSPAS program office. In general, protected health information may not be discussed or disclosed to anyone — either verbally, in writing, or electronically — unless this disclosure is necessary to perform the student’s duties and responsibilities. MSPAS students may not review medical records or access electronically stored patient information unless such review is required in the performance of assigned duties. Students are responsible for maintaining the confidence of patients by sharing confidential information only with others who need to know and by handling any documentation of information in a manner that maintains its confidentiality. MSPAS students may be required to submit a signed confidentiality statement during their clinical phase. Students should note that the HIPAA privacy and security policies apply to all student–patient interactions in formal curricular, extracurricular, or even in volunteer contexts.

Inappropriate disclosure of protected health information (PHI) is a serious matter that reflects adversely on a MSPAS student’s professionalism and fitness to become a PA. The following basic rules are considered fundamental requirements for UD MSPAS students at all times:

- Under no circumstances should any protected health information be accessed (read, photographed, or copied) in the absence of a requirement for performance of duties;
- Health information obtained while providing clinical care duties may not be discussed with others unless (a) such individuals are involved in the treatment of that patient or (b) it is necessary to fulfill educational objectives required of the student;
- Patient logging completed during clinical rotations should not include identifiable patient information to ensure HIPAA compliance;
- Once confidential information is on paper and in a MSPAS student’s hands, the student is responsible for appropriate disposition: (a) distribute to authorized persons only, (b) file securely, or (c) destroy;



- Medical professionals do discuss cases in wider audiences, so long as the patient is de-identified and details sufficiently common or modified as to preclude patient identification by the audience;
- Unauthorized access or disclosure of PHI may result in federal civil/criminal penalties and/or disciplinary action by UD; and
- Students are required to notify the Clinical Education Director of any HIPAA violations.

Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

## **Health/Medical-Related Policies and Procedures**

### **Substance Use Policy**

The goal of the MSPAS Substance Use Policy is to ensure safety throughout the program and to prepare students for PA standards. Four objectives accompany this goal:

1. Contribute to the education of the MSPAS student regarding substance abuse.
2. Aid the MSPAS student in finding medical assistance and counseling for substance abuse related violations.
3. Facilitate compliance with PA accreditation and regulations.
4. Protect the health and safety of all students and patients.

As a condition of receiving funds or any other financial assistance under any federal program, institutions of higher education shall certify that they have developed and implemented an Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace and Campus Policy.

### **Medication**

All MSPAS program students are subject to UD MSPAS and clinical site policies regarding prescription drug use in the workplace. Any student may bring non-opioid prescribed drugs to class or a clinical site and take during work hours only if the medication has been prescribed by an authorized prescriber and only if the drug is taken in accordance with the prescriber's directions. All prescription drugs must be kept in the original container in which they were received from the pharmacy or other dispenser.

A student may possess and take an over-the-counter drug during program and clinical hours only if the drug is used for its intended purpose in accordance with the package directions and/or any supplemental directions of the student's provider, and the use of the drug does not render the student "otherwise unqualified" to meet program safety, technical standards, and learning objectives. If a MSPAS student knowingly or unknowingly takes a banned substance and tests positive, the student is subject to the consequences listed below.

## Urine Drug Screen Policy

This policy applies to all UD PA conditionally accepted applicants and enrolled PA students. A urine drug screen (UDS) is required of each conditionally accepted applicant prior to full admission and at least annually thereafter for every continuing student.

Conditionally accepted applicants who have an adverse finding on a UDS report will be denied full admission/matriculation, and current students will be disciplined in accordance with established University/MSPAS program policy.

### Definitions

*Adverse Finding:* A term describing a UDS report of anything other than “clear” or “no findings” or other similar language used by the approved vendor that issued the UDS report.

*Conditional Acceptance:* A term describing an applicant’s status when basic review criteria have been met at the time an admission offer is extended but prior to full admission to an academic program.

*Full Admission:* A term indicating that a student has met all program admission requirements and has been cleared of any Adverse Findings that would prevent eligibility for enrollment.

*Matriculated:* A term describing students enrolled in a University program as degree-seeking candidates.

### Rationale for this Policy

The MSPAS program is committed to accepting and educating students who meet established standards for professionalism, are of high moral character, and are suitable candidates for professional certification or licensure.

The purposes of conducting a UDS are multiple:

1. Health care providers are entrusted with the health, safety, and welfare of patients; have access to confidential and sensitive information; and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior. Thus, an assessment of a student’s or conditionally accepted applicant’s suitability to function in clinical settings is imperative to ensure the highest level of integrity in students in the MSPAS program.
2. Impaired providers may lack the ability to perform in a safe manner and make appropriate critical life-altering decisions.
3. Clinical facilities are increasingly required by their accreditation agencies to obtain a UDS for security purposes on individuals who supervise care, render treatment, and provide services within the facility.
4. Clinical rotations are an essential element in PA training. Students who cannot participate in clinical rotations because of positive UDS results are unable to

fulfill the requirements of a degree program. Therefore, these issues must be resolved prior to a commitment of resources by the University, student, or conditionally accepted applicant.

5. Additionally, a UDS is required to:
  - (a) meet the contractual obligations contained in affiliation agreements between UD and the various health care facilities;
  - (b) perform due diligence and competency assessment of all individuals who may have contact with patients and/or research participants;
  - (c) ensure uniform compliance with JCAHO standards and agency regulations pertaining to human-resource management;
  - (d) meet the public demands of greater diligence considering the national reports on deaths resulting from medical malpractice and medical errors.

### **Timing and Procedure for the UDS**

#### *Conditionally Accepted Applicants*

1. The UDS is not used as a component of the application, interview, or decision-making process regarding conditional acceptance to a designated program. It is a mandatory component of the post-conditional acceptance matriculation process.
2. Conditionally accepted applicants must pass the UDS during orientation week to be eligible for full admission and begin Term 1 courses.
3. Any conditionally accepted applicant who fails to complete the above will not be allowed to begin classes and may jeopardize full admission status to the UD MSPAS program.

#### *Enrolled PA Students:*

1. At a minimum, enrolled PA students must complete a UDS in Fall 2/Term 4 of the didactic phase in preparation for entry into the clinical phase. (Or more frequently if required by clinical rotation sites or by the University). This will be done through the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center (SKSHC).
2. Any student who fails to adhere to the UDS deadline will be suspended from all classes until the UDS is completed. All exams and assessments missed while on suspension will be recorded with a grade of 0 or Fail as this is not an excused absence from the program.
3. While enrolled in the UD PA program, students must notify the UD PA program director immediately or within two (2) business days of any offense, arrest, or charge that may alter the results of their UDS. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.

Note: Should the vendor report that the screening specimen was diluted, thereby precluding an accurate drug screen test, the student/conditionally accepted applicant

will be required to complete and successfully pass a new drug screen test. The cost of the second test is the student's responsibility.

### **Costs**

1. The costs associated with the UDS for conditional acceptance is covered by fees paid to the program as part of tuition and fees.
2. The costs associated with the UDS between didactic and clinical phase is covered by the fees paid to the program as part of tuition and fees.
3. If an additional UDS is requested or required, the costs are the responsibility of the student.

### **Period of Validity**

The program will generally honor the UDS results for a period of one year, but a UDS may be necessary more frequently, depending on program or rotation site requirements. Any student who has a break in enrollment (i.e., leave of absence) may be required to complete a UDS before the student is permitted to re-enroll in any courses.

### **Scope of the UDS**

A 14-panel urine drug screen will be performed. This panel tests for amphetamine, barbiturates, buprenorphine, benzodiazepines, cocaine, MDMA (ecstasy), methamphetamine, morphine, methadone, oxycodone, phencyclidine (PCP), tricyclic antidepressants, propoxyphene, and cannabis.

### **Initial Positive Results**

Students with a positive drug screen will have an opportunity to consult with the SKSHC Medical Director to verify whether there is a valid medical explanation for the screening results. If, after review by the SKSHC Medical Director, there is a valid medical explanation for the screening results, the SKSHC Medical Director will notify the University of a clear test. If, after review by the SKSHC Medical Director, there is not a valid medical explanation for the positive screen, then the test results will stand. Any appeal right of a positive screen rests solely between the student/conditionally accepted applicant and the SKSHC Medical Director.

### **Procedure for Review of Positive UDS**

An "offense" under this policy is any instance in which a drug screening report shows a positive test for one or more of the drugs listed above in the Drug Screening Panels section.

- The program identified staff member will review all UDS reports and notify the program director of any positive results.
- Conditionally accepted applicants with a positive drug screen will have their conditional offer rescinded and will not be allowed to matriculate in

the program. They may choose to reapply to the program but must complete a new CASPA application the next admission cycle.

### **Violations after Admission**

The abuse of over-the-counter and/or prescription drugs, alcohol, mind altering substances, and/or performance enhancing substances illegally jeopardizes the student's status in the MSPAS program. Illegal consumption includes any action that violates federal and/or state law or University regulations. Sanctions will be imposed for any student with a positive urine drug screen or receiving a citation for drugs, alcohol, or illegal substances. Citations include, but are not limited to, open containers of alcohol, providing alcohol to minors, illegal possession of drugs, and driving or operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

#### **First Violation**

Following a first violation, the MSPAS student will confer with the Program Director and Medical Director to discuss the situation. Based on the violation, the MSPAS student may be immediately removed from the classroom or clinical site. A final decision of the student's standing in the program will be determined by the SEC.

The student will attend a mandatory counseling/educational session(s) with the Substance Abuse Services Center or other local area agency. This process is facilitated by the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center. Students must complete the recommended counseling session(s) and provide the program with clearance documentation upon completion. Failure to complete the counseling or educational sessions will be construed as a further violation of the policy and will result in dismissal from the MSPAS program. After the first violation, MSPAS students will be subject to the MSPAS program random drug testing, as the standard of reasonable suspicion will have been established.

#### **Second Violation**

Any student who has a second positive drug screen or citation for drugs, alcohol, or illegal substances will be dismissed from the program.

### **Reasonable Suspicion**

Reasonable suspicion is defined as a good faith belief, at the time of making the decision to test, that the information relied upon is accurate and there is reason to suspect that an MSPAS student has used illegal or performance enhancing substances.

Students whose behavior rises to a formal level of concern regarding substance use will immediately be removed from any patient care area, given an unexcused absence, issued a Document of Concern (Section VII, Form J) that will become a permanent part of their record, and undergo review by the SEC.

## **Falsification of Information**

Falsification of information submitted as part of the application process or on the UDS can result in immediate removal of the applicant from the conditionally accepted list or dismissal of an enrolled student from the degree program.

## **Confidentiality of Records**

The University maintains UDS reports and all records pertaining to the results in confidence, unless release is otherwise required by law. Information about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is available at <https://www.dbq.edu/Academics/Registrar/FERPA/>.

Information reported on the UDS may be released to future employers, licensing boards, and clinical sites with signed release from the student for purposes of employment credentialing, licensure, and site placement.

## **Record Keeping**

UDS reports and all records pertaining to the results will be maintained in a secure electronic file by the MSPAS program.

# **Communicable Disease, Bloodborne Pathogen and OSHA Policies**

## **Communicable Diseases and Exposures**

All students with communicable diseases or conditions are not permitted to engage in MSPAS activities or patient care until such conditions have been treated and cleared. This restriction is necessary to protect the health and safety of patients, clinical personnel, and UD MSPAS faculty/staff. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following medical conditions:

- Active chickenpox, measles, German measles, herpes zoster (shingles), acute hepatitis, and tuberculosis;
- Group A streptococcal disease (i.e., strep throat) until 24 hours after treatment has been received;
- Draining or infected skin lesions unable to be covered (e.g., Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus/MRSA);
- Hepatitis B or C;
- HIV/AIDS; and
- Fever (must be fever-free for 24-hours to return)

A student who has a communicable disease or is unsure whether they should participate in MSPAS activities or patient care should seek medical care by a private medical provider. Students with Covid-19, viral colds, strep throat, viral gastroenteritis and other acute episodic illness should not participate in MSPAS activities when ill. They should be improved, at least 24-hours fever-free, and following all CDC guidelines to initiate or return to MSPAS activities. All students with other communicable disease

or a disease requiring a leave of absence must receive written medical clearance from a licensed provider and must submit to the MSPAS Program Director prior to initiation of, or return to, MSPAS activities or clinical care. A case-by-case evaluation of each infected student shall be done by a medical provider to determine the student's ability to perform the duties required of the MSPAS program or the clinical rotation. Based on the recommendations of the provider, it is the responsibility of each infected MSPAS student to notify the MSPAS program office if unable to participate in MSPAS activities or if unable to perform clinical work; appropriate documentation is required. All such notifications are kept strictly confidential.

### **HIV, Hepatitis B and C**

The University strives to provide the MSPAS community programs and services that focus on support, education, and prevention of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B & C. MSPAS students who believe they may be at risk for HIV, hepatitis B, or hepatitis C infection have an obligation to be tested. While the testing decision should be voluntary for the individual, there may be instances in which testing could be required by the program. Education, training, and confidentiality safeguards can be used to encourage those who believe they might be at risk to be tested. Pre- and post-test counseling will be available at the testing site. The MSPAS program encourages participation in wellness courses that cover prevention and transmission of sexually transmitted infections, such as HIV.

MSPAS students who know they are infected with HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or another infectious disease will be urged to voluntarily inform a designated official in the school who will provide information on campus/community resources. The designated official will also begin a process to assess the need for necessary modifications and/or accommodation in clinical education or job functions.

Clinical settings which pose additional risk to the personal health of infected students will be identified, and such persons will be advised of those risks and urged to consult their health care provider to assess the significance of the risks to their own health.

Modifications of clinical activity of infected students will take into account the nature of the clinical activity, the technical expertise of the infected person, the risks posed by HIV/Hepatitis carriage, functional disabilities, and the transmissibility of simultaneously carried infectious agents.

### **Infectious and Environmental Hazards**

MSPAS students who may become infected are not excluded from enrollment or restricted in their access to University services or facilities, unless individual

medical evaluation establishes that such exclusion or restrictions are necessary for the welfare of the individual and/or other members of the University community.

Students infected with bloodborne or other pathogens shall not, solely because of such infection, be excluded from participation in any phase of University life, including educational opportunities, employment, and extracurricular activities, except as otherwise required by applicable federal, state, or local law, or unless their health condition presents a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. Students infected with airborne pathogens are excluded from participation in such activities during the infectious stage of their disease.

### **Exposure Policy for Infectious and Environmental Hazards (partial compliance of A3.05)**

The MSPAS program follows the MSPAS Student Handbook guidelines regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards while on campus and the institutional policies of its clinical affiliates regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards while at clinical sites. The MSPAS program is diligent in educating students about methods of prevention and precautionary infection control measures for airborne and bloodborne pathogens prior to students' first contact with patients and first contact with human tissue, blood products, and body fluids. Ultimately, each student is responsible for their own health and safety in the clinical/educational setting; therefore, it is the goal of the MSPAS program that all students learn appropriate policies and procedures to follow in the event they are injured or potentially exposed to bloodborne pathogens or other communicable diseases.

All MSPAS students are required to take the designated bloodborne pathogen and OSHA training upon matriculation into the program. Students may be required to take additional training at the discretion of a clinical rotation site, as their policies and procedures warrant. MSPAS students should understand site-specific policies prior to their work at each clinical affiliate site and should follow the established protocols at that site for immediate care and treatment after exposure.

The student's personal health insurance plan is ultimately responsible for coverage of any incident that occurs during the didactic or clinical phase of the program, including a skin break with a contaminated surgical instrument or needle or eye contamination with blood or body fluid.

During the didactic phase, students should notify the PA faculty in attendance immediately and be referred to the UD Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center. Students must complete an Exposure Incident Report (Section VII, Form B) that will be filed by the program. The PA Program Director should also be notified by the student and faculty member within 24 hours. UD Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center will facilitate



prompt student evaluation during open clinic hours. Outside of health center hours, students will be referred to a local emergency department.

Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center

1994 Grace St., Dubuque, IA

Phone: 563.589.3360

Email: [studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu](mailto:studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu)

*After Hours and Weekend*

UnityPoint Health-Finley Hospital Emergency Department

350 North Grandview Avenue, Dubuque, IA

Phone: 563.589.2658

MercyOne Dubuque

250 Mercy Dr., Dubuque, IA

Phone: 563.589.8000

**On-campus injuries:** The student is directed to UD Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center during normal business hours for appropriate follow-up. If the incident occurs after working hours, or requires emergency care, then the student will be directed to the nearest emergency department for proper evaluation.

MSPAS students may receive follow-up care and treatment for injury or exposure at the clinical site where the injury occurred, with UD Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center or with their primary care provider.

**During the clinical phase:** students should notify their preceptor and immediately follow the procedures established at the clinical facility where the injury or exposure occurred. Should guidelines not be in place, please refer to Section VII: Form E for procedures for care and treatment after exposure and/or injury. The student must also notify the PA Program Director or CED within 24 hours of the incident and complete an Evaluation of Student Exposure Report Form (Section VII, Form C) that will be filed by the program.

Guidelines are available online at <https://www.osha.gov/> to protect students from the risk of occupational infection with HIV, Hepatitis B/C, or other bloodborne pathogens, and to implement the United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standard 29 CFR Section 1910.1030 Bloodborne Pathogens.

Students who know, or who have reasonable basis for believing, that they are infected with bloodborne or airborne pathogens are ethically obligated to report exposures and expected to seek medical care. Students are excused from MSPAS program

and clinical activities in order to seek medical care for bloodborne or airborne pathogen exposure. Should an infected student expose a patient, the student is ethically obligated to report this.

If a student's exposure results in the contraction of a disease or disability, the student is allowed to continue in the program with as little disruption as safely possible depending on the circumstances. The student's specific medical circumstances are evaluated confidentially on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, students may be unable to participate fully in university life or meet MSPAS technical standards because of their illness. As applicable, cases will be reported to the appropriate Public Health Department having jurisdiction over the agency/institution where the exposure occurred.

All students are professionally and ethically obligated to provide patient care with compassion and respect for human dignity. No student may ethically refuse to treat a patient solely because the patient is at risk of spreading, or has, an infectious disease.

The MSPAS program has addressed methods of prevention, procedures for care and treatment after exposure and/or injury (including definition of financial responsibility), and effect on student learning activities as follows:

1. All exposure incidents are regarded as serious and must be reported and documented immediately to the clinical site, as well as the MSPAS Program Director or Clinical Education Director.
2. First aid shall be immediately administered for all types of injuries, including cuts and burns; exposed areas must be thoroughly washed with soap and water.
3. MSPAS students must first contact their instructor or attending preceptor and report the incident including the source and, if appropriate, patient diagnosis. This information is necessary to assist in determining the potential severity of the exposure.
4. The instructor or attending preceptor shall attempt to obtain witness reports of the incident and attempt to determine the nature of the exposure(s) and any associated biohazardous risks, including documentation of routes of exposure(s).
5. If possible, source material of the exposure should be retained and secured in a safe manner.
6. If the instructor or attending preceptor determines that the incident constitutes an occupational exposure to biohazardous materials, then documentation of the incident will begin immediately. Students are required to complete all site-specific incident forms. The student will facilitate completion of the Student Exposure Report Form (Form C) and/or the Student Injury Report Form (Form D) as appropriate with the instructor or attending preceptor within 24 hours.

7. All exposures must be reported to the MSPAS program office. If the MSPAS Program Director or CED is not immediately present, the student will contact a MSPAS faculty member. All information related to student exposure shall be regarded as confidential.
8. Documentation of the incident shall include the activity in which the student was engaged at the time of exposure, the extent to which appropriate work practices and protective equipment were used, and a description of the source of exposure.
9. On-campus injuries: The student is directed to SKSHC during normal business hours for appropriate follow-up. If the incident occurs after working hours, or requires emergency care, then the student will be directed to the nearest emergency department for proper evaluation.
10. Off-campus injuries: The student is directed to seek care at the hospital's emergency department (according to the clinical affiliation agreement) or referred to the closest outpatient clinic.
11. Students are responsible for all charges associated with the diagnostic and therapeutic services associated with needle stick and other types of injuries, including filing health insurance claims. The student assumes responsibility for all charges that are not covered by their health insurance plan. A student may request financial assistance from the UD MSPAS program by discussing the situation with the Program Director.
12. MSPAS students may receive follow-up care and treatment for injury or exposure at the clinical site where the injury occurred, with the SKSHC, or with their primary care provider.

### **Immunization and Health Screen Policy (A3.09)**

As future healthcare providers, healthcare students have a responsibility to uphold the highest standards of public health, patient safety, and professional conduct. Immunizations and vaccinations are a cornerstone of evidence-based medicine and one of the most effective tools for preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

Maintaining up-to-date immunizations is not only essential for protecting the health and safety of our patients, colleagues, and communities—it is also a reflection of our commitment to the core values of the medical profession. These include a dedication to science-based practice, a respect for public health principles, and a duty to model the behaviors we advocate for as clinicians.

All PA students are therefore expected to comply with program immunization requirements as part of their preparation for clinical training and service. This commitment supports the integrity of the learning environment, the well-being of vulnerable patients, and the trust placed in us by the public.

#### **Immunizations**

The MSPAS program developed its policy and immunization guidelines based on the guidelines issued by our affiliated clinical education sites and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-adults/recommended-vaccines/index.html>), specifically those involved in health care. To meet program requirements as listed below, vaccination type, dosing, and schedule must follow CDC-approved standards.

All immunization forms must carry the original signature of a physician or a licensed medical practitioner and the license number or office stamp with address.

All MSPAS students are required to meet immunization requirements as a condition of enrollment to participate in direct patient care during didactic and clinical training. Students who decline required vaccinations may be ineligible for certain clinical experiences during the didactic and/or clinical phase, which may limit their ability to progress through the program. Students will be informed about immunization exemptions in all immunization communications. A student seeking to decline a required vaccination must notify the program. The Medical Director will respond via email with a copy of the vaccination policy and the MSPAS Vaccination Declination Form.

*Failure to comply with these requirements results in a Document of Concern and may warrant a review by the SEC.*

### **Annual Requirements**

Physical examination, influenza vaccine, and tuberculosis screening must be completed annually for the student to be compliant with UD MSPAS Policy. Annual requirements expire a year from the date of completion. Students are responsible for keeping these requirements up to date with no lapse in compliance. Failure to comply with these requirements results in a Document of Concern and may warrant a review by the SEC. A lapse in compliance may result in the inability of the student to complete the required duties of the UD MSPAS program.

### **Physical Examination**

Prior to matriculation, all students must have a physical exam within the past year and have a qualified medical provider document and sign the UD PA Statement of Health form (Section VII: Form A). Students are required to have a physical annually and encouraged to update their examination within 60 days of starting the clinical phase. This can be scheduled through the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center at no additional cost. The annual physical exam certifies they are in satisfactory health to perform the duties of a PA in a training program and no health conditions exist that might endanger the health and well-being of the student, patients, clinical faculty, or other students. The PA Program Technical Standards should be used by the provider as a reference for the physical exam and are listed on the back side of [Form A: Statement of Health](#).

## **Influenza**

Students are required to receive the seasonal flu vaccine annually and provide documentation to the program by November each year.

## **Tuberculosis (TB) Screening**

Students are required to have an annual Interferon-Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) to document absence of TB infection.

- If the blood test is negative, students must repeat the IGRA annually.
- If the blood test is positive, students must follow up with their health care provider and submit documentation of chest x-ray results and tuberculosis questionnaire, as well as a letter of clearance and/or recommendations to return to program activities.
  - A positive IGRA raises concern for a latent TB infection. It is recommended you discuss treatment for a latent TB infection with your primary care provider or the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center on the UD campus. CDC guidelines for healthcare workers will be used regarding evaluation and management of a positive IGRA.
  - Students who have previously been treated for active or latent TB need to provide a letter of clearance for the UD MSPAS program to have on file and will need to complete an annual TB symptom check list and chest x-ray.

## **COVID-19**

Students are required to maintain full and up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination per the CDC guidelines and provide documentation to the program. This recommendation may be pre-empted by clinic and hospital policies of clinical sites requiring vaccination.

## **One-Time Only Requirements**

### **Measles, Mumps, and Rubella**

State of Iowa pre-matriculation immunization requirements include documentation of measles, mumps, and rubella immunity for all students prior to registration for classes. As a prerequisite to matriculation or registration, the State of Iowa requires all students born after 1956 to present documented proof of immunity to measles, mumps, and rubella. Consistent with Department of Health guidelines and Veteran Affairs requirements, acceptable proof of immunity constitutes documentation of a blood antibody titer verifying immunity.

Students who cannot prove immunity must begin the 2 shot MMR vaccination series prior to the start of the program.

## **Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis**

Based on the guidelines published by CDC, matriculating students who have not had a tetanus booster within the past ten (10) years must receive a tetanus booster. A single dose of Tdap must be given for adults who have not received a dose of Tdap previously; otherwise, Td is acceptable.

## **Hepatitis B**

Students must show documented proof of vaccination **AND** immunity to Hepatitis B, as described below. Students must document Hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs) titer status.

If the titer is positive, no further action is necessary.

If the titer is negative, the following steps are required:

Begin either two or three dose hepatitis B series immediately. Proof of receipt of at least the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine is required prior to the first day of classes. The remainder of the two or three-dose series must be completed eight (8) weeks prior to beginning the clinical phase.

Repeat titer six (6) weeks after completing the two or three-dose series. This must be completed prior to beginning the clinical phase.

If the hepatitis B surface antibody titer is still negative, the student is considered a non-responder.

Students who continue to have a negative hepatitis B surface antibody titer receive individual counseling on how best to protect themselves and prevent hepatitis B infection and special procedures to follow should a needle stick injury occur.

## **Chickenpox (varicella)**

Proof of positive (immune) varicella antibody titer is required. If immunity is not shown, completion of the 2-shot series four to eight (4-8) weeks apart is required, and documentation must be submitted.

## **Meningococcal**

Highly recommended for anyone with a risk factor (medical, occupational, lifestyle, or other indication), according to the Iowa Department of Public Health. We recommend discussing your meningococcal vaccine status with your health care provider. This recommendation may be pre-empted by the clinic and hospital policies of the clinical rotation sites.

## Polio (IPV)

Proof of vaccination must be provided. Students should consult with their healthcare provider.

## Health and Immunization Record Policies

University of Dubuque and the MSPAS program are committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students, faculty, staff, patients, and the public. During the matriculation process into UD, students are required to provide documentation of immunizations, health examination, and background check. All documents must be received by June 1 prior to matriculation. *Students who do not meet the mandated requirements are not allowed to attend class or participate in a clinical setting.* Exceptions to this policy may be granted if the student is in the process of receiving the complete vaccine series (e.g., hepatitis B, varicella) in a compliant manner. A student seeking to decline a required vaccination must notify the program. The Medical Director will respond via email with a copy of the vaccination policy and the MSPAS Vaccination Declination Form.

Student immunization forms will be kept by the MSPAS office. Please note: student health records are confidential and are not accessible to or reviewed by program faculty or staff except for immunization, tuberculosis, and drug screening results (A3.18). These will be released as required to clinical sites with written permission from the student. Student health records are kept by the student's health care provider. Principal faculty, the Program Director, and the Medical Director must not participate as health care providers for students in the program, except in an emergency. (A3.06)

MSPAS students may be required to have additional vaccines, drug testing, and/or other medical tests prior to starting classes and/or clinical rotations, as required by the MSPAS program and all affiliated clinical educational sites. Additional periodic evaluations or tests may be required as indicated or if exposure to an infectious patient or pathogen occurs.

IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO UPDATE AND MAINTAIN ALL RELEVANT PERSONAL HEALTH RECORDS AND PROVIDE REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION IN TYPHON. STUDENTS SHOULD RETAIN A PERSONAL COPY OF ALL RELEVANT PERSONAL HEALTH RECORDS.

## Health Insurance Policies

All students are required to have proof of current health insurance coverage and should consider current long-term disability insurance, as well. The University of Dubuque does not offer health insurance.

## Health Insurance

MSPAS students are required to possess current and adequate medical insurance to cover emergencies and common medical problems that might occur during their educational training period. The cost of medical insurance is borne by the student.

Students should be prepared to show proof of health insurance. The policy must provide continuous coverage for the entire period the insured is enrolled as a MSPAS student and must be renewable. The policy must provide in-network and out-of-network coverage for providers, hospital, diagnostic, and therapeutic coverage for both emergency and nonemergency outpatient and inpatient services. *Students should be aware clinical rotations occur outside the state of Iowa.*

## Disability Insurance

All MSPAS students are encouraged to enroll in a disability insurance plan to cover injuries that might result in chronic disability during their educational training period.

## Liability Insurance

Each MSPAS student is covered for professional liability under a professional liability insurance plan with The Travelers Indemnity Company (Cottingham & Butler, producer). This is an occurrence-based form; therefore, a tail policy is not indicated. Students can contact the MSPAS Program Director or Clinical Education Director to learn more about this program. MSPAS students rotating at a clinical site must maintain the role of a student; they are prohibited from assuming any responsibilities outside those clearly defined and agreed upon for a student.

Students should be appropriately and routinely supervised by the preceptor of record and must perform duties within the scope of the agreed-upon clinical experience. Remaining within the scope of agreed-upon student duties and responsibilities is vital to preserving the professional liability coverage provided by the University and is important in protecting the student, University of Dubuque, and the clinical site in the case of legal action sought by a patient.

Students are prohibited from participation in any patient care activity outside of the formal rotation assignment, even in the case that an occasion for participation is presented by the clinical site as a potential employer. Though these opportunities may be attractive and are seemingly benign, they must be avoided, as MSPAS program's liability coverage does not cover the student in these circumstances.

MSPAS students working in paid positions in a different health care related capacity at any time during their PA education are not permitted to assume the role of MSPAS student while on duty as a paid employee. Liability insurance will not cover any student assuming the role of a MSPAS student outside an assigned clinical rotation.



# Progression Policies and Procedures

## Academic Progression Policy (A3.14 a,b,c,d,f,h)

### PURPOSE:

To provide students with the policies and procedures regarding academic progression within the University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program (MSPAS).

### POLICY STATEMENT:

#### I. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS (A3.14a, b)

The MSPAS Student Evaluation Committee (SEC) monitors academic progress and notifies students regarding their status if they fail to meet the standards of performance required by the PA Program.

##### *A. PA Program Retention Standards*

The below standards must be met to remain enrolled in the PA Program leading to a MSPAS Degree. Failure to comply with the PA Program Retention Standards will result in dismissal from the program:

1. Achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.00 after completion of the didactic phase and by the completion of the degree program; and
2. No didactic course failure during the didactic phase of training and no more than one (1) clinical rotation failure during the clinical phase of training (which must be remediated to a passing grade); and
3. Students must have earned a minimum passing final course grade (defined as C+, ≥77%, or P) in all courses-including all remediated courses; and
4. Students must comply with all MSPAS and University Policies, unless such policies note the MSPAS program policy supersedes the University Policies; and
5. Students must adhere to MSPAS professionalism standards and University's Code of Conduct policy; and
6. Students must meet all *technical standards* of an MSPAS student ([Technical Standards](#)).

##### *B. Didactic Phase*

The Didactic Phase is composed of courses outlined in the program's course of study ([Curriculum](#)).

Students are required to earn a *passing final course grade* to receive academic credit. Each Course Director determines and publishes in each course syllabus how the final grade will be calculated. Successful completion of all didactic courses and a cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.0 are required for promotion to the Clinical Phase. There may be no course failures during the didactic phase.

##### *PA 649 Didactic Comprehensive Examination Course*

The Didactic Comprehensive Examination Course is composed of an assessment of medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, patient care skills, and professionalism required to enter the clinical phase of training. The student is required to pass all components of the examination to earn a *passing*

*final course grade* and progress to the Clinical Phase in the MSPAS Program. One reexamination attempt is allowed. Failure of the reexamination results in dismissal from the program.

### *C. Clinical Phase*

The Clinical Phase is composed of courses outlined in the program's [course of study](#). Students are required to earn a passing final course grade to receive academic credit. Course components and grade calculation are published in the course syllabus. Up to one (1) course failure will be allowed and must be successfully remediated prior to graduation.

### *PA 662 Professional Competency Course and Program Summative Exams*

The Program Summative Examination is composed of an assessment of the program competencies in medical knowledge, interpersonal, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required for entry into the profession. The Program Summative Examination takes place three (3) months prior to graduation. The components and prerequisites are defined in the syllabus. The student is required to pass all components to earn a *passing final course grade* for the course as part of the graduation requirements. One reexamination is allowed. Failure of the reexamination results in dismissal from the program.

### *D. Graduation*

Students will become eligible to graduate once all of the following conditions have been met:

1. SEC confirms all requirements for graduation have been met, and they recommend the student for graduation to University Administration and ultimately the Board of Trustees; and
2. Successful completion of the MSPAS Program Curriculum with a minimum cumulative GPA of at least a 3.0 within 48 months of matriculation, excluding any and all approved Leaves of Absence; and
3. The student is in "Good Academic Standing"; and
4. Compliance with standards of professional and moral conduct and adherence to all University and clinical affiliate rules and codes of conduct; and
5. Payment of all financial obligations; and
6. Return of all loaned equipment.

Students who have completed all of the above requirements within 30 days after commencement and verified by the SEC will receive a diploma with the published commencement date. Those completing all requirements greater than 30 days after commencement and within 48 months of matriculation will receive a diploma with the date of late April/Early May, late May, mid-August, or mid-December, with date and year applicable to the academic calendar.

## **II. ACADEMIC ACTIONS**

### *A. Academic Advising*

Student academic performance, professionalism behaviors, ability to meet the technical standards of a PA student, as well as adhering to the University's Student Code of Conduct is continually tracked throughout enrollment in the MSPAS Program. Each student is assigned a faculty member as an academic advisor upon matriculation. The academic advisor will assist in monitoring the performance of

their assigned students to facilitate student-developed plans for improvement, assess risk, and encourage and promote healthy outcomes.

#### *B. Promotion*

The SEC will approve Promotion for all students who successfully complete requirements for each phase of the MSPAS Program.

#### *C. Remediation*

Any course exam/OSCE failure or professional behavior deficiency will require a document of concern to address a plan for improvement. Failed course assignments and/or presentations may result in a document of concern outlining remediation requirements.

#### *D. Probation*

A clinical rotation course failure or a cumulative grade point average of < 3.0 will result in the student being placed on probation. The student will remain on probation until the cumulative grade point average is 3.0 or greater. A student with a clinical rotation course failure will be enrolled in a remediation version of the same course and remain on probation until the failed course has been successfully remediated as indicated by earning a passing final grade. The student will be removed from probation and returned to good standing when the remediated course has been successfully completed. Probationary status is documented on official transcripts.

Students not adhering to the professionalism standards, student conduct policy, or technical standards will be referred to the SEC and placed on probation or possibly be dismissed from the program. In order to return to good standing, students must refrain from demonstrating any deficiencies outlined in these policies. The probationary period will last from the time the student is placed on probation until the end of the following term at which time the SEC will conduct its review. A subsequent violation may result in up to a dismissal decision. A record of probation will be noted in the Tracking Form, as well as the status of return to good standing. The academic notations of Probation and Return to Good Standing will also be included on the student's official transcripts.

#### *F. Deceleration (A3.14d)*

The program does not offer deceleration to any students who are not on an approved leave of absence. All students, except leave of absence students, will remain enrolled with their cohort, including those students who require remediation. The date of conferral of degree will differ from the cohort if the student completes all requirements greater than 30 days after commencement. Those students will still be allowed to walk during graduation with their cohort.

#### *G. Dismissal (A3.14f)*

The circumstances listed below will result in dismissal:

1. Students who fail to achieve at least a 3.0 GPA after completion of all didactic phase courses; or
2. Students who fail to achieve at least a 3.0 GPA at the time of graduation; or
3. Students with a course failure during the didactic phase of training or more than one (1) clinical course failure during the clinical phase of training; or
4. Remediation failure; or

5. Violation of MSPAS Program or University Policies resulting in a dismissal decision by the SEC or the Academic Dean; or
6. Failure to meet the technical standards of an MSPAS student; or
7. Failure to meet the requirements for graduation outlined in I:D1-6; or
8. Students who have a subsequent violation while on probation.
9. Any student who does not finish the MSPAS program curriculum within the required timeframe of 48 months.

### **III. REMEDIATION POLICY (A2.05f, A3.14c)**

#### *A. Didactic Phase Remediation Process*

All courses in the didactic phase require a passing grade before a student may progress to the clinical phase of the Program. Students must pass the cumulative final exam in all courses with a final exam, regardless of their overall course grade. A failed cumulative final exam may be retaken once. Failure of the reexamination results in failure of the course and dismissal from the program. Students passing the reexamination are awarded a final examination grade of 77%.

Students are notified of failed course components (e.g. unit exams, OSCEs, presentations, assignments) through a Document of Concern (DOC) issued by the course director. The student must develop a plan to address the deficiency (inclusive of a timeline). This plan is reviewed and discussed with the student's course director and advisor to ensure appropriateness. Upon agreement, the plan is approved by the course director and advisor and signed by the student, course director, and advisor and is to be accomplished within the remaining time scheduled for the course. The completed form is signed by the program director and filed in the student's folder.

#### *B. Clinical Phase Remediation Process*

All courses in the clinical phase require a passing grade before a student may progress to graduation in the MSPAS Program. Failure to obtain a passing grade in any clinical course requires successful remediation of the failed course. All clinical courses will include a remediation version of the course. The Course Director determines the content based on the student's identified deficiencies. Students who require remediation will be notified with a Document of Concern issued by the course director or SEC regarding the specifics of the course remediation.

Students have only one attempt to remediate a failed clinical phase course. The student is permitted one (1) attempt for an EOR examination in a remediated course. If the score is not within 1.5 standard deviations of the national mean, the student fails the exam, which results in failure of the course and dismissal from the program.

A *minimum* of a 4-week Academic Delay will occur due to clinical course remediation. Remediated courses during the clinical phase will be scheduled upon availability and may not occur until the end of the clinical phase of training and following commencement ceremony.

The credit hours and grading assigned for remediation courses will be identical to the original course for which remediation is necessary. Additional tuition and fees, based on course credit, is borne by the student. Students receiving financial aid are required to contact the Financial Aid Office for information on financial aid impact caused by the additional course in the student's program of study.

Students who successfully complete the remediation course will receive a “Pass” for purposes of GPA calculation in the MSPAS Program. However, the original course’s final failing grade will remain on the student’s official transcript with an (\*), indicating the course was repeated and the original grade will no longer be used in the calculation of the final cumulative GPA.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC APPEALS (A3.14h)**

See *Academic Appeals Policy* Section IV: [Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)

##### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Academic Delay**—Period of time needed to remediate a failed course/rotation.

**Deceleration**—A term used to denote the loss of a student from their initial enrollment cohort, who remains matriculated in the MSPAS Program.

**Dismissal**—Removal from the MSPAS Program such that reapplication and readmission is necessary for a student to return. Upon dismissal notification, the student may not attend currently enrolled courses. This is to protect the student from incurring unnecessary educational expense and the likelihood of having to repay distributed financial aid.

**Document of Concern**—Document outlining area(s) of deficiency and student developed plan for improvement reviewed, approved and signed by the course director, student, advisor, and program director.

**Failing Final Course Grade**—An assessment of “C” (<76.5%) or lower in a letter graded course/rotation or “F” in a Pass/Fail graded course/rotation.

**Final Course Grade**—The course grade issued to each student at the conclusion of the course and submitted by the final grade submission date set forth by the University’s Registrar.

**Grade of Incomplete or “I”**—Temporary grade assigned when a student is unable (for non-academic reasons) to complete certain requirements of the course by the end of the current academic term.

**Good Academic Standing**—Academic status indicating a student meets the current MSPAS Program retention requirements.

**Passing Final Course Grade**—An assessment of “C+” (77%) or better in a letter graded course/rotation or “P” in a Pass/Fail graded course/rotation. In order to be promoted, a student must receive a grade of “P” (Pass) or “C+” or better in all courses.

**Probation**—The failure to meet program requirements, professionalism standards, code of conduct policy, or technical standards. Academic standing is evaluated at the end of each subterm. Probation is noted on the student’s transcript for the applicable term and monitored at the end of each subterm. Cumulative GPA is evaluated at the end of each term.

**Program Curriculum**—Academic materials and assessments that comprise the didactic phase, didactic summative, clinical phase, and program summative of the PA Program.

**Progression**—Advancement to the next term/semester of the MSPAS Program.

**Promotion**—Advancement to the next phase of the MSPAS Program.

**Remediation**—Specific corrective action for academic deficiencies identified through the MSPAS Program’s assessment of individual performance within the MSPAS Program Curriculum.

**Remediation Course**—An enrolled course designated as a “repeat of the original failed course” that includes a specific curriculum designed to remediate an individual student’s identified deficiencies. Additional tuition and fees, based on course credit of the remediated course, is borne by the student.

**Student Evaluation Committee (SEC)**—The MSPAS Program Committee which applies Program standards and procedures to each student’s overall program performance and acts in accordance with this policy.

**Suspension**—Specified period of time that students are ineligible for academic or disciplinary reasons to continue in the MSPAS Program until they have met the terms outlined in their suspension letter.

**Subterm**—A subdivision of a term used during the clinical phase.

**Term**—A defined portion of the academic year: Fall, Spring, Summer.

## **Attendance**

Attendance and participation are mandatory. MSPAS students are expected to be present, prepared, and actively engaged in all classes, labs, and clinical rotations. Attendance and promptness to class and clinic are a reflection of professional behavior. A pattern of absences or tardiness will result in a Document of Concern and may impact progression in the program.

During the didactic phase, students are provided a class schedule each term outlining course time, location, and course director. The program hours during the didactic phase are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, unless noted otherwise. Students are expected to be available during those hours for schedule changes and adjustments. Personal appointments should be scheduled during program breaks, outside of program hours, or during the designated protected time on Tuesday morning from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Clinical phase hours are outlined below.

Program activities, including course sessions, labs, evaluations, and assessments will not be rescheduled to account for student absences. Should absences occur, students are responsible for completing all material missed. It is the student’s responsibility to learn the covered material. Some activities cannot be made up, which may result in a grade deduction or Document of Concern.

Students may be required to attend weekend, early morning, and/or evening events outside of regularly scheduled courses or rotations. Students will be notified of any changes in course times, lectures, or exams.

Remote attendance is defined as all students and the instructor not in the classroom or a student who has been approved to attend remotely due to extenuating circumstances. The attendance policy is no different from an in-person class. In addition, if a student does not have

their camera on or is not engaging in the course (not on camera, doing other things, talking to others, etc.), this will be counted as an unexcused absence. Please refer to the [Remote Learning Etiquette document, Form M](#).

## Absences

### Didactic Phase

**Notification of Absence:** The Program Director and course director must be notified via email as soon as possible if a student will be absent from class for any reason.

All absences require completion of the [Absence Report Form](#) (Section VII: Form F) and submission via [SoftDocs](#) *at least seven (7) days* in advance or as soon as possible, should an emergency arise.

*Submission of an Absence Report Form does not guarantee approval of the absence.*

**Personal Days:** Students are allowed 2 personal days during both the Fall and Spring terms and 1 personal day during Summer term. The program has the right to decline the request (i.e. >3 students have requested the same day, scheduled program event). Personal days cannot be used to miss exams, OSCEs, required assessments or program events. Examples of personal days include, but are not limited to, attending a wedding, graduation, baby/bridal shower, medical appointments, or self-care day. To request a Personal Day, complete the [Absence Report Form](#) and choose “Personal Day” as the reason for absence. Students are responsible for any missed material during their absence. Course recordings are not guaranteed. A score of zero will be given for any missed quiz, exam, OSCE, or other assessment. Half-days are permitted; however, the absence will count as a full day for ease of tracking.

**Excused Absences:** These are separate from Personal Days and may include illness, bereavement, and family emergencies, not routine activities that can be rescheduled to accommodate a student’s education. If a personal illness or personal/family emergency necessitates missing a required activity, the student must contact the Program Director and appropriate course director prior to the beginning of the scheduled activity to inform the instructor of the situation and make arrangements for completing the course requirements. Students should receive confirmation (direct conversation, return email, or phone call) from the course director indicating approval and awareness of the student’s absence. The MSPAS program reserves the right to determine whether an absence is excused. Unexcused absences or a trend of tardiness or early departure may result in a Document of Concern or an SEC meeting. Please use [Form F: Absence Report Form](#) to request an absence.

### **Absence from Assessment Due to Illness or Personal/Family Emergency:**

If a personal illness or personal/family emergency necessitates missing an examination, OSCE, or other assessment, permission to reschedule the assessment must be

granted by the course director prior to its scheduled start time. It is the student's responsibility to contact the appropriate course director and complete an Absence Report Form. Students who do not contact the course director to receive permission for the absence and arrange for a make-up, or who do not have a valid emergency excusal, will earn a grade of zero for the assessment. Missing an assessment due to illness requires documentation from a healthcare provider (MD/DO/PA/NP). Students who miss an assessment as the result of an excused absence are expected to make up the examination within a reasonable amount of time, as agreed upon by the Academic Director, course director, and the student. Every effort will be made for the student to take the exam prior to the absence. Should the student be unable to take the exam prior to the scheduled absence, the make-up examination may differ from the one missed.

For chronic health conditions and/or appointments, the student must contact the Disability Services Office to arrange accommodations (563.589.3262, Appendix A).

### **Clinical Phase**

Student clinical rotation schedules and hours are determined by the primary preceptor and the MSPAS program. Unreliable or undependable behavior is considered unprofessional behavior. Scheduled activities and/or clinical rotations may take place any day of the week (including weekends) and may take place during day or night hours. Students should follow the instructions from clinical site preceptor(s) regarding the schedule for a particular clinical rotation with approval from the Clinical Education Director. Students must complete a minimum number of hours each rotation as defined by the syllabus. The MSPAS program expects students to remain active and engaged in their clinical rotation beyond the minimum hour requirement and take advantage of all MSPAS approved learning opportunities provided by the preceptor. MSPAS students must maintain sufficient flexibility to respond to schedule changes and unexpected patient care demands. Students must communicate preceptor schedule changes to the MSPAS Clinical Education Director. Students may be required to be "on-call" during clinical rotations. Students must be present in the clinic or hospital for on-call hours to count toward rotation required hours.

The program recognizes the value of participation in professional activities; however, the primary focus of the clinical phase is the development and application of knowledge attained by active participation in clinical rotations. Thus, time missed per rotation for such participation should not exceed 16 hours. Professional activities include, but are not limited to, attendance at a professional conference, poster or speaker presentation at a professional conference, or participation in professional service or leadership activities. Absences from clinical rotation for participation in professional activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Clinical Education Director prior to the anticipated absence.

Students are afforded up to eight (8) days of excused absences for the entire clinical phase. No more than two (2) absences will be approved per 4-week rotation. For three-week rotations, students are limited to one (1) excused absence. Students may not combine



approved excused absences or scheduled days off in a manner that results in an extended absence from the clinical site exceeding four (4) consecutive calendar days, including weekends or days when the preceptor is not in clinic.

A student's absence requires submission of a Leave Request and approval by the Clinical Education Director *at least seven (7) days* in advance of an anticipated absence. In the event of an unanticipated absence, the form requires submission and approval by the Clinical Education Director within 24 hours. *Submission of a Leave Request does not guarantee approval.*

In the event of an emergency, students must notify the following by email and phone within 30 minutes of the time they were expected on site:

- MSPAS Clinical Education Director
- On-site preceptor or clinic administrator

Students are required to fulfill missed clinical rotation hours and provide documentation supporting all absences. Lack of required hours, acceptable documentation, or appropriate notification of and approval by both the Clinical Education Director and clinical site preceptor will render an unexcused absence. Any unexcused absences from a clinical rotation are grounds for failure in that course.

Students exceeding two excused absences within a clinical rotation or eight excused absences in the clinical phase will result in review by the Clinical Education Director and may be referred to the SEC.

Attendance at End-of-Rotation day sessions is mandatory. Students may contact the Clinical Education Director in advance regarding extenuating circumstances. Students are required to complete the End-of-Rotation Day requirements within 14 days. It is the student's responsibility to learn missed material. Some activities cannot be made up which may result in an unexcused absence, grade deduction, or document of concern. Students with an unexcused absence or an invalid emergency excuse will earn a grade of zero for the End-of-Rotation Day requirements.

## **Leave of Absence Policy**

The MSPAS program requires students be enrolled in classes on a continuous basis for the entire duration of the program. Exceptions to this are rare and must be formally approved by the Program Director and the SEC Committee. Taking a leave of absence may delay the date of program completion and may affect the date of graduation.

Students may request a leave of absence (LOA) when personal (non-academic) circumstances arise, which jeopardize the likelihood for successful completion of their studies. Examples of personal (non-academic) circumstances include medical emergencies, military service, or family obligations that impact the ability to progress unimpeded in the program of study. It is the responsibility of the student to request a leave of absence. It is not the responsibility of the PA Program to recommend a leave of absence to a student.

All LOA requests must be approved in advance unless unforeseen circumstances prevent advanced notice. All LOA requests must be made using the approved program form “[Absence Report Form](#)” (Form F). All requests for LOA must be made in writing and submitted to the PA Program Director and include the following:

- General reason for extenuating circumstances
- First Date of Absence
- Anticipated Date of Return
- A summary of outstanding coursework
- Proposal of how the coursework will be made up

Requests submitted to the PA Program Director will be reviewed by the SEC chairperson. An SEC meeting with the student will be scheduled, as needed, to discuss the request and return-to-program requirements. All program requirements during a leave of absence and dates of return to the program will be outlined in writing to the student by the Program Director and SEC. The timing and term of return will be at the discretion of the PA Program. The student will be asked to sign their understanding of these requirements prior to the granting of the leave. Authorizations and signatures from both the PA Program Director and SEC chairperson are required for LOA approval.

If a leave of absence is needed for personal medical/brain health reasons, a letter from a medical or mental health provider is required before returning, stating the student is able to meet the technical standards and resume all activities fully, without limitation, as required by the program.

Depending on the timing of the absence and the PA curriculum, an approved LOA may require an “I” (incomplete) grade be submitted to the registrar. In the didactic phase, failure to resolve the incomplete grade by the beginning of the following term will result in an SEC meeting to determine status in the program, which may be dismissal. A leave of absence that prevents completion of a term must follow procedures for re-admittance to the MSPAS program.

In the clinical phase, progression to the next rotation with an incomplete grade requires approval from the CED and may require an SEC meeting. As a general rule, students approved for LOA during the Clinical Phase will be required to take leave in one-month increments corresponding with rotation course schedules. Any approved LOA of less than one month during the Clinical Phase will require the student to successfully complete all syllabus requirements for the respective rotation course. Inability to meet course requirements prior to taking an approved LOA will result in an “I” and necessitate the student complete the course upon return to the program.

The date of conferral of degree will differ from the cohort if the student completes all requirements greater than 30 days after commencement. Those completing all requirements greater than 30 days after commencement and within 48 months of matriculation will receive a diploma with a date of late April/early May, late May, mid-August, or mid-December, dependent on timing of requirement completion, with date and year applicable to the academic calendar.

*This may affect the ability to apply for state licensure as verification of program completion and degree conferral may be required prior to license approval.*

*Students are encouraged to consider all academic, financial, and personal factors that will be impacted by a leave of absence prior to making the request (including tuition, loan repayment, financial aid, and licensing).* Students receiving financial aid are required to contact the Financial Aid Office for information on financial aid impact caused by a temporary interruption in the student's program of study.

### **Withdrawal Policy (A3.14e)**

Students may *withdraw from a course or courses* from the UD MSPAS program any time after the Add/Drop period up to shortly after the course's midterm point (roughly the 60% mark). The official withdrawal deadline date is maintained in the Office of the Registrar. A grade of W will be recorded for any withdrawn course, and the student will be obligated to pay the tuition costs associated with the course. A W grade is not factored into the cumulative GPA. However, a W grade is treated as a course failure for progression purposes. A student withdrawing from a course in the didactic phase may finish out the semester with their other courses, but only so with the knowledge they are dismissed at the conclusion of the semester. A student withdrawing from a course in the clinical phase may continue in the program so long as the withdrawal does not result in dismissal due to a second course failure. A student considering withdrawal from a course is encouraged to consult with the Program Director as to the ramification of the decision.

To initiate a *withdrawal from the program*, the student is required to notify the Program Director and complete the Withdrawal Form. The Withdrawal Form for the MSPAS program is found in Section VII: Form G. Final grades of W will be assigned to all *unfinished* courses for the term in which the student withdrew, so long as the withdrawal was initiated before the withdrawal deadline date.

Students who voluntarily withdraw from the program and desire to return to the program must re-apply, adhering to the MSPAS Admission process outlined on the UD MSPAS website.

### **Professional Behavior Policy & Student Code of Conduct**

The UD MSPAS program strives to attract and train students with the intellectual capacity to become a health care professional who demonstrates ethical and professional behavior. Ethical and professional behaviors are critical to an effective educational model and are considered a core competency in the PA academic program, and thus, are a key factor in academic good standing.

Failure to meet ethical and professional behavior standards will result in action up to, and possibly including, dismissal and may jeopardize progression in the program.

This policy is not intended to address types of student conduct violations as described in the University Code of Conduct (pg. 112) and Academic Integrity (pg. 61) sections of the University of Dubuque Graduate Handbook, as these policies have their own disciplinary processes (A1.02g). However, violation of University policies on Code of Conduct, Values, and Academic Integrity are not without consequence to a PA student's progression in the MSPAS program. All violations of University policy may result in a document of concern and be recorded in the Tracking Form.

All UD MSPAS students are expected to demonstrate high standards of ethical and professional behavior in all educational and clinical settings, including but not limited to:

1. Classroom-based setting (classrooms, labs, online classes)
2. Professional and clinical sites part of the learning program (hospitals, clinics, community health centers, etc.)
3. Other settings not part of the formal educational program that contribute to the learning process (clubs, special-interest groups, governance structures, community service/volunteer activities)
4. Other settings as described below:

While this policy is not intended to directly guide or address behavior that is a part of a student's private life, such behavior may be brought to the attention of UD in several ways and become a focus of a policy investigation or charge:

- a. Conduct may be reported to a member of the faculty or administration by a variety of sources (police, friends, parents, other agencies) that raises a concern about the student's capacity to continue their studies. If such reported conduct raises a concern about the safety of the student or other students that could indicate an issue with moral, ethical, or personal values that would preclude satisfactory functioning in the discipline, an investigation may be conducted and action taken on the basis of the investigation.
- b. If a student is charged with an offense in the civil justice system and the University becomes aware of and verifies this circumstance through self-report of the student or a reliable, verified source, the University may elect to not pursue an investigation until the outcome of the civil court proceeding is known, unless the alleged offense is such that allowing the student to continue their studies could be detrimental to the safety of patients or others as determined by the Dean.
- c. If a student is charged with a criminal offense, the student is obligated to report this to the program director immediately. If a matriculating student has been charged with a criminal offense between the time the student wrote an application and the time the student arrives at school, or at any time while a student, the student must inform the program director of the charges before the first day of classes. If the University later discovers the student withheld disclosure of a criminal charge, the student may be subject to immediate dismissal by the program. Depending on the nature of the criminal charge, the student may not be allowed to continue the course of study until there is a final disposition of the criminal

charge either by verdict, plea, or dismissal. This is consistent with the obligation of the University to ensure the safety of patients, students, and others.

Fundamental attributes of professionalism and ethical and professional behavior include, but are not limited to, honesty and integrity, dedicated desire to learn, respect for the academic process, concern for the welfare of patients and their families, a commitment to patient confidentiality, respect for the rights of others, emotional maturity, and self-discipline.

While not all inclusive, examples of unacceptable ethical and professional behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Lack of integrity and honesty (i.e., lying, misrepresenting, or not reporting information about care given, clinic errors, or any action related to clinic functions; acting outside the scope of the student's role in a clinical, academic, professional, or administrative setting). Allegations of academic misconduct (i.e. cheating, plagiarism, inappropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI)) are addressed in the Academic Integrity policy of the [Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook](#) (pg. 61).
- Failure to demonstrate professional demeanor or concern for patient safety (i.e., offensive language or gestures, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the educational or clinic setting)
- Unmet professional responsibility (i.e., not contributing to an atmosphere conducive to learning due to poor attendance or punctuality; distracting, disrespectful, or insensitive behavior in class, lab, or clinical settings; poor personal hygiene; repeated failure to complete responsibilities in a timely manner; or failure to respond to faculty or staff communication (written, verbal, email, phone) in a timely and professional manner; breaches of patient confidentiality)
- Exhibiting disruptive behavior (i.e., physically aggressive actions such as pushing, punching, or throwing objects; verbal threats or intimidation; use of demeaning or disrespectful language; or inappropriate comments with racial, ethnic, religious, age, gender, or sexual overtones) It also includes more subtle but equally disruptive behaviors such as frequent interruptions in class or meetings, excessive side conversations, inappropriate use of electronic devices (e.g., texting, browsing, or social media use during instructional time), monopolizing discussions, displaying dismissive or disrespectful body language (e.g., eye-rolling, sighing), and speaking over peers or instructors. Additionally, inappropriate documentation in academic or clinical records and disparaging or disrespectful remarks directed at students, faculty, staff, or preceptor, including verbal, written, or electronic, are considered unprofessional and unacceptable.
- Lack of effort toward self-improvement and adaptability (i.e., resistant or defensive in accepting constructive criticism; remaining unaware of own inadequacies; resisting considering or making suggested changes to improve learning, behavior, or performance; not accepting responsibility for errors or failure; abusive or inappropriately critical; arrogant)

- Lack of respect for cultural diversity (i.e., demonstrating insensitivity or disrespect toward individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, or perspectives, in any academic or clinical setting)
- Difficulty collaborating with others (i.e., failure to work effectively as part of a team, whether in the classroom, lab, or clinical setting, or an inability to maintain professional relationships with peers, faculty, staff, or members of the healthcare team)
- Failure to maintain and safeguard the confidentiality of patient information, including paper and electronic records, verbal communication, social networking, and electronic media sites
- Non-compliance with program requirements (i.e., failure to complete required documentation, training, certification, immunization, or HIPAA compliance in a timely manner.)

### **Procedures for Violations of the Professional Behavior policy**

Violations of this policy will result in a Document of Concern and may result in an SEC meeting, based on the egregiousness of the violation or pattern of unprofessional behavior. See the [SEC Hearing Process and Procedure](#).

## **Technical Standards Policy**

The technical standards set forth by the MSPAS program establish the essential qualities considered necessary for students to be admitted to and successfully complete the program. These standards ensure graduates possess the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. MSPAS students must meet all technical standards upon matriculation and throughout enrollment in the MSPAS program. The MSPAS program has a duty to make reasonable accommodations, but no duty to correct a deficiency in any technical standard. In the event, therefore, a student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with reasonable accommodations, the student is subject to dismissal.

MSPAS students must be fully able to perform the essential functions in each of the following categories:

**Observation:** A candidate must be able to

1. Observe demonstrations and visual presentations in lectures and laboratories.
2. Observe patients accurately and completely both at a distance and closely.
3. This standard requires functional vision, hearing, and somatic sensation.

**Communication:** A candidate must be able to

1. Perceive nonverbal communication, speak intelligibly, hear sufficiently, and observe patients in order to elicit information.
2. Elicit and transmit patient information in oral and written English to members of the health care team.
3. Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients.

4. Possess demonstrated reading skills at a level sufficient to accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients.
5. Be capable of completing appropriate medical records and documents in the written and electronic form in a thorough and timely manner.

**Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function:** A candidate must

1. Possess motor skills sufficient to directly perform palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other basic diagnostic procedures.
2. Be able to execute motor movements required to provide basic medical care. Examples of basic medical care include, but are not limited to, airway management, placement of catheters, suturing, phlebotomy, application of sufficient pressure to control bleeding, simple obstetrical maneuvers, etc. (Such actions require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.)
3. Be able to manipulate equipment and instruments to perform basic laboratory tests and procedures.
4. Be able to transport themselves from one location to another in a timely fashion in order to facilitate patient care responsibilities and necessary to receive educational training.

**Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** Problem solving is the critical skill demanded of PAs. This requires that students have the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize. A candidate must

1. Be able to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and the medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans.
2. Be able to independently access and interpret medical histories or files.
3. Identify significant findings from history, physical examination, and laboratory data.
4. Provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses and prescribed medications and therapy.
5. Recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner.

**Behavioral and Social Attributes:** A candidate must

1. Possess the ability to use their intellectual capacity, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis under potentially stressful and/or emergency circumstances.
2. Be able to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior.
3. Be able to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and colleagues.
4. Have a high level of compassion for others with sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems.

5. Be able to adapt to changing environments and to learn in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine.
6. Be able to use supervision appropriately and act independently, when indicated.

Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in certain areas, but a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

Meeting the technical standards is required but does not guarantee a student's eligibility for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE). Students also must meet the expectations of the program and program's accrediting agency (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. [ARC-PA]).

## **PA Professional Competencies**

The MSPAS program has adopted and integrated into its curriculum the National Commission on Certification for Physician Assistants (NCCPA) 2012 revised guidelines defining PA competencies. These competencies encompass the skills, knowledge, education, and attitudes that PAs should acquire through training and subsequent careers. The following listing and description of competencies is taken in full from the NCCPA "Competencies for the PA Profession."

The essential abilities required by the curriculum and for the practice of medicine are in the areas listed below and cannot be compromised without fundamentally threatening a patient's safety and well-being, the institution's educational mission, or the profession's social contract:

### **Medical Knowledge**

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. PAs must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In addition, PAs are expected to demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. PAs are expected to understand, evaluate, and apply the following to clinical scenarios:

- evidence-based medicine;
- scientific principles related to patient care;
- etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology of medical conditions;
- signs and symptoms of medical and surgical conditions;
- appropriate diagnostic studies;
- management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and other treatment modalities;
- interventions for prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance;
- screening methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual; and



- history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses.

### **Interpersonal and Communication Skills**

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

- create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients;
- use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information;
- adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction;
- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group;
- demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety; and
- accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.

### **Patient Care**

Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. PAs must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable. PAs are expected to:

- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care;
- demonstrate compassionate and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families;
- obtain essential and accurate information about their patients;
- make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and informed clinical judgment;
- develop and implement patient management plans;
- counsel and educate patients and their families;
- perform medical and surgical procedures essential to their area of practice;
- provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance; and
- use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education.

### **Professionalism**

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. PAs must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PAs practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency, or mental illness. PAs must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. PAs are expected to demonstrate:

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

### **Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**

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

- analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team;
- locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health;
- apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness;
- utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education; and

- recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others.

### **Systems-Based Practice**

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

PAs are expected to:

- effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems;
- understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care and use the systems effectively;
- practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care;
- advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities;
- partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of health care and patient outcomes;
- accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care;
- apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide effective, efficient patient care;
- recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to health care disparities; and
- apply the concepts of population health to patient care information resources for the purposes of self- and practice-improvement.

## **Technology Policies**

### **Computer Usage**

By signing the Agreement for Use of the Computer System, you will be able to take advantage of all the privileges of using the University of Dubuque's computer and telephone systems. These services include:

- Microsoft Office Applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Publisher, and FrontPage)
- Research programs/library catalogues
- Adobe Acrobat Reader

- Network storage space for your files (access locally and via internet)
- Internet access
- Opportunity to post a personal web page
- University email account (access locally and via Internet)
- Voice mail (if requested)
- Canvas – UDOOnline, [www.dbq.edu](http://www.dbq.edu) (course management system)
- MyUD (registration, grades, student accounts, etc.)

Documentation and instructions on this process are at the UD Office of Technology (Van Vliet Hall) and online at <https://www.dbq.edu/CampusLife/OfficeOfTechnology/>.

## Print Counts

Please note in the Acceptable Use Policy, under Access, Item #7, 250 prints will be allotted to each student per semester at no charge. When this allotment is diminished, additional print counts of 250 each can be purchased from the Cashier's Office, third floor Charles and Romona Myers Center. Print counts carry over from one semester to the next. Printing to a color printer will use more print counts than a monochrome printer.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy (copy and paste): <https://www.dbq.edu/media/CampusLife/OfficeOfTechnology/AcceptableUse.pdf>. The policy can also be found here: <https://www.dbq.edu/campuslife/informationforstudents/>.

## Email Policy

Each student has been provided with a UD email address. The MSPAS program uses UD email as the primary means of communication with students. This is the only email address used for MSPAS program communications. MSPAS students are expected to **check their emails daily** to ensure timely receipt of information. Students are also expected to reply to faculty and staff **within 1 business day** (or sooner, if requested for urgent reasons). Failure to respond to faculty or staff communications in a timely and respectful manner may result in disciplinary action. The MSPAS program cannot be held responsible for missed notifications resulting from unread email. The UD MSPAS email address should only be used when acting in your official role at UD MSPAS.

## Social Media Policy

Subject to all applicable UD policies and state and federal laws, including those governing protected information and patient confidentiality, the MSPAS program supports the responsible and professional use of social media technologies for learning, engagement, and outreach.

Students are encouraged to use professional platforms such as LinkedIn, Doximity, and ResearchGate to build their professional identity. However, program faculty and staff will not connect with students on these platforms until after completion of the program, in order to maintain professional boundaries.

The term “social media” refers to any web-based or digital tool that facilitates public or network-based communication, including (but not limited to): email, text messaging, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), blogs, Discord, and other applications or future platforms that allow content sharing or communication.

This policy applies to all social media activity by UD MSPAS students at all times, regardless of whether such activity occurs during program hours or on personal time. Students must refrain from posting or discussing any patient information or clinical experiences on social media, even if de-identified, as such disclosures may violate HIPAA and professional standards.

Communication with faculty or staff via text messaging may occur when needed for urgent, program-related concerns. Non-urgent matters should be directed to official university communication channels (e.g., email). Text messaging should not be used for casual or social conversation.

Students must abide by the laws, rules, regulations, and policies governing the protection of sensitive information, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) governing the dissemination of health information and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) governing the dissemination of education records. Failure to do so can result in serious consequences both academically and legally. Confidential information must be protected at all times and must never be shared on any social media site, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health information about anyone other than the student posting the information.
- Personal information about MSPAS students, employees, or alumni (e.g., private email addresses, grades, health information, demographic information, information about interactions with patients, and photographs of patients or the care environment – some of which may be FERPA protected).
- Defamation of MSPAS and its affiliates, faculty, staff, and other students.

If UD and/or MSPAS become aware of postings on any social media venue that have a negative or detrimental impact on the University or MSPAS program, such information can be used in determining the appropriate sanction for failure to act in accordance with this policy, which may include dismissal.

Be proactive about your professionalism:

- Separate personal from professional. Identify your opinions as your own;
- Be professional and respectful;
- Always think before you post, remembering that anything you share via social media is not private and can be shared, stored, and spread globally;
- Never post anything when you are angry, stressed, or lack sufficient time to review carefully;
- Only post information, photos, and comments online if you would feel comfortable seeing them on TV or on the front page of the newspaper;

- Remember postings are permanent and can be retrieved even after being deleted by the user;
- Be timely and accurate. Check facts, grammar, and spelling of all content before posting; and
- Use the highest privacy settings available. Social media sites are often targeted by cyber-criminals who use personal data for identity theft.

Prohibited activities, which may represent violations of the law and/or University policy and may result in academic discipline and/or legal sanctions:

- Communicating with patients using social media, including “friending” a patient;
- Posting patient information, including protected health information or photos, on any social networking sites, blogs, instant messaging, or text messaging services;
- Taking photos of patients and procedures. Photos of patients may only be taken when instructed by clinical faculty and proper protocols are followed and permissions obtained;
- Using cell phones, fax machines, or email to transmit confidential information;
- Posting personal information (e.g., home address, phone, password clues, social security number) or photos that show or appear to show you engaging in any offensive behavior, including, without limitation, promiscuity, intoxication, or substance abuse;
- Posting potentially inflammatory or unflattering material on another’s website or wall;
- Posting educational records or other student information protected by FERPA;
- Posting profane or disparaging information about students, faculty, courses, rotations, hospitals, UD, or the MSPAS program;
- Presenting yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for UD or the MSPAS program on social media;
- Using UD and/or MSPAS logos or personal identification numbers in any social media postings;
- Creating personal social media sites using UD email addresses or computer equipment; and
- Using smart phones, portable communication, and/or other social media devices for personal or non-emergent reasons during encounters involving patients or patients’ families and friends, to include, but not limited to, the following areas:
  - Hospital patient rooms, exam and treatment areas, operating room, emergency room, etc.
  - Outpatient clinics
  - Physician or patient lounges, nurse’s stations, hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, etc.
  - During patient care rounds or presentations that discuss specific patients

Violations of Policy

Students who violate this policy are disciplined and verbally instructed by the Program Director to implement immediate corrective action. Depending on the type and severity of the infraction, immediate disciplinary and/or legal action may be warranted. This policy does not replace other UD or MSPAS program policies governing disclosure of confidential information, including protected health information and education records.

## **Student Evaluation Committee (SEC) Hearing Process and Procedures**

The following describes the processes employed to evaluate MSPAS student academic performance, professionalism, and progression by the SEC.

The purpose of the SEC is:

- To ensure that each student who graduates from the University of Dubuque MSPAS program possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to assume the responsibilities of a PA;
- To evaluate academic performance in the required curriculum, to assess advancement, and to recommend appropriate intervention in the event of unacceptable academic performance; and
- To assess personal attributes that impact a student's professionalism and suitability for becoming a physician assistant, and to recommend appropriate interventions as needed.

The SEC relies upon the cooperation, advice, and judgment of faculty and administrators to perform these duties.

### **Causes that Initiate a Formal Review Hearing**

All PA students must meet the minimum technical standards, professional PA competencies, and didactic and clinical phase requirements outlined in this handbook, to be eligible for successful progression through the program. Failure to meet any of these requirements at any time during the program will result in a formal review by the Student Evaluation Committee (SEC). Additionally, the SEC may call a hearing to bring together program and University resources in order to address student performance concerns and provide recommendations.

### **Composition and Selection of SEC Members**

The SEC is comprised of all principal MSPAS faculty members, all of whom are voting members. The Medical Director serves as chair. In order to ensure privacy and the confidentiality of students' personal information and academic records, *no students will participate as SEC members.*

### **Hearing Process of the SEC**

#### ***Notice of Hearing***

All hearing notices are set forth in the MSPAS Student Handbook. Students are provided notice via email a minimum of two (2) University business days prior to the SEC

meeting with the student to consider a matter within its jurisdiction. The notice will state:

- A description of the matter under consideration;
- The time, date, and place of the hearing;
- A list of witnesses (if any).

## Hearing Procedure

### *Information Gathering*

In the event that a matter is referred to the SEC for evaluation and recommendation, the SEC has the authority to gather information concerning the matter to assist with its deliberation and evaluation of the matter in the context of the student's academic performance and overall professionalism and/or ability to meet the technical standards required of a PA student. The SEC may convene meetings for any purpose including assisting with preparation for the SEC hearing.

### *Meeting with Student and Confidentiality*

*All student meetings are conducted in private.* Recording of meetings by the student and/or any witnesses/representatives is strictly prohibited. During the meeting with the student, the student is advised of the information that forms the basis of the inquiry or allegation; the student then is given an opportunity to respond to the information presented. One non-legal representative is allowed to be present during any SEC hearing upon the student's request. The student must provide the program with documentation specifying the name of the individual whom the student is admitting into the hearing. It is possible that the student's representative could be another MSPAS student. The representative may advise the student but may not address the SEC directly or examine or cross-examine witnesses. The SEC allows witnesses to the incident, if any, to present pertinent information at the meeting with the student. The chair has the authority to exclude witnesses who provide redundant or duplicative information. If witnesses make presentations at any hearing, the student shall be entitled to pose relevant questions to such witnesses. The SEC considers the information it has gathered and any additional information provided by the student and makes written findings of fact and recommendations based upon its assessment of the information presented. Such findings and recommendations shall be provided to the program director within five (5) University business days of the conclusion of the hearing.

### *Quorum and Voting*

A quorum consists of at least 50% of the faculty members of the SEC. A recommendation is adopted when approved by a simple majority of the members present. A recommendation to dismiss a student from the MSPAS program must be approved by a three-fifths majority.

### *Record of Hearing*



Written decisions serve as the official records of a hearing.

### ***SEC Recommendations***

The following may be recommended by the SEC:

- Remediation Plan
- Probation
- Dismissal

The SEC may recommend removal of a student's probation once the student has fulfilled the conditions of probation.

### **Probation**

A clinical rotation course failure or a cumulative grade point average of  $< 3.0$  at the end of the term will result in the student being placed on probation. The student will remain on probation until the cumulative grade point average is 3.0 or greater, which is reviewed at the end of each term. A student with a clinical rotation course failure will be enrolled in a remediation version of the same course and remain on probation until the failed course has been successfully remediated as indicated by earning a passing final grade. The student will be removed from probation and returned to good standing when the remediated course has been successfully completed and their cumulative GPA is  $\geq 3.0$ . Probationary status is documented on official transcripts.

Students not adhering to the professionalism standards, student conduct policy, or technical standards will be referred to the SEC and placed on probation or up to dismissal from the program. In order to return to good standing, students must refrain from demonstrating any deficiencies outlined in these policies. The probationary period will last from the time the student is placed on probation until the end of the following term at which time the SEC will conduct its review of the student's adherence to policy. The SEC may determine the student should continue on Probation or return the student to Good Standing. A subsequent professionalism violation may result in further sanctions up to a dismissal decision. A record of Probation will be noted in the Tracking Form, as well as the status of Return to Good Standing. The academic notations of Probation and Return to Good Standing will also be included on the student's official transcripts.

### **Responsibilities of the Medical Director**

The SEC's recommended action steps are reviewed by the Medical Director. The Medical Director will provide the Program Director the final report. The SEC's findings, recommendations with modifications, if any, and decision are sent to the affected student within five (5) University business days of the Program Director's receipt of the SEC's written report.

Once the student has received notification of the recommendations and decision, the student may schedule an appointment with the Program Director to discuss the findings and recommendations for clarification purposes. The appointment must be requested in writing

and received by the Program Director no more than three (3) business days after the student receives written notification of the findings and recommendations by the SEC. If a meeting is requested, it will take place promptly within five (5) University business days.

### Student Appeals

A decision of the MSPAS SEC may be appealed for the following reasons:

- There has been a violation of the student's due process rights as outlined in the hearing procedures above;
- The severity of the sanction is not justified by the nature of the misconduct; or
- New, relevant information not available during the earlier proceedings is made available, and the new information could have substantially affected the outcome of the hearing.

## Appeal Policy and Procedure (A3.14h)

### PURPOSE:

To provide students with the policy and procedure regarding how to appeal an adverse decision imposed by the University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program (MSPAS).

### POLICY STATEMENT:

Students are required to adhere to all professionalism and technical standards of a PA student. Details of the professionalism and technical standards are found in the MSPAS Student Handbook and posted on the [MSPAS website](#).

Further, students are required to adhere to all academic standards of the MSPAS program. Academic standards on progression are published in the MSPAS Student Handbook. Students are responsible to familiarize themselves with the policy and standards on progression.

The [Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook](#) provides details on policy, processes, sanctions and appeals to academic standards that also apply to PA students. PA students should follow the Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook for appeals that apply to *final course grade, academic integrity violation, academic standing, and involuntary medical withdrawal, as well as any violations of the code of conduct for Graduate Students*.

When a student is not meeting one or more professionalism and/or technical standard expected of a PA student, or demonstrates deficiencies or integrity issues in their academic work, the student will be notified, and the incident will be documented in a Document of Concern (DOC) and recorded on the Tracking Form.

The Student Evaluation Committee will monitor the Tracking Form and when there is enough concern regarding a student's ability to adhere to the professionalism and/or technical standards of the PA program a hearing will be scheduled with the student.

A student has the right to appeal any adverse action resulting in probation or dismissal from the PA program by the SEC. The sole basis for an appeal must meet one of the following conditions:

1. There has been a violation of the student's due process rights as outlined in the hearing procedures of the SEC (see [SEC procedures](#)); or
2. The severity of the sanction is not justified by the nature of the misconduct; or
3. New, relevant information not available during the earlier proceedings is made available, and the new information could have substantially affected the outcome of the hearing.

A student may not appeal an action taken simply because the student does not agree with it, nor may a student appeal a published policy of the MSPAS Student Handbook. Any student removed from campus and administratively withdrawn by the Dean of Students will lose all rights to appeal through the SEC unless the former matter is resolved in the student's favor. If a student has an issue with policy, they may follow the grievance process to file their complaint to the Dean. See the [Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook](#) on the Grievance Procedure (pg. 66).

#### DEFINITIONS:

*Document of Concern (DOC)* is a means to formally recognize a deficiency in order for the MSPAS program to take corrective action. A DOC acknowledges deficiencies, provides an opportunity to identify barriers, and outlines a corrective action plan developed by the student and agreed upon by the instructor, advisor, and program director.

*Tracking Form* is a method to monitor trends in a student's academic performance and professional behavior.

*With prejudice:* the issues resulting in the sanction cannot be brought back to the Dean.

*Without prejudice:* the issues resulting in the sanction may be re-introduced in any future hearing before the Dean

#### PROCEDURE:

- A. When a student is not meeting the academic performance, professionalism standards, or technical standards of the PA program, which impacts their academic standing in the PA program, the SEC will call a hearing. Procedures on a hearing by the SEC are outlined in detail in the MSPAS Student Handbook.
- B. The hearing is closed to the public. The student may seek counsel, but the student must present their case without legal representation present. At the hearing, the student may present witnesses, such as classmates, who have firsthand knowledge of the matter. The student may have one non-legal representative present at the hearing for moral support.
- C. At the conclusion of the hearing, the SEC will meet in private to deliberate. The SEC will render a recommendation to the MSPAS Program Director.
- D. The MSPAS Program Director will notify the student of the outcome of the hearing within five (5) University business days of the hearing.

- E. If the outcome results in the student being placed on probation or dismissed, the student may appeal the decision based solely on meeting at least one of the following conditions:
  - a. There has been a violation of the student's due process rights as outlined in the hearing procedures of the SEC; or
  - b. The severity of the sanction is not justified by the nature of the misconduct; or
  - c. New, relevant information not available during the earlier proceedings is made available, and the new information could have substantially affected the outcome of the hearing.
- F. A student may not appeal an action taken simply because they do not agree with it, nor may a student appeal a published policy of the MSPAS Student Handbook.
- G. The filing of a written statement by the student to appeal a probation or dismissal decision of the SEC shall be made to the Dean for Academic Affairs, Graduate and Adult Studies within five (5) University business days. The Dean shall deny any appeal that does not meet this deadline unless the student is on an approved leave of absence.
- H. Within five (5) University business days, the Dean shall review the student's written appeal and the record of the formal hearing of the SEC to determine if the student has met their burden of proof that at least one condition for an appeal has been met requiring further investigation.
- I. If the Dean determines the student has not met the standard of proof required of an appeal, the decision of the SEC will stand. The Dean's decision is final, and the matter may not be appealed any further.
- J. Should the Dean determine the student has met the burden of proof required of an appeal, the Dean will issue a statement on further action to be taken and the timeline needed to arrive at a fair and impartial conclusion. Examples of further action may include but are not limited to: request additional information from the SEC and/or student, send the matter back to the SEC, call a hearing with the Graduate Curriculum, Admission and Academic Standing Committee (GCAAC), or repeal the decision of the SEC with or without prejudice.
- K. If a student is dismissed by the SEC, they may not attend currently enrolled courses while their appeal is in-progress. Furthermore, a student dismissed by the SEC may not enroll or start new courses until the final decision of the appeal has been made. This is to protect the student from incurring unnecessary educational expense and the likelihood of having to repay distributed financial aid.

If a student is dismissed from the MSPAS program, any courses currently listed as "work in progress" (WIP) will be assigned a letter grade of "W" (withdrawn) as a final grade. Any course listed as "incomplete" (I) will be assigned the default letter grade shown on the Incomplete Form.

#### **EXHIBITS:**

MSPAS SEC Hearing Procedures

MSPAS Academic Progression Policy

MSPAS Technical Standards

MSPAS Professionalism Standards

## University of Dubuque Policies and Procedures

### Students with Disabilities

The policy below is a shortened form of the full University of Dubuque Policy on Reasonable Accommodation for Qualified Students with Disabilities. For the full text, please visit: <https://www.dbq.edu/Academics/AcademicSupportSuccess/AccessibilityServices/>.

University of Dubuque (UD) encourages qualified students with disabilities to fully participate in the community of the University of Dubuque. All faculty, staff, and administrators will actively support qualified students with disabilities in all the University's educational programs, services, and activities. UD prohibits unlawful discrimination against qualified students with disabilities.

### Campus Safety Policies and Procedures (partial compliance of A1.02e)

Safety policies and procedures and safety guidelines are available online [here](#).

Safety and security for students on clinical rotations are addressed during the clinical phase orientation. These rely on the personal safety and security measures in place at each clinical facility as documented on Site Visit Forms. The facility at which the rotation/experience takes place shall provide PA students access to the facility's rules, regulations, policies, and procedures with which the PA students are expected to comply, including the facility's OSHA standards, personal and workplace security, and personal safety policies and procedures for all PA students and any instructors on site.

Personal safety measures also include student instruction in the application of universal precautions and risks of bloodborne pathogens during the program's didactic phase prior to potential exposure with a review of the policy/procedures in the clinical phase orientation.

### Jeanne Clery Act Campus Safety Policy

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act requires the distribution of an Annual Security Report and Annual Fire Safety Report to all current faculty, staff, and students and notice of its availability to prospective students, faculty, and staff no later than October 1st of each year. The annual safety report is published in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Act on University of Dubuque's website: <https://www.dbq.edu/SafetySecurity/JeanneCleryAct/>.

"Hazing" is defined under the (Stop Campus Hazing Act) SCHA as "any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons)

against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate, that (I) is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization, [e.g., a club, student government, athletic team, fraternity, or sorority]; and (II) causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury.”

For more information on hazing through the Stop Campus Hazing Act, please go to:

<https://www.dbq.edu/SafetySecurity/JeanneCleryAct/>

### **Title IX Policy (Sex-based Harassment & Discrimination) (partial compliance of A1.02g)**

University of Dubuque strives to foster respect for the dignity and worth of all members of the University community by providing an educational and professional environment free of unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct that is oppressive or intimidating. The University has a zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual harassment. All MSPAS students are required to attend the annual Title IX/Jeanne Clery Act training.

For more information, please refer to the Title IX Policy: Discrimination on the Basis of Sex & Sexual Misconduct, which can be found at <https://www.dbq.edu/AboutUD/TitleIX/>. To report an incident or to address questions or concerns, students should contact the Title IX Coordinator:

Director of Human Resources/Title IX Coordinator  
Julie MacTaggart, 563.589.3619  
Address: 2000 University Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001  
Office Location: 336 Charles & Romona Meyer Center (MTAC)  
Phone: 563.589.3619 Email: [JMacTaggart@dbq.edu](mailto:JMacTaggart@dbq.edu)

Associate Dean for Student Engagement/Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
Megan Wilson, 563.589.3361  
Address: 2000 University Avenue, Dubuque, Iowa 52001  
Office Location: 201 Peters Commons  
Phone: 563.589.3361  
Email: [Mmwilson@dbq.edu](mailto:Mmwilson@dbq.edu)

Vice President for Student Engagement/Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
Nelson Edmonds, 563.589.3867  
Address: 2000 University Avenue, Dubuque, Iowa 52001  
Office Location: #306F Heritage Center

Phone: 563.589.3867  
Email: [NEdmonds@dbq.edu](mailto:NEdmonds@dbq.edu)

For the grievance policy, please refer to the section below: [Grievances](#).

## **Non-Discrimination Policy and Discrimination Complaint Procedures**

University of Dubuque does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, disability, sexual orientation, or age. Any violations of such should be reported to the Director of Human Resources listed in the section above.

## **Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA)**

The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA) and Part 86 of the Department of Education's General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR Part 86) requires University of Dubuque (UD) to develop and implement a Drug and Alcohol Abuse Education and Prevention Program (DAAPP) designed to prevent the unlawful possession, use, and distribution of drugs and alcohol on campus and at campus events. UD is required to distribute written information about its DAAPP, as well as conduct a biennial review to measure its effectiveness and ensure a consistent enforcement of its disciplinary sanctions.

Alcohol and other drug abuse has serious effects on campus safety, community well-being, and on the academic performance of our students. Conducting a biennial review provides an opportunity for UD to document its prevention efforts and closely examine its scope and effectiveness. Throughout this process, UD can continually identify gaps in evidence-based practices and develop recommendations for future improvements.

### **DFSCA Notification**

- The Annual Notification DFSCA can be found here: [Annual Notification DFSCA](#)
- The Biennial Review DFSCA can be found here: [Biennial Review of DFSCA](#)
- Or visit [www.dbq.edu](http://www.dbq.edu), scroll to the bottom footer, and click on the Jeanne Clery Act
- You may contact the Director of Safety and Security for additional question about DFSCA at 563.589.3333.

## **Grievances and Mistreatment (A1.02g, A3.14g)**

The University strives to provide a learning environment that is supportive yet challenging, and we ask each and every student to become productive, responsible, and engaged members of this community. The University of Dubuque has a host of resources available to help students reach their educational and personal goals, but in order for this partnership to work, we need students to ask for help and seek us out when in need. There may be times when an MSPAS student seeks an investigation and possible resolution to a grievance. For the sexual harassment policy, please see [University of Dubuque Policies & Procedures](#).

### **Informal Grievance Procedure**

MSPAS students are encouraged to *informally* resolve a grievance as soon as possible through a meeting with the person(s) alleged to have caused the grievance. If the matter cannot be resolved, or if the individual cannot be reached, the student should meet with the Program Director. If the student's grievance is against a MSPAS committee, the student must meet with the committee chairperson and the Program Director to attempt an informal resolution. A mutually agreeable resolution to an informal complaint shall be formalized through a notation in the student's file/record that is initialed by the student and the professor or committee chairperson.

### **Formal Grievance Procedure**

The student may file a formal grievance to the Program Director. Students wishing to file a formal grievance should consult the [Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook](#) grievance policy (pg. 66).



## Section V: Student Activities, Organizations, and Services

### Student Committees

#### Challenge Bowl

The AAPA National Medical Challenge Bowl is an annual competition held each spring at the AAPA Conference. It tests PA students' knowledge through a series of challenging trivia questions and clinical cases. Monthly practice sessions, led by PA faculty advisors, are available both in person and virtually. These sessions offer a valuable opportunity to improve your speed in answering questions and to broaden your medical knowledge - skills that are helpful for didactic exams and clinical rotations. While all students are welcome to attend the practice sessions, only a team of three PA students and one alternate will be selected to represent the program at the AAPA Challenge Bowl.

#### Legislative Committee

Many of the professional freedoms PAs enjoy today (i.e. prescribing and practice autonomy) are the result of tireless legislative work, often behind the scenes. By joining the UDPA Legislative Committee, you'll gain a front-row seat to the policy issues impacting our profession—and play a part in shaping its future. You'll also have the chance to attend PA Legislative Day at the Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines, where you can meet lawmakers and learn about the legislative process firsthand. Committee meetings are held in alignment with the IPAS Legislative Committee, typically on a quarterly basis via Zoom. These are followed by in-person UDPA committee sessions to debrief, discuss, and plan campus-wide engagement. The committee is advised by PA faculty members.

#### POCUS (Point of Care Ultrasound)

The POCUS Group aims to promote the proper use of point-of-care ultrasound in clinical practice through education, advocacy, and collaboration among current PA students. This group provides a unique opportunity for students across different class years to work together and develop their ultrasound skills. Activities include regular review sessions primarily led by students, with support from faculty. To benefit from the group, members should plan to dedicate a few hours each month for hands-on practice and case review.

#### Wellness Committee

Rooted in the belief that caring for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of self and others is an expression of Christian stewardship, the UDPA Student Wellness Committee promotes holistic well-being within the PA program and broader campus community. The committee provides resources, plans activities, and advocates for a healthy learning environment across key wellness domains such as nutrition, physical activity, emotional health, stress management, spiritual wellness, and social connection. Meetings are held monthly and led by PA faculty advisors.

## **Class Officers**

The Class Officers for each class take on additional roles and responsibilities among the class group, between classes in the PA Program, and in interactions with the larger UD community. Class Officers help establish collegiality and professionalism between and among the members of the class, faculty and staff, Program, and University. Class Officers speak on behalf of the class to faculty and administration, representing the class's position/opinion. Two PA faculty members serve as advisors to the class officers.

The members of the class elect their Class Officers following mid-term of Term 1. Most officer roles continue through the duration of the program. Any student who wishes to hold an officer position must be in good academic standing and passing all coursework at the time of elections and for the duration of the program. In the event a class officer is unable to maintain their duties and responsibilities, the vacant seat will be filled in a manner deemed appropriate by the remaining officers and the Program Director. Officer descriptions are below. Students can be nominated by other students or faculty/staff or nominate themselves for a position. Voting will occur anonymously using a 3<sup>rd</sup>-party vendor (i.e. SurveyMonkey). Officers will be affirmed by the faculty to ensure students are in good standing.

### **Class President**

In fulfilling the following duties, the Class President is encouraged to collaborate with other class officers to establish and maintain collegiality and professionalism at all times:

1. To serve as a student representative on the Curriculum Committee. This committee is charged with evaluation and critique of the curriculum and supporting resources with suggestions and plans for improvement. It is expected that the class president will gather and relay student concerns and suggestions regarding current curriculum and resources to the committee for consideration, as well as relay information from curriculum meetings to the student body. It is expected the information is communicated in a professional and positive manner regardless of the student's personal opinion.
2. To serve as chief organizer of any class activities the class agrees to sponsor, eventually including reunions of alumni.
3. To serve as chief officer of the MSPAS class Executive Board and representative for incoming classes.
4. To serve as class representative when needed by UD for broader University functions.
5. To fairly, kindly, and professionally share ideas, interests, and/or concerns of all members of the class body, thereby creating an equitable community where all students feel represented.

### **Class Vice President**

The Class Vice President has the following duties:

1. Organize and coordinate events and class activities in collaboration with the President and other Executive Board members, while serving as lead organizer of UDPA program social events on campus (Orientation Week, PA Potlucks, holiday events).
2. Assist the President with primary organization of Annual PA Week events and/or other outreach events.

### **Class Treasurer**

The Class Treasurer has the following duties:

1. Manage and oversee class funds.
2. Investigate fundraising opportunities with adherence to UD-specific fundraising rules.
3. Act as lead organizer of fundraisers with support from other executive board members.
4. Investigate grant opportunities and draft initial grant proposals.

### **Class Secretary**

The Class Secretary has the following duties:

1. Record Executive Board meeting minutes.
2. Assist with social media advertising/production of flyers for public events under the direction of the MSPAS program.
3. Collect information from IPAS representatives and distribute to class.
4. Manage class calendar.
5. Be responsible for managing records of class volunteering hours/submit them to the program specialist.
6. Be responsible for managing event volunteer recruitment/sign-ups (i.e., STEM Festival, fundraising, PA Week event).

### **Diversity Chair**

The diversity chair has the following duties:

1. Represent the program as an AAPA representative, serving as diversity chair.
2. Approve all events, outreach, fundraisers, advertising, and information distributed by the SGA as being equitable and inclusive.
3. Attend SGA meetings to ensure inclusive discussions and fair, equitable decisions are produced.
4. Organize the program's project for the PAEA P.A.S.S. (PA Student Success) competition annually.
5. Monitor local events and opportunities for program involvement.

In October, the didactic Diversity Chair will transition into the role of the AAPA Diversity Chair (see below) following implementation of the subsequent cohort's diversity chair.

### **Iowa PA Society Representatives (1 member per cohort):**

Student representatives should be:

- Reading board emails as they come through.
- Participating in board meetings (4 per year) and discussions whether in-person, via email or phone.
- Ready to report on program updates.
- Able to offer ideas/insight for IPAS programming.

Student representatives shall:

- Provide social media support to the IPAS social media committee.
- Keep their programs informed of IPAS happenings (legislative day, scholarships, student workshops).
- Report on average volunteer hours for their class through May 1<sup>st</sup> for the volunteer contest.
- Provide updates to the board for newsletter purposes.
- Vote with fellow students (total of 2 votes for all representatives) on board matters.

Student representatives may:

- Participate in committees (other than the Awards Committee).
- Present at the Annual Business Meeting on their program.

### **Universal Student Government Committee Email Account**

To streamline communication, ensure continuity across cohorts, and enhance organization within student-led committees, a universal email account has been created for each MSPAS class and its associated committees. This shared account serves as the centralized communication and archival platform for all official student government and committee-related business.

#### **Purpose and Approved Uses:**

- The email will serve as the primary contact for communication within the PA student-led organizations, community organizations, and professional societies.
- The account will be used to manage access to shared digital resources, including the class calendar.
- Documents, event instructions, planning templates, and outreach communications should be saved and organized in the associated OneDrive account.
- All materials should be stored in clearly labeled folders for future class reference (e.g., "PA Week 2025," "Volunteer Hour Events," "Fundraising Proposals").

#### **Account Access and Transition:**

- The account will be accessible to current Class Officers and Committee Chairs only. Login credentials will be maintained and transitioned between cohorts under the supervision of the PA SGA advisors.
- Officers are responsible for ensuring a smooth handoff of all digital materials and email account access to the incoming class officers at the end of their term.
- No personal emails should be sent from the account.

#### **Email Monitoring and Outreach Expectations:**

- Officers should monitor the email at least weekly, with increased frequency during active event planning, fundraising periods, or community outreach campaigns.

- A designated officer (typically the Class Secretary) will be responsible for responding to incoming requests and ensuring timely communication.
- Important correspondence should be flagged and/or moved to labeled folders (e.g., “PA Week,” “Fundraising,” “IPAS Communication”). All correspondence should be filed into an appropriate folder after it has been addressed to keep the inbox free of clutter and avoid multiple responses to outreach.

#### **Professionalism and Maintenance:**

- All communication through the universal account must adhere to professional standards, reflecting the values and mission of the University of Dubuque PA Program.
- Email signatures should include the class year and officer titles.

#### **AAPA Representatives** *(Not Program Sponsored)*

**Student Academy Representative (SAR):** Responsible for distributing all Student Academy information to their program; monitors Student Academy social media and website for announcements, leadership opportunities, and available resources which would be of interest to fellow students; and serves as the contact for Student Academy leaders and committees. Attends the annual AOR Meeting at AAPA’s Conference to elect new board members of the Student Academy, to establish and amend policy of Student Academy, and to conduct business as necessary. For more information, please visit the AAPA [Student Academy Representative page](#).

**House of Delegates (HOD) Student Delegate:** This is a national leadership opportunity that is open to all AAPA student members. Elected student delegates bring the PA student perspective to the HOD, and they provide testimony and vote on HOD resolutions. For more information, please visit the [HOD student delegation page](#) (You will need your AAPA login information).

**Diversity Chair:** The Diversity Chair serves as the liaison between the Student Academy and the student society regarding diversity issues affecting their classmates as future colleagues and health care providers. The elected individual need not be a minority, but must have a strong interest in supporting and promoting the education of students on issues of diversity.

## **Professional Organizations**

MSPAS students will become student members of the following professional organizations:

- American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA). The Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Associates (SAAAPA) is the student chapter of AAPA. Membership in the SAAAPA can keep students abreast of important and current issues affecting PA education and practice.
- Iowa Physician Assistant Society (IPAS) is a state chapter of AAPA.

## **UD Student Services** (partial compliance of A1.04 and A3.11h)

To provide timely access and referral of students to services addressing personal issues which may impact the student's progression in the PA program, the University provides all students access to health services and counseling at the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center and learning resources at the Academic Success Center. A list of services and contact information can be found in [Appendix A](#). Additional campus resources and facility information can also be found on the UD website at <http://www.dbq.edu/CampusLife/InformationforStudents/> or in the [Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook](#).

## Section VI: Appendices

### *Appendix A — Student Services, Resources, and Campus Facilities*

#### **Campus Resources and Facilities**

Please visit the Campus Life webpage for a list of campus services and facilities with the most up to date information: <https://www.dbq.edu/CampusLife/>. Additional information can also be found in the [Graduate Student Catalog and Handbook](#).

#### **Advising, Academic and Career Counseling** (Partial compliance of A2.05e, A3.07)

Upon entrance to the MSPAS program, each MSPAS student is assigned a faculty advisor who primarily provides academic advising; however, they also are available to assist with any problem that even remotely affects academic progress. They may not have all the answers, but they will help find the right people who do have the answers. The student is responsible for ensuring they have the correct requirements for graduation. Academic advisors do not counsel students on medical, personal, or mental health issues; rather, they will provide timely access or referral of students to campus resources in the UD Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center or Academic Success Center for assistance.

Students are expected to meet with their assigned advisor regularly. Advising sessions will be documented and will include academic counseling of students, as well as general discussions related to student well-being, guidance, and attainment of professional behaviors. As advisors, faculty members are available anytime during the school year, not just during class registration periods. If an advisor is out-of-town or otherwise unavailable, please seek assistance from another faculty member within the PA program.

#### **Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center** (Partial compliance of A3.07)

Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center

1994 Grace St.

563.589.3360

[studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu](mailto:studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu)

Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center hours:

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Friday

#### **Counseling Services**

Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center provides helpful and effective programs, counseling, and crisis management services to students. Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center works collaboratively with students, academic and co-curricular departments, faculty and staff members, and other pertinent departments, as well as off-campus resources to enhance academic, personal, and career success.

Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center services are available to students at no extra fee. Students who receive services by off-campus providers and/or treatment services are financially responsible for those off-campus services.

Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center appointments are scheduled by calling the center at 563.589.3360 or by emailing [studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu](mailto:studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu). Walk-ins are welcome; however, counselors may or may not be able to see students immediately. Students will be scheduled as soon as possible. However, if a distressed student presents on their own or accompanied by a fellow student, faculty, or staff member, Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center will accommodate the distressed student in a timely manner, with the first available team member. Callers with brain health concerns who call outside of regular business hours will be referred to “Your Life Iowa” hotline at 1-855-581-8111, and the dispatcher at the hotline will assess if a staff member from Foundation 2 Crisis Team should be contacted.

Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center works collaboratively with the University’s Disability Services/Academic Success Center. The Disability Services department assists students with all disability services at the University by verifying, recommending accommodations, and providing information. Once any student contacts Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center regarding a need for accommodations, this takes precedence, and facilitation of an appointment is made as soon as a provider is available and/or an identified off-campus provider is available.

Services are available to students from all departments of the University. Programs, resources, and services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center Counseling Team
- Initial assessment and short-term personal and career counseling
- Life coaching
- Advocacy
- Spiritual counseling
- Informational session(s) on recreational risks and prevention among college students.

### Health Services

The Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center’s mission, as guided by the University’s *Mission* and in support of the Student Success Commitment, is to provide personalized, quality health care, and to collaborate with and empower students through education and promotion of services for optimal lifelong health and wellness.

During center hours, please see Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center for prompt medical evaluation and treatment. Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center provides care for acute illness, injuries, chronic medical conditions, medication management and sexual health. Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center will assist in prompt referral



to appropriate medical providers when needed. If a health condition is affecting academic performance, a prompt appointment with an appropriate health care provider is made. Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center can also assist with scheduling dental, vision, chiropractic, physical therapy, and specialty clinic appointments.

Outside of Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center hours, students can utilize Urgent Care:

Grand River Medical Group: Urgent Care  
3500 Dodge St. #135, Dubuque, Iowa  
563.557.3935 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

Medical Associates Acute Care/Urgent Care – East Campus  
1000 Langworthy, Dubuque, Iowa  
563.584.3455 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

It is imperative that students always have their insurance card and student ID with them for medical appointments and emergency room visits.

### **Transportation to Medical Facilities**

Students are encouraged to organize rides with friends if they cannot transport themselves. Taxi or Uber/Lyft services are available in Dubuque if students cannot find other modes of transportation. The University does not provide transportation to or from medical facilities.

### **Making a Medical Appointment**

To schedule a medical appointment for an illness or injury, please call Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center at 563.589.3360 or contact via email at [studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu](mailto:studenthealthcenter@dbq.edu).

If medical services are needed outside of the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center or Urgent Care hours, students should report to the Emergency Department. If it is an emergency, students should contact UD Office of Safety and Security at 563.589.3333 or call 911.

UnityPoint Health-Finley Hospital Emergency Department  
350 North Grandview Avenue, Dubuque, Iowa  
563.589.2658

MercyOne Dubuque  
250 Mercy Dr., Dubuque, IA  
563.589.8000

Following evaluation, should a student require absence from class or a follow-up appointment, the student must notify the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center. Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center can assist the student in notifying faculty and arranging follow-up appointments. If an extended absence or restriction is indicated, the Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center will refer the student to the Disability Services Office for prompt evaluation so appropriate accommodations can be made.

## **Academic Success Center and Disability Services Policy**

Please refer to the [Graduate Student Catalog and Handbook](#) for the Academic Success Center (ASC) services and resources, as well as the Disability Services policy and procedure.

University of Dubuque Policy on Reasonable Accommodation for Qualified Students with Disabilities can be viewed online here: <https://www.dbq.edu/Academics/AcademicSupportSuccess/AccessibilityServices/>.

## **Help Sessions**

Help Sessions are optional, 1-hour blocks of open time designed to support academic success through peer collaboration and guided review, which are offered during Term 1 for Anatomy and Physiology. These sessions offer students a flexible opportunity to ask questions, seek clarification, and reinforce their understanding of course content in a supportive environment.

Each session is facilitated by a second-year PA student who serves as a peer tutor through the ASC. These tutors are employed as work-study students and are trained through the ASC to provide effective academic support. They will have access to the course syllabus and are prepared to:

- Facilitate informal reviews of course material
- Answer questions and clarify difficult concepts
- Share study strategies and exam preparation tips
- Offer general academic advice and support

Help Sessions are not intended to replace course instruction but rather to complement it by creating space for student-led engagement and reinforcement of key content. All students are welcome to attend and participate. If additional support is needed, students may request private tutoring through the ASC.

## **Office of Student Financial Planning**

The Office of Student Financial Planning is located in the Charles and Romona Myers Center. Information regarding financial-aid services can be located at: <http://www.dbq.edu/admission/financialaid/>.

MSPAS students are encouraged to apply for other grants and scholarships offered by sources outside the University, such as the [PA Foundation](#), the [National Health Service Corps Program](#), [PAs in Orthopedic Surgery](#), and [IPAS](#).

Grants are also available for veterans at <http://www.dbq.edu/veterans/>.

### **Student Accounts/Check Cashing**

Charles and Romona Myers Center

Phone: 563.589.3212

Hours:

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from Monday through Thursday

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday

### **Identification Cards**

All students are required to carry a UD photo ID card. The dedicated PA classrooms/labs have key card entry-controlled access; therefore, only PA students and faculty have access to the classrooms in Linda Chlapaty Hall outside of business hours. ID cards are needed to cash checks, check out books at the library, enter the wellness center (CRWC), and receive free admission to the Stoltz Sports Center and home intercollegiate athletic events. Every student receives an ID card during orientation. If cards are lost or damaged, they can be replaced for a \$25.00 fee in the Office of Safety and Security. Students may make a cash deposit on their card and may do so in Office of Student Accounts located on third floor of the Charles and Romona Myers Center. This credit allows the student to make purchases in the Health Bar, the Barbara and Jack Smeltzer Dining Hall, the CyberCafé, the Babka Bookstores, and Sylvia's Common Ground. Any charges made against the credit balance are automatically deducted until the credit balance is depleted. For assistance, please call 563.589.3333.

### **Parking**

Please refer to the following webpage for current parking information:

<https://www.dbq.edu/AboutUD/CampusPolicies/VehiclesParking/>.

## *Appendix B — Courses and Course Descriptions*

### **Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies: Courses and Course Descriptions**

**PA 611 Anatomy** (6 Credits): Anatomy is a clinically-oriented course in which descriptive and surface anatomy are correlated with diagnostic imaging and physiology. The objective is to provide students with hands-on experience in the study of the structure and function of the human body. It will prepare the student for intensive study of the clinical presentation, pathophysiology, and recognition of various diseases and anomalies in the population. At the end of this course, the student will be able to correctly use anatomic terms and relationships in future explanations of disease etiology, pathophysiology and treatment. Prerequisites: none

Course objectives are:

1. Define anatomic terms and relationships that are acquired through lectures, diagnostic imaging, cadaver dissection and discussions, and use them appropriately in describing disease states relevant to the adult population.
2. Describe the structural manifestations of diseases by discriminating abnormal from normal anatomic findings in order to assess disease states and manage patients.
3. Combine anatomic pathology with previous learning in order to predict specific clinical manifestations as they affect the patient's well-being as a whole entity.
4. Show appropriate ethical behavior in handling human remains and maintaining the confidentiality of the deceased.

**PA 612 Physiology I** (4 Credits): Physiology I is an integrated primary core course, foundational to physician assistant instruction. It involves an intensive study of physiology relevant to the clinical presentation, pathophysiology, and recognition of various diseases & anomalies in the population. The course assumes and incorporates prior and current learning in the basic sciences, anatomy, ancillary diagnostics, and medical terminology. At the end of this course, the student will be able to correctly explain and predict functional processes involved in health, disease, and the adaptation of body systems to treatment. Prerequisites: none

Course objectives are:

1. Explain the workings of structures learned in anatomy in regard to their functional interrelationships and contributions to other organ systems and overall health.
2. Describe the etiology, pathogenesis, and functional manifestations of diseases that affect specific organ systems of the body in terms of deviations from normal function.
3. Demonstrate skill in laboratory test selection and interpretation to make judicious and cost-effective use of the clinical laboratory to solve clinical problems.
4. Combine physiology and pathophysiology with previous learning in order to predict specific clinical manifestations as they affect the patient's well-being as a whole entity.

**PA 613 Clinical Assessment I** (4 Credits): Clinical Assessment I is the first of two courses designed to instruct students in comprehensive history taking and physical exam assessments, along with proper documentation of these components in the medical record. Students are

introduced to the sequential process and skills involved in history taking and physical examination techniques, while integrating concepts of effective communication and basic knowledge of human anatomy and physiology. The course emphasizes the “normal” physical exam assessment, while also introducing students to assessment techniques for the most common abnormal physical exam findings in the areas of the eyes, ears, nose, throat, head and neck, the heart, lungs, abdomen, and nervous system. At the end of this course, the student will be able to perform a partial history and physical exam covering roughly half the organ systems. Prerequisites: none

Course objectives are:

1. Outline the components of a full and focused medical history as they would be documented in a medical record.
2. Classify each aspect of the OPQRSTA used in the history of present illness.
3. Summarize examples of appropriate/skilled patient interviewing techniques.
4. Discuss adaptive interview techniques that can be utilized to address challenging patient situations.
5. Outline the components of a comprehensive and focused physical examination as they would be documented in a medical record.
6. Explain the various exam techniques utilized to accurately assess each organ system included in the full physical examination.
7. Conduct a partial head-to-toe examination comprising selected organ systems.
8. Differentiate normal from abnormal physical examination findings.
9. Identify the variety of examination techniques utilized to evaluate abnormal physical exam findings.
10. Discuss patient-centered teams and the effect of an interdisciplinary team on patient care.

**PA 615 Role of the PA I** (1 Credit): Role of the PA is a 2-course sequence that provides students with foundational information on the PA role and profession. This information will be valuable throughout the program and prepare students to function in their new role as physician assistants (B1.03, B1.04). Part One of the course emphasizes professionalism, licensing and education requirements, and preparation for the care of diverse patient populations, particularly those whom access to care is an issue. Throughout both courses, students will be exposed to a variety of health care professions and gain first-hand knowledge in effective interprofessional collaboration for team-based care. Students will be expected to acquire a broad view of the health care system which will assist them in working with a wide range of patients across the life span. Prerequisites: none

Course objectives are:

1. Evaluate the role of the PA profession both past and present and its impact on the US health care system.
2. Describe the PA educational model, including accreditation guidelines & requirements.
3. Describe how inter-professional teams best work as an approach to patient care.
4. Describe the U.S. health care delivery system and its impact on health policy, access to care, health insurance, and health disparities.

5. Discuss patient safety and quality improvement measures utilized in the prevention of medical errors and the role of risk management.
6. Demonstrate one's understanding of the professional ethics of a PA in the practice of medicine.

**PA 616 Diagnostic Studies I** (2 Credits): Diagnostics I is the first in a 3-part course series spanning the didactic year designed to provide students with an overview of the necessary and relevant laboratory studies and diagnostic imaging studies needed for clinical practice as a Physician Assistant. It allows students to develop diagnostic skills required to provide proficient care throughout their future careers. This course is primarily lecture components coupled with group work using case studies to practice interpreting different diagnostic studies. Lectures provide the foundation necessary for students to interpret various diagnostic studies, and group work will allow practice identifying common pathology in diagnostic studies. At the end of this course, the student will be able to understand basic principles of X-ray, CT/MRI, and ultrasound, as well as identify common pathologic findings. They will be able to interpret and understand the clinical application of abnormal laboratory studies and ECG. Prerequisites: none

Course Objectives are:

1. Describe the characteristics of common laboratory tests, including their required specimens, costs, indications, methodology, and pitfalls.
2. Formulate and execute a laboratory diagnostic work up for a patient presenting for evaluation.
3. Evaluate laboratory results to determine appropriate next level investigation or treatment plans as indicated.
4. Understand basic principles of common radiologic studies.
5. Identify common abnormalities found on radiologic studies.

**PA 621 Medical Microbiology & Infectious Disease** (4 Credits): Medical Microbiology & Infectious Disease builds upon undergraduate microbiology to integrate knowledge of pathogens with clinical syndromes, their presentation, course, and outcomes. It includes the study of epidemiology, modes of transmission, and preventive measures related to infectious disease. By the end of this course, students will be able to identify organisms involved in clinical syndromes, their behavior, and the concepts involved in diagnosis and treatment in the human host. Prerequisites: All semester 1 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Describe the basic aspects of immunity, antigen processing, and autoimmunity.
2. Given a clinical scenario and/or the results of laboratory and imaging studies, identify common infectious diseases and the appropriate medical management of such infections.
3. Apply knowledge about symptoms, lab values, risk factors, modes of transmission, and epidemiology to rank the likelihood of specific microbes within a differential diagnosis of infectious diseases.
4. Given a particular microbe, identify the symptoms, lab values, clinical course, and most likely response to treatment, including sensitivity to antibiotics and antivirals.

5. Differentiate between non-threatening and life-threatening infectious disease syndromes, including possible bioterrorism events.
6. Apply the principles of infection control to choose appropriate measures that prevent and reduce nosocomial infections.

**PA 622 Physiology II** (4 Credits): Physiology II is the continuation of PA 612 Physiology I, involving an intensive study of physiology relevant to the clinical presentation, pathophysiology, and recognition of various diseases and anomalies in the population. Physiology II concentrates on the renal, gastrointestinal, and endocrine systems. At the end of this course, the student will be able to correctly explain and predict functional processes involved in health, disease, and the adaptation of body systems to treatment. Prerequisites: All Semester 1 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Explain the workings of structures learned in anatomy in regards to their functional interrelationships and contributions to other organ systems and overall health.
2. Describe the etiology, pathogenesis, and functional manifestations of diseases that affect specific organ systems of the body in terms of deviations from normal function.
3. Demonstrate skill in laboratory test selection and interpretation to make judicious and cost-effective use of the clinical laboratory to solve clinical problems.
4. Combine physiology and pathophysiology with previous learning in order to predict specific clinical manifestations as they affect the patient's well-being as a whole entity.
5. Describe how specific physiologic problems, possible treatments and the patient's chosen level of participation in their care can determine treatment outcome when practicing patient-centered care.

**PA 623 Pharmacology in Disease Pathology I** (2 Credits): Pharmacology in Disease Pathology I for PA students is presented in the Spring semester of the first year didactic learning segment in conjunction with PA 624 Clinical Medicine I. These lectures are integrated with the appropriate organ or disease systems in which an appreciation of the pathophysiology is helpful for understanding the basis of use of a class of drugs in a particular disease. Examples are anticholinergic drugs in the Autonomic Nervous System section, antifungal agents in the Antimicrobial section, etc. By the end of this course, students will demonstrate competency in choosing drugs and modifying their delivery for common organ and system pathologies covered simultaneously in PA 624 Clinical Medicine I. Prerequisites: All semester 1 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Apply pharmacodynamic and pharmacokinetic principles that describe drug actions in humans.
2. Compare and contrast the specific pharmacology of the major classes of drugs against each other. Identify important distinctions among members of each drug class in relation to the organ systems they affect and the diseases for which they are used therapeutically.

3. Compare and contrast the risks and benefits of pharmacologic therapy for major classes of drugs.
4. Describe the role of molecular, genetic and pharmacogenomic principles in pharmacotherapeutics and drug development.
5. Given patient-specific characteristics, apply evidence-based medical literature to appropriate drug selection.

**PA 624 Clinical Medicine I** (4 Credits): Clinical Medicine I for PA students is the first of a three-course sequence reviewing the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, diagnosis, and management of the most common diseases in humans. This first course in the series concentrates on dermatology, otolaryngology, ophthalmology, hematology, oncology endocrinology, gynecology, and obstetrics. At the end of this course, students will be able to describe common illnesses and their treatments in these fields of medicine prior to actual clinical experience. Prerequisites: All semester 1 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Describe the most common diseases of each system discussed in terms of the following seven dimensions: epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, diagnostic studies, differential diagnosis, therapeutics, management, and prognosis.
2. Synthesize data from the epidemiology, patient history, physical history, physical examination, and diagnostic studies in order to make an appropriate list of diagnostic possibilities.
3. Evaluate the diagnostic possibilities of a given patient case and prioritize the appropriate steps in management.

**PA 625 Clinical Assessment II** (3 Credits): Clinical Assessment II is a continuation of PA 613 Clinical Assessment I, designed to instruct students in comprehensive history taking and physical exam assessments, along with proper documentation of these components in the medical record. The course emphasizes the “normal” physical exam assessment, while also introducing students to assessment techniques for the most common abnormal physical exam findings in the areas of the musculoskeletal and reproductive systems, women’s health, geriatrics, and pediatrics. At the end of this course, the student will be able to perform a complete history and physical exam covering all organ systems. Prerequisites: All semester 1 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Outline the components of a full and focused medical history as they would be documented in a medical record.
2. Classify each aspect of “OPQRST” mnemonic used in the history of present illness.
3. Summarize examples of appropriate/skilled patient interviewing techniques.
4. Discuss adaptive interview techniques that can be utilized to address challenging patient situations.
5. Outline the components of a comprehensive and focused physical examination as they would be documented in a medical record.
6. Explain the various exam techniques utilized to accurately assess each organ system included in the full physical examination.



7. Conduct a full head to toe examination.
8. Differentiate normal from abnormal physical examination findings.
9. Identify the variety of examination techniques to evaluate abnormal physical exam findings.
10. Discuss patient-centered teams and the effect of an interdisciplinary team on patient care.

**PA 626 Clinical Skills I (4 Credits):** Clinical Skills I is the first in a two-course series designed to provide students with an overview of the necessary skills and procedures needed for clinical practice as a Physician Assistant. It allows students to develop the diagnostic and therapeutic skills required to provide proficient care throughout their future careers. This course includes both lecture and laboratory components. Lectures provide the foundation necessary for students to interpret various diagnostic studies, safely perform clinical procedures, and further enhance communication and physical examination skills. At the end of this course, the student will be able to provide life support, perform minor invasive procedures using sterile technique, write a procedure note, and inform and obtain consent from patients. Prerequisites: All prior PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Demonstrate the initial steps of resuscitation with Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) & Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) techniques. (PLO 1, ARC standards B2.07e, B2.09)
2. Demonstrate common clinical procedures. (PLO 1, ARC standards B2.09)
3. Associate various clinical procedures with their indications, possible complications, and relevant patient education. (PLO 1, PLO 3, PLO 5, PLO 6, ARC standards B2.07e, B2.07f, B2.12a, B2.16a)
4. Demonstrate the ability to write a procedure note that includes indications and post-procedural patient education while applying the necessary and proper documentation required of an acceptable medical record. (PLO 3, PLO 5, ARC standards B2.04, B2.07f, B2.12a, B2.14b)

**PA 627 Integration into Clinical Concepts I (4 Credits):** Integration into Clinical Concepts I is the first of a three-course sequence devoted to providing students the opportunity to translate knowledge gained in concurrent didactic curriculum courses to clinical problems and to clinical decision making. At the end of this course, students will be able to perform, present, and summarize an accurate patient assessment in terms of distinguishing symptoms and signs. Prerequisites: All semester 1 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Perform a complete and accurate patient history including past medical history, family history, and social history.
2. Select and describe appropriate physical examination components based on a presenting history and knowledge of underlying anatomy.
3. Synthesize and orally present a coherent description of the patient's clinical condition based upon the information obtained.
4. Create clear and accurate documentation of a full H&P and of an appropriately focused H&P.

**PA 628 Diagnostics II (2 Credits):** Diagnostics II is the second in a 3-part course series spanning the didactic year designed to provide students with an overview of the necessary and relevant laboratory studies and diagnostic imaging studies needed for clinical practice as a Physician Assistant. It allows students to develop diagnostic skills required to provide proficient care throughout their future careers. This course is primarily lecture components coupled with group work using case studies to practice interpreting different diagnostic studies. Diagnostics II also will utilize lab time for hands on components. Lectures provide the foundation necessary for students to interpret various diagnostic studies, and group work will allow practice identifying common pathology in diagnostic studies. At the end of this course series, the student will be able to understand basic principles of X-ray, CT/MRI, and ultrasound, as well as identify common pathologic findings. They will be able to interpret and understand the clinical application of abnormal laboratory studies and ECG. Prerequisites: All prior PA courses

Course objectives are:

1. Describe the characteristics of common laboratory tests, including their required specimens, costs, indications, methodology, and pitfalls.
2. Formulate and execute a laboratory diagnostic work up for a patient presenting for evaluation.
3. Evaluate laboratory results to determine appropriate next level investigation or treatment plans as indicated.
4. Apply basic principles of common radiologic studies.
5. Identify common abnormalities found on radiologic studies.

**PA 631 Pharmacology in Disease Pathology II (2 Credits):** Pharmacology in Disease Pathology II for PA students is a co-requisite in the Summer Semester with PA 632 Clinical Medicine II. These lectures are integrated with the appropriate organ or disease system in which an appreciation of the pathophysiology is helpful for understanding the basis of use of a class of drugs in a particular disease. At the end of this course, students will demonstrate competency in choosing drugs and modifying their delivery for common organ and system pathologies covered simultaneously in Clinical Medicine II. Prerequisites: All semester 2 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Apply pharmacodynamic and pharmacokinetic principles that describe drug actions in humans.
2. Compare and contrast the specific pharmacology of the major classes of drugs. Identify important distinctions among members of each drug class in relation to the organ systems they affect and the diseases for which they are used therapeutically.
3. Compare and contrast the risks and benefits of pharmacologic therapy for major classes of drugs.
4. Describe the role of molecular, genetic and pharmacogenomic principles in pharmacotherapeutics and drug development.
5. Given patient-specific characteristics, apply evidence-based medical literature to appropriate drug selection.

**PA 632 Clinical Medicine II (4 Credits):** Clinical Medicine II for PA students is the second of a

three-course sequence reviewing the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, diagnosis and management of the most common diseases in humans. This second course in the series concentrates on cardiovascular, respiratory and neurologic diseases. At the end of this course, students will be able to describe common illnesses and their treatments encountered in cardiology, pulmonology, , and neurology prior to actual clinical experience. Prerequisites: All Semester 2 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Describe the most common diseases of each system discussed in terms of the following seven dimensions: epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, diagnostic studies, differential diagnosis, therapeutics, management and prognosis.
2. Synthesize data from the epidemiology, patient history, physical examination and diagnostic studies in order to make an appropriate list of diagnostic possibilities.
3. Evaluate the diagnostic possibilities of a given patient case and prioritize the appropriate steps in management.
4. Explain patient-centered teams and the effect of successful inter-professional collaboration.

**PA 633 Integration into Clinical Concepts II (3 Credits):** Integration into Clinical Concepts II is the second of a three-course sequence devoted to providing students the opportunity to translate knowledge gained in concurrent didactic curriculum courses to clinical problems and to clinical decision making. At the end of this course, students will be able to perform, present, and summarize an accurate patient assessment, arrive at a differential diagnosis, and plan further investigation. Prerequisites: All semester 2 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Articulate the underlying anatomical, physiological, pathophysiological, microbiological and/or infectious disease concepts related to select clinical cases.
2. Select and describe appropriate physical examination components based on a presenting history and knowledge of underlying anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology.
3. Propose and justify appropriate additional studies and tests, where appropriate, to facilitate formulation of an appropriate differential diagnosis for select clinical cases.
4. Synthesize historical and physical examination data to formulate an accurate assessment and appropriate differential diagnosis for select case-based scenarios.
5. Orally present a coherent description of the patient's clinical condition based upon the clinical information obtained.
6. Create clear and accurate documentation of an appropriately focused H&P, assessment, and plan.

**PA 634 Behavioral Health (3 Credits):** Human Behavior for PA students is a foundational course prior to a clinical rotation in psychiatry and involves study of normal and abnormal behavior and strategies to prevent, treat, and rehabilitate patients with mental disorders. At the end of this course, students will be able to describe common behavioral conditions and their therapy encountered in primary care, as well as psychiatry, prior to actual clinical experience. Prerequisites: All semester 2 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Discuss the impact of social determinants of health on the development of mental health conditions and their treatment and explain the ways in which age, culture, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, aging, stress, injury, illness, death, dying, and loss affect health-centered encounters.
2. Define, assess, and properly record aspects of a psychiatric history and physical, which provide information relating to possible mental health conditions in children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly in a variety of settings, including emergent, acute, and chronic encounters.
3. Create a differential diagnosis using DSM-5 diagnostic criteria, and select the most likely diagnosis of a given patient behavior to prioritize the appropriate steps to management, including diagnoses that reflect both normal and abnormal development across the lifespan.
4. Describe ethical approaches toward helping and treating culturally diverse patients appropriate to their lifestyles and needs, as well as educating and counseling patients and families in a person-centered and culturally sensitive manner that improves their engagement with and adherence to treatment plans and improves their success in modifying behaviors toward more healthful patterns.
5. Discuss the various mental health provider types and their roles in meeting the needs of patients with a variety of mental health concerns, including how PAs engage with other professionals in teams, as well as when and how to appropriately refer patients to other professionals.
6. Appropriately document gathered information to improve patient safety and prevent medical errors.
7. Discuss the evaluation, diagnosis, treatment, and referral options for individuals experiencing substance use disorders and other disorders that may require acute hospitalization or longer-term treatment options.
8. Discuss ways in which individuals experiencing mental health conditions are vulnerable to being victims of violence or may be otherwise involved in acts of violence. Describe practices for identifying and the prevention of violence.
9. Evaluate patient cases for the appropriate prescription of medications for the treatment of mental health conditions based on symptoms, diagnoses, and patient-specific factors that enhance patient wellbeing and recovery while focusing on patient safety, improving quality, and preventing medical errors.

**PA 635 Diagnostics III (2 Credits):** Diagnostics III is the final course in a 3-part course series spanning the didactic year designed to provide students with an overview of the necessary and relevant laboratory studies and diagnostic imaging studies needed for clinical practice as a Physician Assistant. It allows students to develop diagnostic skills required to provide proficient care throughout their future careers. This course is primarily lecture components coupled with group work using case studies to practice interpreting different diagnostic studies. Lectures provide the foundation necessary for students to interpret various diagnostic studies and group work will allow practice identifying common pathology in diagnostic studies. At the end of this course, the student will be able to understand basic principles of X-ray,

CT/MRI, ultrasound as well as identify common pathologic findings. They will be able to interpret and understand the clinical application of abnormal laboratory studies and ECG.

Prerequisites: All Term I and Term II courses

Course objectives are:

1. Describe the characteristics of common laboratory tests, including their required specimens, costs, indications, methodology, and pitfalls. (PLO 1, ARC B2.07d)
2. Formulate and execute a laboratory diagnostic work up for a patient presenting for evaluation. (PLO 1, ARC B2.05, B2.07c, B2.07d, B2.07e)
3. Evaluate laboratory results to determine appropriate next level investigation or treatment plans as indicated. (PLO 1, ARC B2.05, B2.07c, B2.07d)
4. Interpret normal and abnormal findings on electrocardiograms. (PLO 1, ARC B2.07d)
5. Apply basic principles, identify common abnormalities, and describe indications for higher level imaging. (PLO-1, ARC B2.07d)
6. Describe indications and interpret results of pulmonary function test and cardiac stress testing. (PLO-1, ARC B2.07d)

**PA 640 Role of the PA II** (1 Credit): Role of the PA is part of a 2-course series that provides students with foundational information on the PA role and profession as students prepare for transition into the clinical phase. This will be valuable throughout the program and prepare students to function in their new role as physician assistants (B1.03, B1.04). In addition to further development of professional behavior and opportunities to understand the health care system and the various roles PAs play, Part Two of the course will focus on the transition from classroom to clinical practice with instruction on licensing, credentialing, documentation, coding, and reimbursement. Students will be exposed to a variety of health care professions and gain first-hand knowledge in effective interprofessional collaboration for team-based care, which will assist them in working with a wide range of patients across the life span. Prerequisites: All semester 3 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Develop a preceptor and employment portfolio demonstrating your strengths and experiences through a curriculum vitae and accurate Typhon documentation, patient logging and reporting. (PLO 5; B2.14b)
2. Describe the epidemiology of opioid use disorder (OUD) and its impact on the development of FDA-approved pharmacotherapeutics for medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and recovery services for OUD. (PLO 1,3,4,5,6; B2.02d, B2.11f, B2.12a,b)
3. Explain how interprofessional teams best work as an approach to patient care and the importance of effective communication for collaboration with other health care professionals in providing referrals, rehabilitative and palliative services, and care to individuals with disabilities. (PLO 4; B2.04, B2.10a, B2.10b, B2.17e, B2.07f, B2.08b, e, B2.06a)
4. Explain the PA's role in the public health system as it relates to disease prevention and intervention, patient advocacy, and maintenance of population health. (PLO 2-6; B2.15a,b,c,d)

5. Apply basic EM coding recognizing the importance of proper documentation of patient care in the EMR for billing and reimbursement. (PLO 5; B2.14a, b)
6. Discuss the importance of provider personal wellness and its impact on the prevention of provider impairment and burnout. (PLO 5,6; B2.20a,b)

**PA 641 Clinical Medicine III (4 Credits):** Clinical Medicine III for PA students is the third of a three-course sequence reviewing the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, diagnosis and management of the most common diseases in humans. This third course in the series concentrates on gastrointestinal systems, geriatrics, orthopedic and rheumatologic disease, pediatric diseases, emergency medicine, and nephrology and genitourinary disease. At the end of this course, students will be able to describe common illnesses and their treatments prior to actual clinical experience. Prerequisites: All semester 3 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Describe the most common diseases of each system discussed in terms of the following seven dimensions: epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, diagnostic studies, differential diagnosis, therapeutics, management, and prognosis.
2. Synthesize data from the epidemiology, patient history, physical examination and diagnostic studies in order to make an appropriate list of diagnostic possibilities.
3. Evaluate the diagnostic possibilities of a given patient case and prioritize the appropriate steps in management.

**PA 643 Clinical Skills II (3 Credits):** Clinical Skills II is the second in a two-course series designed to provide students with an overview of skills and procedures needed for clinical practice as a PA. It allows students to develop the diagnostic and therapeutic skills required to provide proficient care throughout their future careers. This course includes both lecture and laboratory components. Lectures provide the foundation necessary for students to safely perform clinical procedures and further enhance communication and physical examination skills. At the end of this course, students will perform minor invasive procedures using sterile technique, inform and obtain consent from patients, and understand the basics of pre-, intra-, post-operative care and inpatient orders. Prerequisites: All third semester PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Perform common clinical procedures in addition to those learned in PA 626 Clinical Skills I.
2. Associate various clinical procedures with their indications, possible complications, and relevant patient education.
3. Describe appropriate pre-, intra-, and post-operative care including clearance, monitoring, documentation, and inpatient orders

**PA 644 Evidence Based Medicine (2 Credits):** Evidence Based Medicine explores advanced application of research, statistical, and evidence-based medicine concepts with emphasis on studies assessing therapeutic interventions. The goal of the course is to equip students to examine clinical issues in health care and develop skills to apply information from research to inform clinical-decision making. At the end of the course, students will be able to use medical literature to advance their clinical practice. Prerequisites: All PA semester 3 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Define Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) and identify the key steps in the practice of EBM.
2. Formulate answerable clinical questions (PICO questions) representative of clinical problems encountered in medical practice.
3. Design and effectively conduct search strategies to obtain the best available evidence to address clinical questions.
4. Apply knowledge of study design and statistical methods to critically appraise scientific biomedical literature.
5. Evaluate the clinical relevance and applicability of scientific evidence.
6. Identify strategies for the integration of best available evidence in the treatment of patients.
7. Further advance critical and analytical thinking skills.

**PA 645 Integration into Clinical Concepts III (4 Credits):** Integration into Clinical Concepts III is the third of a three-course sequence devoted to providing students the opportunity to translate knowledge gained in concurrent didactic curriculum courses to clinical problems and to clinical-decision making. At the end of this course, students will be able to assess patients, narrow a differential diagnosis by further investigation, and create plans for patient management. Prerequisites: All semester 3 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Articulate the underlying anatomical, physiological, pathophysiological, microbiological and/or infectious disease concepts related to select clinical cases.
2. Propose and justify appropriate additional studies and tests to facilitate formulation of a reasonable differential diagnosis for select clinical cases.
3. Synthesize historical and physical examination data to formulate an accurate assessment and appropriate differential diagnosis for select case-based scenarios.
4. Develop an appropriate plan of care including pharmacological management and patient education for select clinical cases.
5. Orally present a coherent description of the patient's clinical condition, physical exam findings, results of further evaluations, assessment, and plan of care based upon the information obtained.
6. Create clear and accurate documentation of an appropriately focused patient history, physical examination, assessment, and plan, and where appropriate, hospital admission orders and/or medication prescriptions.

**PA 646 Pharmacology in Disease Pathology III (2 Credits):** Pharmacology in Disease Pathology III for PA students is a co-requisite in the Fall Semester with PA 642 Clinical Medicine III. These lectures are integrated with the appropriate organ or disease system in which an appreciation of the pathophysiology is helpful for understanding the basis of use of a class of drugs in a particular disease. At the end of this course, students will demonstrate competency in choosing drugs and modifying their delivery for common organ and system pathologies covered simultaneously in Clinical Medicine III. Prerequisites: All semester 3 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Apply pharmacodynamic and pharmacokinetic principles that describe drug actions in

- humans.
2. Compare and contrast the specific pharmacology of the major classes of drugs. Identify important distinctions among members of each drug class in relation to the organ systems they affect and the diseases for which they are used therapeutically.
  3. Compare and contrast the risks and benefits of pharmacologic therapy for major classes of drugs.
  4. Describe the role of molecular, genetic, and pharmacogenomic principles in pharmacotherapeutics and drug development.
  5. Given patient-specific characteristics, apply evidence-based medical literature to appropriate drug selection.

**PA 649 Didactic Comprehensive Exam (1 Credit):** Didactic Comprehensive Exam completes the study of material taught during the previous 15 months, comprised of 4 terms of didactic courses. The goal is for students to review all didactic content prior to entering their final Didactic Phase examinations. At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate the appropriate level of knowledge of both basic-science and clinical-medical content as measured by the Didactic Summative Written Exam, as well as proficiency in assessment and interventional skills measured by a set of Didactic Summative OSCEs, such that the student is determined to be ready to enter the Clinical Phase of the UD MSPAS Program. Prerequisites: All term 4 PA courses.

Course objectives are:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of both basic science and clinical medical content.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in assessment and interventional skills.

PA 650 through PA 660 courses are found in the clinical phase of the MSPAS program, and are each four-week supervised clinical practice experiences. Please reference each course syllabi for specific learning outcomes.

**PA 650 Emergency Medicine Clinical Rotation (4 credits):** This four week supervised clinical practice experience provides an in-depth exposure to the illnesses and injuries prevalent in emergency care. These educational experiences are intended to emphasize interview and examination skills and the performance of techniques and procedures essential to the proper management of emergent illnesses and injuries. At the end of this course, the student will be able to perform appropriate evaluation and treatment of common conditions seen in emergency medicine. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic program.

**PA 651 Family Medicine Clinical Rotation (4 credits):** This four-week supervised clinical practice experience introduces the student to the family medicine setting where emphasis is placed on common diseases treated by the primary care practitioner in conjunction with other members of the health care team. At the end of this course, the student will be able to obtain detailed histories, perform complete and problem-focused physical exams, diagnose, treat, and develop a management plan for common diseases seen in family medicine. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic program.



**PA 652 Internal Medicine Clinical Rotation (4 credits):** This four week clinical course focuses on the practice of internal medicine. During this rotation the physician assistant student is exposed to the common medical problems encountered during in-patient/out-patient medical care. Emphasis is placed on the history and physical examination and the process required for appropriate evaluation and management of patients. At the end of this course, the student will be able to manage common diseases encountered in the field of internal medicine. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic phase.

**PA 653 Medical Specialties Clinical Rotation (4 credits):** In this clinical course, students will rotate with a medical or surgical specialty or subspecialty of choice. This rotation adds depth and breadth to the patient experiences typically encountered in core rotations. During this rotation the physician assistant student is exposed to the common medical problems encountered during in-patient or out-patient medical or surgical specialty care. Emphasis is placed on the history and physical examination and the process required for appropriate evaluation and management of patients. At the end of this course, the student will be able to manage common diseases encountered in the chosen medical or surgical specialty or subspecialty. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic phase.

**PA 654 Women's Health Clinical Rotation (4 credits):** During this four week clinical rotation the student will participate in the care of gynecological and obstetrical patients. Students participate in providing basic health care for the female patient and are introduced to common gynecologic and obstetric conditions. At the end of this course, the student will be able to manage common concerns encountered in women's health. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic program.

**PA 655 Pediatrics Clinical Rotation (4 credits):** This four week clinical course in the pediatric care setting introduces students to childhood illnesses and variations in growth and development. Students perform histories and physical examinations pertinent to the disease and developmental stage and provide education to the patient and caregiver(s). At the end of this course, the student will be able to monitor growth and development and manage common diseases encountered in the field of pediatrics. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic program.

**PA 656 Psychiatry/Behavioral Health Clinical Rotation (4 credits):** This four week clinical course in a psychiatry or psychology setting allows students to gain knowledge and experience evaluating and treating patients with the use of therapy and/or psychotropic medications. At the end of this course, the student will be able to manage common psychiatric disorders and appropriately refer patients to specialists in the field of psychiatry/behavioral health. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic phase.

**PA 657 Surgery Clinical Rotation** (4 credits): This four week clinical course introduces the student to a variety of clinical problems routinely seen with surgical patients. Emphasis is placed on preoperative, intraoperative and postoperative management of the patient. In the operating room the student will practice aseptic technique and operating room principles. At the end of this course, the student will be able to manage minor surgical problems, assist in surgery and properly prepare and refer patients for surgery. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic phase.

**PA 658 Rural Medicine Clinical Rotation** (4 credits): This four week supervised clinical practice experience introduces the student to practicing medicine in a rural setting where access to large healthcare facilities is limited by distance. At the end of this course, the student will be able to take detailed histories, perform complete and problem-focused exams, diagnose, treat, and generally manage common diseases seen by rural practitioners. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic program.

**PA 659 Elective I Clinical Rotation** (4 credits): This clinical course provides additional clinical exposure and knowledge in an area of primary care or specialty medicine such as radiology, orthopedics, dermatology, etc. At the end of this course, the student will be able to perform a subset of skills typical of the field. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic phase.

**PA 660 Elective II Clinical Rotation** (4 credits): This clinical course provides additional clinical exposure and knowledge in an area of primary care or specialty medicine such as radiology, orthopedics, dermatology, etc. At the end of this course, the student will be able to perform a subset of skills typical of the field. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque, 15-month PA didactic phase.

**PA 662 Professional Competency Course** (2 Credit): The Professional Competency Course concentrates on the essential skills and procedures necessary for a PA student to demonstrate competency in prior to graduation. The Review Course consists of knowledge areas and skills listed in the NCCPA Content Blueprint that have been identified as important to physician assistant practice through an intensive practice analysis. Formative assessment occurs throughout the clinical phase and culminates with summative assessment of student knowledge and skills in the form of program summative examinations and OSCEs. At the end of this course, students will be able demonstrate achievement of Program Learning Outcomes. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque 15-month PA didactic phase.

Course objectives are:

1. Identify areas of deficiency through formative and summative evaluation to develop a self-directed study plan.
2. Demonstrate the clinical and technical skills to perform fundamental procedures and interpret diagnostic studies.
3. Apply clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities to evaluate and treat patients

across the lifespan.

4. Demonstrate the interpersonal skills necessary to show empathy with patients and develop rapport with professionals.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the major task and disease content areas in the NCCPA blueprint.
6. Demonstrate the professional behaviors expected of a PA student through self-reflection and mock-patient interactions.
7. Document the required patient exposures for preventive, emergent, acute, and chronic encounters, lifespan, women's health, and behavioral/mental health encounters, and practice setting, including outpatient, inpatient, emergency, and surgical management.

**PA 663 Capstone Project** (2 Credits): The Capstone Project is designed to enable PA students to investigate an approved case-related medical question, analyze and interpret clinical research, author a scholarly paper in clinical medicine, conduct a blinded peer review and disseminate research findings through a poster presentation at the end of the year Capstone Symposium, all of which enhance the professional development of the student. At the end of the course, the student will be able to demonstrate analytic rigor appropriate to clinical master's-level work culminating in the advancement of an evidence based clinician. Prerequisites: Completion of didactic phase. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the University of Dubuque 15-month PA didactic phase.

Course objectives are:

1. Demonstrate expertise in the assessment of literature at the forefront of medicine through the investigation of a case-based medical query.
2. Demonstrate achievement of the knowledge, skills, and behaviors characteristic of an evidence-based healthcare professional.
3. Translate evidence into practice and disseminate findings through a novel paper and oral presentation while adhering to the values of intellectual honesty and appropriate academic and professional conduct.

## **Section VII: Forms**



*This form must be completed prior to enrollment into the PA program AND then annually.*  
Health Care Provider - please return the completed form to the UD student.

## ***Form A – Statement of Health***

### **STATEMENT OF HEALTH**

To be completed by a health care provider (*Physician, PA or Advanced Practice Nurse*):

I have examined: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

DOB \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_, and find this individual to be free of communicable disease and, in concordance with the terms below, can perform the essential functions of a PA as outlined in the *Technical Standards* on page 2.

- ☐ No restrictions
- ☐ No restrictions but the following accommodations may be needed: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ This individual has a medical condition that could interfere with program requirements (medication, appointments)
- ☐ This individual has the following restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Physical Exam Components:*

• Height, weight, vitals	• Cardiac	• Neurological	• Skin/Integument
• HEENT	• Gastrointestinal	• Musculoskeletal	• Brain Health
• Respiratory	• Immunological		

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT:** Pre-matriculation: upload your completed Statement of Health to the UDPA Health Records DropBox (or copy/paste this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/UiS5TTRm-BxB3lxwUirez>). Current students: Upload completed form to Typhon annually.

## Required Technical Standards

MSPAS students must be fully able to perform the essential functions in each of the following categories:

### Observation:

1. Observe demonstrations and visual presentations in lectures and laboratories.
2. Observe patients accurately and completely both at a distance and closely.
3. This standard requires functional vision, hearing, and somatic sensation.

### Communication:

1. Perceive verbal and nonverbal communication, speak intelligibly, and observe patients in order to elicit information.
2. Elicit and transmit patient information in oral and written English to members of the healthcare team.
3. Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients.
4. Possess demonstrated reading skills at a level sufficient to accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients.
5. Be capable of completing appropriate medical records and documents in the written and electronic form in a thorough and timely manner.

### Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function:

1. Possess motor skills sufficient to directly perform palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other basic diagnostic procedures.
2. Be able to execute motor movements required to provide basic medical care. Examples of basic medical care include but are not limited to: airway management, placement of catheters, suturing, phlebotomy, application of sufficient pressure to control bleeding, simple obstetrical maneuvers, etc. (Such actions require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision).
3. Be able to manipulate equipment and instruments to perform basic laboratory tests and procedures.
4. Be able to transport themselves from one location to another in a timely fashion in order to facilitate patient care responsibilities and necessary to receive educational training.

*Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:* Problem solving is a critical skill demanded of PAs. This requires that students have the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize.

1. Be able to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and the medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans.
2. Be able to independently access and interpret medical histories or files.
3. Identify significant findings from history, physical examination, and laboratory data.
4. Provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses and prescribed medications and therapy.
5. Recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner.

### Behavioral and Social Attributes:

1. Possess the ability to use their intellectual capacity, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis under potentially stressful and/or emergency circumstances.
2. Be able to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior.
3. Be able to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and colleagues.
4. Have a high level of compassion for others with sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems.
5. Be able to adapt to changing environments and to learn in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine.
6. Be able to use supervision appropriately and act independently, when indicated.



***Form B – Exposure Incident Report Form***  
(To be completed by the student and faculty member or preceptor)

(E-form: <https://www.dbq.edu/media/Academics/PhysicianAssistantStudies/Exposure-Incident-Report-2023.pdf>)

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the incident:

Was the student referred for medical services: \_\_\_\_\_

If NOT REFERRED, please provide rationale:

Faculty/Preceptor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Program Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Form C – Evaluation of Student Exposure Report Form***

*(to be completed by medical provider evaluating exposure)*

(E-form: <https://www.dbq.edu/media/Academics/PhysicianAssistantStudies/Post-Exposure-Evaluation-2023.pdf>)

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

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the incident:

*Please circle Yes or No for the following questions:*

Student notified of source lab results?	Yes	No
Student counseled on risks of exposure?	Yes	No
Student offered blood testing for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV?	Yes	No
Student declined lab testing?	Yes	No
Student notified of personal lab results?	Yes	No
Further follow-up indicated?	Yes	No
Student notified about need for further follow-up?	Yes	No

SIGNATURE OF MEDICAL PROVIDER: \_\_\_\_\_

Return completed form to:  
Email: [paclinicaledu@dbq.edu](mailto:paclinicaledu@dbq.edu) or  
Fax: (563)589-3650  
For questions, please call: (563)589-3662)





## ***Form D - Student Injury Report Form***

(This form is ***not*** applicable for needle stick or body fluids exposures.)

(E-form: <https://www.dbq.edu/media/Academics/PhysicianAssistantStudies/Injury-Report-2023.pdf>)

In the event of an accident/injury occurring on campus or at a clinical rotation site, the following form needs to be completed and submitted to the MSPAS Program (fax: 563-589-3650) within 24 hours of the incident. Please notify the Program Director and/or Clinical Education Director (*clinical phase students*) as soon as possible following the incident.

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of injury \_\_\_\_\_

Where injury occurred \_\_\_\_\_

Time of injury \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe in full detail how the accident occurred (use additional sheet if needed)

Did you receive medical evaluation and/or treatment? Yes No

Was the Program notified? Yes No

By email, phone call, other? (circle one)

Date and time MSPAS Program was notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you miss time from class/clinical rotation? Yes No

If yes, how many days? \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: If your absence from a clinical rotation will exceed 2 days, you will need a note from the medical provider who examined you in a clinic or hospital and the date you can resume clinical activities. You may not return to clinical rotations until this note has been processed by the MSPAS program.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## ***Form E – Student Exposure Incident Form***

*(only use this form if a clinical site does not have an exposure policy available)*

Dear Healthcare Professional:

One of our MSPAS students may have been exposed to bloodborne pathogens during their clinical rotation. This individual had direct contact with potentially infected blood or other potentially infectious materials.

In accordance with the requirements of OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, the exposed student must immediately have made available to them a confidential medical evaluation and follow-up which must include at least the following elements:

- a. Documentation of the route(s) of exposure and the circumstances under which the exposure incident occurred;
- b. Identification and documentation of the source individual, unless the clinical education site can establish that identification is infeasible or prohibited by state or local law;
  1. The source individual's blood shall be tested as soon as feasible and after consent is obtained in order to determine HBV, HCV, and HIV infectivity. If consent is not obtained, the clinical education site shall establish that legally required consent cannot be obtained. When law does not require the source individual's consent, the source individual's blood, if available, shall be tested and the results documented.
  2. When the source individual is already known to be infected with HBV, HCV, or HIV, testing for the source individual's HBV, HCV, or HIV status need not be repeated.
  3. Results of the source individual's testing shall be made available to the exposed student, and the student shall be informed of applicable laws and regulations concerning disclosure of the identity and infectious status of the source individual.
- c. Collection and testing of blood for HBV, HCV, and HIV serological status;
  1. The exposed student's blood shall be collected as soon as feasible and tested after consent is obtained.
- d. Post-exposure prophylaxis, when medically indicated, as recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service;
- e. Counseling;
- f. Evaluation of reported illnesses.

In accordance with the requirements of OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, you are being provided with the following information:

- a. Copy of the [Bloodborne Pathogen Standard](#). Please pay special attention to sections 1910.1030 (f)(3 to 5) of the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard if you are not familiar with this regulation; the indicated sections deal specifically with post-exposure evaluation and follow-up, information provided to the healthcare professional, and the healthcare professional's written opinion;
- b. A description of the exposed student's duties as they relate to the exposure incident;
- c. Documentation of the route(s) of exposure and circumstances under which exposure occurred;
- d. Results of the source individual's blood testing, if available; and
- e. Copies of all medical records relevant to the appropriate treatment of the student, including hepatitis B virus vaccination status, which are the University's responsibility to maintain.

**Please review the provided information and complete the post-exposure evaluation form. Return the original copy of the completed form to the MSPAS Program Director, and give a copy to the patient within 15 days of the completion of the evaluation.**

The healthcare professional's written opinion for post-exposure evaluation and follow-up (copies attached) must be limited to the following information:

- a. That the student has been informed of the results of the evaluation; and
- b. That the student has been told about any medical conditions resulting from exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials which require further evaluation or treatment.

All other findings or diagnoses must remain confidential and shall **NOT** be included in the written report. If medical follow-up is indicated, please complete the medical follow-up form for each follow-up visit and return it to the address indicated.

Signature of Medical Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Clinical Preceptor: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of Affected Student: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



## ***Form F — Absence Report Form***

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

SoftDocs Link: <https://dbqcentral.etrieve.cloud/Index#/form/296>

In the event of *any* anticipated absence during the *didactic phase* or to request a *leave of absence* *any time during the program*, the student must submit this **Absence Report Form** via SoftDocs a minimum of *seven (7) days* in advance of the anticipated absence.

For *unplanned absences*, following required notification to the course director(s) via email, this form should be submitted as soon as possible. Documentation supporting the unplanned absence should be provided when applicable.

Please see the Attendance and Absence Policies.

Submission of the form does not guarantee an excused absence.

Student Name (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date(s) off: \_\_\_\_\_

Course(s) missed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Absence:** (state general reason without detail about personal health information; for a leave of absence, address bullet points from the Leave of Absence policy)

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Instructions/Comments:**

Program Use Only

Excused: ☐ Unexcused: ☐

Course Director Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

SEC Chairperson Signature (LOA only): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Form G — Withdrawal Form***

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

SoftDocs Link: <https://dbqcentral.etrive.cloud/#/form/349>

### **Withdrawal Form**

In the event that a student needs to withdraw from the program, this form is intended to be the official memorandum of understanding between the student and the program as to the permanence of the withdrawal. *Please refer to the [Withdrawal Policy](#) prior to completing this form via [SoftDocs](#).*

Student Name (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date of Withdrawal: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Withdrawal:

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

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

*Program Use Only (complete with registrar assistance)*

*Confirm Transcript Notations (W, LG, P/F, etc):* \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## ***Form H — Informed Consent/Release Form\****

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

\*The University of Dubuque may amend this policy from time to time without notice to PA students.

[SoftDocs Link: Informed Consent/Release Form](#)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge I have read the University of Dubuque (UD) Substance Abuse and Drug Testing Policy for the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) Program in its entirety, have been given the chance to ask questions about it, and fully understand its provisions.

I understand that the use of amphetamine, barbiturates, buprenorphine, benzodiazepines, cocaine, MDMA (ecstasy), methamphetamine, morphine, methadone, oxycodone, phencyclidine (PCP), tricyclic antidepressants, propoxyphene, and cannabis, as described in the Substance Abuse Policy and Urine Drug Screen Policy, are a violation of UD MSPAS rules for all students.

I hereby consent to have samples of my urine collected for mandatory random testing or when informed by the UD MSPAS Program Director who has determined directly or through UD faculty or staff that there is a sufficient basis for reasonable suspicion that I have used or that I am under the influence of prohibited drugs. I understand that my urine samples may be submitted for testing prohibited substances and that this analysis will be conducted by qualified laboratory personnel. The purpose of this analysis will be to determine the presence or absence of prescribed substances in my urine.

I authorize the individual or organization designated by UD, as well as appropriate UD personnel, to collect urine samples, determine test results, and to make a confidential release of the results to the Medical Director appointed by the MSPAS Program, to other UD personnel for the purpose of administering the policy, and to any individual, entity, or agency to whom or which disclosure is required by federal, state, or local law.

I understand that I must sign the Informed Consent/Release Form to participate in the MSPAS Program at UD.

I understand and agree that the results of my drug tests will only be disclosed on an as needed basis in accordance with UD policy or as authorized in this form.

I hereby release UD and its Board of Trustees, officers, employees, and agents from all liability and legal responsibility for any action related to the implementation of the Substance Abuse or Drug Testing policies for the MSPAS Program or the release of information and records in accordance with the terms of the Substance Abuse and Drug Testing policies for the MSPAS Program and as authorized on this form.

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of MSPAS Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Form I—Authorization to Release Information***

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

**University of Dubuque**

**Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies**

SoftDocs Link: [Authorization to Release Information](#)

Student name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Students in the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) Program participate in direct patient care, observation, and clinical rotations which are part of the requisite coursework for the MSPAS degree offered by University of Dubuque (UD). To enable UD and the clinical sites to determine a student's eligibility to participate in these experiences, certain medical, criminal background checks, and drug screen information pertaining to that student are required by UD and the clinical sites.

UD is authorized to release to the MSPAS Program and its affiliates results of criminal background checks, results of drug screens, immunization records, current Tuberculosis screening results, current certifications, statement of health, letter of standing, date of birth, and the last four digits of your social security number to be used to satisfy the information requirements of clinical sites at which the student will participate in educational activities.

I hereby release UD and its officers, trustees, and employees from any and all liabilities, responsibilities, damages, and claims which might arise from the release of information authorized above. I understand that I may withdraw this consent for release of information at any time prior to the expiration date, except to the extent that action has been taken in reliance hereon. I understand that withdrawal of this consent may affect my ability to complete required coursework and my ability to graduate from the MSPAS Program.

I acknowledge it is my responsibility to keep a copy of this signed form and all aforementioned records eligible for release for my own records. I acknowledge I have fully read and understand this release. I further acknowledge that all of my questions have been answered prior to the signing of this release.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# ***Form J — Document of Concern*** Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ ADVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

This information is provided to inform you that you are not meeting program expectations and to help you develop an improvement plan so you can successfully complete this course/clinical rotation/program. Some of the violations listed below are serious enough to warrant sanctions up to and including dismissal from the MSPAS Program. Please reference the handbook sections on Technical Standards and PA Competencies for definitions.

**Receipt of this document must be acknowledged within 24 hours. Completion of this document, including meeting with the course director and your advisor, must occur within 1 (one) week of receipt.**

NOT MEETING PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS	
<p>Technical Standards</p> <p>_____ Observation</p> <p>_____ Communication</p> <p>_____ Motor</p> <p>_____ Intellectual</p> <p>_____ Behavioral/Social</p>	<p>PA Competencies</p> <p>_____ Medical Knowledge</p> <p>_____ Interpersonal &amp; Communication Skills</p> <p>_____ Patient Care</p> <p>_____ Professionalism</p> <p>_____ Practice-based Learning &amp; Improvement</p> <p>_____ Systems-based Practice</p>

*Description of Event (completed by program faculty/staff):*

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☐ Program Director Notified



**Action Plan:**

☐ Warning

☐ Reexamination

☐ Assignment

☐ Referral to SEC

*Student Plan for Improvement (completed by student; approved by advisor/course director):*

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☐ \*I *AGREE* with this Document of Concern and/or the decision of the Program Director

☐ \*I *DISAGREE* with this Document of Concern and/or the decision of the Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty/Course Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

☐ File



## ***Form K — Student Handbook Policy*** **Acknowledgement and Statement of Understanding**

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

SoftDocs Link: [Handbook Policy Attestation](#)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), have read and understand the policies and procedures found in this MSPAS Graduate Student Catalog and Handbook. I understand the handbook is not a contract and does not guarantee completion of the program.

By initialing alongside each topic, the student confirms the MSPAS Program Student Handbook has been received, read, and understood.

I am familiar with the contents of this document and the policies and procedures governing the following and agree to abide by these policies:

- \_\_\_ Student Handbook
- \_\_\_ Program Information
- \_\_\_ Program Learning Outcomes, Competencies, Technical Standards
- \_\_\_ Grading and Evaluation
- \_\_\_ Student Privacy and Records, FERPA, HIPAA
- \_\_\_ Student Employment and Faculty serving as healthcare provider
- \_\_\_ Background checks, fingerprinting, substance use and urine drug screens
- \_\_\_ Dress code and classroom etiquette
- \_\_\_ Testing and exam policy
- \_\_\_ Clinical Rotation policies
- \_\_\_ Immunization, health screen, and health insurance policies
- \_\_\_ Communicable disease, bloodborne pathogen, OSHA, and injury policies
- \_\_\_ Academic Progression and Program Completion Requirements
- \_\_\_ Professionalism Policy, Code of Conduct and Value of Integrity
- \_\_\_ Attendance Requirements and Remote Learning Etiquette
- \_\_\_ Probation, Withdrawal, Dismissal, Remediation
- \_\_\_ Appeals Process
- \_\_\_ Grievance and Mistreatment Policy
- \_\_\_ Technology policies
- \_\_\_ Student Evaluation Committee (SEC) policy and procedures
- \_\_\_ Disability, Campus Safety, Title IX, and Non-Discrimination policies
- \_\_\_ Student Services (including Academic Success Center, Health and Counseling Services)

This form must be signed via the SoftDocs link following review of the handbook during orientation.

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

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



***Form L —Student Handbook Policy-Clinical Phase***  
**Acknowledgement and Statement of Understanding**  
Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), have read and understand the policies and procedures found in this MSPAS Graduate Student Catalog and Handbook. I understand the handbook is not a contract and does not guarantee completion of the program.

By initialing alongside each topic, the student confirms the MSPAS Program Student Handbook has been received, read, and understood. I am familiar with the contents of this document and the policies and procedures governing the following:

- \_\_\_ PA Competencies
- \_\_\_ Professional & Academic Standards
- \_\_\_ Program Progression and Completion Requirements
- \_\_\_ Professionalism Policies
- \_\_\_ Prerequisites for the Clinical Phase (Immunizations, titers, UDS, background checks, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Policies & Regulations (Health Policies, Immunizations, Health Insurance, Disability Insurance, Liability Insurance, Background Checks, Substance Use Policy, Communicable Diseases & Exposures, HIPAA)
- \_\_\_ Academic Policies (Attendance Policy, Absence Procedure, Remote Learning Etiquette)
- \_\_\_ Student Policies (Student Employment)
- \_\_\_ Clinical Sites & Responsibilities (Solicitation of Rotation Sites and Preceptors)
- \_\_\_ Distant Rotation Policy (Including Housing /Transportation)
- \_\_\_ Clinic Site Orientation & Required Materials
- \_\_\_ Faculty/Preceptor serving as healthcare provider
- \_\_\_ Standard Precautions
- \_\_\_ Injury/Exposure Policy
- \_\_\_ Course Descriptions
- \_\_\_ Grading and Evaluation
- \_\_\_ EOR Examination Policy
- \_\_\_ Rotation Failure

I agree to abide by these policies.

This form must be signed via the SoftDocs link following review of the handbook during clinical orientation.

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

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

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



## ***Form M — Remote Learning Etiquette***

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies



**Dress appropriately.** While remote in delivery, this is still class time. Please be fully and appropriately clothed (no pajamas, no bathing suits, etc.).



**Maintain proper posture.** Laying down is inappropriate. Please either be sitting upright or standing (whichever is comfortable) to promote active learning.



**Be present in the learning environment.** Remove any potential distractions (i.e. roommates, pets, cell phones, other tabs, sidebar chats, etc.) and keep food items to snack-sized items (please do not eat dinner during class).



**Video must be on.** This is not a conference call - your full attendance is appreciated and expected.



**Mute your microphone.** Unless you have a question or are contributing to the discussion, please keep your microphone muted to cut down on unnecessary distractions/background noise.



**Create a conducive learning space.** Be mindful of and control the setting behind you. Background items can distract and/or send improper messages to your audience. Inappropriate background items CAN violate the UD Code of Conduct and will not be tolerated (ignorance is not an excuse).



**Test your technology before class.** Being ready for class is important - please work out the bugs, test your volume and adjust the camera angle before start time to ensure that you are ready to participate.



**Be on time.** Respect the speaker's time. As the saying goes, if you're early, you're on time.



**Be prepared to engage.** Like a face-to-face class, have the material read, pre-class assignments completed, and talking points ready - participation is vital in the digital space.



**Speak up.** You might have a great connection and a high-quality microphone, but that might not be true for all - speak clearly and fully.