



DIVISION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION

College of Medicine
School of Allied Health Professions
University of Nebraska Medical Center

Articles of Agreement Requirements, Policies, Expectations and Guidelines for The Professional Compact between PA Students and the UNMC PA Program 2011-2012



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INTRODUCTION THE COMPACT WITH THE PA PROGRAM

Each student accepted into the UNMC PA Program will be expected to enter into a compact with the Program. A compact is defined here as a non-legal agreement between two parties. The compact states that as a condition of acceptance into, and continuation in the Program, the student freely and sincerely agrees to abide by the Articles of Agreement, a collective name for the policies, requirements, guidelines and expectations of the Program. In return, the Program agrees to provide instruction, experiences and guidance to enable the student to become a competent practitioner. The compact is intended to emphasize the commitment to professional excellence on the part of both the student and the Program.

The student is asked to sign the following Compact Declaration:

I hereby affirm and declare that I (name) wish to enroll in, and complete the Physician Assistant Program at UNMC. As a condition for enrollment and continued progress in the Program, I freely and with full understanding and sincerity of purpose, agree to enter in to a compact with UNMC PA Program and abide by the policies, requirements, guidelines and expectations of the program collectively known as the Articles of Agreement. In return, I understand that the UNMC PA Program agrees to provide me with the curriculum, instruction and guidance to enable me to become a competent, and compassionate professional PA practitioner. I also understand and agree that if, in the judgment of the Program Director and/or the faculty of the Program, I fail to meet the obligations, responsibilities or requirements as stated in the Articles I have agreed to, my enrollment will be terminated via voluntary withdrawal, or academic dismissal. Finally, I understand the intent and meaning of the Articles contained herein, and agree that the Articles will be used to evaluate my academic progress and professional conduct for as long as I am enrolled in the UNMC Physician Assistant Program.

Signed _____

Date _____

This document, containing the Articles of Agreement, is presented to each student accepted into the University of Nebraska Physician Assistant Program for his/her thorough review and understanding. It contains essential information the policies, requirements, guidelines, and expectations which govern academic performance and student conduct applicable to all students who are enrolled in any phase of the twenty-eight months of the Program. These Articles are unique to the Program and are designed to promote standards for academic progress, professional development and personal responsibility. It presents, in concise form, the parameters of achievement and professional behavior the Program faculty expects of its students.

Each student enrolled in the Program is expected to read and understand these Articles, and keep them in a handy place for ready reference. Additionally, each student is encouraged to obtain clarification from the Program Director about any sections not understood.

The information contained herein replaces previous policies and requirements and will be effective for all students in the Fall Semester of the 2011-2012 academic year and thereafter. Consequently, any student appeals that attempt to invoke, utilize or assume as precedent any past policies, requirements or practices will not be considered valid or legitimate.

SECTION A: Overall Evaluation of Student Performance

- A.1. The faculty of the University of Nebraska Physician Assistant Program is charged with the responsibility for educating students as well as determining the capacity of every student for professional competency and responsibility. At regular times throughout the length of the Program, the faculty must evaluate this capacity for each student and recommend whether or not the student should continue in the program. Therefore, the faculty reserves the right and has the responsibility to recommend the academic or disciplinary suspension or dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal of a student when unsatisfactory academic progress, academic dishonesty, unsatisfactory clinical performance, unsatisfactory professional growth, impaired mental or physical health, unsatisfactory personal conduct, failure to comply with published Program policies, requirements or other factors deemed necessary for professional competency make it impractical or inadvisable for the student to continue in the program.

If at any time during his/her course of study a student is in the position of being recommended for academic or disciplinary suspension or dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal, for any reason, the student shall be notified in writing as to the cause for such action by the Program Director.

SECTION B: Academic Requirements for Graduation

- B.1. In order to graduate from the PA Program, every student must satisfactorily complete all required course work and all letter graded and non-letter graded course work, clerkships (required and elective), assignments and projects designated by the Program as “required,” and receive an overall “satisfactory” rating on the Professionalism Evaluation form throughout the student’s enrollment in the Program. “Satisfactory completion” shall mean completing all non-letter graded assignments and projects with an instructor’s “Pass,” or “Satisfactory,” completing each course and clerkship with a minimum grade of C- **and** maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.00 throughout the student’s entire enrollment in the Program. A grade of C- represents quality points of 1.67 and is only acceptable as a satisfactory grade when the cumulative GPA is 2.00 or above.
- B.2. All courses in the PA Program are designated as “required” and must be taken by every student. No Program courses will be waived, no advanced standing in the Program will be granted, and no advanced credit for any previous course work will be given even though it may be similar or identical to course work in the Program.
- B.3. All clerkships designated as “required” must be taken by every student unless excused in writing by the Program Director.
- B.4. As a requirement for graduation, all students must undergo a summary evaluation of their medical knowledge and clinical skills. This summary evaluation will consist of written and performance examinations, and will occur prior to each student’s completion of the Program. In order to graduate from the Program, every student must pass the summary evaluation with acceptable scores, which will be determined by the faculty. Students will be notified in advance of the particulars of the examination in a timely manner.

- B.5. All written and performance assignments for all PHAS classes will be required to be performed or turned in before a class will be considered “successfully completed” by a student. Assignments turned in or performances completed past the designated due date will be penalized according to the criteria established in the course syllabus, or by the instructor unless other specific arrangements have been made with the instructor. A student, who has not completed and turned in all assignments or completed all performances by the end of the course, unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor, will receive a grade of F (failure) for the course.
- B.6. Failure in a course or a clerkship will necessitate an extension of the usual time required for a student’s completion of the Program and will require the assignment of a new completion date and a new graduation date.

SECTION C: Evaluation of Student Academic Work

C.1. Letter Graded Evaluation

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

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A+	4.00	C+	2.33
A	4.00	C	2.00
A-	3.67	C-	1.67
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.67	D-	.67
		F	0.00

C.1.a Definition of Letter Grades

A+,A, A-	=	Excellent performance
B+,B, B-	=	Very good performance
C+,C, C- *	=	Satisfactory performance
D+,D, D-,F	=	Unsatisfactory performance
WP	=	Withdrew passing
WF	=	Withdrew failing
I	=	Incomplete
NR	=	No report
WX	=	Administrative withdrawal
W	=	Withdrawal (good standing)

* PLEASE NOTE: Receiving a grade of C- in a particular course (or more than one course) may result in a GPA that does not meet satisfactory standards of academic progress, i.e., a GPA below 2.00 (see p. 5).

C.2. Non-letter Graded Evaluation

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

SECTION D: Standards of Academic Progress

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

D.1. **Standard I**

All courses and clerkships will be evaluated by letter grade. For all courses and clerkships every student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 (on a 4.00 scale) throughout the student’s entire enrollment in the Program.

D.2. **Standard II**

All courses and clerkships will be evaluated by a letter grade. Every student must attain a

letter grade of not less than C- in each course or clerkship taken. Any grade below C- (i.e., D+, D, D- and F) will be considered unsatisfactory and designated as a failure in the course or clerkship.

D.3. **Standard III**

Every student must maintain a “Satisfactory” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation (see p. 10) on a continuing basis throughout the student’s enrollment in the Program.

D.4. **Standard IV**

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

SECTION E: Academic Probation

E.1. Failure of any student to maintain all four Standards of Academic Progress throughout all semesters and/or enrollment periods during the student’s enrollment in the Program will result in the student being automatically placed on Academic Probation. A student will be allowed only **one** Academic Probation during his or her course of study throughout his or her entire enrollment in the Program. Any occasion for a second Academic Probation (e.g., obtaining another D+, D, D- or F or dropping below a cumulative 2.00 GPA after the first Academic Probation) will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. This policy is in conformity with the School of Allied Health Professions Policy (SAHP) for Academic Probation and may be found in the Policies for Students in the Allied Health Professions. The following consequences will apply with reference to each of the four Standards of Academic Progress.

SECTION F: Academic Consequences

F.1. **Standard I**

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.00 for all courses and clerkships. Any student failing to achieve a GPA of 2.00 at the end of the first semester or cumulatively thereafter, will incur *automatic Academic Probation*. The period of Academic Probation will be for one semester and will be effective during the semester or enrollment period immediately following the semester or enrollment period in which the student failed to achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.00. During the semester or period of Academic Probation the student 1) must take the regular, required academic course work as sequenced in the PA Program curriculum; 2) must attain a cumulative GPA of 2.00; 3) must not obtain any grades below C-; and, 4) must obtain “satisfactory” ratings on the Professionalism Checklist (see p. 8). Failure to achieve any of these four requirements during the probationary semester will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. Thereafter, throughout the remainder of the student’s enrollment, the student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better. Failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.00 will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

F.2. **Standard II**

F.2.1. **Phase I Consequences**

The following academic consequences will be in effect for any student who receives a grade below C- (D+, D, D-, F) in any single Program course in any semester in Phase I **PROVIDED** the student has been granted an exemption from Policy G11- Promotion from Phase I to Phase II (P.16) by the Program Director, and is allowed to continue in the Program.

- a) The student must repeat the course at the earliest time the course is offered again. The course must be satisfactorily completed with a grade of C- or better. Failure to pass the course a second time with a minimum grade of C- will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.
- b) The student will be placed on automatic Academic Probation (see Academic Probation Policy above) for one semester following the semester in which the unsatisfactory grade was received. During the probationary semester, the student must obtain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.00 (and maintain a GPA of 2.00 for the remainder of the student’s enrollment).
- c) The student will be returned to “good standing” in the PA Program upon satisfactory repetition of the course with a grade of C- or better provided that a cumulative GPA of 2.00 is maintained and no other grades below C- have been received.

F.2.1.1. The following consequences will be in effect for any student receiving two grades below C- (D+, D, D-, F) in any semester in Phase I.

- a) Termination of the student’s enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

F.2.2. Phase II Consequences

F.2.2.1. Clerkship grades below C- (D+, D, D-, F)

Any student failing to obtain a grade of C- or better in any clerkship, required or elective, will be considered to have performed unsatisfactorily in the clerkship and will incur academic consequences. The following academic consequences will be in effect for any student who receives a grade below C- (D+, D, D-, F) in any clerkship.

- a) The student must repeat the clerkship at a time designated by the clinical coordinator of the Program.
- b) The repeated clerkship must be satisfactorily completed with a grade of C- or better. Failure to obtain a minimum grade of C- for the repeated clerkship will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.
- c) The student will be automatically placed on Academic Probation (see Academic Probation Policy above) for one semester following the semester in which the unsatisfactory grade was received. During the probationary semester, the student must obtain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00 and must not receive any grade below C-. If a grade below C- is received in any clerkship during the semester of Academic Probation or thereafter, the result will be termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. (**NOTE:** Academic Probation will be extended beyond one semester when a clerkship originates in, but extends beyond the designated probationary semester. In such cases, the Academic Probation period will terminate when the clerkship period ends. A student will be allowed only one Academic Probation throughout the student's entire course of study.)
- d) Throughout Phase II, the Clinical Phase, only one grade below C- will be allowed. If at any time during Phase II the student receives a second grade below C- (in any clerkship), the result will be termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. This policy applies to both required and elective clerkships.
- e) The student will be returned to "good standing" in the Program provided that a minimum grade of C- is attained in the repeated clerkship, a cumulative GPA of 2.00 is maintained, and no other grades below C- are received.

F.3. **Standard III**

Students must maintain a “Satisfactory” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation (see p. 10).

The concept of professional identity implies knowledge of professional conduct, professional attitudes and professional growth collectively known as professionalism. Every student in the PA Program is encouraged to move intellectually and attitudinally toward developing a greater sense of professionalism in order to realize his/her greatest contribution in the promotion of health and alleviation of suffering. In particular, the attributes of excellence, humanism, accountability and altruism together with a sense of dedication to service and to ethical principles need to be developed if a student is to grow toward a sense of professional competence, professional identity and the shared values which function to reinforce greater service to humanity within the PA profession. It is incumbent upon the PA Program faculty to foster the concept of professionalism whenever possible, and more, to evaluate professional growth in students as they progress through the Program. Therefore, the faculty has adopted the Professionalism Evaluation to monitor and assess the professional skills, behaviors and attitudes of physician assistant students as they move through the Program. Each student will be monitored by the faculty on a continuing basis throughout his or her enrollment in the Program, and a written evaluation will be completed at the end of each semester and at other times when deemed necessary. Any action, behavior, incident or occasion at any time during a student’s enrollment that results in a student receiving a rating of Unsatisfactory (or a “Yes” in section VIII) by the faculty in one or more categories of the Professionalism Evaluation will result in the student being placed on Academic or Disciplinary Probation (depending on the deficiency), automatically and immediately. The student will also be placed on Academic Probation for the semester following the action, behavior, incident or occasion which will be designated the “probationary semester” during which the student will be expected to improve or remediate the unsatisfactory area of professionalism. The student shall be informed in writing and, if deemed necessary, in a meeting with the faculty as to the exact nature of the ratings of Unsatisfactory. At the end of the probationary semester the student must obtain ratings of Satisfactory in all categories in which ratings of Unsatisfactory were received in the previous semester. If on any occasion a student is given a Needs to Improve rating, the student will be given 30 days in which to make necessary corrections. After 30 days the student will be reevaluated and at that time must have improved to the point of receiving a Satisfactory rating as determined by the Program Director and Faculty. If the student fails to achieve a Satisfactory rating after 30 days, an Unsatisfactory rating will be assigned. Probationary action will then be taken according to the policy explained above. Failure to achieve Satisfactory ratings in these categories at the conclusion of the probationary semester will result in recommendation for termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. Serious breaches of professionalism by a student – for example causing harm to others, academic cheating, committing a felony – will result in a recommendation by the faculty for termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

PROFESSIONALISM EVALUATION

Student Name _____ Semester _____ Date _____

Students will be evaluated on each of the eight categories. Examples of expected positive professional behaviors, attitudes and attributes are listed below under the first seven categories. The eighth category, **Professional Concerns** reflects undesirable and unprofessional behaviors, attitudes and attributes.

	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
I. Excellence			
* Strives for the highest standards of competence in skills and knowledge	_____	_____	_____
* Accepts responsibility for educational challenges and self-learning	_____	_____	_____
* Accepts correction and guidance graciously and corrects shortcomings	_____	_____	_____
* Respects teachers and their teaching endeavors	_____	_____	_____
II. Humanism			
* Shows respect, compassion and empathy for others	_____	_____	_____
* Honors the choices and rights of others	_____	_____	_____
* Sensitive and responsive to culture, gender, age, disabilities and ethnicity of others	_____	_____	_____
* Able to establish cooperative relationships with others who have differences in opinion, philosophy, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity and language	_____	_____	_____
III. Accountability			
* Punctual and prepared for all obligations	_____	_____	_____
* Dependably completes assigned tasks	_____	_____	_____
* Appears neat in grooming, dress and hygiene	_____	_____	_____
IV. Altruism			
* Responds to the needs of others without regard to self-interest	_____	_____	_____
V. Ethical/Legal Understanding			
* Maintains confidentiality standards	_____	_____	_____
* Truthful to patients and colleagues	_____	_____	_____
* Committed to ethical principals of the PA profession	_____	_____	_____
* Possesses personal and academic integrity	_____	_____	_____
VI. Communication Skills			
* Able to effectively relate to patients, peers and colleagues	_____	_____	_____
* Establishes positive rapport with others	_____	_____	_____
* Effectively identifies patient concerns	_____	_____	_____
* Maintains composure during adverse interactions or situations	_____	_____	_____
* Uses language appropriate to others' level of understanding	_____	_____	_____

VII. Clinical Competence

- * Committed to ongoing professional development _____
- * Dedicated to providing the highest quality of care to patients _____
- * Promotes the emotional and physical well-being of patients _____
- * Uses a holistic approach to patient care _____

NO

YES

VIII. Professional Concerns

- * Lacks Initiative
Needs excessive direction. Little self-directed learning _____
- * Lacks Self-Confidence
Performance is limited by a lack of self-confidence _____
- * Does Not Know Limitations
Overestimates abilities _____
- * Condescending
Makes demeaning comments about others _____
- * Arrogant
Displays an attitude of superiority or self-importance _____
- * Abrasive
Is overly aggressive in a manner that annoys others _____
- * Sarcastic
Excessive use of sarcasm in inappropriate settings _____
- * Impulsive/Reactive
Displays inappropriate behavior when frustrated or angry _____
- * Disruptive
Socializes during lectures/class _____
- * Uncooperative
Unable to cooperate or work well with others _____

No Professional Concerns

Comments: _____

Signature of Advisor or Program Director _____ Date _____

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

F.4. **Standard IV**

There are several non-letter graded assignments or projects in the PA Program, and most relate to clinical skills. These assignments and projects are considered important components of the Program and must be satisfactorily completed by every student. Satisfactory completion criteria will be designated by the faculty for each assignment or project and will be found in course or clerkship syllabi. Failure to satisfactorily complete the assignment or project or to arrange with the faculty for its completion will result in Academic Probation during the semester following the assignment or project. During the probationary semester, the student must complete or arrange the completion of the assignment or project under the supervision and/or approval of a faculty member (or individual designated by the faculty). Failure to complete the assignment or project with faculty approval will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

F.5. **Consequences of Failure to Meet Two or More Standards of Progress**

Failure to meet any two or more Standards of Academic Progress in Section D in any semester or enrollment period will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

SECTION G: General Policies

G.1. **Phase I Policy on Class Attendance**

Attendance at all classes is required. "Cutting" (or not attending) classes is unacceptable. An excused absence is required each time a student will be absent from any class. To obtain an **excused absence**, from each class session for which the student intends to be absent, the student must (1) Notify the PA office and (2) the course instructor or coordinator that he/she will be absent from class. This notice must be given as far in advance of the class as is practical. Notice may be given by phone, e-mail or in writing.

The expectation by the faculty that all students will attend all classes cannot be overemphasized. Attendance at all classes is considered an aspect of professional responsibility and individual dependability. Most importantly, attendance is essential to understanding the content, structure and testing rationale of medical courses. Attendance is, therefore, considered critical for the successful completion of all courses. Regular checks of attendance are not possible for every class. Therefore, unannounced and random checks of attendance will be carried out through all semesters of Phase I.

Consequences for unexcused absences from courses are:

- * **First Occurrence -**
A meeting with the student's advisor to discuss prevention of further occurrences.
- * **Second Occurrence -**
Academic warning and a meeting with the faculty to discuss prevention of further occurrences.
- * **Third Occurrence -**
Academic suspension.
- * **Continued Unexcused -**
Absences after the third occurrence may result in academic dismissal.

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

G.2. ***Policies Related to Phase II***

A. **General Policy for Phase II**

All students will be governed by the requirements for clerkships and other educational activities and assignments during Phase II as outlined in the Phase II Handbook on Blackboard.

B. **Policy on Assignment of Clerkships during Phase II**

Phase II of the UNMC PA Program is the Clinical Education phase of the Program. During Phase II, students develop their clinical skills at clinical sites that have been established by the Program. These sites, known collectively as the Nebraska Clinical Network, have been established over many years with Nebraska physicians, hospitals, clinics and other institutions together with selected sites outside of the state of Nebraska. Because of the PA Program's educational focus on primary care practice and the Program's professional commitment to the entire state of Nebraska, most clinical clerkship sites are located away from Omaha and the Medical Center. The majority of these sites are spread throughout the state of Nebraska with many of them being located in the small towns and rural areas of the state. Because of the Program's goal to educate students broadly in medicine as well as provide optimal clinical experiences for its students, the following requirements will guide the Program's policy for the assignment of all students to clerkships during Phase II of the Program.

1. Every student will be required to spend three consecutive months in a Family Practice Clerkship located in a small town or rural area of Nebraska.
2. Every student will be required to perform all required clerkships within the Nebraska Clinical Network.
3. Every student will be required to perform all elective clerkships within the Nebraska Clinical Network with the exception of one clerkship which may be performed outside the Nebraska Clinical Network.
4. Elective clerkships established outside of the Nebraska Clinical Network must be approved and arranged by the PA Program. Requests by students for clerkships outside the Nebraska Clinical Network will be subject to University and Program policy, logistical, legal and monitoring considerations, and clerkship site circumstances.
5. Students must agree to pay their own transportation costs to all clerkship sites.
6. Students must agree to pay for costs of room and board if these are not furnished by the clerkship site.
7. Required testing and educational sessions are held at the Medical Center Campus up to eight times during Phase II of the Program. Students will be responsible for all costs incurred to attend these sessions including travel to and from clerkship sites and the Medical Center.
8. All international clerkships must be set up through and approved by UNMC's International Student and Programs Division. No outside agencies accepted. Students responsible for all costs associated with international travel.
9. All clerkship assignments and schedules must have the approval of the Clinical Coordinator, and the final authority for the assignment of all clerkships and schedules rests with the Clinical Coordinator.

C. Selected Policies of Special Note in Phase II

1. All students must complete the clerkships designated as "required" by the Program. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate student preference on clerkship scheduling and sites. However, in all cases the final determination for all clerkships times, sites and activities will be at the discretion of the Clinical Coordinator.
2. Grades will be assigned on the basis of performance and end of clerkship examinations as defined in the Phase II Handbook on Blackboard.
3. Students will observe a dress code when working in any clinical situation. This means that a professional appearance is mandatory for all students unless otherwise specified by the clinical preceptor. In all clinics a white coat with a Program approved name tag and the PA Program cloth patch will be worn with appropriate dress to reflect a "professional" or "business" appearance (i.e. no blue jeans, shorts, tennis shoes, etc.). Personal grooming and hygiene must be a priority. For men a shirt and tie with appropriate dress pants are required. For women a skirt and blouse, dress, or dress slacks are required. In certain clerkships, the requirement for the white coat may be waived by the preceptor.
4. All students are required to be present for clinical duties at the times designated by the preceptor, including Saturdays and Sundays. Students shall not be required to be present on holidays designated by the official PA Program Academic Calendar. Absences from clerkship duties shall be governed by preceptor requirements at each clerkship site. However, in all cases, students are required to notify the preceptor, the clinical coordinator and his or her Academic Advisor at the Program of all absences during all clerkships.
5. Failure to notify the Program of an absence from any clerkship site shall constitute an unexcused absence and be subject to consequences. The following consequences shall be in effect for unexcused absences from clerkships:
 - * **First Occurrence -**
Academic warning from advisor.
 - * **Second Occurrence -**
A drop of one letter grade for the clerkship and a meeting with the faculty to discuss prevention of future occurrences.
 - * **Third Occurrence -**
Academic suspension from clerkships and a meeting with the faculty to determine the student's continuation in the Program.
 - * **Fourth Occurrence -**
Termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

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

6. All students will be required to take the appropriate end-of-rotation examinations as directed by the Program.
7. Students falsifying entries on the electronic patient logs will be considered to be engaging in academic dishonesty and will incur disciplinary consequences as follows:
 - * **First Occurrence** -
Disciplinary warning from advisor.
 - * **Second Occurrence** -
A drop of one full letter grade.
 - * **Third Occurrence** -
Termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or disciplinary dismissal.
8. Failure to submit entries on the electronic patient logging system in a timely manner (within two weeks) as described in the Phase II Handbook on Blackboard will result in academic suspension from clerkships. Habitual and long-term failure to submit clerkship log entries will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.

G.3. **Policy on Absences Related to Professional Organization Sponsored Activities**

Students who are approved by the program and who cannot be present for required and/or assigned academic work because of attendance or involvement in professional organization sponsored activities specifically approved by the Program will have the opportunity **and** the obligation to make up any missed assignments, quizzes, examinations, clinical clerkship days or other academic work as determined by the program faculty and the ability of the faculty to provide such activities or comparable substitutes upon the return of the student from the approved activity. Such activities include but are not limited to SAAAPA membership and leadership activities, AAPA membership and leadership activities, AAPA regional activities, and the NAPA conference. **This policy applies only to Division of Physician Assistant Education course work and clerkships.** Students enrolled in course work in other academic departments must consult with the course directors for department policies regarding absences.

G.4. **Policy on Personal Conduct and Professionalism**

The Physician Assistant Program is part of an educational institution in which there is an atmosphere of learning, as well as a sense of community. The Program regards as basic to professional development the principles of **academic integrity, self-respect, respect for others** and **individual responsibility, all aspects of professionalism.** Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with these principles. Should a student's personal conduct adversely affect other persons, the Program, the University, or under certain conditions, the student himself or herself, the faculty will investigate any circumstances surrounding the conduct and render a decision about the conduct. The decision may result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to the following: written reprimand, grade adjustment, disciplinary probation, disciplinary suspension, or disciplinary dismissal. Examples of conduct for which students are subject to disciplinary action include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Dishonesty in any form, such as cheating, academic misconduct, fabrication, plagiarism, misuse of identification cards and furnishing false information to the school or college.
- b. Obstruction or disruption of any academic, social or administrative activity.
- c. Threats, physical harm or verbal abuse of any person on institutional property or at institutional-sponsored activities.
- d. Theft of or damage to property of the institution.
- e. Unauthorized entry into UNMC facilities.
- f. Violation of rules governing institution facilities.
- g. Use, possession, sale or distribution of narcotics or abuse of drugs or stimulants.
- h. Drunkenness, or use, possession, sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages on institution property.
- i. Gambling on institution property.
- j. Unauthorized possession or use on campus of explosives or firearms.
- k. Failure to comply with the directions of institution officials acting in the performance of their duties.
- l. In addition to the above, all Physician Assistant students will be subject to the rules and regulations for students matriculating at the University of Nebraska Medical Center as described in the University of Nebraska Medical Center Student Handbook.

G.5. ***Policy on Probation Limitation***

It is the policy of the UNMC Physician Assistant Program that only **one** probationary period will be allowed during a student's course of study while enrolled in the Program. The probation period may be designated as **Academic Probation** or it may be designated as **Disciplinary Probation**. Once an **Academic Probation** or **Disciplinary Probation** is given to a student, and that student successfully completes all the requirements for the probationary period the student will be returned to "good standing" status in the Program. During the student's remaining course of study in the Program, the student will not be granted a second probation of *either* type. Instead, if circumstances arise that would result in another probationary period, the student's enrollment will be terminated via academic or disciplinary dismissal.

The policies relating to **Academic Probation** may be found on pages 5 and 9 of this manual.

The policy relating to **Disciplinary Probation** may be found on page 12 of this manual.

G.6. ***Policy on Leaves of Absence***

a) **Regular Leave of Absence**

Students in the Physician Assistant Program may, under exceptional circumstances, be granted a leave of absence. Any such leave of absence granted shall be solely within the discretion of the Program Director based upon

the merits of the request, evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A leave of absence constitutes formal permission to delay progression through the Physician Assistant Program, but does not excuse the student from any course requirements. A leave of absence may be granted for a period of time mutually agreed upon by the student and the Program Director, but under no circumstance will a leave be granted for longer than one year. A leave of absence that extends the student's academic program beyond the usual 28 consecutive months will require the assignment of a new program completion date, new graduation date, and may require assignment to a new class. The new graduation date assigned will depend on the length of the leave and the official University graduation dates. In addition, a new completion date will delay eligibility for taking the NCCPA PANCE examination and will delay the temporary and/or permanent licensing process in various states including Nebraska. **NOTE:** Any student who is experiencing academic failure, or who is not in good academic standing (for example a student with failing grades on exams or clinical clerkships), or any student who is the subject of an involuntary dismissal from the Program for any reason is not eligible to utilize this policy for the purpose of avoiding or delaying academic or disciplinary consequences.

For all leaves of absence, the following will apply:

1. The student request for a leave of absence must be made in writing and addressed to the Program Director. The reason for the request should be stated clearly in the letter. In most cases, the student should continue to attend classes, take examinations and fulfill any other class assignments until leave has been formally granted.
2. The student is responsible for initiating determination of the financial consequences of taking a leave of absence. Students must review financial arrangements with the Business Office and the Office of Financial Aid.
3. When a leave of absence is granted, the Program may require that the student meet additional academic requirements (e.g., remedial course work) and/or submit specific documentation (e.g., certification for medical leave or a medical release to return to classes).
4. When a leave of absence is granted, students must notify the course coordinators of all classes in which they are enrolled of their withdrawal from course work, or the clinical preceptors of any clerkships in which they are enrolled of their withdrawal from clerkships.
5. A student who has been granted a leave of absence is responsible for notifying the Program Director in writing of his/her intention to return to classes on the appointed date no later than two months before the start of classes. If not so notified, the student's place in the class will be forfeited. Re-entry into the program will then require re-application through the usual admissions process of the program.
6. Upon re-enrollment following a leave of absence, the student will be subject to all rules and regulations which pertain to any new class to which he/she will be assigned.

b) **Military Leave of Absence**

It is the policy of the University of Nebraska Physician Assistant Program that students will not be excused from classes to attend short sessions (2 to 31 days) of active duty associated with their national guard or reserve training commitments. Because of the critical nature of the educational material being presented at any given time, absence from scheduled classes or clerkships could seriously interrupt the academic progress of students. In the event an entire unit is called to active duty because of a local or national emergency, the UNMC Policy #7013 will apply.

G.7. ***Policy on Student Service Work***

In order to avoid practices which might conflict with the professional and educational objectives of the University of Nebraska Physician Assistant Program during Phase I and Phase II, and to avoid practices in which students are substituted for regular staff, the following policy shall be in effect with regard to service work.

- a. Students may not be hired as employees for any private or public practice, clinic or institution to perform any medical services during any time they are part of the physician assistant educational program including during the time the student is under the sponsorship of a specific practice, clinic or institution during a clerkship.
- b. Students may not take the responsibility or place of qualified staff in any medical setting.
- c. Students may not be given any payments, stipends or other remuneration for medical services performed as part of the physician assistant educational program.
- d. Students may volunteer their medical services to charitable, humanitarian or community service organizations when such services are assigned or approved within the physician assistant educational program.

G.8. ***Policy on Appeals***

The Physician Assistant Program policy on appeals for academic and disciplinary actions conforms with the policies and procedures designated by the College of Medicine and the School of Allied Health Professions. These policies and procedures are described in The University of Nebraska Medical Center Student Handbook. Students are referred to this publication for detailed information at <http://net.unmc.edu/care/docs/handbook.pdf>.

G.9. ***Policy on Attire for Laboratory, Clinical Performance and Practicum Classes***

Unless otherwise indicated by the course instructor, students are required to wear scrub attire for any classes where exposure to blood, bodily fluids, chemicals or potentially harmful agents is possible. Additionally, footwear that covers the major part of the foot is required (e.g. athletic shoes). **No open-toed shoes are to be worn.**

G.10. *Policy on Awarding Degrees with Honors*

Awarding of degrees with honors will be based on grade point average. The grades from the first six semesters of the Program will be used in the computation of the GPA for degrees with honors for all students. The last or 7th semester grades of the Program will not be used in the computation for degrees with Honors. In conformity with the School of Allied Health Professions (SAHP) policy on degrees and honors the following additional stipulations will apply to each PA graduating class: No more than 20 percent of each graduating class will be eligible for graduation with honors. Within this 20 percent, the following percentages of students may receive the indicated designations for honors. 2% Highest Distinction, 8% High Distinction, 10% Distinction.

G.11. *Policy on Promotion from Phase I to Phase II*

Students must successfully complete and pass all Phase I course work and all Phase I requirements (graded and non-letter graded) to be promoted to and begin Phase II of the Program. Any exception to this requirement must be approved in writing by the Program Director.

G.12 *Policy on Professional Appearance and Conduct in the Classroom*

1. Attendance at all classes is required.
2. Show courtesy and attention to all lecturers and speakers.
3. Be on time for the beginning of class.
4. Do not exit the class or lecture before the instructor is finished.
5. Refrain from slamming books, snapping notebooks and shuffling papers to show impatience with instructors.
6. Refrain from talking (and whispering) during lectures and presentations.
7. Refrain from eating during lectures and presentations. Beverages are allowed in closed-top containers.
8. Refrain from sleeping or dozing during lectures and presentations.
9. No cell phone calls or text messaging during class.
10. No iPods during class.
11. Keep feet off of all furniture, tables & chairs. Feet on the floor.
12. Personal appearance must be neat. No ragged, torn or unkempt clothing. Appearance may be casual but not slovenly. Appropriate dress and shoes required in all labs as designated by instructors.
13. Personal grooming and hygiene a priority. "Present a professional face to the world."
14. No hats in the classroom for men or women.
15. Keep the classroom neat. Pick up trash, scraps, beverage containers, papers, etc.

G.13. *Policy on Computer Use and Electronic Information Security*

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

1. Any references to a patient or patient care events, even if the patient's name is not included. Under HIPAA, such information is still considered protected health information.
2. Photographs of patients at UNMC, The Nebraska Medical Center, or UNMC Physicians, even if the patient or his/her legal guardian gives a copy of the picture to a staff member. Patient photographs are also protected health information under HIPAA, and signed written HIPAA authorization is required before disclosing them.
3. Sharing any confidential UNMC business with others who do not have a need to know to perform their assigned duties on behalf of UNMC.
4. "Any references to a patient or patient care events on social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, etc.), even if the patient's name or other identifying information is not included. Patient photographs shall not be placed on social networking sites, even if the patient or his/her legal guardian gives a copy of the picture to a staff member.

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

SECTION H: Program Expectations of Students

1. All students are expected to show common courtesy to others.
2. All students are expected to appear neat, clean, groomed and appropriately attired in the classroom, clinic and at all student functions and activities. Sloppiness, slovenliness and lack of grooming are unacceptable.
3. All students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and demonstrate qualities reflecting a professional-in-training. These qualities include honesty, self-responsibility, consideration for others, mature judgment, fairness and academic integrity.
4. All students are expected to be cooperative with faculty and staff.
5. All students are expected to participate in class meetings and activities.
6. All students are expected to participate in Program activities requiring student input and service. Examples are assisting with CME activities, health fairs and other activities as designated by SAHP or Program administration as beneficial to students, the Program, the University or the public.
7. All students are expected to have a desire to become competent professionals, have a positive attitude toward the profession, join the student professional society, and contribute to the profession in personal ways where possible.
8. All students are expected to understand that as a health care professional in training, they will be required at certain times to participate in educational and clinical experiences that may be outside traditional work week hours.

9. All students eligible to graduate are expected to participate in graduation ceremonies.
10. Desire to excel in all academic and professional assignments and activities will be expected of all students.
11. All students are expected to strive for the highest academic and professional standards throughout their enrollment in the Program.

University of Nebraska Medical Center Physician Assistant Program

Instructional Plan for the Professional Education of PA Students: Mission, Goals, Objectives and Learning Outcomes

I. The Program's Mission

The mission of the UNMC Physician Assistant Program is “to educate a diverse student population as entry-level practitioners of primary care medicine, working with physician supervision, in order to provide the citizens of Nebraska, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, with quality medical care.” The educational structure of the Program follows from its mission.

II. The Program's Primary Educational Goals:

The overarching goal of the UNMC PA Program is to provide students with a comprehensive professional medical education enabling them to render knowledgeable, competent, ethical and compassionate patient care with physician supervision. Primary educational goals of the Program are to provide students with the 1) knowledge 2) skills and 3) professionalism necessary for clinical practice:

1) Knowledge Goals:

The student's acquisition of medical knowledge in the Program will be guided by the biopsychosocial model of medical care. This model requires the knowledge and analysis of the biological, psychological and social determinants of health and illness and its scientific and compassionate application to human structure, function and behavior. It also requires knowledge of contextual and underlying factors including current medical practice concepts, clinical research in medicine and its application to clinical decision making, medical delivery and payment systems, effective utilization of communication, the values and ethics of professionalism, and self-assessment activities for continuous self-improvement and improvement of patient care. Students will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of diagnosis and treatment that includes a spectrum of supportive factors in which the internal and external environments of individuals will be considered when deciding on preventive, therapeutic, rehabilitative and causative management of patients.

2) Skill Goals:

Students will be able to acquire and demonstrate the following skills:

- a) Critical Appraisal Skills. The application of certain rules of evidence to clinical, investigational, and published data to determine their validity and applicability.
- b) Clinical Skills. The ability to acquire, interpret, synthesize, and record clinical information in managing the health problems of patients, considering their physical, social, and emotional functioning. Included is proficiency in the management of patients utilizing therapeutic functions, tasks, and technical procedures as well as effective interpersonal and social skills and behaviors.

- c) Self-Improvement Skills. The ability to identify areas of deficiency in one's own performance, find appropriate educational resources, evaluate personal learning progress, and use new knowledge and skills in the care of patients.

3) Professionalism Goals:

Students will be able to recognize, develop, and maintain the personal and professional qualities required for a career as a physician assistant. Students will understand that acquiring the privilege to intervene in the lives of patients carries with it the obligation to act responsibly, compassionately, and ethically.

- a) Towards oneself – to recognize and acknowledge personal assets, emotional reactions, and limitations in one's own knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- b) Toward patients and their families – to be able, with appropriate supervision, to take responsibility for the medical and care of patients and their families.
- c) Toward colleagues – to contribute to productive communication and cooperation among colleagues engaged in learning, research, and health care.
- d) Toward the community – to contribute to the maintenance and improvement of the health of the community and general population.

III. Foundation Documents for Curriculum and Instruction

To achieve the Primary Educational Goals, in 2006 the Program adapted three documents to serve as foundational and guiding documents for the core of the instructional process at the UNMC PA Program. These documents were created and endorsed by the four PA professional organizations: AAPA, PAEA, NCCPA and ARC-PA. The (updated) documents are:

- 1) "Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession" (published by the AAPA in 2005.)
- 2) "Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education (4th Ed.)"
- 3) "NCCPA Content Blueprint 2011"
- 4) "The Requirement for Residency Education in Family Practice: Section V: D1 Human Behavior and Mental Health (2005-2006)." This document was adapted to guide the human behavior and mental health components of the Program.

IV. Instructional Goals

The basic guiding document for the PA Program is "Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession." Directly from this document have come the Instructional Goals of the Program (expressed as expected competencies from the document). These are:

- 1) Medical knowledge
- 2) Interpersonal and communication skills
- 3) Patient care
- 4) Professionalism
- 5) Practice-based learning and improvement
- 6) Systems-based practice

V. Terminal Instructional/Learning Objectives

The Terminal Instructional/Learning Objectives for the Instructional Goals follow for Phase I: the Academic Phase and Phase II: the Clinical Phase of the Program:

Phase I: Academic Phase

Medical Knowledge

The student will demonstrate to the faculty's satisfaction, (as evidenced by objective written examinations, performance demonstrations and examinations and oral recitations) the following:

1. Identification of etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical conditions
2. Identification of signs and symptoms of medical conditions
3. Selection and interpretation of appropriate diagnostic and/or lab studies
4. Identification of the principles of managing general medical and surgical conditions to include identifying the indications, contraindications, side effects, interactions adverse reactions of pharmacologic agents and other relevant treatment modalities
5. Identification of the appropriate site of care for presenting conditions, including identifying emergent cases and those requiring referral or admission
6. Identification of appropriate interventions for prevention of harmful/pathologic conditions
7. Identification of the appropriate methods to detect pathological conditions in an asymptomatic individual
8. The differentiation between the normal and abnormal in anatomic, physiological, laboratory findings and other diagnostic data
9. Identification and discussion of appropriate use of history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate a differential diagnosis
10. Identification of appropriate principles of care to patients with chronic conditions

Interpersonal & Communication Skills

The student will demonstrate to the faculty's satisfaction, (as evidenced by objective written examinations, performance demonstrations and examinations and oral recitations) the following:

1. Identification of the verbal and nonverbal elements of a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
2. Utilization of listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning, and writing skills to elicit and provide information
3. Appropriately demonstrates communication style and messages to the context of the individual patient interaction
4. Identification of communication processes to work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member of a health care team
5. The identification of appropriate behaviors and communication in interpersonal, intercultural and community situations and settings
6. Discussion of the concepts of emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
7. Discussion of the processes of accurately and adequately documenting and recording information regarding the care process for medical, legal, quality and financial purposes

Patient Care

The student will demonstrate to the faculty's satisfaction, (as evidenced by objective written examinations, performance demonstrations and examinations and oral recitations) the following:

1. Identification of the processes necessary to work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care
2. Identification of the principles of caring and respectful behavior when interacting with patients and their families
3. Discuss the methods for gathering essential and accurate information about their patients
4. Identification of the information to make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment
5. Discussion of the process for developing and carrying out of patient management plans
6. Discussion of the principles and methods of counseling and educating patients and their families
7. Discussion of and performance of basic medical and surgical procedures considered essential in the area of primary care
8. Discussion of the necessary elements of health care services and education aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health

Professionalism

The student will demonstrate to the faculty's satisfaction, (as evidenced by objective written examinations, performance demonstrations and examinations and oral recitations) the following:

1. Discussion of the appropriate role of the physician assistant
2. Discussion of professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care professionals
3. Discussion of the principles of respect, compassion and integrity
4. Identification of personal aspects of responsiveness to the needs of patients and society
5. Identifications and discussion of the ethical principles pertaining to confidentiality of patient information and informed consent
6. Discussion of the necessary professional attitudes and character traits in order to become sensitive and responsive to patients' culture, age, gender, and disabilities

Practice-Based Learning and Improvement

The student will demonstrate to the faculty's satisfaction, (as evidenced by objective written examinations, performance demonstrations and examinations and oral recitations) the following:

1. Identification of the process for locating, appraising and integrating evidence from scientific studies related to a patients' health problem
2. Discussion of and application of knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness from the medical literature
3. Application of information technology to access on-line medical information and support their own educational assignments
4. Recognition and discussion of gender, cultural, cognitive, emotional and other biases; gaps in medical knowledge; and physical limitations in themselves and others

Systems-Based Practice

The student will demonstrate to the faculty's satisfaction, (as evidenced by objective written examinations, performance demonstrations and examinations and oral recitations) the following:

1. Discussion of the uses of information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
2. Discussion of the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
3. Discussion of the principles of cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
4. Discussion of advocacy for quality patient care and assisting patients in dealing with system complexities
5. Discussion of practices for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care

Phase II: Clinical Phase

1. Medical Knowledge

The student will demonstrate to the preceptor's satisfaction as evidenced by the preceptor's evaluation of the following:

1. Understands etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical conditions
2. Identifies signs and symptoms of medical conditions
3. Selects and interprets appropriate diagnostic and/or lab studies
4. Manages general medical and surgical conditions to include understanding the indications, contraindications, side effects, interactions, adverse reactions of pharmacologic agents, and other relevant treatment modalities
5. Identifies the appropriate site of care for presenting conditions, including identifying emergent cases and those requiring referral or admission
6. Identifies appropriate interventions for prevention of conditions
7. Identifies the appropriate methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual
8. Differentiates between the normal and abnormal in anatomic, physiological, laboratory findings and other diagnostic data
9. Appropriately uses history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate a differential diagnosis
10. Provides appropriate care to patients with chronic conditions

2. Interpersonal & Communication Skills

The student will demonstrate to the preceptor's satisfaction, as evidenced by the preceptor's evaluation, the following:

1. Creates and sustains a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
2. Uses effective listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning, and writing skills to elicit and provide information
3. Appropriately adapts communication style and messages to the context of the individual patient interaction
4. Works effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member of a health care team
5. Applies an understanding of human behavior
6. Demonstrates emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
7. Accurately and adequately documents and records information regarding the care process for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes

3. **Patient Care**

The student will demonstrate to the preceptor's satisfaction, as evidenced by the preceptor's evaluation, the following:

1. Works effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care
2. Demonstrates caring and respectful behavior when interacting with patients and their families
3. Gathers essential and accurate information about their patients
4. Makes informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment
5. Develops and carries out patient management plans
6. Counsels and educates patients and their families
7. Competently performs medical and surgical procedures considered essential in the area of primary care
8. Provides health care services and education aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health

4. **Professionalism**

The student will demonstrate to the preceptor's satisfaction, as evidenced by the preceptor's evaluation, the following:

1. Understands the appropriate role of the physician assistant
2. Professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care professionals
3. Demonstrates respect, compassion and integrity
4. Responsiveness to the needs of patients and society
5. Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to confidentiality of patient information and informed consent
6. Sensitive and responsive to patients' culture, age, gender, and disabilities

5. **Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**

The student will demonstrate to the preceptor's satisfaction, as evidenced by the preceptor's evaluation, the following:

1. Locates, appraises and integrates evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health problems
2. Applies knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
3. Applies information technology to manage information, access on-line medical information, and support their own education
4. Recognizes and appropriately addresses gender, cultural, cognitive, emotional and other biases; gaps in medical knowledge; and physical limitations in themselves and others

6. **Systems-Based Practice**

The student will demonstrate to the preceptor's satisfaction, as evidenced by the preceptor's evaluation, the following:

1. Uses information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
2. Understands the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
3. Practices cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
4. Advocates for quality patient care and assists patients in dealing with system complexities
5. Accepts responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care

VI. Enabling Instructional/Learning Objectives

The Enabling Instructional/Learning Objectives are multiple and specific to each course and clerkship. They are found in the course syllabi and clerkship objectives to assist the student in achieving the intended competencies, i.e., the Terminal Instructional Objectives during the course and clerkship periods of study.

VII. Instructional Cores in the Curriculum

The curriculum has been conceptually arranged into six instructional cores in order to effect both a broad and in-depth instructional emphasis on the six Instructional Goals expressed as competencies and in which the multiple Enabling Instructional/Learning Objectives are distributed.

Core I:

Competency: Medical Knowledge

Courses:

GCBA 571 Structures of the Human Body
CIP 606 Physiology
PAMM 690 Biology of Disease
CLS 500 Application and Interpretation of Clinical Laboratory Data
PHAR 507 Pharmacology
CLS 511 Medical Microbiology
PHAS 630 & 635 Clinical Skills I & II
PHAS 650 & 655 Adult and Pediatric Medicine I & II
PHAS 645 Behavioral Medicine

Clerkships:

All

Core II

Competency: Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Courses:

PHAS 630 & 637 Communication in Medicine I & II
PHAS 645 Behavioral Medicine

Clerkships:

All

Core III

Competency: Patient Care

Courses:

PHAS 650 & 655 Adult and Pediatric Medicine I & II
PHAS 630 & 635 Clinical Skills I & II (CSI component in particular)

Clerkships:

All

Core IV

Competency: Professionalism

Courses:

PHAS 620 Introduction to the Physician Assistant Profession
PHAS 660 Medical Ethics

Clerkships:

All

Core V

Competency: Practice-Based Learning and Improvement

Courses:

- PHAS 645 Behavioral Medicine
- PHAS 665 Systems in Health Care and Management
- PHAS 670 Research Applications in Medicine

Clerkships:

All

Core VI

Competency: Systems-Based Practice

Courses:

- PHAS 665 Systems in Health Care and Management

Clerkships:

All

VIII. Learning Outcomes

Throughout the course of instruction and at its conclusion the PA Program measures the Learning Outcomes which are directly related to the Enabling and Terminal Instructional/Learning Objectives by means of:

1. Objective written examinations,
2. Performance examinations(e.g. OSCE)
3. Oral demonstrations (e.g. PBL)
4. Behavior assessments (e.g. Professionalism Evaluation form)
5. Supervised clinical practice evaluations
6. The Summative written and performance examinations (prior to graduation)
7. The PANCE

The Faculty Advising System at the UNMC PA Program

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

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

During the first few weeks of the first semester the student is enrolled in the Program, the student is expected to make an appointment with his/her advisor for an introductory (get acquainted) session. At that time advisors will let students know about office hours, schedules and the preferred ways to contact them throughout the year. Advisors will also inform the student about the Program's expectations concerning academic progress and professional behavior and development throughout the student's enrollment.

Faculty advisors may be consulted for any reason of the student's choosing. Faculty advisors are considered advocates for the students they are assigned and have the student's best interests and welfare as their first responsibility. Students are encouraged to get to know their faculty advisor well in order to establish a positive rapport for effective collaboration.

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

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

Appendix III

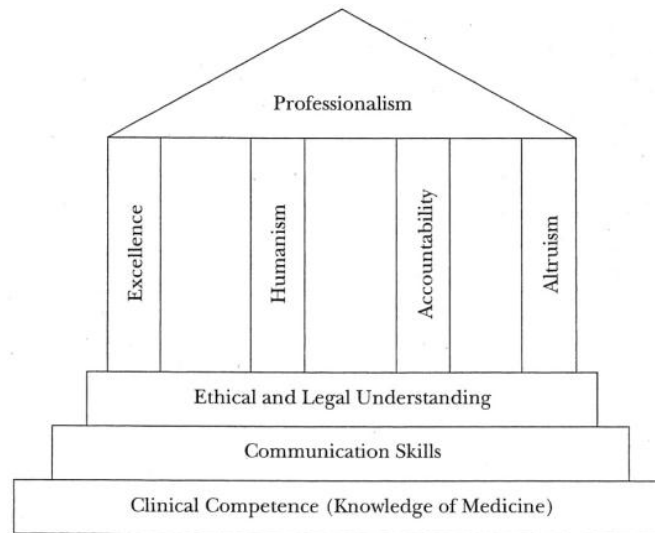
The UNMC PA Program Model of Professionalism

Throughout the Articles of Agreement, professionalism is emphasized as a primary value for the PA Program. Here is presented an abbreviated model of professionalism that has been adopted by the PA Program for its students and faculty and serves as the basis for the student Professionalism Evaluation.

A Definition Guiding the Assessment of Professionalism

Professionalism is demonstrated through a foundation of clinical competence, communication skills, and ethical and legal understanding, upon which is built the aspiration to and wise application of the principles of professionalism: excellence, humanism, accountability, and altruism.

The Model Demonstrating the Elements of Professionalism



Definitions for the Four Principles of Professionalism

Excellence begins with a commitment to competence in medical knowledge and skills, ethical and legal understanding and communication skills. It includes a continual effort to exceed ordinary expectations in these areas through professional commitment, self-assessment and lifelong learning. It focuses on dedication to the continuous improvement of the quality of care and the promotion of scientific knowledge and technology in the service of patients.

Humanism denotes a sincere concern for and interest in humanity rooted in the interaction between people in need of assistance and those offering it. Humanism includes respect, compassion, empathy, honor and integrity in relationships with patients, colleagues, and other health professionals. These qualities also apply to a variety of activities including patient care, academic assignments, scholarly work and research.

Accountability refers to the procedures and processes by which one justifies and takes responsibility for his or her activities. Responsibility involves the free acceptance of duty to serve one's patients and the public, to advocate for individual patients so they may receive the best possible care and to use systematic approaches to promoting, maintaining and improving the health of individuals and populations. It also includes responsibility for professional competence and legal and ethical conduct.

Altruism is behavior designed to benefit another person. The essence of altruism involves actions aimed at increasing the welfare of others, particularly those in need. It is grounded in compassion with a deep sense of connection to others. It involves helping others out of a sense of regard and commitment. It demands that patient's best interests rather than the interests of the practitioner guide behavior.

Source: Stern, D.T. (Ed). *Measuring Medical Professionalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE WHITE COAT

INTRODUCTION - All students are required to follow these instructions concerning the proper appearance of the white coat which is to be worn by students in all clinical settings. Students should know that there is a requirement by the Program's accrediting agency (The Accreditation Review Committee on Education for the Physician Assistant) stipulating that students be clearly identified specifically as physician assistant students in all clinical settings to distinguish them from other healthcare professionals. Accordingly, the Nebraska Program has established requirements to ensure that all students are clearly and uniformly identifiable by patients and health professionals in clinical settings, and that they present a professional appearance at all times. The identifying items required by the Program for all students include 1) a standard white clinic coat, 2) a name tag, 3) a patch displaying the identifier for the Nebraska Physician Assistant Program, 4) a University of Nebraska Medical Center patch, and 5) an identification card issued by the Medical Center to all students. This memo should provide guidance and clarification about the proper appearance of the coat and the proper display of identification items on the coat (see diagram). Please take the time and make the effort to be sure that your coat and overall appearance conform exactly to the specifications detailed below.

WHITE COAT - The standard white student coat is short, buttons in front and has one left breast pocket, and two waist pockets. The length of the coat should approximate that of a man's or woman's suit coat. Sleeve length should be exact to avoid having to roll up the sleeves. Smocks, belted coats, long coats (i.e., extending to the knees or below) and colors other than white are not acceptable. The coat should be absolutely clean at all times, free of soil and stains, and neatly ironed or pressed for a crisp, neat look. It is suggested that students have two (2) coats to insure that one is ready to wear at all times (additional coats may be purchased at the bookstore).

PA PATCH - The PA patch must be permanently affixed and centered on **only** the left breast pocket on the coat. The patch must not be worn on the sleeve, lapel, or any other location on the coat. The patch is required to be on the coat, and is not an optional item.

NAME BADGE - The name badge must be placed on **only** one place on the coat. The name badge must be centered on the upper part of the left breast pocket. The name badge is not to be worn on the lapel. The name badge is required to be on the coat and is not an optional item.

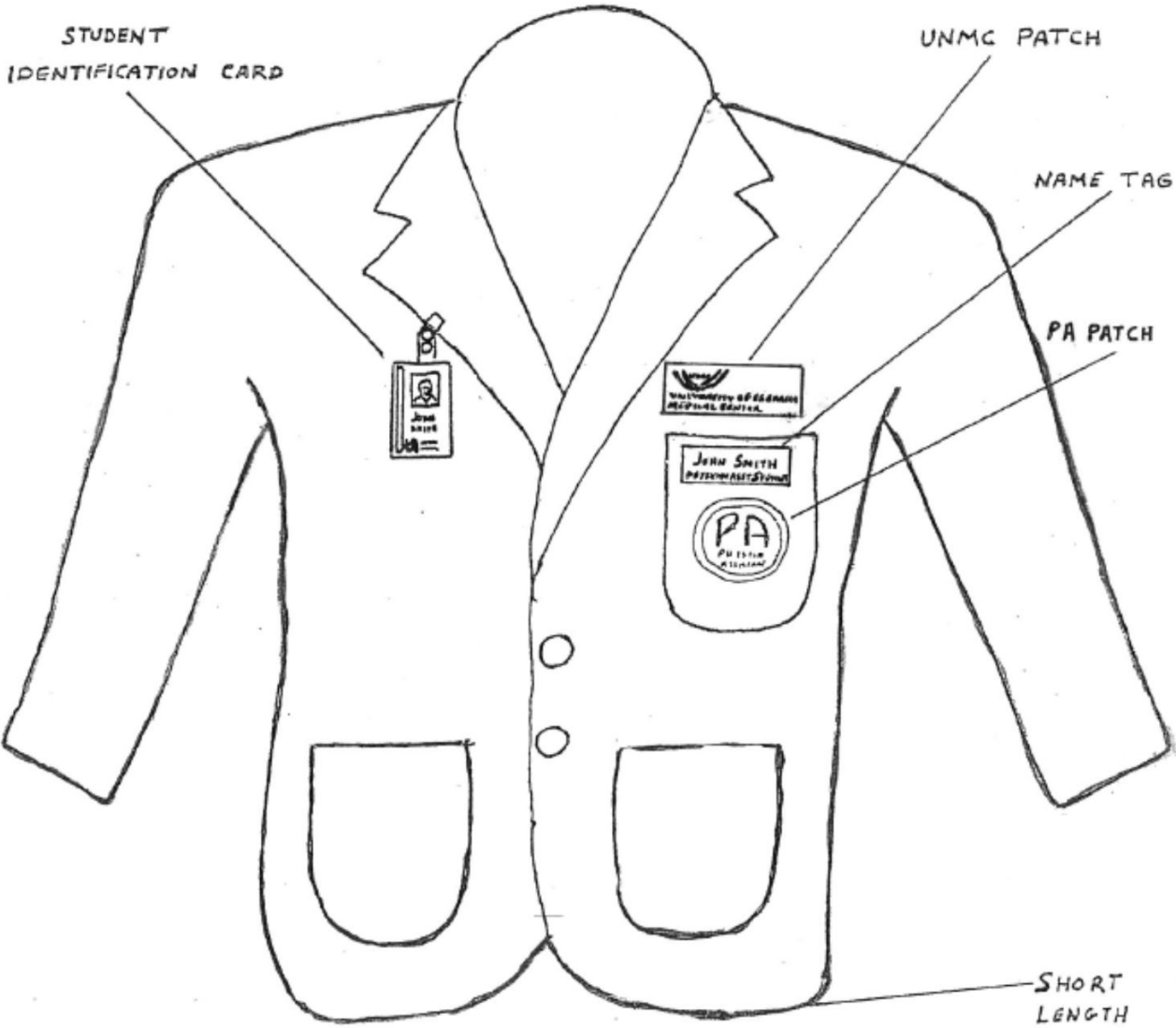
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER PATCH - This patch is usually supplied with the coat when the coat is purchased at the UNMC bookstore. It must be sewn or permanently affixed just above the left breast pocket of the coat.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER IDENTIFICATION CARD - The Medical Center ID card must be worn at all times by PA students in order to identify themselves as currently enrolled students. The ID should be affixed to the right lapel of the coat so that it may be easily seen. If wearing the ID on the right lapel becomes problematic, the ID may be worn around the neck on a chain or cord.

GENERAL APPEARANCE - Students are reminded that in addition to the white coat, there are other dress requirements. For men, a dress shirt and dress tie are required to be worn (please, no string or bolo ties). Also, dress pants and some type of dress shoes are required (i.e., no jeans, shorts, sneakers, or jogging shoes). In some clinical locations in Nebraska, it may not be the custom to wear ties. In these few locations, students should observe the local custom for appropriate dress. However, a neat and clean appearance is mandatory at all times.

For women, in addition to the white coat, a conservative dress, blouse and skirt, or blouse and dress pants are required. Conservative might be defined as suitable for a place of business. Examples of inappropriate clothing would be low cut necklines, mini-skirts, see-through material, etc. A neat and clean appearance is mandatory at all times.

**PROPER DISPLAY
of
IDENTIFICATION ITEMS ON WHITE COAT
for PA STUDENTS**



DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Academic Dismissal** - Means the student has not met the minimum academic standards of the Program and will not be allowed to continue in the Program.
- Academic Probation** - Means the student has not met the minimum academic or professional standards of the Program and will be required to meet certain standards established by the Program for a defined period of time. Academic Probation for one semester is automatic if a student does not meet the standards of academic progress in Section D of this document. During the period of academic probation the student must earn a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 or better, must earn grades of C- or better in each course or clerkship, must receive “Satisfactory” ratings on all sections of the Professionalism Checklist, and receive “Pass” or “Satisfactory” in all non-graded assignments and projects. Failure to achieve these standards during the probationary period and thereafter will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal. Only one semester of Academic Probation will be allowed during a student’s course of study. Any occasion necessitating a second period of Academic Probation will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or academic dismissal.
- Academic Suspension** - Means the student has not met the minimum academic requirements of the Program or is in violation of Program requirements or policies and will not be allowed to continue in the Program for a specified period of time.
- Academic Warning** - Means the student is not meeting minimum academic standards of the Program in a course or clerkship in progress.
- Administrative Suspension** – The student has failed to comply with administrative requirements such as payment of fines, payment of tuition or other administrative regulations, policies or rules of the Program or University and will not be allowed to continue in the Program for a specified period of time.
- Clerkship** - A supervised clinical learning experience in a defined area of medicine characterized by utilizing clinical knowledge and skills in working with patients, occurring in Phase II (Clinical Phase) of the PA Program.
- Course** - A unit of instruction which may involve lectures, observation, performance, assignments and evaluation which usually takes place in the classroom or laboratory occurring primarily in Phase I, the Academic (Didactic) Phase, of the PA Program.
- Disciplinary Dismissal** - Means the student has failed to comply with Program requirements or policy related to conduct or professional behavior and will result in termination of enrollment.
- Disciplinary Probation** - Means the student has failed to comply with Program requirements or policy related to conduct or professional behavior, and will be required to meet certain standards established by the Program for a defined period of time. Failure to meet the established standards will result in termination of enrollment via voluntary withdrawal or disciplinary dismissal.
- Disciplinary Suspension** - Means that the student has failed to comply with Program requirements or policy related to conduct or professional behavior, and will incur a period of involuntary separation from the Program for a prescribed period of time. Reinstatement may be subject to certain requirements set either by the Dean or Student Disciplinary Hearing Board.
- Good Standing** - Means that the student is currently meeting all requirements for satisfactory academic progress and all other requirements of the Program.
- Voluntary Withdrawal** - Means the student has not met the minimum academic standards or other requirements of the Program and agrees to withdraw from the Program, or simply wishes to withdraw for personal reasons.