



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Student Handbook

Professional Phase

Didactic Phase

Revised: January 2022

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SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The Physician Assistant Program Student Handbook contains information on the policies, procedures, regulations, requirements, and standards required for successful completion of the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program. It is a supplement to the Springfield College Student Handbook and the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs.

The physician assistant program reserves the right to make changes in the rules and regulations of the program, its academic calendar, admission policies, procedures and standards, degree requirements, and standards necessary for successful completion of the program at its sole discretion. Additionally, change may include, but is not limited to, changes in course content, scheduling of courses offered, and canceling of scheduled classes and/or other program-related activities.

The College reserves the right to make changes in admission requirements, fees, charges, tuition, instructors, policies, procedures or standards, regulations, and academic programs offered at its sole discretion. Additionally, the college has the right to divide, cancel, or reschedule classes or programs if enrollment or other factors require such action.

Welcome to the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program. This program provides a strenuous but rewarding educational experience. Faculty and staff of the Program will work with you to help you become a physician assistant and attain the goal of certification. The Springfield College Physician Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Springfield College. 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remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards.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 approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be September 2026. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.

I. MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program is to educate students in spirit, mind, and body for leadership in clinical, community, and academic service to humanity by building upon its foundations of humanics and academic excellence.

Goal 1: Professionalism

Provide educational experiences, which help to instill and promote the development of professional values, ethical behaviors, and leadership to humanity that are expected of physician assistants.

Objectives

- Students will exhibit an understanding of diverse populations, medical ethics, patient confidentiality, professional values and responsibilities. (PAST 540)
- Continue to apply critical thinking skills and principles of medical ethics in all aspects of clinical and professional tasks and behaviors. (PAST 640/650/660/670-680)
- Demonstrate professional behavior. (PAST 640/650/660/670-680)
- Discuss, via professional presentation, a medical case that the student has seen during one of their clinical clerkships this semester. (PAST 640/650/660)

Outcomes:

Our students excel in the areas of professionalism, ethical behavior and service to humanity. The college sponsors various campus wide humanics in action activities throughout the year that many of our students attend. The PA student organization (PASO) organizes local events to support different community charities.

Every semester each student completes a professionalism self-assessment, which is reviewed with his or her advisor and documented in his or her student file. Any deficiencies identified by either the student or faculty member are discussed and a plan for remediation is developed.

Clinical students of our program have consistently and successfully demonstrated excellence in the areas of professionalism and ethical behavior as reported by our clinical preceptors. Data

collected from over 200 clinical preceptor evaluations show that the following percentages of our students perform at the benchmark level of a PA student or above (the level of a new PA, or the level of an experienced PA) in the following areas:

Providing Culturally Competent Care 100%
Ethical Behavior/Conduct 100%
Communication and Professional Relationships 99.5%

Goal 2: Evidence Based Practice

Educate students as to the importance of continued evidence-based practice through understanding, evaluating and utilizing medical literature for life-long learning.

Objectives

- Discriminate between high- and low-quality articles in the health care literature (RSCH 610/612/PAST 626)
- Interpret the literature for application in their field (RSCH 610/612/ PAST 626)
- Understand the elements and components of research and research reports (RSCH 610/612/PAST 626)
- Detect the various sources of bias in health care related articles and materials (RSCH 610/612/PAST 626)
- Describe the phases of clinical research for drugs and investigational devices (RSCH 610)
- Demonstrate the ability to discuss articles using research terminology (RSCH 610/612/PAST 626/640/650/660)

Outcomes:

Each of our students undergoes curriculum wide training in evidence-based practice. Their education starts with a foundation/methods research and statistics courses. The students conduct literature reviews, and use their training to demonstrate the ability to collect, analyze and draw conclusions from the medical literature.

The capstone project is a best practices paper based upon their literature review, which may be presented at a professional conference. Throughout the entire curriculum, evidence-based assignments are used to reinforce the students' learning.

Goal 3: Interprofessional/ Disciplinary Education

Provide educational experiences, which support the practice of patient centered care, by preparing our students to work effectively in interprofessional health care teams.

Objectives

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of various health care professionals and how these professionals contribute to the team approach of patient centered healthcare as part of an interprofessional team. (PAST 540).
- Develop ability to express opinions and professional judgments to team members (PAST 534/544/670-680)

- Listen respectfully to other team members and participate both as a team leader and member. (PAST 534/544/670-680)
- Understand and respect the roles, responsibilities and expertise of all participants (PAST 534/544/670-680)
- Engage with other health professionals in collaborative patient-centered problem solving (PAST 544/670-680)
- Understand your own and others' stereotypical views of different health professions and professionals. (PAST 534/544/670-680)

Outcomes

All students attend and participate in an Interprofessional experience during the didactic year. The students then write a reflection paper based on their experience.

Based on data from clinical year preceptor surveys 99.5% of our students “Work and communicate effectively and professionally as a leader or member of an interprofessional health care team to provide patient-centered care” at the benchmark level of a PA student or above (the level of a new PA, or the level of an experienced PA).

Goal 4: Medical Knowledge and Patient Care

Educating physician assistants who have the clinical skills necessary to provide high quality medical care in a variety of clinical settings.

Objectives

- Perform the appropriate history and physical exam throughout the lifespan. (PAST 512/522/532/670-680)
- Counsel and educate patients on preventative care, chronic and acute disease processes. (PAST 512/522/524/534/544/532/670-680)
- Discuss the anatomy and physiology of each disease process. (PAST 515/524/525/534/544/670-680)
- Discuss the appropriate utilization of pharmacotherapeutics in acute and chronic conditions. (PAST 523/524/533/534/544/543/670-680)
- Discuss mental health disorders, diagnosis, treatment and appropriate referral. (PAST513/670-680)
- Perform various clinical skills used commonly in clinical practice. (PAST 521/531/670-680)
- Discuss the epidemiology, etiology, pathophysiology, risk factors, signs/symptoms, differential diagnosis, physical findings, diagnostics, and treatment plans for various disease states. (PAST 524/534/544/670-680)
- Identify and interpret the appropriate diagnostics and laboratory medicine for each disease. (PAST 524/534/544/670-680)

- Integrate the knowledge base and skills learned during didactic year to enhance and further learning during clinical experiences to provide the best patient care to diverse populations. (PAST 640/650/660/670-680)

Outcomes

Springfield College PA students excel at medical knowledge and patient care goals as evidenced by our Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) Pass Rates posted on the webpage. Our students consistently score above average on the PANCE tasks areas when compared to the national mean.

Average patient-care scores on the PANCE for the most recent graduating class compared to national averages.

Class 2021

	<i>Springfield College PANCE</i>	<i>National PANCE</i>
<i>Applying Scientific Concepts</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>78%</i>
<i>Clinical Intervention</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>81%</i>
<i>Formulating Most likely diagnosis</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>82%</i>
<i>Health Maintenance</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>75%</i>
<i>History and Physical Exam</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>81%</i>
<i>Professional Practice</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>82%</i>
<i>Pharmaceutical Therapeutics</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>80%</i>
<i>Lab and Diagnostics Studies</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>80%</i>

II. GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

- A. Students must provide a local address, email, home telephone number, and cell phone number to the physician assistant program office each year. Changes in address or telephone number should be given to the program administrative associate and updated when necessary.
- B. Each student is required to purchase malpractice insurance each year that he or she is enrolled in the professional phase of the program. The insurance is linked to tuition payment. Therefore, non-payment of tuition will result in lack of malpractice insurance, which will prevent students from engaging in history taking and physical examination exercises with classmates and patient encounters in the didactic year or clinical rotations.
- C. Students are expected to secure their own transportation (reliable car) to clinical sites and didactic lectures.
- D. Physician assistant students are expected to follow all rules, regulations, policies, and procedures outlined in the Springfield College Student Handbook, Physician Assistant Program Student Handbooks, and the Springfield College Graduate Catalog.
- E. Because of the intensity of the physician assistant program, students are strongly discouraged from attempting to work outside of the program. Students should bear in mind that any work undertaken outside the program is not covered by the student

malpractice insurance required during the professional phase of the program. Course work and clinical experiences will not be arranged to accommodate any outside work.

- F. Principal faculty, the program director, and the medical director will not participate as health care providers for students in the program.
- G. PA students must not have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty.
- H. Student health records are confidential and will be kept at Springfield College Health Services and will not be accessible to or reviewed by program, principal, or instructional faculty or staff, except for immunization and tuberculosis screening results, which may be maintained and released with written permission from the student.

III. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROFESSIONALISM

The cornerstone of PA education is a combination of academic success and professional development. Various steps are in place to monitor the performance and promotion of physician assistant students. The Promotions Committee follows each student to ensure academic and professional development and takes action when inadequacies are found. Any deficiencies found in a student's performance are discussed within the committee and recommendations regarding remediation or dismissal are made. Continued enrollment in the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program is subject to the decision of the Promotions Committee, the program director, and the dean who must be assured that academic grades and overall performance are satisfactory, that the student is complying with the policies of the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program, and that the best interests of the school and of the other students are being served through the student's continued enrollment.

- A. ACADEMIC POLICIES
PA Program Curriculum

Didactic Phase Year 1 Spring Semester		
RSCH 610	Foundations and Methods of Research	3 credits
RSCH 620	Educational & Psychological Statistics I	3 credits
PAST 540	Ethics and Professional Issues	3 credits
BIOL 276	Medical Genetics	3 credits
PAST 515	Clinical Human Anatomy & Physiology I	2 credits
	Total Semester Hours	14 credits
Year 1 Summer Semester		
PAST 512	History & Physical I	4 credits
PAST 524	Clinical Medicine I	6 credits
PAST 513	Mental Health Issues	3 credits
PAST 523	Pharmacology I	2 credits
RSCH 612	Proposal Design	2 credits
	Total Semester Hours	17 credits
Year 2 Fall Semester		
PAST 522	History & Physical II	4 credits
PAST 525	Clinical Human Anatomy & Physiology II	2 credits
PAST 534	Clinical Medicine II	6 credits
PAST 533	Pharmacology II	2 credits
PAST 521	Applied Clinical Skills I	2 credits
	Total Semester Hours	16 credits
Year 2 Spring Semester		
PAST 532	History & Physical III	4 credits
PAST 544	Clinical Medicine III	6 credits

PAST 531	Applied Clinical Skills II	2 credits
PAST 543	Pharmacology III	2 credits
	ACLS Certification	1 credit
	Total Semester Hours	15 credits

Clinical Phase Year 2 Summer Semester		
PAST 670	Inpatient Medicine I	4 credits
PAST 671	Inpatient Medicine II	4 credits
PAST 672	Family Medicine I	4 credits
PAST 640	PA Seminar VIII	1 credit
PAST 626	PA Research Project	3 credit
	Total Semester Hours	16 credits
Year 2 Fall Semester		
PAST 673	Family Medicine II	4 credits
PAST 674	Emergency Medicine	4 credits
PAST 675	Obstetrics & Gynecology	4 credits
PAST 676	Pediatrics	4 credits
PAST 650	PA Seminar IX	1 credit
	Total Semester Hours	17 credits
Year 3 Spring Semester		
PAST 677	Psychiatry	4 credits
PAST 678	General Surgery	4 credits
PAST 679	Preceptorship I	4 credits
PAST 680	Preceptorship II	4 credits
PAST 660	PA Seminar X	1 credit
	Total Semester Hours	17 credits
	Total Semester Hours for the Professional Phase	112 credits

B. Attendance

Punctual classroom attendance in all program courses is mandatory. A student who

arrives late or leaves early will be considered absent unless granted permission by the course instructor or coordinator. Excessive absences from class or clinical rotations may result in a reduction in grade or failure of the course. Please consult the course syllabus for instructions and policies regarding make-up, absence, and lateness.

Students who encounter difficulty in maintaining a professional commitment to their clinical training or academic studies must meet with the program director to discuss continuance in the program. In order for a student who has missed classes to remain in the program, all missed work, to the degree possible, must be made up by the end of the course. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work. If work cannot be made up by the end of the course, the student may receive a reduction in grade, failure, or incomplete as determined by the course instructor. This could lead to remediation or dismissal from the program.

C. Leave of Absence (LOA)

A request for LOA must be submitted in writing to the program director. LOA may be granted, if deemed appropriate, for health, personal, or family reasons. An LOA is generally granted for a period of one year, with readmission into a subsequent class, at the discretion of the program director. Readmission will be allowed provided the issues necessitating the leave have been dealt with appropriately. If for any reason the leave of absence extends beyond the previously determined amount of time, the student must apply for readmission to the program unless a longer period is approved by the program director. Each student is only allowed one lifetime LOA.

In order to be considered for a leave of absence, the following conditions must exist:

1. A minimum of a B in all physician assistant program courses at the time of request.
2. Demonstrated behavior, attitude, and ethics consistent with the professional demeanor expected of a physician assistant student as determined by the program director.
3. Once the final exam for a course has been taken the course grade stands and any subsequent requests for LOA will be reviewed by the program director on a case by case basis.

The process for LOA is listed below:

1. Request the LOA in a letter specifying the LOA start, reason for LOA, and plan for return.
2. Meet with the program director.
3. Receive a letter from the program director approving the leave and specifying the return date.
4. Upon return to the program all students must write a letter describing how the need for LOA has been resolved.

B. Grading System

Unless otherwise stipulated by the individual course syllabus, the grading system followed by the physician assistant program for program courses is as follows:

94 - 100	A	4.0
90 - 93	A-	3.7
86 - 89	B+	3.3
80 - 85	B	3.0
↑ Satisfactory Performance ↑		
=====		
↑ Unsatisfactory Performance ↑		
77 - 79	B-	2.7
75 - 76	C+	2.3
73 - 74	C	2.0
70 - 72	C-	1.7
<70	F	0

C. Learning Disabilities

Several different teaching methods may be used in program courses. Regardless of the method(s) used, it is the student's responsibility to learn the material. Anyone with a documented learning disability, recognized by the college, who wishes accommodations should identify themselves to the Academic Success Center within the first week of classes to see whether reasonable accommodations are appropriate and/or available.

D. Credit Transfer

Students will not be excused from taking any courses in the physician assistant program. All courses must be taken at Springfield College. No course substitutions are allowed.

E. Harassment Policy

See the Springfield College Student Handbook for the harassment policy, pages 63-64. The program will defer to the college policy when dealing with cases of harassment. http://www.springfieldcollege.edu/Assets/pdfs/student-life/Student_Handbook.pdf

F. Testing Policy

1. Exam Blocks

Exams are administered in a single or in multiple blocks of test questions. You may answer the questions within a block in any order, and you may review and change responses within a block of questions during the time allotted for that block. However, after you exit a block of test questions, or after time expires for that block, you will not be allowed to review its questions or change your answers.

2. Exam Length

Exam length can vary and include multiple blocks of no more than 60 questions

with 60 minutes to complete each block. There will be five (5) minutes allotted for breaks between blocks, and you will be responsible for managing your break time.

3. No Personal Belongings

No personal belongings (ie, brimmed hats, backpacks, handbags, books, notes, study materials, calculators, watches of any kind, electronic paging devices, recording or filming devices, radios, cellular phones, outerwear, or food and beverages) are allowed in the testing room except in the front of the exam room. Upon reasonable suspicion, personal belongings and their contents may be subject to inspection. Any materials that are, or reasonably appear to be, a reproduction of any Springfield College PA examination materials will be confiscated.

4. Procedures

Student cell phones and watches will be placed in airplane mode and stored on the desk in front of the exam dividers in full view of the exam proctor.

While taking a scheduled or unscheduled break, you may not access personal items that have been stored in the front of the room, including any electronic devices.

While on an unscheduled break, you are not allowed to access any personal items other than medication or food required at a specific time, with the prior approval of the exam proctor. Items not permitted include, but are not limited to, smartphones, computers, tablets, watches, exam notes, books and study guides, or other electronic devices.

If you use a medical device or equipment that you must have with you at all times, please be sure to have your accommodations documented prior to the exam.

5. Breaks

There is a total of five (5) minutes allotted for scheduled breaks between testing blocks. After completion of each block, a "scheduled" break will begin, and you will not be able to return to the block of questions available prior to the break. Any scheduled break time used over your five (5)-minute break time will be deducted from your exam time and may result in your examination closing earlier than you anticipated.

If you take a break during a block of questions, you will be taking an "unscheduled" break. The amount of unscheduled break time that you take will be deducted from the time allotted to answer questions.

While on an unscheduled break, you are not allowed to access any personal items other than medication or food required at a specific time, with the prior approval of the exam proctor. Items not permitted include, but are not limited to, smartphones, computers, watches, tablets, exam notes, books and study guides, or other electronic devices.

While on an unscheduled break, if you leave and reenter the exam room, you must sign out, noting the exact time of exit, and you will be required to sign back in listing the exact time of return.

You are responsible for managing your break time. The successive test block will begin at the scheduled time, and the test will time out and close at the end of the last 60-minute block.

While taking a scheduled or unscheduled break, you may not access personal items that have been stored in the front of the room, including any electronic devices.

If you finish a test question block prior to the scheduled 60 minutes and close the block in a multiple test block exam, you can take the optional scheduled break or request the password for the next block; you will not have access to any of your personal belongings during that time. If you elect to take the scheduled break, you will need to sign out at your exit time and sign back in when you return. Once you finish the final test question block and close your test, you may leave the classroom. It is expected that students will not loiter in the building after they have completed their examination.

6. Cheating

If any student is found not to be following this exam protocol, they will be given a score of zero for the exam, an honor code violation will be reported to Academic Affairs, and the student may be dismissed from the program.

IV. MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION, CONTINUATION, AND GRADUATION

In addition to the academic standards described above, students will be expected to meet the following minimum technical standards in order to successfully complete the program. Technical standards define the attributes that are considered necessary for students to possess in order to complete their education and training and subsequently enter clinical practice. These standards are prerequisites for entrance, continuation, and graduation from the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program.

Students must possess aptitude, ability, and skills in five areas: 1) observation, 2) communication, 3) sensory and motor coordination and function, 4) conceptualization, integration, and quantitation, and 5) behavioral and social interaction. The functions described below are critically important to the student and must be autonomously performed by the student. It should be understood that these are standards for minimum competence in the program.

A. OBSERVATION

Students must be able to observe demonstrations and conduct experiments in the basic sciences including, but not limited to, chemical, biological, anatomic and physiologic sciences, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms. Students must be able to observe intracellular details through a microscope and observe demonstrations in the classroom including films, projected overheads and slides, and other forms of visual presentation.

Students must be able to accurately observe a patient near and at a distance, noting nonverbal as well as verbal signs. Specific vision-related criteria include, but are not limited to, detecting and identifying changes in the color of fluids, skin, and culture media; visualizing and discriminating findings on x-rays and other imaging tests; and

reading written and illustrated materials. Students must be able to observe and differentiate changes in body movement, observe anatomic structures, discriminate among numbers and patterns associated with diagnostic tests such as electrocardiograms and electroencephalograms, and competently use diagnostic instruments such as an otoscope, ophthalmoscope, and microscope.

B. COMMUNICATION

Students must be able to effectively relate to patients, conveying a sense of compassion and empathy. They must be able to clearly communicate with patients in order to elicit information; accurately describe changes in mood, activity, and posture of patients; and understand verbal as well as nonverbal communication.

Communication includes not only speech, but reading and writing. Physician assistant education presents exceptional challenges in the volume and breadth of required reading in order to master the subject area and to impart information to others. Students must be able to communicate quickly, effectively, and efficiently with oral, handwritten, and typed English in the classroom and later, with all members of the health care team. Specific requirements include, but are not limited to, the following: rapidly and clearly communicating with the medical team on rounds or elsewhere, eliciting an accurate history and physical exam from patients, and communicating complex findings in appropriate terms to patients and to various members of the health care team. Students must learn to recognize and promptly respond to emotional communications such as sadness and agitation.

Students must be able to read and write efficiently, accurately, and legibly to record observations and plans in legal documents, such as the patient record. Students must be able to prepare and communicate concise but complete summaries of individual encounters and complex, prolonged encounters, including hospitalizations. Students must be able to complete forms according to directions in a complete and timely fashion.

C. SENSORY AND MOTOR COORDINATION OR FUNCTION

Students must possess sufficient sensory and motor function to perform physical examinations using palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. This requires sufficient exteroceptive sense (visual, auditory, olfactory, touch, pain, and temperature), proprioceptive sense (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibration), and motor function.

Students must be able to evaluate various components of the spoken voice such as pitch, intensity, and timbre. They must also be able to accurately differentiate percussive notes and auscultatory findings, including, but not limited to, heart, lung, and abdominal sounds. Students must be able to accurately discern, through the auditory sense, normal and abnormal findings using instruments including, but not limited to, tuning forks, stethoscopes, sphygmomanometers, Doppler devices, and auditory alarms.

Students should be able to execute motor movements to provide general care and emergency treatments to patients. The student, therefore, must be able to respond promptly to urgencies within the hospital or practice setting and must not hinder the ability of their co-workers to provide prompt care. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of a physician assistant include arriving quickly when called,

assisting in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), administering intravenous medications, applying pressure to arrest bleeding, maintaining an airway, suturing uncomplicated wounds, and assisting with obstetrical maneuvers. As a further illustration, CPR may require safely moving an adult patient, applying considerable chest pressure over a prolonged period of time, forcefully delivering artificial respiration, and calling for help.

Students should be able to perform basic laboratory tests, such as a wet mount, urinalysis, gram stain, etc, and diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, such as phlebotomy, venipuncture, and the placement of catheters and tubes. The administration of intravenous medications requires a certain level of dexterity, sensation, and visual acuity. Students must be able to measure angles and diameters of various body structures using a tape measure or other devices; measure blood pressure, respiration, and pulse; and interpret graphs describing biologic relationships.

Clinical rotations in ambulatory care settings require the ability to transport oneself to a variety of settings in a timely manner, while inpatient rounds require prolonged and rapid ambulation.

D. INTELLECTUAL, CONCEPTUAL, INTEGRATIVE, AND QUANTITATIVE ABILITIES

Problem solving, a critical skill demanded of physician assistants, requires intellectual abilities which must be performed quickly, especially in emergency situations. These intellectual abilities include numerical recognition, measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, judgment, and synthesis. Students must be able to identify significant findings from the patient's history and the physical examination and laboratory data and 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 and diagnostic and therapeutic planning is primary. When appropriate, students must be able to identify and communicate the limits of their knowledge to others.

E. BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

Students must possess the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, good interpersonal skills, interest in people, and motivation are personal qualities that are required. Students must possess the ability to monitor and react appropriately to their own emotional needs and responses. For example, students need to maintain emotional demeanor and organization in the face of long hours, fatigued colleagues, and dissatisfied patients.

Students must be able to develop professional relationships with their colleagues, as well as with patients. They must be able to provide comfort and reassurance to patients, when appropriate, while protecting patient confidentiality. Students must possess endurance to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. All students are at times required to work for extended periods of time, occasionally with rotating schedules. Students must be able to adapt to changing

environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine. Students are expected to accept suggestions and criticisms and if necessary, to respond by modification of behavior.

V. ACADEMIC HONESTY

The practice of medicine requires sound judgment, honor, and integrity. All students enrolled in the Springfield College Physician Assistant Program are expected to conform to the principles of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated by the program faculty or the college.

Anyone determined by the Program to have cheated on unit tests, quarterly examinations, final examinations, quizzes, practical examinations, homework, or written assignments will receive a final grade of "F" in the course, regardless of the student's progress to that point, and will automatically be suspended from the Program. All instances of cheating will be reported to Academic Affairs.

Cheating also includes plagiarism, which "is the act of using another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source. It is giving the impression that you have written or thought of something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else." (Plagiarism, Springfield College Writing Center)

Further forms of cheating include, but are not limited to, purchasing of papers and presenting the same written work for more than one course without the permission of the instructors of the courses in which the student is enrolled. The use of cellular phones and transmitting or recording devices during exams or exam review sessions is prohibited and will be considered academic dishonesty. Discussion among students regarding testing material is considered academic dishonesty. For students in the clinical year, honesty is expected in the recording of history information, physical findings, and laboratory data or other information not obtained directly by the student.

Refer to the Springfield College academic honesty and integrity policy
http://catalog.springfield.edu/content.php?catoid=71&navoid=1829#acad_hone_and_inte_poli

VI. WRITING POLICY

The ability to communicate well both orally and in writing is key to being a well-educated health care provider. Students are expected to present work in correct grammatical form with no misspelled words. Grades in the professional courses will reflect deficiencies. Consult course syllabi for expectations.

VII. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, ETHICS, AND ATTIRE EXPECTED OF STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical setting and when off college property. Students should understand that their personal behavior as a member of the PA program and their future profession reflects not only on themselves but also their fellow PA students, future colleagues, and the entire Springfield College faculty and staff.

Students may express personal taste through appropriate, conservative dress while

attending classes on the Springfield College campus, on clinical rotations, and when attending program-related activities.

- A. During the normal course of interaction with others, the wearing of a head scarf, hat, cap, hood, or other head covering in a building is unacceptable. An exception to this is when such items are required as part of a medical treatment, religious observance, or clinical rotation.
- B. Except for specific laboratory assignments, students are expected to wear appropriate footwear while attending classes.
- C. Students are not allowed to wear operating room attire (scrubs) in the classrooms on the Springfield College campus (unless directed by the course instructor).
- D. Eating and/or drinking during classroom sessions is not allowed, unless approved by the course instructor.
- E. Audio/video recording of lectures is prohibited without verbal permission from the lecturer.
- F. In all professional settings including the classrooms and especially in the presence of faculty and program staff, individuals are to be addressed by their appropriate professional title.
- G. In the professional phase when attending classes at the college, students are expected to dress professionally. Professional dress includes dresses, dress skirts (knee length minimum), dress pants, dress shirts that are not too tight or too revealing, dress shoes, appropriately colored socks, and ties. No sweats, sneakers, or hats are allowed.

Dress for laboratory settings will be at the discretion of the instructor.

When at a professional setting (hospital, medical office, etc), students are expected to dress in professional attire (see above). No flip flops or open toe shoes are allowed.

Nails should be short. Acrylic fingernails are prohibited in all clinical settings. Body jewelry is usually inappropriate for medical providers and therefore discouraged.

- H. Massachusetts State law requires that students and personnel employed at health care facilities wear an identification badge. Students are therefore required by law to wear their Springfield College ID badge when attending classes and other functions at all health care facilities.

VIII. STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONALISM

Appropriate behavior includes, but is not in any way limited to, honesty, trustworthiness, professional demeanor, respect for the rights of others, personal accountability, and concern for the welfare of patients – all of which are outlined below.

- A. Honesty – Being truthful in communication with others.

- B. Trustworthiness – Being dependable; following through on responsibilities in a timely manner; maintaining the confidentiality of patient information.
- C. Professional Communication and Demeanor – Being thoughtful, appropriate, and kind when interacting with patients, their families, other members of the health care team, and all others; striving to maintain composure under pressures of fatigue, professional stress, or personal problems; maintaining a neat and clean appearance and dress in attire that is reasonable and accepted as professional to the patient population served; expressing disagreements in a tone and manner that is appropriate to the situation.
- D. Respect for the rights of others – Dealing with staff and peer members of the health care team in a considerate manner and with a spirit of cooperation; acting with an egalitarian spirit toward all persons encountered in a professional or non-professional setting regardless of age, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, gender, sexual preference, socioeconomic status, or Veteran/Reserve/National Guard status; respecting the rights of patients and their families to be informed and share in patient care decisions; respecting patients’ modesty and privacy.
- E. Personal accountability – Participating responsibly in patient care to the best of one’s ability and with appropriate supervision; undertaking clinical duties and persevering until they are complete; notifying the responsible person if something interferes with one’s ability to perform clinical tasks effectively; compliance with college policies and procedures in an honest and forthright manner.
- F. Concern for the welfare of patients – Treating patients and their families with respect and dignity both in their presence and in discussions with others; discerning accurately when supervision or advice is needed and seeking these out before acting; recognizing when one’s ability to function effectively is compromised and asking for relief or help; not using alcohol or drugs in a way that could compromise patient care or one’s own performance; not engaging in romantic, sexual, or other nonprofessional relationships with a patient, even upon the apparent request of a patient.

IX. USE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL BY STUDENTS

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while attending program activities or classes, the following will take place:

- A. The student will immediately be removed from the classroom or from the clinical setting and be referred to the Springfield College Health Center for evaluation.
- B. The violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be reviewed with Student Affairs and any disciplinary action taken will be with the guidance of Student Affairs.
- C. If the student repeats the behavior he or she will not be allowed to continue in the program until proof is submitted to the program director that he or she is undergoing treatment for the substance. A letter from a counselor stating that the student is well enough to return to classes is required in order to return to the program.

X. HEALTH STATUS, BACKGROUND CHECK, AND DRUG SCREEN REQUIREMENTS

- A. Immunization status, yearly physical exams, and tuberculosis (TB) status must be updated in the Springfield College Health Center by the start of classes in January of the professional phase. Copies of the TB status and immunizations need to be sent to the PA department as well. It is the responsibility of the student to keep up to date, with the appropriate updates sent to the college and an updated copy on file on Typhon.
- B. PA Students will not be allowed to attend classes, labs, or clinical experiences until all documentation is complete. If authorized, the administrative clinical coordinator will submit documentation on the student's behalf to clinical sites requesting the information for clinical rotations.
- C. Students will be required to obtain an influenza vaccination yearly (with documentation updated on Typhon) or wear a mask while at a clinical site if the particular clinical site requires vaccination.
- D. Covid vaccination is required at the level minimally recommended by the CDC. Documentation is required to be updated on Typhon. Religious and medical exemptions will be accepted if approved by the college. Clinical placement may be affected if vaccinations are not kept up to date or by exemptions.
- E. A Massachusetts CORI and national background check must be completed in the month of May during the didactic and clinical years. The MA CORI information is held in the SC Police Department; the national background check information is maintained on the vendor's server, however, the student will authorize the release of the information to the program or clinical site upon request as needed. These background checks are in compliance with the HLSC policy on background checks.
- F. Students will be required to submit drug-testing results to clinical sites prior to starting rotations. Positive drug screen results will be forwarded to the student's program director for review. Consequences of positive drug screens will be determined by the program director per individual program policy. Program directors may contact Student Affairs to discuss positive results as per the Student Code of Conduct.

XI. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE DIDACTIC YEAR AND MATRICULATION TO THE CLINICAL YEAR

The following rules and regulations reflect the minimum academic and behavioral standards expected of students during the didactic year of the program. In order to complete the didactic year, students must

- A. Earn at least a "B" in all Physician Assistant Program courses.
- B. Attend all classes, lectures, seminars, and other learning activities as dictated by the course instructors.
- C. Attend all assigned clinical experiences and complete the work associated with patient encounters in these assignments.
- D. Be present and on time for all examinations (see individual course syllabi).
- E. Meet at least once a semester with assigned advisors.

- F. Attend PA Program approved classes to obtain Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification. All certifications must remain current while enrolled in the PA program.
- G. Demonstrate professional behavior and attitude consistent with the Program Code of Conduct and Ethics, Appendix D.

XII. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE CLINICAL YEAR

- A. Students are responsible for all costs associated with clinical rotations, including travel, parking, housing, and living expenses. Students are also responsible for the costs associated with clinical attire and diagnostic equipment.
- B. The program has the responsibility for arranging the clinical instruction and supervision of each student. Students may seek out clinical sites in their home communities. The program must approve each clinical site, and an affiliation agreement must be in place 3 months prior to the student's rotation. The program retains the responsibility for student training and evaluation.
- C. The following rules and regulations reflect the minimum academic and behavioral standards expected of the students during the clinical year of the program. In addition to strictly complying with all of the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the college and the program, the student must
 1. Successfully complete clinical rotations including Inpatient Medicine, Family Medicine, General Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and elective rotations with a grade of "B" or better.
 2. If a student should fail a clinical rotation, he or she will remediate for four weeks to remediate the identified deficiency. This may include a repeated rotation or additional coursework. A failed clinical rotation will most likely result in a delay of graduation. A plan for remediation will be developed by the clinical education director and program director to remedy the student's deficiency. Remediation may be achieved through a guided independent study course that must be successfully completed with a passing grade of B or better. Failure to achieve a grade of B or better on the remediation or second attempt at the failed rotation will result in dismissal from the program.
 3. Failure of a clinical rotation evaluation (preceptor evaluation) will result in failure of that rotation regardless of the grade on the end of rotation exam. Refer to course syllabi for further details.
 4. Failure of two rotations will result in dismissal from the program.
 5. A summative practical and written examination will be given in the final semester to assess medical knowledge, clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, interpersonal skills, and professional behaviors. The physician assistant student must show competence in all areas to graduate from the program. If necessary, remediation will be mandatory in all areas until the minimum competence is achieved.
 6. Demonstrate professional behavior and attitude consistent with the Program Code of Conduct and Ethics, Appendix D.

XIII. EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The evaluation of ethical and professional behavior is an ongoing process during school, and the successful completion of each semester, rotation, and phase of the curriculum require

that a student meet the appropriate ethical and professional standards as laid out previously. A Periodic Evaluation of Professionalism/Student Behavior Form, Appendix A, will be used for assessment and to document irregularities in professional conduct and will be included in the student's file.

A. Procedure:

Unprofessional behavior may be addressed in one or more of the following ways, depending on the nature of the behavior and the setting and circumstances in which it occurred:

1. Incident Report
2. Professional written warning,
3. Professional probation with remedial work, or
4. Dismissal

Professional warning will entail a written account of the offense, with a Periodic Evaluation of Professionalism/Student Behavior Form, Appendix A, completed. If subsequent professional issues arise, probation or dismissal may result.

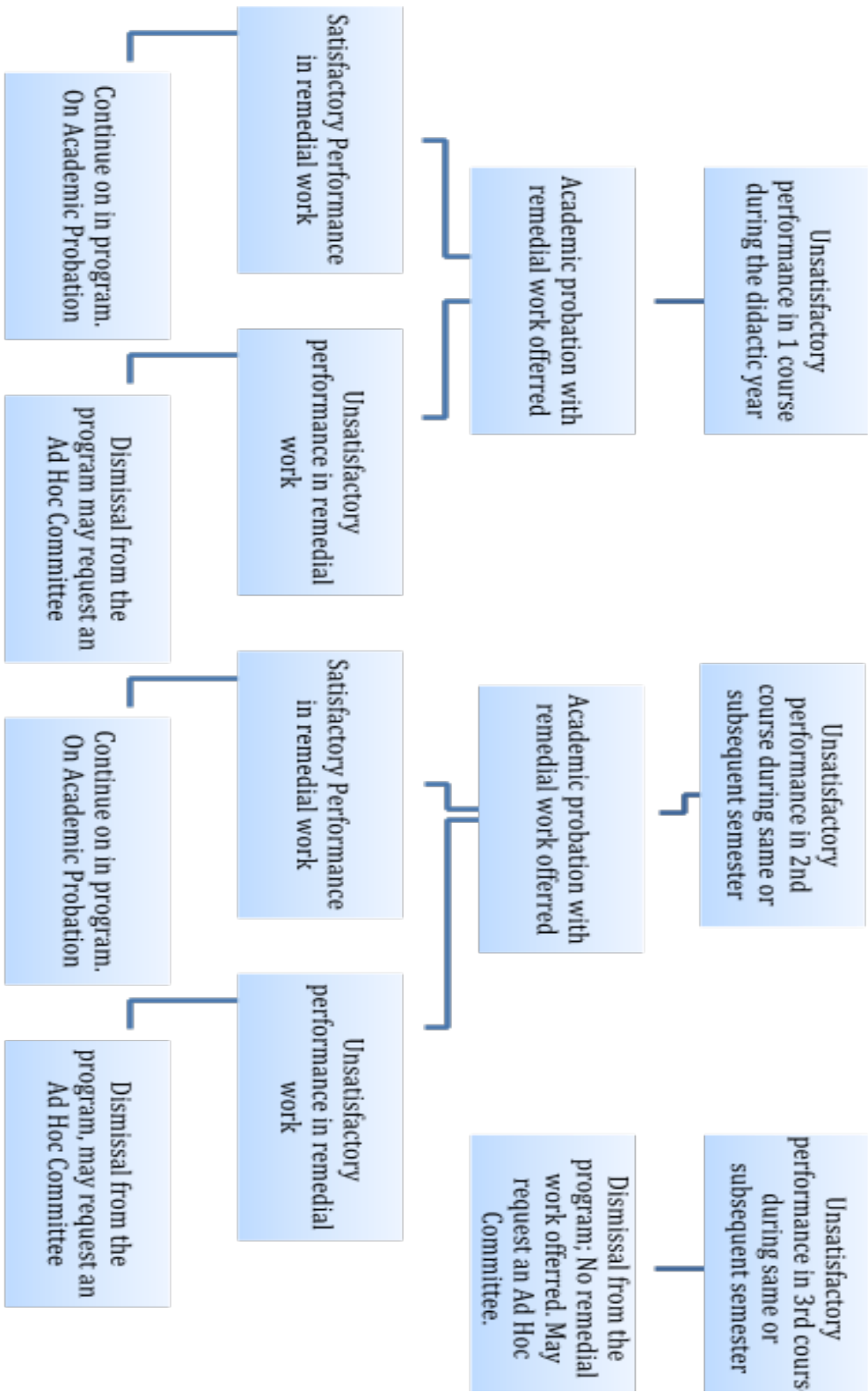
Professional probation lasts from the time of offense through graduation. Remedial work may result in delay of progress and graduation in the PA Program. If subsequent professional issues arise, dismissal may result.

XIV. EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (During the first 15 months of professional phase)

- A. At the end of every semester the Promotions Committee meets to discuss the progress of every student. The promotions committee ensures that each student is successfully meeting the program competencies in regard to clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, interpersonal skills, medical knowledge, and professional behaviors. In the case of students experiencing difficulties in achieving the program competencies, the committee recommends whether these students should be promoted, promoted upon completion of remedial work (academic/professional probation), or dismissed.
- B. Academic probation is a conditional status that is assigned when a student has unsatisfactory academic performance. Unsuccessful performance of 1 or 2 courses in a single semester or throughout the didactic year will result in being placed on academic probation, and remedial work will be offered. If the student is not successful in completing the remedial work he or she will be dismissed from the program, but not the college. If the student has unsatisfactory performance in a third course the student will be dismissed from the program.
- C. If dismissed the student has the opportunity to request an Ad Hoc Committee hearing. See Appendix B. The Ad Hoc Committee will make a recommendation to the program director as to whether or not the student should be allowed to decelerate.
- D. Each student will have only one lifetime opportunity to decelerate. In addition, because the courses offered each semester are interrelated and dependent, students are required to repeat all physician assistant didactic courses (PAST, RSCH, BIOL) by reregistering, attending all classes, and passing all evaluation requirements. As per the college policy, "the new grade, whether higher or lower than the original grade, is used in calculating both the current semester and cumulative GPA." If the student is not

successful in showing current competency in all PAST/RSCH/BIOL courses he or she will be dismissed from the program, regardless of previous performance. The student will need to pay for all courses again, regardless of the previous grade. As per the college policy above, the previous grade will no longer be accepted and the student must have satisfactory performance in all courses. See the following matrix.

- E. If remedial work is offered, the course coordinator(s) will arrange the type of work to be completed. See the individual course syllabi for details.
- F. At the successful completion of the didactic phase (first 15 months) academic probation standing is lifted and the clinical year remediation policy becomes effective.



Unsatisfactory Performance Matrix: Didactic Year

XV. ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT

Occasionally, accidents will occur in the laboratory or at the clinical site. Any student or staff member injured as a result of any accident involving a student must immediately file a Springfield College Accident/Incident Report Form with the program office. If the accident occurs at a clinical site, the student must notify the clinical education director or program director by telephone as soon as possible. The form found in Appendix C can be photocopied and used for filing the report.

XVI. STUDENT HEALTH

- A. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires all educational institutions to maintain full immunization records for all enrolled students. Students who do not comply with this mandate will not be permitted to remain enrolled at Springfield College.
- B. All incoming students will be required to have documented immunizations for health care providers as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the "Healthcare Personnel Vaccination Recommendations Document." Students must provide the Springfield College Health Center with documentation of their immunizations. Failure to comply with this immunization requirement will lead to immediate action from the Program.
- C. Students must carry health insurance while attending Springfield College. Students are responsible for all medical fees incurred while enrolled in the program. All Springfield College students are required to have a medical examination by a qualified health practitioner prior to enrollment in the College. The Physical Examination Report must be completed and returned to the Springfield College Health Center no later than the first day of class in the initial first spring semester. Students will not be allowed to attend classes, labs, or clinical experiences until the form is completed and returned to the Health Center. Any change in health status must be documented in the health record. Due to the nature of the program and the necessity for contact with immunosuppressed patients, failure to maintain a current health record will lead to suspension from the program until the record is complete.

XVII. EQUIPMENT

Students are expected to obtain the following required pieces of diagnostic equipment before the beginning of the summer semester of the didactic year. Although the program does not endorse any one medical instrument or supply company, program faculty can be consulted prior to purchasing equipment.

- A. Quality stethoscope with bell/diaphragm (recommend Littman Cardiology III or better)
- B. Aneroid-type adult sphygmomanometer
- C. Oto-ophthalmoscope diagnostic set (NOT the Welch Allyn basic set)
- D. Percussion hammer
- E. Tuning fork (C128)
- F. OSHA safety glasses
- G. Laminated handheld vision screener with cm/inch rule & pupil size gauge (Rosenbaum)
- H. Patient cloth examination gown
- I. Conservative sport bra (women)
- J. Gym shorts
- K. White, tailored lab jacket (2), with program patches appropriately sewn on
- L. Retractable fabric measuring tape with centimeters

- M. Basic suture set and Surgireal 5 layer/no vessels skin (or comparable) *Flat end forceps
- N. Digital device (smartphone, iPad, or other tablet)
- O. Surgical scrub suits

XVIII. MEDICAL REFERENCE RESOURCES

Recent editions of all required textbooks and medical reference books are available at the Harold C Smith Learning Commons and in the offices of program faculty. Recommended readings may be placed on reserve. UpToDate, MEDLINE, Harrison's On-Line, and other literature searches can be performed at the Harold C Smith Learning Commons.

XIX. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- A. Physician Assistant Student Organization (PASO)
Springfield College allows PA students to gather together for the purpose of friendship, support, professional development, and community service.
- B. American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
PA students are eligible for membership in the Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA). Members receive official publications of the Academy, have access to a job service, and are eligible to compete for scholarships.
- C. Massachusetts Association of Physician Assistants (MAPA)
MAPA is a constituent chapter of AAPA. Students are chosen from the programs in Massachusetts to sit on the MAPA Board of Directors. Each year MAPA offers one or more scholarships to MAPA student members and supports student projects in a variety of ways.

Students are required to join all of the above organizations. Special rates are available for student membership. AAPA membership will be paid through a program fee. MAPA membership is the student's responsibility to enroll and maintain yearly.

XX. PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF

Brooke Hallowell, PhD, CCC-SLP, ASHA Fellow Dean School of Health Sciences (413) 748-3820	Meghan Migeon DMSc, MS, PA-C Associate Professor Program Director (413) 748-3558
Jamie Moore DScPAS, PA-C Assistant Professor Didactic Instructor (413) 748-3541	Rebecca Rosenstein MD Medical Director (413) 748-3554
Roxanne R. Sprague, MCMSc, PA-C Assistant Professor Didactic Instructor (413) 748-3931	Loni Kearney, MS, PA-C Assistant Professor Didactic Instructor (413) 748-3518
Christine Niedbala MS, PA-C Assistant Professor Didactic Instructor (413) 748-3515	Andrew Baginski MEd, MHS, CAP, PA-C Assistant Professor Clinical Education Director (413) 748-4750
Melinda Connors MS, PA-C Assistant Professor Clinical Education Co-Director (413) 748-3514	Sara Zukowski, BS Administrative Associate (413) 748-3554
Scott Kirkland, AS Simulation Lab Coordinator (413) 748-3809	
Adjunct Faculty	
Carol Coan, PhD Melissa Miles, MS, PA-C Jenn Alix, MS, PA-C	Luanne McClowsky DMSc, PA-C Kelly Gildea, MS, PA-C Sara McGowan, MS, PA-C Sarah Delisle MA, PA-C

XXI. APPENDIX A: PROFESSIONALISM EVALUATION FORM/INCIDENT REPORT

Student: _____ Advisor or Faculty Completing Form: _____ Date: _____

This form will be used to document and evaluate professionalism issues and concerning student behaviors. It will be completed as needed by program faculty/adjuncts in the presence of the student, the student's academic advisor (if available) and the Program Director or an additional program faculty member. This feedback may be informational or may result in a written warning, professional probation, or dismissal from the program. In accordance with the Professionalism policy outlined in the Student handbook, failure to improve on unacceptable items or further infractions may result in dismissal from the PA program. Regardless of probation status, any student who demonstrates a serious/grievous professionalism issue as deemed by the Departmental Promotions Committee may be immediately dismissed.

Professionalism/Behavioral Category of Concern	Isolated Occurrence	Repeatedly	Grievous/Concerning	Unacceptable
Professional Appearance (professional dress, grooming, hygiene)				
Attendance / Punctuality				
Personal Accountability/Preparedness (class, group work, labs)				
Assignment Timeliness/Completeness				
Communication Effectiveness (peers, lecturers, faculty, preceptors)				
Respect/Professional Relationships: peers, lecturers, faculty, preceptors				
Teamwork/Cooperativeness				
Respect for Appropriate Personal Boundaries				
Responsiveness to Feedback/Constructive Criticism				
Concern for the Welfare of Patients/Others (Empathy)				
Recognizes Own Limitations				
Self-Confidence				
Maturity and Self-Control				
Motivation, Initiative, Academic Curiosity				
Adaptability to Stressful / Changing Circumstances				
Reliability, Honesty, Trustworthiness (Integrity)				
Sensitivity to Diversity (culture, age, gender, disability)				
Overall Attitude (must give examples or describe incident)				

Detailed account of incident or behavior: If commenting on more than one behavior/incident or more space is needed, use back of form.

Date Behavior(s) Observed: _____ Associated Course: _____ Setting: _____

Faculty Comments: _____

Student Comments: _____

Time frame/Date for Re-evaluation of above: _____ Next semester (circle if ok for interval evaluation)

Disposition: Professionalism Incident Report Written Warning Professional Probation Dismissal

Advisor or Faculty Completing Evaluation: _____ Date: _____

Student: _____ Date: _____ Student refused to sign

Program Director Review: _____

XXII. APPENDIX B: APPEAL PROCEDURE

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM APPEAL PROCEDURE

- A. **Appealing a PAST Final Grade**
Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program have the right to appeal a final grade in a PAST course. The process begins with the student requesting a review of their tests and assignments with the course instructor. If the student feels they were treated unfairly, the student may pursue the review with the program director and dean, in that order. A written request to the program director describing the circumstances of the appeal must be submitted within one week of the notification of the disputed grade. Due to the scheduling of PAST courses, this must be accomplished prior to the beginning of the next academic semester.
- B. **Appealing to the Ad Hoc Student Evaluation Committee (AHSEC) After Dismissal**
Reasons for dismissal from the program may include, but are not limited to, poor academic achievement, academic dishonesty, and behavior and/or attitude not consistent with the physician assistant profession. Students who have been dismissed from the professional phase of the physician assistant program may appeal to the Ad Hoc Student Evaluation Committee. While an appeal is in process, the student may NOT continue in program activities. The AHSEC will consist of one Springfield College Physician Assistant Program faculty member not directly involved with the appeal and at least two (2) other members from the faculty of Springfield College. The following procedure will be followed:
- C. Any student wishing to appeal dismissal from the program must submit a written request for a meeting with AHSEC to the program director within two weeks of receiving notification of dismissal. The student must clearly specify in writing why he or she feels the dismissal should be overturned.
1. The program director will form an Ad Hoc Committee within two weeks from receipt of the written appeal.
 2. The Ad Hoc Committee will review all the facts along with any supporting documentation from the student and faculty. The appeal should be specific enough so that members of the committee will have a clear understanding of the student's reason for the request. The student and the faculty member may be asked to present a statement concerning the appeal to the Ad Hoc Committee during a formal meeting of the committee.
 3. The program director will notify the student in writing of the program's final decision within five working days after receiving the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation.
 4. There is no further recourse for appeal in the program.
- D. Dismissal from the Program does not necessarily mean dismissal from the college. The student should make an appointment with an advisor in another department to continue his or her education at Springfield College.

XXIII. APPENDIX C: ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM
ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Name:		SSN:
STUDENT or EMPLOYEE	GENDER:	DOB:
Home Address: (Number, Street, City, State, ZIP)		
Springfield College Address: (Residence Hall/Department)		Telephone:
Date and Time of Injury/Accident:		Scene of Injury/Accident:
Source of Injury: (equipment, wet floor, loose tile, etc.)		
Witness: YES or NO	Name of Witness:	
Describe what happened:		
Location of Injury: (left ankle, right index finger, etc.)		
Disposition:		
Signature:		Date:
Title/Occupation:		
Name and Title of Person Preparing Form: (if not injured party)		Date:
This form may be photocopied		

XXIV. APPENDIX D: ETHICAL CODE OF BEHAVIOR FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM ETHICAL CODE OF BEHAVIOR FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

Members of the physician assistant profession must act in an appropriate way to monitor and maintain the integrity of the standards of the profession. The SC PA Program is committed to excellence in patient care and education and the training of physician assistant students. To further this goal, staff members and students are expected to adhere to a Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics in their interactions with patients, colleagues and other health professionals, and the public.

The following code of conduct and ethics is adapted from the Dartmouth College Medical School and Hitchcock Medical Center Code.

Professional Obligations

A. Respect for Persons

1. Practice the doctrine of informed consent for any patient diagnostic test or therapy
2. Treat patients, colleagues, students, and teachers with the same degree of respect you would wish them to show you
3. Treat patients with kindness, gentleness, dignity, empathy, and compassion
4. Do not use offensive language verbally or in writing when referring to patients or their illnesses
5. Respect the privacy and modesty of patients
6. Do not harass others, physically, verbally, psychologically, or sexually
7. Do not prejudge others on the basis of gender identity, religion, race, age, or sexual preference

B. Respect for Patient Confidentiality

1. Do not share the medical or personal details of a patient with anyone except those health care providers integral to the well being of the patient or within the context of an educational endeavor
2. Do not discuss patients or their illness in public places where conversations may be overheard
3. Do not publicly identify patients in spoken words or in writing
4. Do not invite or permit unauthorized persons into patient care areas of the institution
5. Do not share your confidential computer system password with anyone
6. All physician assistant students are advised NOT to participate in social media communications

C. Honesty, Integrity

1. Be truthful in verbal and in written communications
2. Acknowledge your errors of omission and commission
3. Do not knowingly mislead others
4. Do not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise act dishonestly
5. Do not falsify or fabricate scientific data

- D. Responsibility for Patient Care
 - 1. Assume 24-hour responsibility for patients under your care; when you go off duty, assure that your patients' care is adequately covered by another practitioner
 - 2. Follow-up on ordered laboratory tests and complete patient record documentation conscientiously
 - 3. Coordinate with your team the timing of information sharing with patients and their families to present a coherent and consistent treatment plan
 - 4. Do not use alcohol or other drugs that could diminish the quality of patient care or academic performance

- E. Awareness of Limitations, Professional Growth
 - 1. Be aware of your professional limitations and deficiencies of knowledge and abilities and know when and whom to ask for supervision, assistance, or consultation
 - 2. Do not engage in unsupervised involvement in areas or situations where you are not adequately trained
 - 3. Avoid patient involvement when you are seriously ill, distraught, or overcome with personal problems
 - 4. Have all patient workups and orders countersigned by the appropriate supervisory personnel

- F. Department as a Professional
 - 1. Clearly identify yourself and your professional level to patients and staff; wear your nametag when in patient areas
 - 2. Do not allow yourself, as a student, to be introduced as a physician assistant or doctor
 - 3. Dress in a neat, clean, and professionally appropriate manner
 - 4. Maintain a professional composure despite the stresses of fatigue, professional pressure, or personal problems
 - 5. Do not have romantic or sexual relationships with your patients; recognize that if such relationships develop, seek help and terminate the professional relationship
 - 6. Do not have pictures depicting yourself or other PA students or health providers on internet or social media sites

- G. Responsibility for Peer Behavior
 - 1. Take the initiative to identify and help rehabilitate impaired students, nurses, physicians, physician assistants, and other employees
 - 2. Report important violations of the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics

- H. Respect for Personal Ethics
 - 1. You are not required to perform procedures (eg, abortions, termination of medical treatment) that you feel are unethical, illegal, or may be detrimental to the patient
 - 2. Inform patients and their families of available treatment options that are consistent with acceptable standards of medical care

- I. Respect for Property and Laws

1. Respect the property of Springfield College and other facilities with which you are affiliated
2. Adhere to the regulations and policies such as fire safety, hazardous waste disposal, and universal precautions of Springfield College and all other facilities with which you are affiliated
3. Adhere to local, state, and federal laws and regulations

XXV. APPENDIX E: PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

Patient-Centered Care

Provide patient-centered care that is compassionate, appropriate, and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health

- 1.1 Gather essential and accurate information about patients and their conditions through history-taking and physical examination skills (MK, IPS, CTS)
- 1.2 Develop differential diagnoses, order and interpret diagnostic tests, perform necessary clinical and technical procedures, diagnose, treat and manage illness. (MK, CTS, CRPS)
- 1.3 Interpret data to make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and clinical judgment (MK, CTS, CRPS)
- 1.4 Develop and implement patient management plans (MK, CRPS)
- 1.5 Counsel and educate patients and their families to empower them to participate in their care and enable shared decision-making (IPS, PB)
- 1.6 Provide appropriate referral of patients including ensuring continuity of care throughout transitions between providers or settings (IPS, CRPS, PB)
- 1.7 Provide health care services to patients, families, and communities aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health (MK, IPS, CRPS)

Knowledge for Practice

Demonstrate knowledge of established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences, as well as the application of this knowledge to patient care

- 2.1 Apply principles of clinical sciences to diagnosis disease and utilize (1) therapeutic decision-making (distinguish between normal and abnormal findings), (2) clinical reasoning and problem-solving, and (3) other aspects of evidence-based medicine (MK, CTS, CRPS)
- 2.2 Discern among acute, chronic and emerging disease states (MK, CRPS)
- 2.3 Apply the principles of epidemiological sciences to the identification of health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources, and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for patients and populations (MK, CRPS)
- 2.4 Identify economic factors that affect access to care (MK, CRPS)
- 2.5 Access and interpret credible sources of medical knowledge (MK, CRPS)
- 2.6 Understand different types of health systems and insurance (MK)

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals

- 3.1 Establish meaningful, therapeutic relationships with patients and families to ensure that patients' needs and goals are met in order to deliver culturally competent care (IPS)
- 3.2 Communicate effectively with patients, families and the public (IPS)
- 3.3 Work effectively with others as a member or leader of a healthcare team (IPS, PB)
- 3.4 Demonstrate sensitivity, honesty, and compassion in difficult conversations, including those about death, end of life, adverse events, bad news, disclosure of errors, and other sensitive topics (IPS)
- 3.5 Recognize the need for and ensure patients have access to unbiased, professional interpreters and appropriate resources when barriers to communication arise. (IPS)

3.6 Demonstrate insight and understanding about emotions and human response to emotions that allow one to develop and manage interpersonal interactions (IPS)

3.7 Accurately and adequately document medical information regarding care for medical, legal, and quality purposes (MK, CTS, IPS)

Professionalism

Demonstrate a commitment to practicing medicine in ethically and legally appropriate ways and emphasizing professional maturity and accountability for delivering safe and quality care to patients and populations.

4.1 Demonstrate respect and compassion for the dignity and privacy of the patient while maintaining confidentiality in the delivery of team-based care (PB)

4.2 Demonstrate responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest (PB)

4.3 Demonstrate accountability to patients, society, and the profession (PB)

4.4 Demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to a diverse patient population, including but not limited to diversity in gender, age, culture, race, religion, disabilities, and sexual orientation (PB)

4.5 Demonstrate a commitment to personal wellness, including coping mechanisms (PB)

4.6 Recognize one's limits and establish healthy boundaries to support healthy partnerships (PB)

Interprofessional Collaboration

Demonstrate the ability to engage in an interprofessional team in a manner that optimizes safe, effective patient- and population-centered care

5.1 Work with other health professionals to establish and maintain a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, ethical integrity, and trust (IPS, PB)

5.2 Recognize when referrals are needed and make them to the appropriate health care provider (MK)

5.3 Develop relationships and effectively communicate with physicians, other health professionals, and health care teams. (IPS, PB)

5.4 Use the full scope of knowledge, skills, and abilities of available health professionals to provide care that is safe, timely, efficient, effective and equitable. (MK, IPS, CRPS)

Practice-based learning & Improvement

Practice-based learning and improvement include engaging in critical analysis of one's own experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self-evaluation, lifelong learning and practice improvement.

6.1 Develop the ability to use self-awareness of knowledge, skills and emotional limitations to identify strengths, deficiencies, and limits of one's knowledge (MK, CRPS, PB)

6.2 Use appropriate literature to make evidence-based decisions on patient care (MK, CRPS)

6.3 Recognize the value of the work of monitoring and reporting for quality improvement (MK)

ARC-PA competencies legend

(MK) Medical Knowledge

(IPS) Interpersonal Skills

(CTS) Clinical and Technical Skills

(CRPS) Clinical Reasoning and Problem Solving abilities

(PB) Professional Behaviors

XXVI. APPENDIX F: EXPOSURE POLICY AND PROTOCOL

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM EXPOSURE POLICY AND PROTOCOL

In the event that a student is exposed to a known, unknown, or potentially infectious source, eg, needle stick, laceration/abrasion, bite, ingestion, inhalation/droplet, splash, or other exposure to bodily fluids, the following procedure is to be followed without delay.

Remove yourself from the immediate area to begin decontamination procedures. Clean the wound and surrounding area with soap and water (for needle stick or other exposures with open skin) or flush eyes, nose, and mouth with copious amounts of water (for a splash to face).

Inform your preceptor, immediate supervisor, and/or other staff member of the exposure and injury (if applicable). The clinical staff should alert the infection control/bloodborne pathogen contact person. If the clinical staff or contact person has questions about the course of action or evaluation of exposure risk, have that person contact the PA Program clinical education director or program director directly.

Immediately contact the clinical education director via cell phone (Andrew Baginski 203-206-3750 or Melinda Connors 413-522-1889). If unable to reach the clinical education director, contact the program director (Meghan Migeon 413-775-3397). You must make direct, personal contact; voicemail is not sufficient notification. Obtain information regarding the policies and procedures of your clinical site, if possible, prior to calling.

Complete the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Report (Appendix G).

If your clinical site has an exposure protocol in place, follow all policies and procedures outlined. This may entail your being seen in the emergency department or employee/occupational health for initial screening and treatment.

If there is no protocol in place or if there is any confusion or inconsistency regarding procedures, inform your preceptor that you have been instructed by the PA Program to leave the clinical site immediately to seek prompt medical evaluation, screening, and treatment. You will then proceed directly to an emergency department.

Inform the clinical education director when you have completed the above steps to determine when you should return to your clinical site.

Follow-up after initial decontamination, labs/screening, and treatments must be made. This may be with the clinical site (if local protocols were followed), an occupational health clinic, the Springfield College Health Center, an infectious disease specialist, or your primary care provider as appropriate.

Since students are not considered employees of either the clinical site or Springfield College, they are not covered under workers' compensation insurance programs. Payment for all evaluations, treatments, and follow up is the responsibility of the student. Bills and costs may be submitted to your medical insurance, depending on coverage and individual insurance policies.

XXVII. APPENDIX G: BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE REPORT

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM
BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE REPORT

In case of exposure to bloodborne pathogens, complete this form and submit a copy to the evaluating and treating facility provider and retain a copy for the program Clinical Education Director. Complete all four pages of the following form. A facility-specific form may be substituted for this report if one has already been completed.

Date of Exposure:	Time of Exposure:
Date of Report:	Time of Report:

Exposed Individual's Information:

Name: (Last, First, MI)	
Gender:	Date of Birth:
Address: (Number, Street, City, State, ZIP)	
Telephone:	Second Phone:
Employment Status: STUDENT FACULTY STAFF OTHER	Springfield College ID Number:

Person Completing Form: (name, title)	
Signature:	Date:

Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Report Page 1 of 3

Exposed Individual's Initials:		Date of Birth:
Place (facility, department, clinical site) where the exposure occurred:		
Supervisor/Individual in charge of the area where the exposure occurred:		
Supervisor/Individual in Charge Role: PRECEPTOR SUPERVISOR STAFF OTHER		
Supervisor/Individual in Charge Phone Number:		
Witness 1: (name, title, phone)		Witness 2: (name, title, phone)
Source of Exposure: (circle all that apply)	Blood/Blood products Body fluid with visible blood Body fluid without visible blood Solution with visible blood Solution without visible blood Vaginal secretions Seminal fluid	Cerebrospinal fluid Synovial fluid Pleural fluid Amniotic fluid Pericardial fluid Peritoneal fluid Other:
Mechanism of Exposure: (circle all that apply)	Needlestick/Sharps accident type of device: _____ Mucous membrane contact eyes nose mouth other	Human bite Skin contact broken chapped abraded dermatitis
Activity Leading to the Exposure (circle all that apply)	Giving an injection Handling waste products Handling lab specimens Performing an invasive procedure procedure: _____ Handling a disposal box	Recapping a needle Discarding a needle Handling an IV line Controlling bleeding Cleaning a blood spill Other:
Anatomical location of exposure:		
Personal protective equipment in use at time of exposure:		
Describe any injuries:		
Estimated time interval from exposure until medical evaluation:		

Exposed Individual's Initials:	Date of Birth:
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Actions Taken after the Exposure:

YES or NO	Was the area washed with soap and water (or other appropriate cleanser) or was the area flushed with water?
YES or NO	Did the injury bleed freely?
YES or NO	Was a topical antiseptic applied?
YES or NO	Was the preceptor/supervisor notified?
YES or NO	Was the Infection Control Officer of the site notified?
YES or NO	Was the exposed individual referred for medical evaluation/treatment?
	Where was that evaluation/treatment received?
YES or NO	Was the School/Program Faculty notified?
	Who was notified? CLINICAL COORDINATOR or PROGRAM DIRECTOR
YES or NO	Was follow-up scheduled for re-evaluation?
YES or NO	Was the clinical site made aware of the approximate date of return?
	What is the approximate date of return?

Narrative Description of the Incident (include the nature and scope of any personal injury):