

**DIVISION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
EDUCATION**

**SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
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
2009-2010**



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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.

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 2009-2010 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 professionalism checklist 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 competence, knowledge, and skills, 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 ethical values which function to reinforce greater service to humanity within the PA profession. It is incumbent upon the PA 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 by the faculty in one or more categories of the Professionalism Evaluation will result in the student being placed on Academic Probation 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 Directory 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 breeches 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. A rating of "Satisfactory" on category eight means that the student has **not** demonstrated the behavior, attitude or attribute.

	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
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	_____	_____	_____
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	_____	_____	_____
Accountability			
* Punctual and prepared for all obligations	_____	_____	_____
* Dependably completes assigned tasks	_____	_____	_____
* Appears neat in grooming, dress and hygiene	_____	_____	_____
Altruism			
* Responds to the needs of others without regard to self-interest	_____	_____	_____
Ethical/Legal Understanding			
* Maintains confidentiality standards	_____	_____	_____
* Truthful to patients and colleagues	_____	_____	_____
* Committed to ethical principals of the PA profession	_____	_____	_____
* Possesses personal and academic integrity	_____	_____	_____
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	_____	_____	_____

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 _____

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 _____

Comments: _____

Signature of Director for the PA Program Faculty _____ 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 other outside agencies will be accepted.
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. ***Policies Related to Personal Conduct***

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 prides itself upon the principles of **academic integrity, self-respect, respect for others and individual responsibility.** 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 and the Policies for Students in the School of Allied Health Professions.

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:

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

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 and in Policies for Students in the School of Allied Health Professions. Students are referred to these publications for detailed information.

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 policy on degrees and honors (section A-16) of the SAHP Student Handbook 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 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 MySpace and Facebook 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.

Under HIPPA UNMC students can be found civilly or even criminally liable for privacy and information security violations. Patients trust us 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: General Expectations

1. All students will be assigned academic advisors and are expected to consult with their advisors at least two times per semester during Phase I. In Phase II, individual arrangements for meetings will be made between the advisor and student.
2. All students are expected to show common courtesy to others.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. All students are expected to be cooperative with faculty and staff.
6. All students are expected to participate in class meetings and activities.

7. All students are expected to participate in Program activities requiring student input and service. Examples are participating in research or assisting with CME activities, health fairs and other activities as designated by SAHP or Program administration as beneficial to students, the Program or the staff.
8. 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.
9. All students are expected to understand that as a health care professional in training, they may be required to participate in educational and clinical experiences at times that may be outside traditional work week hours.
10. All students eligible to graduate are expected to participate in graduation ceremonies.
11. Desire to succeed in all academic and professional assignments and activities will be expected of all students.
12. All students should expect to meet for themselves the highest academic and professional standards throughout their enrollment in the Program.

Compact with the UNMC PA Program

I hereby affirm and declare that I _____ 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.

Student Signature

Name Printed

Date