

**University of Nebraska Medical Center**  
**Physician Assistant Program Handbook**

**Class of 2024**  
**August 22, 2022**



## Welcome Letter

### UNMC Physician Assistant (PA) Students:

We are pleased to welcome you to the Division of Physician Assistant Education and congratulate you on being selected from a highly competitive pool of applicants to be enrolled in our PA studies.

You join a growing legacy spanning over four decades of PA education. The UNMC PA Program was first established in 1971 as a mandate from the Nebraska State Legislature to provide primary health care to rural and underserved areas of Nebraska.

While this still remains our priority, the scope of our outreach has significantly grown. You are among an exceptional group of 66 new students pursuing our premier curriculum leading to the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree. All of you will experience our enhanced technology in simulation and media capture instruction. In addition, we host several clinically practicing PAs from across the country and world who are taking courses through our online Degree Advancement Option (DAO) Programs. Through a collaborative relationship with the Interservice PA Program of the US Armed Services, we grant diplomas to PA graduates at Fort Sam Houston in Texas where they educate over 200 students each year for service as PAs in the US military.

With these opportunities to extend our innovative education more broadly, our first priority remains developing PAs who lead health care teams to provide the highest quality, evidence-based health care to those they serve. The policies and standards established in this Handbook help assure that this goal is reached. Please review this material to confirm your own expectations of the program and what this program expects of you.

We have no doubt your commitment to your PA studies is high. The journey ahead will be challenging and dynamic, unlike anything else you've ever accomplished. We look forward to guiding you to become the best PA you can possibly be.

Sincerely,

The PA Faculty and Staff

I.	Mission and Goals of the UNMC PA Program.....	5
A.	Mission.....	5
B.	Goals.....	5
II.	The Physician Assistant Profession.....	5
A.	Definition of a PA.....	5
B.	Description of the PA Profession*.....	5
C.	UNMC Program Accreditation.....	6
III.	Academic Policies.....	7
A.	Overall Evaluation of Student Performance.....	7
B.	Progress and Promotion Committee.....	8
1.	Role of the Committee.....	8
2.	Composition of the Committee.....	8
3.	Appearance before the Committee.....	8
C.	Evaluation of Student Academic Work & Standards of Academic Progress.....	9
1.	Letter Graded Evaluation.....	9
2.	Professionalism Evaluation.....	10
3.	Summative Evaluation.....	12
D.	Failing to Meet Standards of Academic Progress.....	12
E.	Program Dismissal.....	13
1.	Academic Dismissal.....	13
2.	Student Code of Conduct.....	15
F.	Appeals.....	15
G.	Withdrawal.....	15
1.	Program Withdrawal.....	15
2.	Course Withdrawal.....	15
IV.	Program Policies.....	16
A.	General Policies.....	16
1.	Professionalism.....	16
2.	Personal Conduct.....	16
3.	Use of Electronic Devices.....	17
4.	Use of Live Models for Learning.....	17

5. Leave of Absence.....	17
6. Student Society and Involvement in Professional Organization Sponsored Activities .....	19
7. Program Evaluations.....	20
8. Social Media .....	20
9. Background Checks.....	21
10. Drug Screening.....	21
11. Policy on Student Work .....	24
B. Phase I Policies .....	24
1. Attendance .....	24
2. Professional Appearance .....	25
3. Academic Advisors.....	26
C. Phase II Policies .....	28
1. Progression from Phase I to Phase II .....	28
2. Attendance .....	28
3. Professional Appearance .....	30
4. General Phase II Policies.....	30
5. Policy on Assignment of Clerkships during Phase II.....	31
V. Graduation Requirements .....	32
A. Academic Requirements for Graduation .....	32
B. Credentials Awarded.....	32
C. Awarding Degrees with Honors .....	33
Appendix 1: Technical Standards .....	34
Appendix 2: Graduate Competencies .....	36
Appendix 3: Curriculum Overview .....	39
Appendix 4: UNMC PA Program Model of Professionalism .....	41
Appendix 5: Professional White Coat.....	42
Appendix 6: Definition of Terms .....	43
Appendix 7: Compact.....	44

## I. Mission and Goals of the UNMC PA Program

### A. Mission

We will be innovative leaders in the physician assistant education, developing clinicians who practice evidence-based medicine and provide exceptional, team-based care to all individuals and communities.

### B. Goals

1. To develop exceptional clinicians.
2. To prepare professional graduates.
3. To achieve student satisfaction in their educational experience.
4. To prepare graduates to achieve 100% pass rate on the PANCE.
5. Foster a culture of caring for the underserved
6. Admit and graduate students who will add to the diversity of the PA profession.
7. To promote opportunities of leadership.
8. To develop clinicians who practice effectively in a team-based environment.
9. To develop clinicians engaged in on-going evidence-based medicine practices.

## II. The Physician Assistant Profession

### A. Definition of a PA

Physician Assistants (PAs) are healthcare providers who are nationally certified and state licensed to practice medicine and prescribe medication in every medical and surgical specialty and setting. PAs practice and prescribe in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and all U.S. territories with the exception of Puerto Rico. PAs are educated at the graduate level, with most PAs receiving a Master's degree or higher. In order to maintain national certification, PAs are required to recertify as medical generalists every 10 years and complete 100 hours of continuing medical education every two years.

### B. Description of the PA Profession\*

Physician assistants are academically and clinically prepared to practice medicine on collaborative medical teams. The collaborative medical team is fundamental to the PA profession and enhances the delivery of high-quality health care. Within the collaborative medical team, PAs are medical professionals who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and often serve as a patient's principal healthcare provider. With thousands of hours of medical training, PAs are versatile and collaborative. PAs practice in every state and in every medical setting and specialty, improving healthcare access and quality.

The role of the PA demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills, and the capacity to respond to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. Essential attributes of the graduate PA include an attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient's welfare.

\*Portions of the above text are adapted from the Accreditation *Standards* for Physician Assistant Education, Fifth Edition, ARC-PA, page 3, 2019.

### C. UNMC Program Accreditation

Programs that educate PAs are accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA), which serves as the only accrediting body for PA programs in the country. Seven national medical organizations cooperate with the ARC- PA to establish, maintain and promote appropriate standards of quality for entry level education of PAs.

A PA graduate is not eligible to take the national certifying exam unless the PA graduated from a program that is accredited by the ARC-PA. A PA graduate must pass the national certifying exam in order to practice in all states, the District of Columbia and all United States territories.

In 1972, the University of Nebraska Medical Center PA Program received provisional accreditation as a new program.

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the University of Nebraska Medical Center Physician Assistant Program sponsored by the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Accreditation- Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA *Standards*.

Accreditation remains in effect until the Program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the *Standards*. The next validation review of the Program by the ARC-PA will be in March 2027. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation *Standards* and ARC-PA policy. UNMC is accredited by the HLC, and in the event of program closure, abides by the HLC "teach out" policies available on their website.

### III. Academic Policies

#### A. Overall Evaluation of Student Performance

The faculty of the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Physician Assistant Program are charged with the responsibility to determine the clinical, academic, and professional capacity of every student. Throughout the Program, formative and summative evaluations are performed to measure the student's competence, identify areas of deficiency and recommend whether or not the student should progress in the Program. Evaluations for academic progression will include a combination of the following:

- Written exams (multiple choice, short answer, essay, etc.)
- Computer based examinations (multiple choice, short answer, matching, etc.)
- Clinical clerkship End of Rotation exams (EOR exams)
- Practical exams (exams involving the cadavers and diagnostic and therapeutic equipment)
- Oral presentations
- Group projects
- Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) (students are assessed in their ability to perform diagnostic examination techniques by an observer and the simulated patient)
- A Capstone Project
- Evaluations by preceptors in the clinical phase
- Evaluation of patient encounter/procedure logs from the clinical phase
- Medical record documentation submitted to faculty for evaluation and assessment (History and Physical exam records and Subjective/Objective/Assessment/Plan (SOAP) notes)
- Student self-evaluation
- Student professionalism evaluation by faculty
- Other forms of assessment not listed above

The faculty, as represented by the Progress and Promotion Committee, identify any student's failure to comply with published Program policies and requirements deemed necessary for Program competency, in consultation with the Program Director.

## B. Progress and Promotion Committee

### 1. Role of the Committee

The Progress and Promotion Committee (PPC) is a standing committee of the Physician Assistant Program. It holds the responsibility for the evaluation of student academic and professional progress and to make recommendations for action.

The Committee may recommend a formal acknowledgement of a student's success and any of the following actions:

- a. Recommendations for academic and professional progress
- b. Academic Warning
- c. Formal Remediation
- d. Academic Probation
- e. Required Leave of Absence
- f. Deceleration
- g. Academic Suspension
- h. Academic Dismissal
- i. Referral for UNMC Student Code of Conduct investigation

### 2. Composition of the Committee

The Progress and Promotion Committee is comprised of the faculty members within the Division of Physician Assistant Education. The chair of the Committee is appointed by the Program Director. Subcommittees will be appointed by the chair to consider and make recommendations on individual student progression as outlined in the Progress and Promotion Committee policy manual. The chair of the Committee reports to and receives charges from the Division of Physician Assistant Education Program Director.

### 3. Appearance before the Committee

Students in the PA Program are expected to make satisfactory academic and professional progress toward completion of the degree requirements. Any student not making satisfactory progress may be referred to the Progress and Promotion Committee to determine appropriate actions to further support the student's success. At times, the circumstances may warrant a required student appearance before the Committee. Procedures for the hearing process are outlined in the Progress and Promotion Committee manual (available upon request).



## C. Evaluation of Student Academic Work & Standards of Academic Progress

Every student must meet the following standards of academic progress in each semester and/or enrollment period in order to be designated as making satisfactory academic progress in the Program and be considered “in good standing” in the Program. Failure to meet all standards in any semester will result in consequences as outlined in Section III.D.

### 1. Letter Graded Evaluation

A final grade of “C” or better must be earned in all courses to meet requirements for a Master’s in Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree. All courses taken by students will be evaluated by a letter grade according to the approved standard University grading scale. The course syllabus will be the determinate of the final course grade. Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) is the ratio expressed by the sum of the quality points divided by the sum of credits attempted.

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

Definition of:

A+, A, A-	=	Excellent performance
B+, B, B-	=	Very good performance
C+, C	=	Satisfactory performance
C-, D+, D, D-, F	=	Unsatisfactory performance
I	=	Incomplete
NR	=	No report
WX	=	Administrative withdrawal
W	=	Withdrawal

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

Each Clinical Clerkship is an individual PHAS course in the PA Program curriculum and follow all standards related to courses. Clinical Clerkship locations are assigned by the Program; students should expect to travel and be responsible for all costs associated with the travel and course requirements. Any student refusal to attend a Clinical Clerkship without an approved Leave of Absence will receive a grade of F for the course.

### **1.a. Standard I: Letter Graded Evaluation**

Every student must attain a final letter grade of C or higher in each individual course. Any grade below C (i.e., C-, D+, D, D- and F) will be considered unsatisfactory and thus designated as a failure of that course. Any incomplete may be considered unsatisfactory and thus designated as a failure of that course. A withdrawal from any course will be considered unsatisfactory and thus designated as a failure of that course, and the withdrawal will result in program withdrawal or dismissal.

Every student must maintain a minimum UNMC PA Program curriculum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 (on a 4.00 scale) for all courses while enrolled in the Program.

### **1.b. Consequences of Substandard Performance Standard I: Letter Graded Evaluation**

Any student who receives one course grade below C for any course included on the program curriculum may be placed on a required academic leave of absence until the next semester in which that course is offered in the PA curriculum. Upon returning to the Program, the student will be on Academic Probation for that semester and will be required to repeat the failed course and achieve a grade of C or higher. No more than one year may lapse before returning from a required academic leave of absence.

Every student must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 (on a 4.00 scale) in the UNMC PA Program curriculum. Failure to maintain a minimum UNMC PA Program curriculum cumulative GPA of 2.50 will result in a review by the Division Program Director and/or referral to the Progress and Promotion Committee for potential further action, including possible referral based on the CAHP Student Success and Academic Standing policy and possible dismissal from the Program.

## **2. Professionalism Evaluation**

Each student will be held to professionalism standards outlined in the UNMC Student Code of Conduct and academic professionalism standards of the Program in all educational settings, including but not limited to, the classroom, labs, off campus activities, and clinical settings. Professionalism concerns depending upon the nature of the concern may result in disciplinary and/or academic consequences, including dismissal. Professionalism Standards are provided to all PA students upon matriculation in the Program via Canvas and/or email.

Each student is assessed on professionalism by the Program on a continuing basis throughout their enrollment in the Program. An evaluation is completed at designated times throughout the program as well as when deemed necessary. The Professionalism Evaluation ratings include “Skill Demonstrated,” “Skill Developing,” “Skill Underdeveloped,” or “Unsatisfactory.” Additional assessment of professionalism may occur in individual courses and will follow the academic grading criteria outlined in the syllabus.

## **2.a. Standard II: Professionalism Evaluation**

Every student must achieve a “Skill Demonstrated” or “Skill Developing” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation on a continuing basis throughout the student’s enrollment in the Program. Every student must earn and maintain a “Skill Demonstrated” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation by the time of graduation.

Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, would be considered “Unsatisfactory” for this standard and follow procedures outlined in the section below (Section III.C.2.b.). See Attendance Policy for definitions and guidelines (Sections IV.B.1 & IV.C.2).

All course, guest lecture, faculty and program evaluations are mandatory within the program. Failure to complete all evaluations by the provided due date would be considered “Unsatisfactory” for this standard and follow procedures outlined in the section below (Section III.C.2.b.). See Program Evaluation Policy for definitions and guidelines (Section IV.A.7).

## **2.b. Consequences of Substandard Performance Standard II: Professionalism Evaluation**

If a student receives a rating of “Skill Developing” in any category, the student’s advisor will meet with the student to discuss the rating and offer guidance. The student will be re-evaluated on all parameters on a continuing basis to measure progress toward earning a rating of “Skill Demonstrated” for each parameter.

If, on any occasion, a student is given a “Skill Underdeveloped” rating, the student will meet with their advisor for guidance, followed by a 30-day period to make necessary corrections. After 30 days, the student will be re-evaluated and must show improvement as reflected by a rating of “Skill Demonstrated” or “Skill Developing” as determined by the Program Director and/or faculty. If the student fails to achieve a “Skill Demonstrated” or “Skill Developing” rating after 30 days, an “Unsatisfactory” rating will be assigned and follow the consequences below.

Any action, behavior, or incident at any time during a student’s enrollment that results in a student receiving a rating of “Unsatisfactory” in one or more categories of the Professionalism Evaluation, due to excessive absences, or any alleged violations of the UNMC Student Code of Conduct will result in a review by the Division Program Director and/or referral to the Progress and Promotion Committee for potential further action, which could result in referral based on the CAHP Student Success and Academic Standing policy or UNMC Student Code of Conduct policy, and possible dismissal from the Program.

If a student has not earned a “Skill Demonstrated” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation at the time of graduation, they will be referred to the Progress and Promotion Committee for consideration of remediation or possible dismissal. Graduation will be delayed until the student earns a “Skill Demonstrated” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation.

Serious breaches of professionalism by a student (i.e., causing harm to others, academic dishonesty, committing a felony, or other applicable Code of Conduct violations) will result in a recommendation by the Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotion Committee for immediate termination of enrollment.

### 3. Summative Evaluation

The summative evaluation is an assessment of the student conducted by the program to ensure that the student has the medical knowledge, interpersonal, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required for entry-level practice in the PA profession, as defined by the ARC-PA. Each student will complete and must satisfactorily pass all summative evaluations in the Program to progress to the next semester, phase, and/or graduation.

#### **3.a. Standard III: Summative Evaluation**

Every student must achieve a “Pass” or “Satisfactory” evaluation on all Summative Evaluations both within designated courses and within the clinical phase of the program.

#### **3.b. Consequences of Substandard Performance Standard III: Summative Evaluation**

Any student who does not pass or satisfactorily complete any Summative Evaluation will be reviewed by the Division Program Director and/or referred to the Progress and Promotion Committee for further action, including possible remediation, referral based on the CAHP Student Success and Academic Standing policy, and/or possible dismissal from the Program. The student should expect a possible delay in starting clinical clerkships and/or a delay in graduation.

### D. Failing to Meet Standards of Academic Progress

If a student fails to meet any of the relevant Standards of Academic Progress outlined in Section III.C at any point during the Program, the Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotion Committee, in accordance with the College of Allied Health (CAHP) Student Success and Academic Standing Policy and the University of Nebraska Student Code of Conduct policy, will take action(s) or make the recommendation(s) of Academic Warning, Formal Remediation, Academic Probation, Required Leave of Absence, Deceleration, Academic Suspension, Academic Dismissal, and/or Referral for UNMC Student Code of Conduct investigation.

The CAHP policy can be found at

[https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student\\_Success\\_and\\_Academic\\_Standing](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student_Success_and_Academic_Standing).

The Student Code of Conduct policy can be found at <https://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/student-policies-procedures/code-of-conduct/code-of-conduct.pdf>.

If a student is placed on probation and successfully completes all of the requirements for the probationary period, the student will be returned to “in good standing” status in the Program.

The student may be assigned required remediation activities by the Program Director, Progress and Promotion Committee, CAHP Conduct Officer, and/or faculty. Failure to successfully complete the remediation activities assigned will result in a recommendation for dismissal from the Program.

The student must agree to complete all conditions presented to them through this process. Failure to agree to conditions offered will result in a recommendation for dismissal from the Program.

An Academic Suspension may initiate an immediate removal from academic and/or clinical activities, which may result in a delay in progression and/or graduation. The length of the delay will vary and is dependent on the circumstances involved.

## E. Program Dismissal

Program dismissal is the permanent removal of the student from enrollment in the PA Program.

### 1. Academic Dismissal

If a student receives the recommendation of Academic Dismissal from the Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotion Committee, the student will follow the procedure outlined in the College of Allied Health (CAHP) Student Success and Academic Standing Policy.

### ***1.a. Academic Criteria for Program Dismissal***

If any one or more of the following occur at any point during the course of study in the Program, the student will be recommended for Academic Dismissal from the Program:

- Failure to pass two or more courses (including clerkships) with a final grade of C or higher. Courses may or may not be within the same semester. (Standard I)
- Failure to pass a single course with a grade of C or higher on the second attempt. (Standard I)
- Receiving a rating of “Unsatisfactory” in one or more categories of the Professionalism Evaluation AND failing to progress towards a higher rating in all of those categories following the assigned remediation plan. The Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotion Committee will make the determination of progress as outlined in the remediation plan. (Standard II).
- Failure to pass or satisfactorily complete any Summative Evaluation AND failing to progress towards passing or satisfactorily completing the evaluation following the assigned remediation plan. The Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotion Committee will make the determination of progress as outlined in the remediation plan. (Standard III).
- The student may be assigned required remediation activities by the Program Director, Progress and Promotion Committee, CAHP Conduct Officer, and/or faculty. Failure to successfully complete the remediation activities assigned will result in a recommendation for dismissal from the Program.
- The student must agree to complete all conditions presented to them through the process outlined in Section III.D. Failure to agree to conditions offered will result in a recommendation for dismissal from the Program.
- A withdrawal from any course will result in program withdrawal or dismissal.

Serious breaches of professionalism by a student (i.e., causing harm to others, academic dishonesty, committing a felony, or other applicable Code of Conduct violations) may result in a recommendation by the Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotion Committee for immediate termination of enrollment. (Standard II).

Students may have circumstances that impact their success within the Program. The criteria outlined directly above in Section III.E.1.a will be recommended as written despite individual circumstances. Extenuating circumstances brought forward by a student may be considered by the Progress and Promotion Committee on a case-by-case basis. An alternative recommendation requires support from a minimum of 80% of the Progress and Promotion Committee members and must be supported by the Division Program Director.

## 2. Student Code of Conduct

If a student receives the recommendation of Referral for UNMC Student Code of Conduct investigation from the Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotion Committee, the student will follow the procedure outlined in the University of Nebraska Student Code of Conduct policy. The result may be dismissal from the Program and possibly university.

Following the Student Code of Conduct investigation, a student may be additionally reviewed academically under Section III.C and III.D, which may include a recommendation for Academic Dismissal despite the outcome of the Student Code of Conduct investigation.

### F. Appeals

The Division of Physician Assistant Education policy on appeals for academic and disciplinary actions conforms to the policies and procedures designated by UNMC and the College of Allied Health Professions. Students are referred to these policies for detailed information.

The CAHP policy can be found at

[https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student\\_Success\\_and\\_Academic\\_Standing](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student_Success_and_Academic_Standing).

The Student Code of Conduct policy can be found at <https://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/student-policies-procedures/code-of-conduct/code-of-conduct.pdf>.

### G. Withdrawal

#### 1. Program Withdrawal

*(Adopted from CAHP Student Success and Academic Standing Policy)*

The student must consult with the Program Director regarding the decision to withdraw prior to submitting a written Request for Withdrawal. The student must request a withdrawal in writing to the Program Director and the CAHP Director of Enrollment Management. Withdrawn is a final status. Notation of Withdrawn will appear on the student's academic transcript with the date that the withdrawal is effective. In the case of a student-initiated withdrawal, the student is eligible to reapply to the program.

#### 2. Course Withdrawal

The PA Program curriculum is a cohort curriculum. A student may not withdraw from any course in the program. Any course withdrawal will be considered unsatisfactory and thus designated as a failure of that course. A withdrawal from a course(s) will be considered a withdrawal from all courses and the program. Students will be directed to the policy on Program Withdrawal (Section III.G.1) or be recommended for Academic Dismissal.

## IV. Program Policies

### A. General Policies

#### 1. Professionalism

The concept of professionalism consists of the attributes of excellence, humanism, accountability, and altruism, with a dedication to service and a commitment to ethical principles. All students in the PA Program are expected to move intellectually and attitudinally toward developing these attributes of professionalism and the shared values which reinforce greater service to humanity.

#### 2. Personal Conduct

The Program regards the principles of academic integrity, self-respect, respect for others, and individual responsibility for all aspects of professionalism as basic to professional development. Students enrolled in the PA 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 the student himself or herself, the Progress and Promotion Committee will investigate and determine appropriate actions as necessary.

Examples of conduct for which students are subject to disciplinary action include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Dishonesty in any form, such as cheating, academic misconduct, fabrication, plagiarism, misuse of identification card, and furnishing false information to the academic institution or clinical rotation sites.
- Obstruction or disruption of any academic, social, or administrative activity.
- Threats, physical harm, or verbal abuse of any person on institutional property or at institutional-sponsored activities.
- Theft of or damage to property of the institution.
- Unauthorized entry into UNMC facilities
- Violation of UNMC computer and internet use policies.
- Violation of rules governing institution facilities.
- Use, possession, sale or distribution of narcotics or abuse of drugs or stimulants.
- Drunkenness, or use, possession, sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages on institution property.
- Gambling on institution property.
- Unauthorized possession or use on campus of explosives or firearms.
- Failure to comply with the directions of institution officials at UNMC and any affiliated training sites acting in the performance of their duties.



In addition to the above, all PA students are subject to the rules and regulations for students matriculating to the University of Nebraska Medical Center as described in the University of Nebraska Medical Center Student Handbook, including the University of Nebraska Medical Center Code of Conduct.

Professional behavior is expected in the classroom and clinical settings at all times. Behavior in the classroom should promote comfort and enjoyment for everyone. Respect is to be shown for fellow students and instructors in all interactions.

### **3. Use of Electronic Devices**

The occasional use of a cellular phone or other electronic devices by students while learning may be necessary for personal needs. However, this can become a significant distraction if the student engages in excessive use. In the classroom, all electronic devices should be dedicated to the topic of instruction. Use of the electronic device should not be distracting to other students and faculty. If emergency phone calls are anticipated, the student should notify the instructor prior to the class period and every effort should be made to limit the disruption of the class.

In clinical settings, cell phones/pagers should be silenced during all health care delivery activities and professional meetings unless the student has been specifically instructed to be available "on-call" by the clinical preceptor.

### **4. Use of Live Models for Learning**

The instruction of certain examination and procedural skills requires live models. Whenever possible, fellow students are asked to equally share the responsibility of serving as models, which gives the students helpful instruction from both the clinician's and the patient's perspectives. In situations involving sensitive exams, appropriate staff supervision is provided to assure that modesty and respect is maintained while facilitating the instruction. In selected exams, such as male and female GU exams, trained live models are provided. The student should keep in mind at all times that he/she represents UNMC, the PA Program and the PA profession. Due courtesy and respect should be shown at all times to patients, faculty, instructors, medical staff and preceptors.

### **5. Leave of Absence**

Under exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence may be granted or required for a period of no longer than one academic year. A Leave of Absence may be classified as one of the following types: Personal Leave of Absence or Required Leave of Absence. A leave of absence constitutes formal permission to delay progression through the PA Program but does not excuse the student from any course requirements. A Personal Leave of Absence is requested by the student and must be requested in writing from the student to the Program Director. A Required Leave of Absence is mandated by the Program for a period of time in which the student is required to discontinue academic enrollment in a program.

A leave of absence that extends the student's academic program beyond the usual length of the program curriculum will require the assignment of new program completion and graduation dates and may require assignment to a new cohort and program handbook, including, but not limited to, any new curriculum, policies, standards, and/or graduation requirements. The new graduation date will depend on the length of the leave and the official University graduation dates. A new completion date may delay eligibility for taking the NCCPA PANCE and will delay the temporary and/or permanent licensing process in various states including Nebraska.

Any student who is experiencing academic failure, who is not in good academic standing, under an investigation for an alleged violation of the Student Code of Conduct, or any student who is being considered for an involuntary dismissal from the Program for any reason is not eligible to utilize a personal leave of absence for the purpose of avoiding or delaying academic or disciplinary consequences.

For all leaves of absence, the following will apply:

- The student is responsible for the financial consequences of taking a leave of absence. Students must review financial arrangements with the Business Office and the Office of Financial Aid prior to finalizing the leave of absence.
- When a leave of absence is granted, the Program may require that the student meet additional academic requirements for effective and safe reintegration into the classroom or clinical clerkships (e.g., remedial course work, ACLS/PALS course work, physical exam proficiency, etc.) and/or submit specific documentation (i.e., a medical release to return to classes).
- When a leave of absence is granted, the student must notify the course directors of all classes or all preceptors of clerkships in which they are enrolled regarding the leave.
- A student who has been granted a leave of absence is responsible for notifying the Program Director in writing of their intention to return to classes on the appointed date or no later than two months before the start of classes. Without this notification, the student's place in the class may 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 is responsible for all missed coursework. The course director has the authority to verify the student's comprehension of course material upon re-enrollment. Additionally, the course director can include the integration of additional course material if new academic guidelines or recommendations are required of the course.
- Upon re-enrollment following a leave of absence, the student will be subject to all policies, procedures, standards, and expectations which pertain to the new class.

### ***5.a. Personal Leave of Absence***

A Personal Leave of Absence is requested by the student for either personal or medical reasons. For all types of Personal Leaves of Absence, the student request must be made in writing and addressed to the Program Director. The reason for the request should be stated clearly in the letter. The student should continue to attend classes, take examinations and fulfill any other class assignments until the leave has been formally granted.

If a Personal Leave of Absence is being requested by a student for documented medical or ADA reasons, the student is responsible for supplying documentation to the Program Director at the time of written request from the UNMC Division of Student Success supporting the request. No medical documentation should be supplied directly to the program and will not be accepted. Failure to supply appropriate documentation will delay approval, may require a new written request if longer than 2 weeks before receiving sufficient documentation, and the student will remain responsible for all program and course requirements and assignments. In the event a course concludes prior to an approved leave of absence, the student will receive a final grade appropriate to the grading criteria in the syllabus.

When the approved written request for a personal leave of absence is received after the date designated by the Last Day to Withdraw from Classes found on the UNMC Academic Calendar, the current scores earned by the student for grading criteria outlined in the syllabus will remain the same upon returning from the leave of absence.

Review all information and criteria above that apply to all types of Leave of Absences (Section IV.A.5)

### ***5.b. Required Leave of Absence***

A Required Leave of Absence is mandated by the Program for a period of time in which the student is required to discontinue academic enrollment in a program.

## **6. Student Society and Involvement in Professional Organization Sponsored Activities**

The PA Student Society (PASS) serves as the official organization for the students of the University of Nebraska Medical Center PA Program. PASS serves to promote academic achievement, clinical experience and to promote the PA as a member of the health care delivery team. All students enrolled in the PA Program are eligible for membership. Class officer elections will take place during the first semester of the Program. PASS members will abide by the Constitution and By-Laws of the University of Nebraska Medical Center PA Student Society.

Students are encouraged to participate in professional organization sponsored activities, including membership and leadership activities related to PA professional organizations at the local, state or national level. With prior approval by the Program Director or respective course director, a student may miss

required academic work due to involvement in professional organization sponsored activities. However, the student is obligated to make up any missed assignments, quizzes, examinations, clinical clerkship days or other academic work as determined by the Program faculty. The faculty may offer comparable substitute learning activities. Students enrolled in course work in academic departments outside the Division of Physician Assistant Education must consult with the course directors for department policies regarding absences.

## 7. Program Evaluations

All course, guest lecture, faculty and program evaluations/surveys sent by the Program are mandatory unless otherwise noted. Communication regarding evaluations/surveys will be sent to the UNMC student email account on record and may occur any time during the semester with due dates occurring throughout the semester. It is the student's responsibility to check their email account a minimum of once every 24 hours.

Failure to complete all evaluations/surveys by the provided due date will result in all of the following consequences:

- Students will not be allowed to progress to the next semester and will be placed on a Required Leave of Absence until all evaluations/surveys are completed and the courses are offered again. This may result in a delay in graduation.
- Students may not graduate from the program and receive their diploma until all evaluations/surveys are completed.
- Students will be considered "Unsatisfactory" for the Professionalism Standard and follow procedures outlined in Section III.C.2.b.

## 8. Social Media

Use of electronic social networking (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) allows instant widespread sharing of information, therefore, privacy and information security requirements regarding UNMC protected and confidential information apply. Sharing confidential UNMC information, including protected health information, on personal social networking websites is strictly prohibited.

Examples of prohibited disclosure include:

- Any references to a patient or patient care event, even if the patient's name is not included. Under the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), such information is considered protected health information.
- Photographs of patients at UNMC, Nebraska Medicine, or any clinical site attended while enrolled as a student at UNMC, even if the patient or his/her legal guardian has provided the picture. Patient photographs are protected health information under HIPAA, and documented, signed HIPAA authorization is required before any disclosure.

- 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 HIPAA, UNMC students can be found civilly or criminally liable for privacy and information security violations. Any student violating confidentiality will be subject to corrective action up to and including academic dismissal. Such events will be referred to the Progress and Promotion Committee for consideration and recommendation of action to the Program Director.

## 9. Background Checks

Prior to the beginning of class instruction, each PA student is required to have a background check for a review of criminal or other illegal behavior as recorded by state or national agencies. The cost of the initial, and any subsequent, required background checks are the responsibility of the student. Results of the background check are required by many clinical rotation sites. If criminal or illegal behaviors are discovered that were not previously disclosed, UNMC will consider possible disciplinary actions that may include dismissal. Subsequent background checks may be required and the cost borne by the student.

## 10. Drug Screening

### *Rationale*

All healthcare providers are entrusted with the health, safety and welfare of patients. Healthcare providers have access to controlled substances and confidential patient information and operate in settings that require the use of good judgement and ethical behavior. Thus, an assessment of a student's possible impairment that could diminish the student's capacity to function in such a setting is imperative to promote the highest level of integrity in patient care.

Many clinical facilities that serve as educational and training sites for students require drug screening for individuals who provide services within the facility and for those individuals who provide patient care. Clinical rotations are required of all students in the Physician Assistant (PA) Program. In addition, many licensing agencies require individuals to pass a drug screen as a condition of licensure/employment. It is in the interests of both students and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) PA Program to identify and resolve potential issues where a student may not be allowed to participate in a clinical rotation due to the use of a controlled or illegal substance.

The UNMC PA Program's Technical Standards for students require all students meet the physical and cognitive demands of the clinical setting and to exhibit sound judgement at all times. Students who are seriously ill, injured or taking medication that impairs judgment (including, but not limited to, lawfully prescribed medications and medical marijuana) may not meet the Technical Standards, and therefore may not be suitable for the clinical environment where patient safety is the utmost concern.

## ***Relevant Standards, Laws and Policies***

### **UNMC Standards of Conduct for Employees and Students Regarding Alcohol and Drugs**

All University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) students and employees are required to abide by the UNMC Standards of Conduct for Employees and Students Regarding Alcohol and Drugs. This policy is available at: [https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Student\\_Policies](https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Student_Policies).

Students are also expected to abide by the UNMC Substance Use Disorders Policy and Procedures. This document is available at: [https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Student\\_Policies](https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Student_Policies).

### **UNMC PA Program Policies and Procedures for Drug Screening**

- All students enrolled in the UNMC PA Program will receive information about the requirement for drug screening, deadline for compliance, results reporting, and associated fees from the PA Program prior to matriculation.
- Students are responsible for all costs associated with drug screenings.
- At a minimum, all students must undergo a 10-panel drug screen performed at an accredited laboratory (e.g., CLIA, CAP, TJC, NLCP, FDT) or collection center associated with an accredited laboratory or as designated by UNMC or the clinical affiliate. Results must be provided to the PA Program:
  - As laid out by the PA Professional Issues (PHAS 620) Course Syllabus, prior to entering the Spring semester of PA 1 year.
  - Completed and on-record prior to the start of clinical rotations during the PA 2 year.
- Additional drug screens may be required for reasons including, but not limited to:
  - Drug screens that are reported as indeterminate or dilute
  - Requirements related to violating pertinent drug or alcohol-related policies or laws, or to fulfil treatment requirements for a substance abuse disorder.
  - Requirements by clinical facilities for additional drug screening of students who wish to do clinical rotations at those sites. Such screening may be required prior to commencing the clinical rotation, or during the clinical rotation in accordance with the policies and procedures of that facility.
- Students will receive specific instructions from the Program regarding the location of accredited vendors for drug screening and how to access the Drug Screen Authorization form, which provides the vendor with the student's authorization to release the test results to the UNMC PA Program. Drug screen results must be conveyed directly from the accredited vendor to a designated individual in the PA Program.
- A student has the right to review the information reported by the vendor for accuracy and completeness, and to request that the vendor verify the drug screen results.

- Drug screening results will be stored in compliance with FERPA standards and kept for no longer than two years after a student's separation from the program, after which such reports will be securely destroyed.
- Drug screen results may be reported to clinical rotation sites or clinical skills integration sites for clinical placements in compliance with contractual agreements.
- Students are responsible for keeping a copy of their drug screen results and having it readily available for any clinical rotation site if requested.
- Students who refuse to submit to any required drug screen will be subject to the same disciplinary procedures as those with a positive result on the drug screen.

### ***Positive Screening Results***

The UNMC Physician Assistant Program Division Program Director and/or Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) will review all cases of students who have a positive result on a required drug screen. Prior to taking any action that may adversely affect the student, the program will inform the student in writing of his or her rights, how to contact the designated vendor to challenge the accuracy of the report, and the role of the designated Drug Screening vendor in any decisions made by the program.

If the results of a drug screen indicate a student has violated a UNMC policy related to alcohol or drugs, the student is subject to disciplinary procedures. In that case, the program will proceed to file Misconduct Charges as specified in the "Procedural Rules Relating to Student Discipline", found in the UNMC Student Handbook available <http://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/student-policies-procedures/proced-rules-relat-student-discip/>, and will specify in detail one of the five levels of disciplinary sanctions to be imposed upon the student. The PA Program may elect to share the disciplinary action imposed with a clinical site if one is involved.

Students may be referred for evaluation and treatment through UNMC Student Health, UNMC Counseling and Student Development Office or another designated program as a condition for remaining in the program. Any substance abuse evaluation or treatment recommended or required to remain in the program will be at the expense of the student.

Students who have had Disciplinary Actions imposed may refer to "Procedural Rules Relating to Student Discipline," of the UNMC Student Handbook for further information regarding their rights.

## 11. Policy on Student Work

Students should avoid any activity that might conflict with the professional and educational objectives of the UNMC Physician Assistant Program during Phase I and Phase II, and avoid activity that substitutes themselves for regular staff. The following requirements protect the students from this misuse of their roles as learners.

- Students may not be hired as employees for any private or public health care practice to perform medical services while enrolled in courses in the Physician Assistant Program curriculum including the student's clinical clerkships.
- Students may not take the responsibility or place of qualified staff in any medical setting.
- Students may not be given any payments, stipends or other remuneration for medical services performed as a student enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program.
- Students may volunteer their medical services to charitable, humanitarian or community service organizations when such services are assigned or approved by the Physician Assistant Program.

### B. Phase I Policies

#### 1. Attendance

Attendance at all classes is considered critical to the student's success in developing individual responsibility, professionalism and academic achievement. The student's presence in all scheduled learning activities is essential to understanding the content, structure and testing rationale of the rigorous, concentrated PA Program curriculum. Any student's absence prevents class peers from benefiting from his or her engagement. Attendance, therefore, is mandatory for all courses, labs and clinical experiences for the successful completion of the curriculum.

Regular checks of attendance are not possible for each class period, therefore, unannounced random checks of attendance may be performed and this may affect a student's course grade as outlined in the syllabus. Processes for emergent and planned absences are as follows:

#### ***Emergent Absence Excuse***

An excused absence will be granted for severe illness of the student, severe illness of a student's immediate family member or a death in the student's immediate family. In these instances, the student should follow the process outlined below. Failure to meet these criteria may result in an unexcused absence.

- The student must notify the appropriate course director(s) and faculty advisor as soon as it becomes evident that s/he will be unable to attend class.
- Whenever possible, notification should occur prior to the scheduled class periods.
- An Absence Form must be completed by the student and submitted to the course director(s) within one week of the student's return to classes.



### ***Requested Absence Excuse***

Excused absences will be considered for approval for reasons other than the emergent situations noted above, including any necessary legal appearances. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The student must follow the procedures outlined below in order to obtain an excused absence. Failure to follow these procedures will result in an unexcused absence.

- The student must complete and submit an Absence Request Form to the appropriate course director(s) at least two weeks prior to the requested absence date.
- Requests will be reviewed and approved or denied by the course director(s).
- If the request is approved, and the course director is not a member of the PA Program faculty, the student must also seek approval for absence from the faculty advisor, who must also approve the absence for it to be considered approved.
- The student is obligated to complete any missed assignments or other learning activities assigned as a substitute for the absence.
- If the request is denied, the student is expected to attend all classes, clinical experiences and program activities as scheduled. If the student chooses to be absent despite the decision, the absence will be considered unexcused.

### ***Consequences for Excessive Absences***

Excessive absences are sufficient reason for considering a student to be academically deficient. The PA program defines excessive absences as more than three absences per semester. Each course director is given the discretion to determine penalties for absences as outlined in the course syllabus. These may include reduction of the final course grade which may result in failure of the course.

Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, will require a meeting with the Progress and Promotion Committee (PPC). If the PPC determines that a student's cumulative absences have substantially interfered with the student's education, a referral to the CAHP Student Success and Academic Standing policy or UNMC Student Code of Conduct policy, and possible dismissal from the Program may occur.

## **2. Professional Appearance**

University-wide standards of dress and behavior should be observed both on campus and in the classroom. Neatness and modesty are valued, with appropriate dress, grooming and personal hygiene expected for students in all phases of the Program.

Personal grooming and appearance must be neat, and hygiene strictly maintained. The wearing of hats is not permitted in the classroom, except as a customary part of a student's cultural or religious wardrobe. Clothing may not display images or language considered lewd or obscene.

#### Summary:

- Professional in appearance
- Clean and neat
- Provide for the safety of both student and patient
- Allow full performance of all duties

#### Examples of inappropriate dress (not meant to be all inclusive):

- Strong colognes or other scented products should not be used (potential allergic reactions)
- Open toed shoes/sandals must not be worn in areas where body fluid exposures may occur
- Ornate or ostentatious jewelry
- Short tops or bottoms (including excessive exposure of upper and lower torso)
- High heels (limitation of mobility)
- Soiled scrubs in public areas or scrubs outside of hospital
- Artificial nails (infection risk)

For all classes involving lab or clinical activity, students are required to wear attire as directed by instructors, staying consistent with OSHA standards if there is any risk of exposure to blood, bodily fluids, chemicals or potentially harmful agents. Legs must be covered and footwear must cover the majority of the foot (such as athletic shoes). Open-toed shoes should not be worn in these situations.

The program provides a photo ID badge identifying the student as a Physician Assistant student from UNMC which is to be worn in all clinical settings on a white jacket of uniform style. In those settings, the student must always have the UNMC identification badge clearly displayed on his or her person for easy visual access by others (see Appendix 5). The student is responsible for the purchase and upkeep of the jacket.

### **3. Academic Advisors**

All students are assigned PA faculty as academic advisors and are expected to consult with their advisors at least two times per semester during Phase I. The main responsibilities of the faculty advisor are:

- To be an advocate for the student throughout the student's enrollment.
- To oversee and monitor the student's progress through the Program and assist the student to maintain satisfactory progress through the Program whenever necessary.
- To be available for academic advising and consultation throughout the student's enrollment in the Program.
- To advise the student about the UNMC campus resources and assistance for non-academic problems or concerns.
- 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 their advisor for an introductory session. At that time advisors will let students know about office schedules and the preferred ways to stay in contact throughout the year. Advisors will also inform the student about the Program's expectations concerning academic progress and professional development throughout the student's enrollment.

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

More specifically for academic success, students should 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 academic advisors or any member of the faculty with whom the student feels comfortable.

Inquiries or advice regarding a student's personal medical concerns cannot be handled by the faculty advisor; for health concerns or emergencies, please visit an appropriate medical facility. Students should know that academic advisors are obligated to contact students for consultation in any circumstance where satisfactory academic progress may be in question. All academic advisors want to ensure that their advisees maintain good academic standing throughout the entire enrollment in the Program.

Students are evaluated by their advisor at designated times throughout the curriculum on their professional behaviors by means of the Professionalism Evaluation form. Advisors consult with the student about the evaluation in order to promote and foster the student's professional development.

Should an event necessitate a "Skill Underdeveloped" or an "Unsatisfactory" rating on the Professionalism Evaluation form at any point in the student's enrollment, the student will be contacted by their advisor for consultation and remedial action.

## C. Phase II Policies

### 1. Progression from Phase I to Phase II

Students must successfully complete and pass all Phase I course work and requirements (graded and non-letter graded) to be promoted to Phase II, as determined by the Progress and Promotion Committee. Any exception to this requirement must be approved and documented by the Program Director.

### 2. Attendance

During the clinical portion of the PA Program, students must attend all scheduled courses, exams, and rotation activities. The student is expected to fully participate in supervised on-call responsibilities as assigned by the preceptor. The PA Program generally does not permit absences for any reason other than personal illness, a family emergency, or legal appearance. Students are not permitted time off to study for exams or other personal needs, except as noted later in this section for employment interviews.

#### ***Emergent Absence Excuse***

An excused absence will be granted for severe illness of the student, severe illness of a student's immediate family member or a death in the student's immediate family. In these instances, the student should follow the process outlined below. Failure to meet these criteria may result in an unexcused absence.

- Student must notify the PA office and the rotation site before 9:00 a.m. or prior to the start of planned clinical activities for the day, whichever is earlier.
- Whenever possible, notification should occur prior to scheduled appointments.
- An Absence Form, signed by the Preceptor, must be completed by the student and submitted to a member of the Clinical Team within one week of the student's return to classes.

The student and Clinical Team will work with the Preceptor to determine how the missed time will be made up. Final approval for the make-up of missed time will be at the discretion of the Clinical Team. An extended absence, even if excused, may require a Leave of Absence from the Program, which will alter the student's anticipated date of graduation.

#### ***Requested Absence Excuse***

Excused absences will be considered for approval for reasons other than the emergent situations noted above, including any necessary legal appearances.

The student should not directly ask a Preceptor for permission for an absence for any reason unless prior approval is given by the Clinical Team. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The student may not plan any absence unless the following processes are complete. The student must follow the

procedures outlined below in order to obtain an excused absence. Failure to follow these procedures will result in an unexcused absence.

- Student must complete and submit an Absence Request Form to the Clinical Team as soon as s/he is aware of a possible absence. At a minimum, the request must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the requested absence date.
- Requests will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Clinical Team and/or the Program Director.
- If the request is approved, the student must then obtain approval for absence from the Preceptor.
- If the request is denied, the student is expected to attend all clinical activities and program activities as scheduled by the Preceptor and PA Program. If the student chooses to be absent despite the decision, the absence will be considered unexcused.
- The student is obligated to complete any missed assignments or other learning activities assigned as a substitute for the absence.

### ***Travel Days***

Students assigned to a distant rotation will be allowed travel time one day prior to the scheduled End-of-Clerkship meeting dates. If the rotation site is more than five hours from campus, a full day will be allowed and a half day will be allowed if the location is less than five hours away.

### ***Employment Interviews***

Each student is allowed up to three days for employment interviews. Approval must be obtained from the Clinical Team at least five working days in advance of the interview. No more than two consecutive days are allowed for distant travel. The Requested Absence form as noted above should be followed. Employment interviews should be limited to no more than two days during any one-month single rotation.

### ***Consequences for Excessive Absences or Habitual Tardiness***

Excessive absences, more than three days per clerkship or ten days per phase II, are sufficient reason for considering a student to be academically deficient. An unexcused absence during any clerkship may be grounds for failure of a rotation. All unexcused absences will be reviewed by the Clinical Team and may be referred to the Progress and Promotion Committee for further action, including referral to the CAHP Student Success and Academic Standing policy or UNMC Student Code of Conduct policy, and possible dismissal from the Program. Habitual tardiness is considered disruptive and unprofessional and may result in disciplinary action.

### **3. Professional Appearance**

Students in Phase II are expected to dress in professional attire at all times in the clinical setting. A professional appearance is mandatory for all students unless otherwise specified by the clinical preceptor. Appropriate dress to reflect a "professional" or "business" appearance (i.e., no jeans, shorts, tennis shoes, etc.) is required in all clinical settings. Personal grooming and hygiene must be a priority. Tattoos should be covered and piercings should be removed from the face area with the exception of earrings. For men, a shirt and tie with appropriate dress pants are expected. For women, a skirt and blouse, dress, or dress slacks are expected. Shoes should be closed-toed and heels flat to low height. Clothing should allow for adequate movement during patient care and should not be tight, short, or low cut. Women are not to wear short skirts or revealing tops. Scrub attire is appropriate for surgical/ER or procedural settings but should not be worn in the clinic.

The Program provides a photo ID badge identifying the student as a Physician Assistant student from UNMC which is to be worn in all clinical settings on a white jacket of uniform style. White coats must be worn at all times when seeing patients, clearly representing the student as a Physician Assistant student from UNMC.

In certain clerkships, the requirement for the white coat may be waived by the preceptor; however, the student must always have the UNMC identification badge clearly displayed on his or her person for easy visual access by others (see Appendix 5). The student is responsible for the purchase and upkeep of the jacket.

### **4. General Phase II Policies**

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 Canvas.

## 5. Policy on Assignment of Clerkships during Phase II

During Phase II, students develop their clinical competence 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, PAs, 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 state of Nebraska, many clinical clerkship sites are located away from Omaha and outside Nebraska Medicine. The majority of these sites are across the state of Nebraska with many located in rural areas. Because the Program's goals include educating students broadly in medicine as well as providing optimal clinical experiences for students, the following requirements guide the Program's policy for the assignment of all students to clerkships during Phase II of the Program.

- Every student will be required to spend two consecutive months in a Family Practice Clerkship located in a rural area as assigned by the Clinical Team.
- Every student should expect to perform all required and elective clerkships within the Nebraska Clinical Network.
- 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.
- Students must pay their own transportation costs to all clerkship sites.
- Students must pay for costs of room and board if these are not furnished by the clerkship site. Financial assistance may be available to help with these costs. It is the student's responsibility to pursue these opportunities with the Financial Aid office.
- Required testing and educational sessions are held at a UNMC campus up to eight times during Phase II of the Program. Students are responsible for all costs incurred to attend these sessions including travel to and from clerkship sites to the UNMC campus hosting the sessions.
- All international clerkships must be set up through and approved by UNMC's International Student and Programs Division. No outside agencies are accepted. Students are responsible for all costs associated with international travel.
- The final authority for the assignment of all clerkships and schedules rests with the Clinical Team.

All students must complete the clerkships designated as "required" by the Program. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate student preferences on clerkship scheduling and sites. However, in all cases the final determination for all clerkship dates, sites and activities will be at the discretion of the Clinical Team.

Grades are assigned on the basis of performance and end-of-clerkship examinations as defined in the Phase II Handbook on Canvas.

## V. Graduation Requirements

### A. Academic Requirements for Graduation

In order to graduate from the UNMC PA Program, each student must satisfactorily complete all of the following:

1. All letter-grade and non-letter grade course work,
2. All clerkships (required and elective),
3. A “Skill Demonstrated” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation,
4. All required assignments,
5. A summative evaluation of all clinical knowledge and skills, consisting of both objective examinations and skill performance evaluations.

“Satisfactory completion” means completing all courses, clerkships and the summative evaluation with a letter grade of C or higher; maintaining a cumulative GPA of 2.50; receiving a “pass” or “satisfactory” evaluation on non-letter graded assignments; and achieving a “Skill Demonstrated” rating in all categories of the Professionalism Evaluation.

Standards for completion of any course are determined by the course director. The course director determines the criteria for earning each letter grade. The syllabus for each course outlines the evaluation methods and the required performance scale and have met the approval of the Program Director.

Standards for completion of any clerkship are based on the evaluations and examination performance as interpreted by the PA Program Clinical Team and approved by the Program Director. Standards for completion of the summative evaluation are determined by the PA program faculty and approved by the Program Director.

All students who have successfully completed the PA Program graduation requirements are recommended for graduation by the Program Director to the Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions.

### B. Credentials Awarded

Since the class starting in 1994, UNMC PA Program graduates are awarded the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree. Program graduates are qualified to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants.



## C. Awarding Degrees with Honors

Awarding of degrees with honors is 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 seventh semester grades of the Program will not be used in the computation). In conformity with the College of Allied Health Professions policy on honors, the following classifications apply to the PA graduating class: Distinction requires a GPA of 3.70-3.79; High Distinction requires a GPA of 3.80-3.89; and Highest Distinction requires a GPA of 3.90 or higher.

## Appendix 1: Technical Standards

The UNMC Physician Assistant Program is dedicated to the education of students who strive to become competent and caring providers of primary health care services. The student must be able to achieve certain technical standards of knowledge and skill in order to successfully complete the Program. The technical standards stated in this document apply to satisfactory performance in all academic and clinical course work, as well as fulfillment of "non-academic" essential functions of the curriculum involving physical, cognitive, and behavioral factors that are essential to a professional clinical practitioner.

UNMC shall provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities otherwise qualified to complete the essential functions of the curriculum and the profession. The safety and welfare of a patient shall never be put in jeopardy as a result of an effort to reasonably accommodate a disability.

A student in the Physician Assistant Program must have adequate abilities and skills in the following five areas:

### Observation

The student must be able to observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to chemical, biological, anatomic and physiologic sciences, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms. A student must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and other sensory modalities. A student must be able to integrate all information visually and through the other senses.

### Communication

A student must be able to communicate effectively, sensitively, and rapidly in English with patients and members of the health care team. A student must be able to elicit information from patients, perceive nonverbal communications, and describe changes in mood, activity and posture. Communication includes not only speech, but writing, reading, interpreting tables, figures, graphs and computer literacy.

### Sensory and Motor Function

The student must have sufficient sensory and motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. The student will be required to coordinate both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of hearing, touch and vision.

More specifically, the student must be able to exercise such fine motor skills as to adequately perform laboratory tests, including but not limited to, wet mount, urinalysis and gram stain. The student must exercise such level of dexterity, sensation and visual acuity as to accurately complete such processes as administering intravenous medication, making fine measurements of angles and size, measuring blood pressure, respiration and pulse, performing physical examinations, and performing therapeutic procedures such as suturing and casting. The student must be able to hear sufficiently to accurately differentiate percussive notes and auscultatory findings, including but not limited to, heart, lung, and abdominal sounds, as well as discern

normal and abnormal findings using instruments such as tuning forks, stethoscopes, sphygmomanometers, and Doppler devices.

A student must be able to transport himself or herself in a manner which provides timely response in both general and emergency care situations. Moving patients and engaging in some procedures such as CPR will require a necessary level of strength.

### **Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities**

A student must have the intellect necessary to quickly analyze and resolve problems. These intellectual abilities include numerical recognition, measurement, calculations, reasoning, analysis judgment and synthesis. The student must be able to identify significant findings from the patient's history, the physical examination and laboratory data, provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses, and choose appropriate medications and therapy.

The ability to incorporate new information from many sources in formulating diagnoses and plans is essential. Good judgment in patient assessment, diagnostic and therapeutic planning is primary. When appropriate, students must be able to identify and communicate the limits of their knowledge to others.

### **Behavioral and Social Attributes**

A student must possess the emotional health required for full use of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment and the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients. The development of mature, sensitive effective and professional relationships with patients and members of the health care team is essential. Students must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are desired in a health professional and assessed during the admissions and education processes.

#### **Note:**

Requests for accommodation due to any type of disability must be made to the Program Director in writing either 1) Upon matriculation into the Program or 2) Immediately upon determination that such disability exists. Retroactive academic considerations will NOT be made for students with a known disability which could affect their academic performance if the disability was not made known to the Program Director.

## Appendix 2: Graduate Competencies

Graduates of the UNMC PA Program are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the following competency areas, which are based upon the ‘Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession,’ developed and maintained by the four main PA professional organizations: NCCPA, AAPA, ARC-PA and PAEA.

### Medical Knowledge, Clinical Reasoning, & Problem-Solving Abilities

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

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

1. Explain epidemiology, pathophysiology, risk factors, signs and symptoms, and the appropriate physical examination and diagnostic workup, including expected findings, for emergent, acute, and chronic medical conditions.
2. Analyzes physical examination and diagnostic study findings to diagnose and correctly manage general medical and surgical conditions, to include explaining the indications, contraindications, side effects, interactions, and adverse reactions of pharmacologic agents, deciding on appropriate patient disposition, and proper utilization of other treatment modalities.
3. Develop appropriate interventions for screening and prevention of conditions in an asymptomatic individual.
4. Formulate a differential diagnosis using appropriate history, physical exam, and diagnostic study findings.

### Interpersonal & Communication Skills

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass the verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic exchange of information. Physician assistants must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients’ families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system.

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

1. Demonstrate effective and contextually appropriate communication, questioning, and writing skills to adequately and accurately elicit and document information in a manner that creates and sustains a therapeutic and ethically sound patient relationship, enables sound patient education, and records information for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.

2. Works effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member of a health care team, including demonstrating emotional resilience and stability, an understanding human behavior, adaptability, and flexibility within the team and clinical environment.

## Patient Care & Clinical and Technical Skills

Patient care includes patient-specific and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable.

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

1. Works effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide competent, equitable, evidence-based, patient-centered care, to assist in and perform appropriate surgical procedures, and to provide preventive healthcare services aimed at maintaining health across the lifespan.
2. Demonstrates caring and respectful behavior when interacting with patients of all ages and their families, including collecting essential and accurate information, developing and carrying out patient management plans, and providing patient and family counseling and education.

## Professionalism

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

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

1. Explains the appropriate role of the physician assistant and maintains professional relationships with collaborating physicians and all members of the healthcare team while remaining committed to ethical principles, confidentiality of patient information, and informed consent.
2. Demonstrates respect, compassion, and integrity to all patients, society, and the PA profession, including being sensitive and responsive to individual patients and recognizing and addressing health disparities that may exist.

## Practice-Based Learning & Improvement

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

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

1. Locates, synthesizes, analyzes, and critiques evidence from scientific studies, technology resources, and current literature, including identification of gaps in knowledge, statistical and methodological validity, limitations, and biases, on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness and integrate this information into informed patient management.

## Systems-Based Practice & Interprofessional Collaboration

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

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

1. Explain the funding sources, payment structure, and resource allocation that contributes to patient care and practice quality, cost-effective care.
2. Accepts responsibility for promoting a safe healthcare environment, advocating for patients navigating the healthcare system, and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care.

## Appendix 3: Curriculum Overview

University of Nebraska Medical Center  
 College of Allied Health Professions  
 Division of Physician Assistant Education

### CURRICULUM 2022 – 2024

<u>Course No.</u>		<u>Semester Hours</u>
<b>PHASE I</b>		
FALL SEMESTER		
GCBA 571 .....	Structures of the Human Body	9
CIP 606 .....	Physiology	6
PHAS 620 .....	Physician Assistant Professional Issues	1
PAMM 690 .....	Biology of Disease	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>
SPRING SEMESTER		
CLS 500 .....	Application and Interpretation of Clinical Laboratory Data	2
PHAR 507 .....	Pharmacology	5
PHAS 630 .....	Clinical Skills I	3
PHAS 632 .....	Communication in Medicine I	2
PHAS 650 .....	Adult and Pediatric Medicine I	8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>
SUMMER SEMESTER		
PHAS 635 .....	Clinical Skills II	3
PHAS 637 .....	Communication in Medicine II	1
PHAS 645 .....	Behavioral Medicine	3
PHAS 655 .....	Adult and Pediatric Medicine II	9
PHAS 670 .....	Research Applications in Medicine	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>
FALL 2 SEMESTER		
PHAS 660 .....	Medical Ethics	1
PHAS 665 .....	Systems in Health Care and Management	1
PHAS 656 .....	Adult and Pediatric Medicine III	3
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PHASE II</b>		
FALL SEMESTER		
PHAS 700 Clinical Education/Clerkships (by arrangement) .....		12
SPRING SEMESTER		
PHAS 700 Clinical Education/Clerkships (by arrangement) .....		24
FALL SEMESTER		
PHAS 700 Clinical Education/Clerkships (by arrangement) .....		24

## PHASE II

Phase II, the clinical education phase, consists of 10 months of *Required* clerkships and 5 months of *Elective* clerkships. The required clerkships are in specific areas of clinical medicine, designed to provide a broad foundation for primary care clinical practice. Elective clerkships will be selected from specialty and primary care areas.

### Required Clerkships

#### Required Clerkships

PHAS 702	Psychiatry Clerkship .....	4
PHAS 703	Internal Medicine Clerkship .....	4
PHAS 704	Pediatrics Clerkship .....	4
PHAS 705	Women's Health Clerkship .....	4
PHAS 706	Surgery Clerkship .....	4
PHAS 707 A-B	Family Medicine Clerkship.....	8
PHAS 707C	Primary Care Clerkship .....	4
PHAS 708	Emergency Medicine Clerkship.....	4
PHAS 799	On Campus .....	4

#### Elective Clerkships

PHAS 721	Cardiology Elective.....	4
PHAS 722	Endocrinology Elective .....	4
PHAS 723	Gastroenterology Elective .....	4
PHAS 725	Nephrology Elective .....	4
PHAS 724	Infectious Disease Elective .....	4
PHAS 726	Oncology/Hematology Elective .....	4
PHAS 727	Pulmonary Medicine Elective .....	4
PHAS 728	Rheumatology Elective.....	4
PHAS 729	Cardiovascular Surgery Elective .....	4
PHAS 731	Neurosurgery Elective .....	4
PHAS 732	Orthopedic Surgery Elective .....	4
PHAS 736	Plastic Surgery Elective.....	4
PHAS 737	Urology Elective .....	4
PHAS 739	Allergy/Immunology Elective .....	4
PHAS 742	Dermatology Elective .....	4
PHAS 744	International Elective .....	4
PHAS 745	Neonatology Elective.....	4
PHAS 749	Otolaryngology Elective.....	4
PHAS 751	Rehabilitative Medicine Elective .....	4
PHAS 771	Primary Care Elective.....	4
PHAS 773	Internal Medicine Elective .....	4
PHAS 774	Pediatric Elective.....	4
PHAS 779	Geriatric Elective .....	4

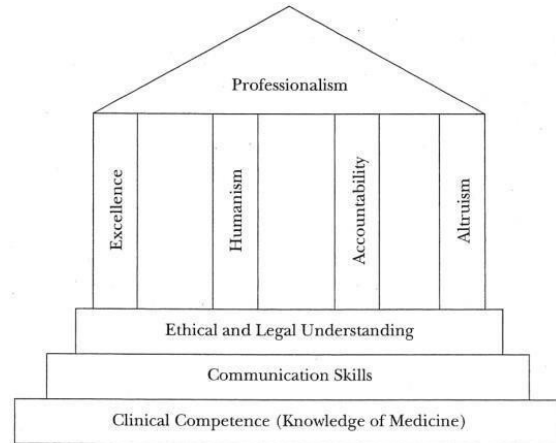
(Clerkships in other specialties are available to meet student needs.)



## Appendix 4: UNMC PA Program Model of Professionalism

Throughout the UNMC PA Program Student Policy Handbook, 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.

### 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.

## Appendix 5: Professional White Coat

It is the responsibility of each PA student to assure that patients, peers, other health professionals and the general public all clearly understand the identity of the student as a physician assistant student at UNMC, distinguished from other health care professionals. In addition to consistently introducing oneself clearly as a physician assistant student, the proper appearance of the white coat further identifies the student as a PA student in clinical settings.

The white coat is a clear mark of professionalism and additional emblems described below clearly and uniformly identify the PA students to all. The identifying items required by the Program for all PA students include 1) a standard white coat, 2) embroidery, and 3) an identification badge/card issued by UNMC to all students. This appendix provides guidance and clarification about the proper appearance of the coat and the proper display of identification items on the coat. Please make every 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 ensure that one is ready to wear at all times (additional coats may be purchased at the bookstore).

### University of Nebraska Medical Center Embroidery

This is usually supplied with the coat when the coat is purchased at the UNMC bookstore. It is sewn or permanently affixed just above the left breast pocket of the coat.

### University of Nebraska Medical Center Identification Badge/Card

The UNMC ID card must be worn at all times by PA students in order to identify themselves as currently enrolled students. The ID should be worn on the person for easy visual access by others, such as around the neck on a chain/cord or pinned to the breast pocket of the coat.

## Appendix 6: Definition of Terms

### Academic Dismissal

Refer to the College of Allied Health (CAHP) Student Success and Academic Standing Policy at [https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student\\_Success\\_and\\_Academic\\_Standing](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student_Success_and_Academic_Standing).

### Academic Probation

Refer to the College of Allied Health (CAHP) Student Success and Academic Standing Policy at [https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student\\_Success\\_and\\_Academic\\_Standing](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student_Success_and_Academic_Standing).

### Academic Warning

A cautionary notice from the Program Director that the student is not meeting minimum academic standards of the Program in a course or clerkship in progress. If improvements are not made, further academic consequences may result.

### 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.

### Good Standing

The student is currently meeting all requirements for satisfactory academic progress and all other requirements of the Program.

### Leave of Absence

Refer to the College of Allied Health (CAHP) Student Success and Academic Standing Policy at [https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student\\_Success\\_and\\_Academic\\_Standing](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student_Success_and_Academic_Standing).

## Appendix 7: Compact

### 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. This compact is 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 UNMC Physician Assistant Program Handbook, 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 physician assistant. 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, \_\_\_\_\_, 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 UNMC PA Program Handbook. 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. I also understand and agree that if, in the judgment of the Program Director and the faculty of the Program, I fail to meet the obligations, responsibilities or requirements as stated in the Handbook I have agreed to, my enrollment will be terminated via voluntary withdrawal or dismissal. Finally, I understand the intent and meaning of the Handbook contained herein, and agree that the Handbook 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 Handbook, presented to each student accepted in the UNMC PA Program, is unique to the Program and is designed to promote standards for academic progress, professional development and personal responsibility over the 28 months of the program curriculum.

Each student enrolled in the Program is expected to read and understand this Handbook and keep it in a handy place for ready reference. It is also conveniently available on Canvas in the course PHAS 620 PA Professional Issues. 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 2022-2023 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.