



CHARLESTON
SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITY

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

2026 Student Handbook

INTEGRATING FAITH IN LEARNING, LEADING, AND SERVING

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the policies, procedures, practices, and processes for the Charleston Southern University (CSU) PA Program. This handbook serves as a comprehensive resource in conjunction with individual course syllabi and the *Clinical Year Handbook*, which provide additional information regarding the conduct and expectations of clinical rotations. combination with various course syllabi and handbooks covering the conduct of the clinical rotations, which provide additional information.

This CSU *PA Program Student Handbook* functions in conjunction with the policies and procedures of CSU, found in the *CSU Graduate Catalog* and the *CSU Student Handbook*. The policies and procedures herein are specific to the CSU PA Program and do not supersede university policies except as specifically permitted by the University.

Every student is responsible for being knowledgeable and adhering to the contents of both the *PA Program Student Handbook* and the *CSU Student Handbook*. Students are expected to comply with all policies and procedures outlined in these resources.

This handbook is intended to provide guidance but may not address every situation that arises within the CSU PA Program. The Program reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Amendments or revisions may be made in writing or communicated verbally but will always be clearly communicated to students. Any questions not addressed within these resources should be directed to the student's faculty advisor, course directors, or program administration.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR - 2026 DIDACTIC YEAR

Spring Semester	January 5	Class of 2027 PA Program Orientation
	January 6	Unit 1 – Classes Begin
	January 9	<i>Final Date to Register or Drop/Add a class for Unit 1. Last date to receive a full refund of tuition if withdrawing from CSU.</i>
	January 16	<i>Last date to receive a 25% tuition refund if withdrawing from CSU by 5 PM.</i>
	January 19	Martin Luther King, Jr., Day (CAMPUS CLOSED)
	February 5 – 6	Unit 1 – FINAL EXAMS
	February 9	Unit 2 – Classes Begin
	February 13	<i>Final Date to Register or Drop/Add a class for Unit 2.</i>
	March 16 – 20	Unit 2 – MIDTERM EXAMS
	April 3	Good Friday (CAMPUS CLOSED)
	April 27 – May 1	Unit 2 – FINAL EXAMS
	May 4 – 15	STUDENT BREAK – NO CLASSES
Summer Semester	May 18	Unit 3 – Classes Begin
	May 22	<i>Final Date to Register or Drop/Add a class for Unit 3. Last date to receive a full refund of tuition if withdrawing from CSU.</i>
	May 25	Memorial Day (CAMPUS CLOSED)
	May 29	<i>Last date to receive a 25% tuition refund if withdrawing from CSU by 5 PM.</i>
	June 22 – 26	Unit 3 – MIDTERM EXAMS
	July 3	Independence Day Observed (CAMPUS CLOSED)
	August 3 – 7	Unit 3 – FINAL EXAMS
Fall Semester	August 10 – 14	STUDENT BREAK – NO CLASSES
	August 17	Unit 4 – Classes Begin
	August 21	<i>Final Date to Register or Drop/Add a class for Unit 4. Last date to receive a full refund of tuition if withdrawing from CSU.</i>
	August 28	<i>Last date to receive a 25% tuition refund if withdrawing from CSU by 5 PM.</i>
	September 7	Labor Day (CAMPUS CLOSED)
	September 21 – 25	Unit 4 – MIDTERM EXAMS
	November 2 – 6	Unit 4 – FINAL EXAMS
	November 9	Unit 5 – Classes Begin
	November 13	<i>Final Date to Register or Drop/Add a class for Unit 5.</i>
	November 25 – 27	Thanksgiving Holiday (CAMPUS CLOSED)
WHITE COAT CEREMONY – Saturday, December 12, 2026		
December 14 – January 3		Christmas/New Year Break (CAMPUS CLOSED)

ACADEMIC CALENDAR – 2027 CLINICAL YEAR

Spring Semester	Rotation 1	January 4 – February 5
	Callback #1	February 4 – 5
	Rotation 2	February 8 – March 11
	Callback #2	March 10 – 11
	Rotation 3	March 15 – April 16
	Callback #3	April 15 – 16
	Student Break	April 19 – 23
	Rotation 4	April 26 – May 28
	Callback #4	May 27 – 28
	Rotation 5	May 31 – July 2
Summer Semester	Callback #5	July 1 – 2
	Rotation 6	July 5 – August 6
	Callback #6	August 5 – 6
	Student Break	August 9 – 13
	Rotation 7	August 16 – September 17
	Callback #7	September 16 – 17
	Rotation 8	September 20 – October 22
	Callback #8	October 21 – 22
	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	OCTOBER 25 - 29
	Rotation 9	November 1 – December 3
Fall Semester	Callback #9	December 2 – 3
	PANCE Board Review	December 6 – 8
	Clinical Year Remediation	December 9 – 10
	COMMENCEMENT SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11	

MISSION & GOALS

CHARLESTON SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Who We Are: "Promoting Academic Excellence in a Christian Environment."

CHARLESTON SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY FOUNDING PRINCIPLE

Our Founding Principle: Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

CHARLESTON SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY VISION

To be a Christian university nationally recognized for integrating faith in learning, leading, and serving.

LEARNING: 2 Corinthians 10:5 "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

LEADING: Colossians 3:17 "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

SERVING: Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

PA PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Charleston Southern University Master of Medical Science in PA Studies Program is to educate compassionate and highly motivated individuals in a Christian environment who excel in providing patient-centered care, practicing as an interprofessional team, serving as leaders in their communities, and advancing the PA profession.

PA PROGRAM GOALS

- Recruit highly capable students to the program.
- Deliver an outstanding curriculum that prepares students to provide patient-centered medical care upon graduation.
- Foster a healthy and supportive Christian learning environment that prepares students appropriately to transition from student to clinician.
- Engage faculty and students in opportunities for service, leadership, and scholarly activities in the school, our community, and the profession.

PROGRAM LEARNING COMPETENCIES (PLCS)

Upon completion of the program, clinical education phase students will have acquired the knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, clinical and technical skills, and professional behaviors required for entry into PA practice:

KNOWLEDGE	
PLC-1	Assess and prioritize patient care needs across all ages and populations in primary care and specialty settings, integrating medical, behavioral, and social knowledge.
PLC-2	Incorporate current scientific evidence with clinical expertise to develop and implement evidence-based, patient-centered care decisions and sound clinical judgment.
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	
PLC-3	Elicit an accurate medical history from patients.
PLC-4	Design and deliver patient education using verbal, non-verbal, and written modalities to promote disease prevention and health awareness for patients, caregivers, and healthcare teams.
PLC-5	Effectively engage patients, caregivers, and interprofessional team members through adaptable interpersonal and professional communication to ensure clear and accurate exchange of information, supporting collaborative care.
CLINICAL REASONING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING ABILITIES	
PLC-6	Analyze patient history and physical exam findings to formulate a prioritized, evidence-based differential diagnosis.
PLC-7	Evaluate clinical indications and patient data to recommend appropriate diagnostic studies that support accurate diagnosis and management.
PLC-8	Develop and implement a patient-centered therapeutic management plan, including pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic interventions, based on history, physical exam, and diagnostic study findings.
CLINICAL AND TECHNICAL SKILLS	
PLC-9	Perform a thorough, accurate physical exam aligned with the patient's medical history to inform clinical decision-making.
PLC-10	Perform clinical procedures frequently encountered in general medical practice, including surgical wound management (e.g., staple, suture, drain placement/removal, basic skin biopsy, incision & drainage), topical and local anesthesia administration, simple laceration repair, injections and aspirations (e.g., trigger point, cyst, bursa, joint), intravenous access, venipuncture, bladder catheterization, nasopharyngeal swabs, and Pap tests, demonstrating technical proficiency and adherence to safety protocols.
PLC-11	Interpret diagnostic tests and imaging studies accurately and apply findings to guide patient evaluation and management decisions.
PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS	
PLC-12	Exhibit professional behavior by applying ethical principles, demonstrating cultural sensitivity, and responding appropriately to patients, caregivers, and interprofessional team members.

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the Charleston Southern University Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Charleston Southern University.

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 March 2032. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy. The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website: <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-charleston-southern-university/>

Charleston Southern University's accreditation can be found here:

<https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/about/accreditation-disclosures/>

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The CSU PA Program is an Accreditation Review Commission on Education (ARC-PA)-accredited program.

All 50 states require graduation from an ARC-PA-accredited program and National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) certification following successful completion of the Physician Assistant National Certification Exam (PANCE) as conditions for initial PA licensure. Successful completion of the CSU PA Program affords our PA graduates the opportunity to sit for the PANCE.

Successfully passing the NCCPA PANCE exam meets all 50 state licensure requirements. Additional licensure information for each state may be found on the American Academy of PAs (AAPA) website:
<https://www.aapa.org/download/19739/>

Students are responsible for investigating the specific requirements of the state in which they are planning to practice following graduation.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The PA Program Director reports directly to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences, then to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President, and the Board of Trustees. The Program Director serves as the chief administrator for the PA program and is responsible for all PA program operations.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Position	Credentials	Extension 843-663-xxxx	Email Address
Dr. A. Steele	Program Director & Department Chair	DMSc, PA-C	7456	asteele@csuniv.edu
Dr. J. Downs	Medical Director	MD	7454	jdowns@csuniv.edu
Prof. Z. Wulbecker	Director of Didactic Education (DDE)	PA-C	7455	zwulbecker@csuniv.edu
Dr. J. Goebel	Director of Clinical Education (DCE)	PA-C	7453	jgoebel@csuniv.edu
Dr. I. Davis	Principal Faculty	PA-C	7462	ldavis@csuniv.edu
Prof. A. Black	Principal Faculty	PA-C	7457	ablack@csuniv.edu
Prof. K. McLemore	Principal Faculty	PA-C	7451	kmclemore@csuniv.edu
Prof. C. Davis	Principal Faculty	PA-C	7450	cadavis@csuniv.edu
Prof. M. Trageser	Principal Faculty	PA-C	7072	mtrageser@csuniv.edu
Mrs. Kendall Smith	Admissions Coordinator		7461	Knsmith@csuniv.edu
Mrs. Sundi Romano	Clinical Coordinator		7020	sromano@csuniv.edu
Ms. Iris Kelley	Lab Technician		7460	ikelley@csuniv.edu
Ms. Susan Davies	Director of Simulation		7307	sdavies@csuniv.edu
Dr. Gabrielle Poole	CHS Dean	DMSc, PA-C	7264	gpoole@csuniv.edu
Mrs. Anna Watson	CHS Director of Operations		7264	anwatson@csuniv.edu
Dr. L. Walthall	Instructional Faculty	MD		lwalhall@csuniv.edu
Dr. M. Corvino	Instructional Faculty	PharmD		mcorvino@csuniv.edu
PA Program Suite/Front Desk			7427	paprogram@csuniv.edu

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

Technical Standards

The following Technical Standards are necessary for acceptance to and continuation in the program:

OBSERVATION

The student must possess the ability to accurately perceive information through sensory input in the educational and patient care settings. Visual (near and distance), auditory, tactile, and olfactory senses are used to assess the patient and disease processes. Additionally, the ability to observe non-verbal cues such as posture and body language is needed for diagnostic information and healthy patient-provider interactions.

Multiple instructional methods are used throughout the program, and the student must be able to learn from all the following: auditory instruction, written materials and visual aids, hands-on kinesthetic learning and demonstrations, microscopic and diagnostic images, and physical examination.

COMMUNICATION

Accurate, timely, and professional communication is essential in all aspects of health care. The student must be able to speak clearly, effectively, and compassionately in all interactions. The student must be able to hear and understand the spoken English language and listen for more subtle sounds on physical examination.

The student must be able to use hand-written and electronic methods to complete assignments in a timely manner, accurately and sensitively document patient encounters, and communicate with the health care team and any other relevant parties.

MOTOR

Intact gross and fine motor functions, sensation, and equilibrium are necessary for PA curriculum completion and for patient care. The student must be able to execute coordinated movements in order to manipulate medical equipment and instrumentation and to perform medical procedures. One must be able to conduct a physical exam using palpation, percussion, and auscultation, while being able to assist with patient movements and transfers.

COGNITIVE

The intellectual ability to assimilate large amounts of complex information is necessary for successful completion of the PA Program. A PA must be able to extract and synthesize significant information from the medical history, physical exam and diagnostic testing to formulate diagnoses and care plans. Problem-solving skills within time constraints, given written, verbal, and visual information, are essential for program success. Additionally, one must be able to comprehend and retain information learned from the educational process, medical literature, clinical experience, and continuing medical education to deliver quality patient care. Critical thinking by combining knowledge and reasoning to complete tasks, as well as to analyze, implement, assess and reassess patient information and care plans, is also required.

BEHAVIORAL

The program expects that all students will conduct themselves in a professional, compassionate, and emotionally mature manner. Professional dress, language, and actions are expected of the PA student. The student is to be respectful to others, including but not limited to other classmates, instructors, and staff, health care team members, as well as patients and family members.

The emotionally mature student can accept criticism and respond by modifying behaviors. One must exercise sound judgment and integrity in all situations and be able to tolerate stress in the educational and clinical settings. The student will also be able to engage in appropriate physical contact with the patient during the physical examination and exhibit sensitivity to the personal nature of these interactions by using a caring bedside manner.

The successful practice of medicine requires one to be adaptable, flexible, and compassionate towards people from all backgrounds and belief systems. The student will develop appropriate interpersonal relationships with others and strive to engage, motivate, and educate patients as part of the comprehensive treatment plan.

The PA student will demonstrate safe, ethical, and legal professional practice and abide by program and University policies. It is important to recognize one's own personal and professional limitations and seek assistance when needed.

Accessibility Services

If any student thinks he/she may need accommodations for a course, that student should contact the Accessibility Services Department of CSU Student Success, which is located on the 2nd floor of Rivers Library. Guidelines, applications, documentation, and consent forms, along with additional resources regarding the requirements/procedures, are located on [the Accessibility Services' website](#), or the student may wish to contact the office at 843-863-7159 to initiate registration for accommodations.

Approval of accommodations is **only** granted by CSU Accessibility Services. Once a student has been approved to receive accommodations through Accessibility Services, the student must contact and coordinate such accommodation requests with each course director individually during office hours to discuss the accommodations approved by CSU Accessibility Services. Please visit the CSU Accessibility Services website for additional information about this process.

MyCSU

MyCSU is the student portal for CSU, providing students with access to financial aid information, current and upcoming course schedules, account information, and more. To access, select MyCSU at the bottom of the CSU homepage and use the CSU ID and PIN number to log in.

To access these, select one of the following under Password Help in the middle of the page:

- “*I forgot my CSU ID #*” to access your CSU ID
- “*I forgot my CSU PIN*” to access your PIN number

Blackboard

The Blackboard link is in the left-hand menu on the MyCSU homepage. Students can log in to their Blackboard account using the following:

- Username: student ID number (no leading zeros)
- Password: PIN number

The standard protocol is for all courses to appear in Blackboard on the first day of classes. Some professors may turn their courses on early, granting you access to the syllabus and materials. If you experience difficulty accessing your Blackboard account, please contact 24X7 Tech Support at 843-863-7277 or visit MyCSU and submit a student work order via the link under the *Student tab*.

BucMail – CSU Email

Upon enrollment, the University assigned students an official BucMail account (student.csuniv.edu), which is the only email account used by program professors and staff to communicate with PA students. Checking BucMail daily is required of each PA student. Questions or concerns about this email account must be directed to Information Technology Services (see below).

Student Technology Work Orders

Students who need help with technology issues, such as the Student Wireless Network, BucMail, Blackboard, and BucAlert, can submit a work order to Information Technology Services via the Student Work Order link on the Student Tab in MyCSU or call 843-863-8022.

Student IDs & Health Science Building Access

At New Student Orientation, PA students will receive a CSU Student ID from Campus Security. PA students are to wear and prominently display their ID at all times while in their role as students in the PA Program. This includes on- and off-campus activities related to their training and education as students.

PA students will be issued a key card by the PA Program that provides 24-hour access to the Health Science Building (HSB) and all designated PA study and lecture spaces. If lost, PA students must immediately report the loss and pay the replacement fee. PA students will sign the Health Science Building Access Form upon entrance to the program.

Student iPads

As part of the Program Fee, students receive a 9th-generation model iPad with a 10.2" screen and with two (2) years of AppleCare for your devices. While not required, it is highly recommended that each student purchase an iPad cover, a screen protector, and an Apple Pencil for notetaking in class. iPads are distributed at New Student Orientation, loaded with several of the applications used in the program. All these resources will be reviewed at New Student Orientation.

Netiquette Policy

CSU holds its students, faculty, and staff to the highest standards of conduct and expects all to demonstrate courteous behaviors and practices in online communications. CSU's "netiquette" (Internet etiquette) policy includes guidelines and recommendations for online communications. Being respectful, thoughtful, meaningful, and ethical are fundamental to good netiquette.

CSU's basic netiquette rules are:

- Course communications are for internal use only and considered confidential. Do not forward or quote discussion posts, emails, or other course communications to outside parties.
- Never share personal login usernames, IDs, or passwords.
- Do not type in all capital letters. It is perceived online as shouting.
- Use proper capitalization, grammar, spelling, and punctuation conventions for professional communications.
- Avoid texting jargon or abbreviations without explanation.
 - Incorrect: CSU is a wonderful university.
 - Correct: Charleston Southern University (CSU) is a wonderful university.
- Be mindful of sending emails. Ensure that content is relevant and pay attention to Reply versus Reply All.
- BucMail is the only email allowed for course communications. Other platforms (Yahoo, Gmail, etc.) are prohibited.
- In video conferencing, mute your microphone when not speaking.
- Differing views are natural and welcome in discussion boards. Be respectful in your comments—even if you disagree or dislike someone's position on a topic.
- Respect the time and availability of students, faculty, and staff. Emails should be addressed within 24 hours of receipt. Keep in mind that traditional faculty work hours are 8 AM – 5 PM EDT/EST.

CAMPUS SECURITY

CSU provides 24-hour armed security patrols using both professional and contracted security personnel.

While the university makes every effort to maintain a safe and secure campus, each individual is responsible for exercising appropriate caution. PA students must carry their CSU Student ID at all times while on campus.

Contact Information

For emergencies, dial x2020 from any CSU landline or 843-553-5896 from a mobile or off-campus phone. If voice communication is unsafe, students may text 843-371-8445 to safely relay critical information. PA students are strongly encouraged to store this number for text-only emergency use.

CAMPUS SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

- Keep keys in your possession; do not loan them to others.
- Report lost or stolen items to Campus Security immediately and complete a theft report.
- Record serial numbers of valuable items and mark them with an identifiable label.
- Cooperate fully with Campus Security and police.
- Consider insurance for high-value personal property; the university is not liable for lost or stolen items.
- Textbooks are valuable items – mark them accordingly.

VEHICLE & PARKING REGULATIONS

University regulations mandate that all motor vehicles owned or operated by students on campus be registered and display a current vehicle permit. Permits must be obtained before the Drop/add date for the semester or within 24 hours of any other time a vehicle is brought onto campus.

Permits are purchased online on the CSU website under Campus Security, which links to Rydin/Permit Express. A temporary dashboard permit will be provided, and a permanent decal will be mailed. Permits are valid for the two years of PA student enrollment. Permits must be displayed on the lower driver's side windshield; failure to do so is a violation.

PARKING VIOLATIONS/FINES

- Failure to display a permit by the Drop/Add deadline: \$100/occurrence + processing fees.
- Parking in a handicapped space: \$100 fine + processing fees.
- Other parking violations: \$20/occurrence + processing fees.

Payments may be made online via Rydin/Permit Express.

ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS

- Students with physical disabilities may request special parking accommodations through Campus Security.
- Parking on grass is strictly prohibited except in the designated field across from the football stadium.
- Registered drivers are responsible for all violations involving their vehicle; unpaid fines may result in account holds.
- The university is not responsible for vehicles or their contents.
- Vehicle maintenance is not permitted on campus.
- Temporary permits may be issued by the Campus Security Office located in the Student Center.

BUCAERT EMERGENCY INFORMATION SYSTEM

The BucAlert system alerts students, parents, faculty, and staff during emergencies. All students are automatically enrolled through their CSU email. To add or update contact information or additional email addresses, log in to MyCSU with your CSU ID and PIN.

TIMELY WARNING

If a situation poses an ongoing threat to the CSU community, the Dean of Students, in consultation with the President and/or Vice Presidents, may issue a Timely Warning via BucAlert as soon as sufficient information becomes available.

EMERGENCIES

Campus Security is available 24/7. For emergencies,

- dial x2020 CSU landlines
- 843-553-5896 from mobile phones or off-campus phones.
- Text 843-371-8445 if speaking is unsafe.

Students should be prepared to state their exact location and the nature of the emergency.

EMERGENCY PHONE LOCATIONS ON CAMPUS

- Physical Plant Side of Art Lab
- Back Side of Quad
- Front Side of Quad 3
- Back Side of Library
- Reflection Pond Side of Science Building
- Parking Lot Side of Science Building
- Parking Lot Side of Wingo/Norris
- Parking Lot Side of Ashby/Jones
- Parking Lot Side of College of Nursing
- Parking Lot Side of Hunter Center
- Communications Building by Pool
- Reflection Pond Side of Thurmond Center
- Softball Field End of Russell West
- Russell Side of Women's North
- Parking Lot Side of Women's North
- Softball Field Side of Women's South
- Baseball Field Press Box
- Parking Lot Side of Field House
- Whitfield Stadium Center

ESCORT POLICY

Security escorts are available from any location on campus. To request an escort:

- Dial x2020 from any campus phone
- Call 843-553-5896 from a mobile device.

Students should provide their location and destination. Uniformed officers provide escorts. Students are strongly encouraged not to walk alone after dark.

DISCLOSURE OF CAMPUS CRIME

In accordance with federal law, CSU publishes annual campus crime statistics. This report is available online on the Campus Security page.

FIRST AID

CSU does not maintain a medical clinic; however, a basic first aid kit is available in the Residence Life Office (Student Center, second floor). Residence Life and Campus Security personnel are trained in basic first aid and

CPR. First aid assistance may be requested at any time by dialing x2020. For urgent medical care, Trident Regional Medical Center is located directly across from campus and offers full emergency services. For additional information about Campus Security, please see the CSU Student Handbook.

TUITION & EXPENSES

Please see <https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/academics/college-of-health-sciences/physician-assistant/cost-aid/> for the most up-to-date information on tuition and expenses.

Refund Policy

- ❖ 100% of semester tuition and fees are due at the beginning of the semester.
- ❖ Fees paid directly to the University are nonrefundable.

Tuition refunds are made as follows:

Refund Timeline Per Semester	
Before Classes Begin	100%
During 1st Week*	100%
During 2nd Week	25%
After 2nd Week	0%

**Before the end of the drop/add period*

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

DIDACTIC YEAR COURSE LIST				
Semester	Unit	Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
SPRING	1	MPAS 500	Human Anatomy and Lab	4
		MPAS 590	Diagnostic Sciences	1
	2	MPAS 510	The Path to Becoming a PA-I	1
		MPAS 520	Clinical Medicine I	6
		MPAS 530	Basic Sciences I	3
		MPAS 540	Patient Assessment and Diagnostic Methods I	2
		MPAS 550	Pharmacology I	2
		MPAS 560	Problem-Based Learning I	1
Total Semester Credit Hours				20
SUMMER	3	MPAS 521	Clinical Medicine II	6
		MPAS 531	Basic Sciences II	3
		MPAS 541	Patient Assessment Diagnostic Methods II	2
		MPAS 551	Pharmacology II	2
		MPAS 511	The Path to Becoming a PA-II	1
		MPAS 561	Problem-Based Learning II	1
Total Semester Credit Hours				15
FALL	4	MPAS 522	Clinical Medicine III	6
		MPAS 532	Basic Sciences III	3
		MPAS 542	Patient Assessment and Diagnostic Methods III	2
		MPAS 552	Pharmacology III	2
		MPAS 512	The Path to Becoming a PA-III	1
		MPAS 562	Problem-Based Learning III	1
		MPAS 570	Fundamentals of Pediatrics	1
5	MPAS 580	Clinical Year Prep	4	
	MPAS 600	The Graduate Project I	1	
Total Semester Credit Hours				18
TOTAL DIDACTIC YEAR CREDIT HOURS				53

CLINICAL YEAR COURSE LIST		
Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
MPAS 610	Family Medicine Rotation	5
MPAS 620	Internal Medicine Rotation	5
MPAS 630	Emergency Medicine Rotation	5
MPAS 640	Surgery Rotation	5
MPAS 650	Pediatrics Rotation	5
MPAS 660	Psychiatry Rotation	5
MPAS 670	Women's Health Rotation	5
MPAS 680	Elective 1 Rotation	5
MPAS 690	Elective 2 Rotation	5
MPAS 601	The Graduate Project II	1
TOTAL CLINICAL YEAR CREDIT HOURS		46

PROGRAM STUDENT POLICIES

Program policies apply to all students, principal faculty, and the Program Director, regardless of location. The program informs students of program policies and practices by posting the *PA Program Student Handbook* to Blackboard.

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

Students enrolled in the CSU PA Program must adhere to the academic performance and professionalism standards outlined in this policy.

SECTION 2: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

2.1 Grading Schema

A final course grade of 70% is required to pass each course in the didactic and clinical years. Grades will be assigned based on the following grade scale.

Grade Scale & Grade Points

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Points	Performance Description
92% or above	A	4.0	Work of distinction; exceeds expectations
89.00-91.99%	B+	3.3	Work of very good quality; above satisfactory graduate performance
80.00-88.99%	B	3.0	Work of good quality; meets expectations for graduate-level performance
70.00-79.99%	C	2.0	Marginal work; below program standards and places students <i>at risk</i>
<70.00%	F	0	Fails to meet minimum standards

Performance in assessments is judged on the student's ability to:

1. Acquire a strong clinical science knowledge base (exams, quizzes, OSCEs, skills testing).
2. Demonstrate self-directed learning and complete knowledge synthesis activities (assignments, discussion boards).
3. Apply clinical reasoning in case-based and scenario-based assessments (exams, OSCEs).
4. Engage actively in all required course activities.
5. Exhibit ongoing professional development.

Grade of Incomplete "I"

The temporary grade of "I" can only be awarded in cases where a student has completed and passed the majority of the work required for course completion, but, for reasons beyond the student's control, cannot complete the entire course in the timeframe of the term enrolled. Incomplete grades are awarded at the discretion of the course director. Incomplete grades should only be assigned when, in the course director's judgment, it is feasible for the student to complete the coursework while not enrolled and without attending additional class meetings to

complete course requirements. The course director will determine the time a student has to complete the required coursework, not to exceed 30 business days. An Incomplete will not be given as a substitute for a failing grade or because a student failed to complete assignments over the course of the academic term. To award a grade of "Incomplete," a course director completes a *Request to Receive an Incomplete Course Grade Form* (found on MyCSU) and submits it to the Office of the Registrar.

A grade of "I" will be factored into a student's grade point average with hours carried and no quality points. If the student fails to complete the required coursework within the allotted time, the grade of "I" will be converted to an "F" and will remain permanently on the transcript. Failing a course is grounds for program dismissal.

2.2 Examination Policy

Students will not request changes in the examination schedule. Every exam must have a proctor, and students must follow the proctor's instructions at all times. Grading policies and procedures are outlined in each course syllabus.

All examinations must be completed within the allotted time. No extensions will be granted. Students who arrive late may begin the examination upon arrival but will only have the remaining allocated time to complete it; no additional time will be provided. If a tardy student arrives *after* any classmate has completed and submitted the examination, the tardy student is not permitted to take the exam at that time.

All exams must be taken at the scheduled time. Any student who fails to comply with this policy will receive a score of zero for the exam. In the event of a student's absence, the student must notify the course director **before** the scheduled exam time or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably possible thereafter, to request an alternate time. Missed examinations will receive a zero score, be considered failed, and be ineligible for retakes or remediation.

Notifying the course director of an absence does not guarantee the ability to make up the exam.

At the discretion of the course director, a missed examination may be rescheduled and completed within five weekdays of the original exam date, at a time and location determined by the course director. While a makeup examination will test the same knowledge content as the original, the format, question style, or delivery method may differ as determined by the course director.

All personal items and electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, laptops (unless used to take the exam), or any other electronic devices, must be turned off and stored in a designated location before the start of the examination. Failure to comply will result in the student being asked to leave the examination and receiving a recorded score of zero. Exclusions may be granted only for approved accommodations.

Examinations are routinely administered in a computer lab setting. Students may be permitted a single restroom break at the proctor's discretion, and only one student may be excused at a time. Accessing unauthorized materials, browsing the internet, or viewing any external resources during an exam constitutes a violation of the **Academic Integrity Policy**.

Reproducing examination items in any format (e.g., written, verbal, photographic, or electronic) is strictly prohibited and will be considered **cheating** and a violation of the **Academic Integrity Policy**.

Computer statistical analysis of exam items will be utilized to assess the integrity of each exam item. The outcome of this review may result in exam items being discarded or alternative answers being accepted. Test grades will not be reported to the class until all class members have taken the exam.

2.3 Post-Examination Review

At the discretion of each course director, a post-examination review may be performed only after:

- Every student has completed the examination.
- The examination has been statistically analyzed.
- The scores have been validated and finalized.

The post-examination review is for informational purposes only, to provide feedback to students on highly missed exam items and to clarify measured objectives. The topic of grade changes will not be entertained at any post-examination review session. For a more detailed post-examination review or feedback, students may individually schedule time with the course director within seven (7) business days of such examination.

2.4 Student Attendance Policy

Attendance is a crucial component of the CSU PA program, significantly contributing to the learning experience and professional development of our students. Regular attendance is essential to mastering course content, developing clinical skills, and cultivating a professional demeanor. Therefore, attendance is required for program lectures, skills labs, OSCEs, other educational activities, clinical rotations, call-back days, the summative assessment, and board review week for the CSU PA program. Because the program understands that occasions may exist that result in absence from class, this policy aims to establish clear expectations regarding attendance and consequences for non-compliance.

DIDACTIC PHASE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Attendance Threshold: Attendance for each course must meet or exceed 85% of the scheduled class times. This threshold ensures that students are actively engaged in learning and meeting the program's educational standards. NOTE: For classes with laboratory components, mandatory attendance is expected due to the nature of each lab.

Consequences for non-compliance:

1. First instance (less than 85% attendance in any course):
 - A written professionalism infraction violation will be issued.
 - Counseling session with the DDE to address concerns and develop strategies for improvement.
2. Subsequent instances (Less than 85% attendance in more than one (1) course):
 - Academic probation status will be assigned.
 - Counseling session with the Program Director to discuss the implications of academic probation and develop an improvement plan.
3. Continued non-compliance (less than 85% attendance in any course after academic probation):
 - Dismissal from the PA program may be considered.
 - The decision for dismissal will be made after a thorough review by the Academic & Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC), considering the student's overall academic performance, professional conduct, and efforts to remedy attendance issues.

Process:

1. Documentation:
 - Attendance records will be regularly maintained and monitored by course instructors.
 - Instances of non-compliance with the attendance policy will be documented and communicated to the DDE.
2. Notification:
 - Students will be promptly notified of attendance concerns, warnings, and the initiation of academic probation.
3. Counseling:
 - Counseling sessions will be conducted to understand the root causes of attendance issues and collaboratively develop strategies for improvement.

CLINICAL PHASE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance Expectations:

- Students must attend all assigned clinical rotation experiences.
- Each rotation is five weeks in length.
- Students are expected to be at the clinical site whenever the preceptor or designated preceptor is working. Some clinical sites may require evening, overnight, weekend, or holiday duties.
- Students may miss no more than nine (9) clinical days during the entire clinical year, with a maximum of two days per rotation.
- Absences are strictly prohibited during Callback Days (CBD), the Summative Evaluation, or Board Review Week.

Unexpected Absence Protocol:

An unexpected absence may occur due to illness or other emergent situations.

- Notify the clinical preceptor as soon as possible **on the day of absence**, making every reasonable effort to confirm receipt and provide an expected return date.
- Notify the DCE **on the day of absence**.
- Submit an *Absence Report Form* to the DCE within two business days of returning.

Expected Absence Protocol:

Students aware of an absence in advance are expected to

- Promptly notify the DCE in advance of the missed rotation and submit the *Absence Report Form*.
- Obtain the preceptor's signature on the *Absence Report Form* and return the completed form to the DCE for placement in the student's file.

Noncompliance Consequences:

1. *First failure to notify DCE and/or preceptor of absence:
 - Issued a written professionalism warning.
 - Counseling session with the DCE.
2. *Subsequent failures to notify per policy:
 - Assigned *academic probation*.
 - Counseling session with the Program Director to discuss the implications of academic probation and develop an improvement plan.
3. Failure to attend Callback Days, Summative Evaluation, or Board Review Week:
 - Extenuating circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the DCE and the

Program Director.

- Without approved circumstances, the student will receive a zero for the activity, academic probation for egregious professionalism performance, and may be referred to the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) for consideration of dismissal from the program.

*** Students may be required to complete additional work or make up missed shifts to meet the time requirements of a rotation. Such make-up requirements may delay graduation.**

Process:

- Documentation:
 - The Preceptor Evaluation of the Student encourages preceptors to document any absence of the PA student during a rotation.
 - Instances of non-compliance with the attendance policy will be documented and communicated to the DCE.
- Notification:
 - Students will be promptly notified of attendance concerns, warnings, and the initiation of academic probation.
- Counseling:
Counseling sessions will be conducted to understand the root causes of attendance issues and collaboratively develop strategies for improvement.

2.5 Accessibility Services

If any student thinks he/she may need accommodations for a course, that student should contact the Accessibility Services Department of CSU Student Success, which is located on the 2nd floor of Rivers Library. Guidelines, applications, documentation, and consent forms, along with additional resources regarding the requirements/procedures, are located on [the Accessibility Services' website](#), or the student may wish to contact the office at 843-863-7159 to initiate registration for accommodations.

Approval of accommodations is **only** granted by CSU Accessibility Services. Once a student has been approved to receive accommodations through Accessibility Services, the student must contact and coordinate such accommodation requests with each course director individually during office hours to discuss the accommodations approved by CSU Accessibility Services. Please visit the CSU Accessibility Services website for additional information about this process.

SECTION 3: PROFESSIONALISM

3.1 Professionalism Overview

Professionalism is a foundational expectation of the CSU PA program, and professional behavior is an essential tenet of medical practice and PA medical education. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) identifies professionalism as professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles, and sensitivity to a diverse patient population. Furthermore, because our graduates will be key healthcare team members, we acknowledge that professionalism within the medical training program will further develop providers who will communicate effectively and respect the principles of honesty, confidentiality, and respect for others and their actions.

All CSU PA students are expected to consistently demonstrate professional behavior in academic, clinical, and interpersonal settings, on and off campus. This includes integrity, accountability, respect for others, and

adherence to all program and university policies and procedures. Professionalism is considered equally important to academic performance and will be continually assessed throughout the program.

Professionalism reflects the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. It involves prioritizing the interests of patients above one's own, acknowledging personal and professional limitations, and practicing without impairment from substance use, cognitive dysfunction, or mental illness. As future healthcare providers, CSU PA students are expected to demonstrate high levels of responsibility, ethical conduct, cultural sensitivity, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

Using the NCCPA's Competencies for the PA Profession as a guideline, CSU PA students' professional behavior expectations are as follows:

1. Arrive on time and prepare for class or assigned responsibilities.
2. Exhibit-professional demeanor and behavior in the classroom and clinical settings.
3. Show attentive presence and engagement appropriate to the course format (e.g., alert, note-taking, ask questions when needed).
4. Demonstrate respectful and courteous interactions with peers, faculty, staff, and patients.
5. Communicate effectively and respectfully in all required formats (e.g., email correspondence, discussion, EHR, if applicable).
6. Demonstrate appropriate attire and professional appearance in the classroom and clinical settings.
7. Adhere to academic integrity and honor code standards.

3.2 Professionalism Evaluation of Student

Professionalism is a core program learning competency of the CSU PA Program and is continuously evaluated throughout the PA student's enrollment. In the didactic year, the student's conduct, accountability, teamwork, and adherence to program expectations are observed, and documentation of lapses is outlined below in 3.3 – *Professionalism Infractions*. During the clinical phase, preceptors assess and provide feedback on the professionalism of the PA student as they interact with patients, staff, and other members of the healthcare team.

3.3 Professionalism Infractions

A tiered approach for addressing lapses in professionalism is outlined below. Minor infractions will result in a citation, and major infractions will result in a violation. The following examples are provided as guidance; however, they are not exhaustive. The Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) reserves the right to classify any concerning behavior as a lapse in professionalism and to escalate any infraction to a higher level of disciplinary action.

Professionalism Citation	Professionalism Violation
<i>Examples of Mild Infractions</i>	<i>Examples of Major Infractions (Violation)</i>
Repeat tardiness	Academic integrity violations
Unprofessional dress	Threatening communication, harassment, or bullying
Disruptive behavior in class	HIPAA violations
Misuse of equipment	Insubordination

Failure to respond or delayed response to faculty, preceptors, or staff (more than 48 hours)	No call/no show for a scheduled clinical rotation/ shift
Disrespectful communication with peers, faculty, preceptors, or staff	Substance use during academic or clinical hours
Inappropriate (non-HIPAA) social media use while identifying as a CSU PA student	Ethical/legal violations

PROFESSIONALISM CITATION AND VIOLATION ACTIONS

- 1st infraction:
 - Professionalism Citation is issued
 - The Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) is notified.
- 2nd infraction:
 - Professionalism Citation is issued
 - The Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) is notified.
 - Self-reflection is completed.
 - Meeting with Program Director to discuss self-reflection and behavior modification.
- 3rd infraction:
 - Professionalism Violation is issued
 - The Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) is notified and convenes to review for consideration of additional disciplinary action, including academic probation.

A student forfeits further citation opportunities once a Professionalism Violation is issued. Any subsequent infractions will result in additional violations regardless of the degree of severity. Major infractions may bypass citations and result in an immediate Professionalism Violation.

Any student who receives three professionalism violations will be recommended for dismissal from the PA Program.

The Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) reserves the right to escalate an egregious issue to a Professionalism Violation based on the severity or impact of the incident, regardless of prior citation history.

3.4 Appearance & Attire

The standard attire for students in the PA program is business casual. Clothing should allow for adequate movement and should not be tight, short, or low-cut, or expose the torso with movement. This is expected in both the classroom and on clinical rotations. If the appearance standard for a clinical site is stricter than that outlined herein, the student must adhere to that clinical site's policy. Clothing should be clean, pressed, and in good condition, with no tears or holes. In addition, students should follow these guidelines:

Category	Standards and Expectations
Hair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be neat, clean, and kept out of the face during patient care. • Color must be a natural tone; bright colors or elaborate ornaments are not permitted. • Beards or mustaches are allowed if well-groomed and clean.
Fingernails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be short enough to avoid injuring patients.

Category	Standards and Expectations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear or light polish may be worn if neat. • Artificial fingernails of any type are prohibited in clinical settings.
Jewelry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watches, wedding rings, and earrings are permitted. • Excessive bracelets or necklaces are not allowed in the classroom or clinical settings.
Fragrances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong scents (perfume, cologne, lotion, smoke, and heavily scented deodorant) are not permitted.
Piercings & Tattoos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ear and nostril piercings are acceptable during the didactic year. • Clinical sites may impose stricter standards, which must be followed. • Earlobe expanders are prohibited. • Tattoos should be covered in the clinical setting when possible.
Shoes/Socks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptable styles: oxfords, lace-ups, loafers, clogs, boots, flats, sandals, and moderate heels. • Unacceptable: flashy athletic shoes, flip-flops, or slippers. • Open-toed shoes are prohibited in clinical environments and labs.
Shirts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not permitted: T-shirts, tank tops, spaghetti strap blouses, shirts exposing the midriff, shirts with slogans, sweatshirts, or hoodies.
Bottoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not permitted: denim jeans, cargo pants, pants with holes or rips, shorts, sweatpants, exercise pants, leggings (unless worn under a skirt or dress), mini skirts, skorts, and sundresses. • Skirts and dresses must not be more than three inches above the knee.
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must wear their CSU Student ID visibly at all times during program-related activities, both on and off campus.
Scrubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU PA Program scrubs (provided by the program) may only be worn at times designated by course directors or the Program Director.

Clinical supervisors, preceptors, and PA faculty reserve the right to dismiss a student from a clinical or educational site if they are perceived as inappropriately attired. Such actions will be reviewed by the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) to determine whether remediation or disciplinary action is warranted. In some cases, additional professional or developmental training may be required, which could delay graduation and, if not successfully completed, may prevent program completion.

LABORATORY SETTINGS

Courses that include a laboratory component, such as Human Anatomy, Patient Assessment and Diagnostic Methods, and Clinical Year Prep, will have specific guidelines for attire and appearance in their respective course syllabi. Such course requirements will have precedence over the policies noted above, but will not replace them.

CLINICAL SETTINGS

Students must always be clearly identified as CSU PA students in all clinical settings. They are to be clearly distinguished from other health profession students and practitioners. In medical settings, students must **ALWAYS** introduce themselves to patients, patient family members, clinical site staff, and others by stating

their full name and position title – “Physician Assistant Student.”

Students will wear a short white lab coat embroidered with the CSU PA Program logo during all assigned rotation activities unless otherwise directed by the clinical preceptor. Students must also wear either their CSU Student ID badge or a site-issued badge for each rotation.

3.5 Social Media & Electronic Device Use

The following are guidelines established by CSU & the PA program regarding social media & electronic device use:

Category	Standards and Expectations
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect confidential, sensitive, and proprietary information.• Do not post content about the University, staff, students, clinical facilities, patients/clients, or any parties connected to your role as a CSU PA student.
Copyright & Fair Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect copyright and intellectual property rights of the University and others.• For guidance, consult the University Library or Copyright Office.
University Marks & Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not use Charleston Southern University or PA Program marks, logos, or graphics on personal social media sites.• Do not use the University's name to promote or disparage a product, cause, political party, or candidate for public office.
Classroom & Clinical Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During lectures and clinical time, social media-enabled devices may only be used as authorized by faculty.• Cell phone features must be silenced.
Phone Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal calls or texts are not permitted in patient care areas or PA classrooms.• Students responding to emergency calls/texts must step outside the room.
Computers & Tablets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of computers, tablets, or iPads during class is restricted to notetaking and academic purposes.• Students should avoid distracting others nearby.
Recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Videotaping or audiotaping instructors or peers requires written permission.• Patients may never be recorded or photographed without written consent from both the patient and the clinical preceptor.
Professional Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students identified as affiliated with CSU must ensure online profiles and content align with University and Program standards.• Personal opinions must be clearly identified as such.
HIPAA Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines must always be observed.• Patient, caregiver, or clinical site information may never be posted to social media, websites, or online forums.
Personal Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are solely responsible for their posts and must safeguard their own and others' privacy and confidentiality.
Faculty & Staff Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Text messaging is not permitted for official communication with PA faculty or staff.• CSU PA faculty and staff may not accept or send social media connection requests to PA students.

All students are required to review and adhere to the CSU Student Handbook social media policy in addition to these program-specific guidelines.

SECTION 4: ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONALISM PROGRESSION

4.1 Academic & Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC)

The Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) comprises PA faculty appointed by the Program Director. It serves to ensure that each PA student's academic and professional performance aligns with program and university policies and to intervene when required. While adverse academic and professionalism actions are clearly outlined below, the APPC will review each student's academic and professionalism performance at the end of each semester and make progression recommendations when appropriate. A PA student may not progress to the clinical year or graduate from the program without the APPC's recommendation.

4.2 Academic Standing & Adverse Academic Actions

GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING

Good academic standing is defined as earning a semester GPA of 3.0 or above.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student is subject to *academic probation* for the following reasons:

- Earning one final course grade of "C."
- Earning a semester GPA less than 3.0.
- Receiving one professionalism violation.
- Egregious professional behavior, as deemed by the APPC.
- Earning below 70% on any clinical year assessment (Preceptor Evaluation of Student, EOR exam).

ACADEMIC DISMISSAL

A student is subject to *academic dismissal* from the program for the following reasons:

- Earning one final course grade of "F", defined as earning less than 70%.
- Failing to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher at the end of the didactic year (Unit 5).
- Being placed on academic probation for two semesters.
- Receiving three professionalism violations.
- Egregious professionalism behavior, as deemed by the APPC.
- Earning below 70% on a second Preceptor Evaluation of the Student.
- Failing to achieve a score of 75% or higher on the Summative Evaluation after the maximum allocated remediation attempts.

NOTE:** Some professional policy violations may be so egregious that citation/violation or probation will be skipped in lieu of ***program dismissal. Examples may include:

- Conviction of a crime that precludes the student from participating in clinical education
- Falsifying admissions documents.
- Blatant HIPAA violation.
- Attending to patient care while impaired/under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Dismissal from a clinical practicum experience by a preceptor or healthcare system.

All PA students have the right to appeal decisions related to academic or professionalism performance. Please refer to the ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONALISM GRIEVANCES & APPEALS section of the PA Student Handbook for the appeals procedures.

4.3 Academic Probation

The criteria for academic probation are outlined above.

Academic probation is a formal designation indicating that a student's academic or professional performance is below program standards. Its purpose is to (1) alert the student to the seriousness of their standing, (2) provide structured support for performance improvement, and (3) identify students at risk of dismissal for failing to meet instructional objectives, course outcomes, or progression requirements.

The Director of Didactic Education (DDE) or Director of Clinical Education (DCE) will issue a formal letter detailing the reason for the probation, conditions for improvement, and the steps required to return to good academic standing. Copies are sent to the Program Director, APPC Chair, academic advisor, and the Registrar's office for inclusion in the student's permanent record.

Upon being placed on probation:

1. The DDE or DCE, the academic advisor, and the student must meet within the first week of the regularly scheduled class after receipt of such a letter to review the student's status, expectations, and a plan for improvement.
2. Documentation from this meeting, including identified deficiencies, remediation plans, expected outcomes, timelines, and consequences, must be entered into the student's academic records.
3. The student must meet regularly with their academic advisor to monitor progress; the frequency of meetings will be determined at the sole discretion of the advisor.
4. The student must meet regularly with the course director for any course in which satisfactory performance has not been achieved; the frequency of such meetings will be determined at the sole discretion of the course director.
5. The student must complete all requirements outlined in **4.5 – Remediation**, as applicable to the circumstances of academic probation.
6. The student's academic advisor must approve participation in extracurricular or campus activities during the probationary period.
7. Academic probation is disclosed in any final verifications of training, employment letters, state medical licensure applications, and other official program references.

A student may be removed from probation at the discretion of the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) when the following criteria are met:

1. Successful completion of the subsequent grading period without earning any grades below a "B" and maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
2. Demonstration of significant improvement and remediation of professionalism discrepancies or substandard performance.

When probation is lifted, the DDE or DCE issues a formal letter of removal, with copies sent to the Program Director, academic advisor, and Registrar's office.

If a student fails to demonstrate satisfactory improvement or complete the terms of remediation, the matter is referred to the APPC for review and consideration of dismissal from the program, in accordance with the program's **Progression Requirements**.

4.4 Progression Requirements

Given the sequential nature of the curriculum, students are expected to complete each unit/semester on time as a cohort. Progression is a function of successfully passing all required coursework in a unit, and the coursework for the unit will serve as the prerequisite for the following unit.

Students may progress within the PA program when in good academic standing. The ability to progress in the program is subject to the discretion of the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC).

If a student is remediating a course or component, they may progress to the next unit at the APPC's discretion.

If a student is subject to disciplinary action under the professionalism policy, their status is reviewed at the conclusion of each academic unit by the APPC, which will determine whether the student should be placed on academic probation or permitted to progress in the program.

For a student to progress from the didactic year into the clinical year, they must meet both of the following:

1. Be in good academic standing, defined as achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, at the end of Unit 5
2. Be recommended for advancement by the APPC.

*A student who is denied progression may appeal the denial by submitting a written letter of appeal to the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) within seven (7) business days of receiving written notification of the denial.

The Program Director is responsible for confirming a student's eligibility to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certification Exam (PANCE) following graduation. Such eligibility is based on successfully completing the program's curricular requirements and the APPC's positive recommendation on such student's preparedness for the exam.

4.5 Remediation Policy

To meet program expectations and graduation requirements, all students must demonstrate competency in knowledge, skills, and professional attributes. Student progress is continuously monitored and documented to identify deficiencies that may place a student "at risk." The ARC-PA defines remediation as "the program-defined process for addressing deficiencies in a student's knowledge and skills, such that the correction of these deficiencies is measurable and can be documented." It provides structured opportunities for students to address unsatisfactory performance and achieve established learning outcomes, including additional training, supervision, or educational support beyond the standard instruction provided to the cohort.

The purpose of remediation is to:

- promote early identification of deficiencies
- ensure timely intervention
- allow students to demonstrate mastery of content and readiness for clinical practice

All remediation activities must be measurable, documented, and completed within the parameters established by the program, and must be completed within **two weeks of the original assessment** unless otherwise approved and documented on the appropriate **Remediation Form**, which is placed in the student's academic file.

Failure to successfully remediate will result in referral to the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) and additional program action, up to and including the recommendation of dismissal from the program. If

the Program Director supports dismissal, the student may file a formal appeal in accordance with the **Academic Appeals Policy**.

DIDACTIC PHASE REMEDIATION:

Earning 80% or higher indicates a PA student is performing at a level that meets expectations for graduate-level performance. Scores below 80% indicate performance that falls short of program standards, and the student is “at risk.” Scores under 70% reflect failure to meet minimum standards of success and require formal intervention.

The course director is responsible for initiating and completing documentation.

Within 24 hours of grades being posted, didactic students scoring below 80% must 1) complete the **Didactic Phase Remediation Form** and submit it to the course director (or designee), and 2) arrange the remediation meeting. The course director (or designee), in consultation with the Director of Didactic Education (DDE), will develop a remediation plan that documents the 1) nature of the deficiency, 2) assigned remediation plan/activities, 3) timeline for completion (including reassessment, if indicated), and 4) expected outcomes.

The student’s advisor will be kept informed, and the student is responsible for completing assigned activities and maintaining documentation under faculty oversight. Faculty must verify that the remediation outcomes have been met within the designated timeframe.

Remediation activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Reading and study assignments
- Written self-reflection
- Written analysis of selected exam items with references/citations
- Individual skills training or faculty-led tutoring

Each remediation plan becomes part of the student’s permanent academic record and must be signed by both students and faculty to acknowledge expectations and timelines. Documentation must detail the completed learning activities, and faculty must assess and document the student’s ability to meet the learning outcome(s) within the designated time frame as outlined in the plan.

The course director and the DDE confirm successful completion. Failure to fulfill all terms of the remediation plan may result in adverse actions.

Successful remediation does not alter course grades unless explicitly stated in the syllabus.

The program uses a **tiered approach** to ensure consistency and proportionality in remediation. This framework escalates from faculty-directed support to formal review by the Academic and Professionalism Progress (APP) Committee if deficiencies persist. See Appendix XX for the remediation flowchart outlining this process.

REMEDIATION TIERS

Tier / Criteria	Criteria	Process & Requirements
Tier 1:	75–79.99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student receives and completes the Self-Reflection section of the Didactic Year Remediation Form.

Supervised Self-Reflection		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student meets with the course director, instructor, or designee to review responses, discuss areas of weakness, and identify strategies/resources. • Course director or designee documents outcomes on the <i>Didactic Year Remediation Form</i>. • No reassessment is required for Tier 1 remediation.
Tier 2: Remediation with Mastery Demonstration	70–74.99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1 steps are completed. • Course director notifies the Director of Didactic Education. • Course director develops a tailored remediation plan, documented on the <i>Didactic Year Remediation Form</i>. • Student completes assigned remediation tasks. • Course director meets with the student to confirm mastery of content. • All documentation is filed in the student's academic record.
Tier 3: Remediation with Reassessment	Below 70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1 and Tier 2 steps are completed. • A formal reassessment is required to verify mastery of content. • A student is permitted up to two reassessment attempts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Attempt 1</i>: Must be scheduled and completed within two weeks of the original assessment unless otherwise approved. ○ <i>Attempt 2</i>: May be authorized by the APP Committee, in consultation with the Program Director, if mastery is not achieved after the first attempt. • A minimum passing score of ≥70% is required to demonstrate mastery. • The maximum recorded grade for any remediated assessment is 70%, regardless of the score earned. • Failure to achieve ≥70% after the second reassessment will result in referral to the APPC for dismissal review. • <i>Didactic Year Remediation Form</i> is completed, signed by the student and placed in the student's academic record.

Oversight and Documentation

The ***Didactic Year Remediation Form*** will serve as the official record of all remediation activities (self-reflection, remediation plans, mastery demonstration, and reassessment outcomes).

- For all Tier 2 and Tier 3 remediation records:
 - DDE & Program Director must review and sign
 - Documentation of Tier 2 and 3 remediation will be maintained in the student's permanent academic file.

CLINICAL PHASE REMEDIATION:

The remediation process for the clinical year takes into account the unique characteristics of the clinical year.

The ***Clinical Phase Remediation Form*** will be used to document the remediations and will be maintained in the student's permanent academic file.

Rotation Assignment:

A student who earns less than 75 % on the rotation assignment is required to participate in *an informal remediation plan* outlined by a member of the clinical education team.

EOR Exam or OSCE

A clinical year student who scores below 70% on a clinical year assessment, including an End of Rotation (EOR) exam or OSCE, will be required to remediate as follows:

1. EOR Exam
 - a. A student will be allowed one attempt to remediate the EOR exam with a minimum passing score of 70%.
 - b. The final grade on any remediated EOR Exam may not exceed 70 %, regardless of the score earned.
2. OSCE
 - a. A student will be allowed one attempt to remediate the OSCE with a minimum passing score of 70%.
 - b. The final grade on any remediated OSCE may not exceed 70 %, regardless of the score earned.

Preceptor Evaluation of the Student

Rotation remediation will be required if their Preceptor Evaluation of the Student is below 70% *OR* their overall course grade is below 70%. A student may remediate only one clinical course/rotation during the clinical phase of the program.

1. The student will be required to repeat the rotation in its entirety, including all associated assignments and assessments, which will result in a delay in program completion and graduation.
2. The grade of record will be an I (incomplete) until the student successfully remediates the course. A change of grade request will be completed to reflect the course grade.
3. Regardless of the student's overall remediation grade average, the highest course grade adjustment awarded is a C.

Category/Criteria	Process and Requirements
Rotation Assignment <75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will participate in an informal remediation plan outlined by a member of the Clinical Education team.
End of Rotation (EOR) Exam <70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student is allowed one attempt to remediate the EOR Exam.• Minimum passing score: 70%.• Final grade on remediated EOR Exam may not exceed 70%, regardless of the score earned.
Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) <70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student is allowed one attempt to remediate the OSCE.• Minimum passing score: 70%.• Final grade on remediated OSCE may not exceed 70%, regardless of the score earned.
Preceptor Evaluation of the Student <70% OR Overall Course Grade <70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rotation remediation is required if the Preceptor Evaluation is below 70% or overall course grade is below 70%.• A student may remediate only one clinical course/rotation during the clinical phase.• Student will repeat the rotation in its entirety, including all associated assignments and assessments.• Rotation remediation will result in a delay in program completion and graduation.• Grade of record will be an Incomplete (I) until remediation is successful.• Upon successful remediation, a change of grade request will reflect the updated course grade.

Category/Criteria	Process and Requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The highest grade adjustment possible for remediated clinical courses is a C.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT REMEDIATION:

Students must earn a grade of 75% or higher on all aspects of the summative assessment. The ***Summative Assessment Remediation Form*** will be used to document the remediations and will be maintained in the student's permanent academic file.

- Students earning a grade of less than 75% on any assessment item must remediate and successfully meet the student learning outcome reassessment with 75% or higher to graduate from the program.
- Students will have two (2) additional attempts to earn a grade greater than or equal to 75% on the summative evaluations. *It is important to note that the timing of remediation for this process may delay graduation.*
- A student who fails to earn a grade above 75% after the maximum allocated attempts will be dismissed from the program.

4.6 Deceleration

The CSU PA program curriculum is designed to be delivered on a full-time basis to students in a cohort. The program must be completed on a full-time basis, and students are not eligible to opt into deceleration. Program policies may result in program-required deceleration for an approved leave of absence, as outlined below.

4.7 Leave of Absence

Students seeking a leave of absence from the CSU PA Program must submit a written request to the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) and the Program Director to obtain permission. Acceptable leave of absence requests are considered for personal, financial, or medical reasons and are not typically granted for academic reasons.

DIDACTIC YEAR

For students requesting a leave of absence during the *didactic* year, the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) will make a recommendation to the Program Director, who will make the final decision regarding whether the leave of absence should be approved and the contingencies of returning to the program if approved. Students will either be required to return to the program in January or the semester after the one they most successfully completed.

CLINICAL YEAR

For students requesting a leave of absence during the *clinical* year, the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC) will make a recommendation to the Program Director, who makes the final decision regarding whether the leave of absence should be approved and the contingencies of returning to the program if approved. Students will return to the program within one (1) year from the date their leave of absence commenced and may not be permitted to complete The Graduate Project II coursework with their current cohort.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Students may only be granted one leave of absence for the program duration.

2. A leave of absence may be no more than one year in length. Anyone requiring longer than one year must reapply for the program, and their application will be treated in the same manner as all other applicants at that time.
3. A leave of absence will delay program completion, graduation, and registration for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE).
4. If the leave of absence is granted, a date will be established by which the student must notify the program of their intent to resume the program.
 - a. Any student granted a leave of absence for a medical reason will be required to provide documentation from their medical provider so that they may return to the program with their intent to resume letter.
5. A student with a leave of absence must complete a unique CSU application for readmission to be registered for courses and receive Financial Aid.
6. Any student granted a leave of absence will be required to complete a new background check and urine drug screen, which will be subject to the same review as other PA program matriculants within said cohort.
7. A student granted a leave of absence may choose to audit courses in the program leading up to their return to the program but will be required to comply with university course auditing fees. Any associated financial burdens shall be the sole responsibility of such student.
8. The ability of a student to return to the program outside of a January start will be contingent on the approval of the ARC-PA. Should the ARC-PA deny the program's application to exceed class size, the student will be unable to continue in the program.
9. A student denied a leave of absence by the Program Director may not appeal this decision.

4.8 Withdrawal

WITHDRAWAL BY REQUEST OF THE STUDENT

Students may initiate voluntary withdrawal from the program at any time by submitting a formal letter of resignation to the Program Director. It is strongly recommended that students first meet with their academic advisor and the Program Director before initiating the withdrawal process.

To officially withdraw from CSU, students must complete the **Withdrawal Form** available through MyCSU under Forms. The form must be submitted online while the student is logged into MyCSU. Once the required documentation is submitted, the Office of the Registrar will process the withdrawal and remove the student from any current and/or future enrollments.

Students remain responsible for tuition and fees according to the Tuition and Fees Policy, which can be found on the CSU PA program website. All financial obligations and the return of any university property must be satisfied to avoid administrative “holds” on the student’s academic records. Such holds may delay transcript requests or prevent future course registration.

As part of the withdrawal process, CSU will request student feedback regarding the reason for withdrawal and any contributing factors to support continuous improvement of student services.

Due to the sequential nature of the PA program curriculum, **withdrawal from individual courses is not permitted**, as it would prevent students from meeting the established progression requirements.

WITHDRAWAL BY REQUEST OF THE PROGRAM

CSU reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student whose conduct, general attitude, and/or influence are considered harmful to the university. Such administrative withdrawals or suspensions are handled through the Program Director, the Dean of the College of Health Sciences, and the Provost.

SECTION 5: STUDENT EXPECTATIONS & CONDUCT

5.1 Evaluation Completion Policy

Timely and honest student feedback is essential for program improvement, compliance with the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), and ensuring that the curriculum and faculty meet learners' needs. Completion of evaluations demonstrates professionalism and accountability as members of the academic community.

Completion of all assigned evaluations is a required component of student participation in the CSU PA Program. These evaluations are integral to maintaining program quality, monitoring instructional effectiveness, and fulfilling accreditation requirements. Students must complete assigned evaluations related to:

1. Didactic and clinical courses
2. Faculty and instructional staff
3. Clinical preceptors and clinical rotation sites
4. Program services, policies, and the overall learning environment

Policy Application: This policy applies to all CSU PA students during both the didactic and clinical phases of the program.

Expectations/Procedures

- Evaluations will be distributed electronically through the program's designated platform at specified intervals throughout the didactic and clinical phases.
- All students are required to submit their completed evaluations by the stated deadlines.
- Students are expected to provide constructive and professional feedback. Responses will remain confidential and reported in aggregate to faculty and administration.

Consequences for Non-Compliance

- Failure to complete evaluations by the deadline will be documented as a professionalism violation.
- Repeated failure to comply may result in referral to the APPC for further action.
- Students may be restricted from viewing grades, course syllabi, or advancing in the program until all required evaluations are completed.

5.2 Inclement Weather

In severe weather conditions, students should monitor local news outlets and the CSU website for closing announcements. The BUC Alert System also provides emergency notifications, including weather-related updates. The PA program follows university closure decisions made by CSU administrators.

DIDACTIC PHASE

- When the university is closed for inclement weather or official holidays, didactic students are not required to attend classes or activities on campus.

CLINICAL PHASE

- Official CSU holidays and weather-related closures do not apply to students in the clinical phase on rotations. Attendance requirements at the rotation site take priority over the university calendar.
- If the clinical site is open and the preceptor is working, students are expected to report unless the DCE has approved other arrangements.
- Students should use reasonable judgment regarding safety, especially since clinical sites may be located far from campus and weather conditions can vary by region.
- If the assigned facility is closed, students should not report and must notify the DCE of the closure on the same day.

5.3 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

This establishes guidelines for the ethical, responsible, and effective use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools within the CSU PA program and ensures that PA students responsibly utilize AI to enhance learning, research, and clinical training while upholding academic integrity, professionalism, and patient-centered care. AI should never replace medical literature or evidence-based medical resources and is not considered a substitute for critical thinking or independent learning. This policy is anticipated to grow and change with advances in technology.

Transparency about AI use eliminates concerns about credibility and perceived dishonesty. Use caution and avoid overreliance on AI, which can be inaccurate or biased. Verify, cite, and consistently use your knowledge base and clinical reasoning skills.

The use of AI for significant contributions to your work must be cited or acknowledged to avoid plagiarism. The CSU PA program uses the AMA format for writing and citations.

Prohibited AI Use

- AI platforms and tools are strictly prohibited and must not be used to complete assessments, graded assignments, or clinical documentation unless explicitly permitted by the course director, instructor, or faculty.
- Submitting AI-generated work as original without disclosure is considered plagiarism, which is Academic Dishonesty and a violation of ethical integrity. That will result in academic discipline, including expulsion from the University.

Note: This policy was created using ChatGPT.

SECTION 6: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, GRIEVANCES, & APPEALS

6.1 Academic Integrity Policy

As a liberal arts university committed to the Christian faith, CSU seeks to develop ethical men and women of disciplined, creative minds and lives that focus on leadership, service, and learning. The Honor System of Charleston Southern University is designed to provide an academic community of trust in which students can enjoy the opportunity to grow both intellectually and personally. For these purposes, the following rules and guidelines will be applied.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic Dishonesty is the transfer, receipt, or use of academic information, or the attempted transfer, receipt, or use of academic information in a manner not authorized by the instructor or by university rules. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism, as well as aiding or encouraging another to commit academic dishonesty.

Cheating is defined as wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material borrowed from another source (including the Internet) by a student with the intent of aiding themselves or another in academic work. This includes, but is not limited to, a quiz, examination, presentation, experiment, skills testing, OSCES, or any written assignment, which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade. Using AI in violation of a course or assessment's stated AI protocol is cheating.

Plagiarism is the taking or attempted taking of an idea, a writing, a graphic, a music composition, an art, or datum of another person or an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool without giving proper credit and presenting or attempting to present it as one's own, with or without intent. It is also taking written materials of one's own that have been used for a previous course assignment and using it without reference to it in its original form. Any use of AI models without proper citation is plagiarism. Students are encouraged to ask their instructor(s) for clarification regarding their academic dishonesty standards. Instructors will include academic dishonesty/integrity standards, including explicit permissible AI use, on their course syllabi and each individual assignment.

Students are encouraged to ask their instructor(s) for clarification regarding their academic dishonesty standards. Instructors are encouraged to include academic dishonesty/integrity standards in their course syllabi.

Violations of this policy will result in academic discipline, up to and including expulsion from the University. Since PA students will be making decisions as future licensed professionals that affect their patients' lives, foundational ethical integrity is a core principle of the program. The CSU PA program is committed to a **zero-tolerance policy** for any academic dishonesty or ethical infractions.

REPORTING AN ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATION

1. It is the course director's responsibility to certify that academic assignments are independently mastered sufficiently to merit course credit. The responsibility of the student is to independently master academic assignments, refrain from acts of academic dishonesty, and refuse to aid or tolerate the academic dishonesty of others.
2. If an instructor or course director determines that the student is guilty of academic dishonesty, the course director must:
 - a. Discuss the matter with the student.
 - b. Then complete the *Academic Violation Form* found on MyCSU, which should include evidence and other necessary documentation.\
 - c. The completed *Academic Violation Form* is submitted to the PA Program Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC). The Committee will recommend an appropriate penalty, which may include a grade of zero on the assignment or a failing grade (F) in the course, resulting in dismissal from the program. The recommendation must also take into

account the student's academic standing and any probation status related to a professionalism infraction.

- d. The student must indicate on the *Academic Violation Form* whether they accept the penalty for violating the Academic Integrity policy or wish to appeal the instructor's decision. If an appeal is requested, the appeal due date must be entered on the form. (See the Appeals section for more information)
3. Once signed, the course director forwards the *Academic Violation Form* to the Registrar's Office for placement in the student's permanent record. The student will then be permanently ineligible for membership in any honorary society, CSU honor list, graduate assistantship, or university-funded financial aid. The Registrar will distribute copies of the *Academic Violation Form* to the student, faculty member, Program Director, Dean of the College of Health Sciences, and Dean of Students.
4. Failure to appeal when the form is completed, or by the appeal deadline, will be considered an admission of guilt, unless compelling circumstances are determined at the sole discretion of the Provost.
5. A second violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will result in dismissal from the program. There is no appeal process for a second violation of this policy.

The PA Program follows the CSU policies for academic integrity with minor modifications that align with the unique nuances of the program policies and procedures.

6.2 Academic & Professionalism Grievances & Appeals

The following procedures outline the appeals processes for academic and professionalism grievances within the CSU PA Program. These procedures are adapted from university policy to reflect the distinctive structure, sequencing, and progression standards of the PA curriculum. The appeals are organized in order of increasing scope and severity, beginning with individual course matters and progressing to program-level standing and dismissal.

- Students are expected to use the ***Academic & Professionalism Grievance Appeal Form*** for the written appeal process.
- If a student files an appeal outside a major term and the course director or Program Director is unavailable, all timelines will begin on the first day of the following major term. In unusual or extreme circumstances, the provost will determine the timeliness of the process.
- **During the appeals process, the student may continue to attend the class in which the violation occurred.**

COURSE GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. Initial Appeal to Course Director

The first level of appeal for a final course grade is to the instructor or course director. The student must submit a written appeal through the completed *Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form* within ten (10) days of the grade posting, stating the reason for dissatisfaction. The instructor will explain the grading basis during a meeting (in person or virtual) scheduled within ten (10) days of the request. If the instructor does not respond within thirty (30) days, the student may appeal directly to the DDE or DCE. Failure of the student to attend the scheduled meeting ends the appeal process. If the course director fails to respond to the student's appeal request within ten (10) days, the student will appeal to the DDE or DCE.

2. Appeal to Program Director

If dissatisfied after the initial meeting, the student may submit the completed *Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form* to the Program Director within five (5) days. The appeal must state the reasons for dissatisfaction and the desired resolution. The Program Director will notify the student, faculty member, and Registrar of the decision within ten (10) days. If no reasonable cause is found, the appeal may be denied without further review.

3. Ad Hoc Review Committee

If the Program Director determines reasonable doubt exists, an ad hoc committee of three qualified faculty will be appointed within ten (10) days. The committee will issue a written decision within ten (10) days of convening and provide copies to the Program Director, instructor, and student.

4. Final Appeal to Graduate Council

After exhausting all program-level remedies, the student may appeal to the Enrollment Subcommittee of the Graduate Council within ten (10) days. The committee cannot alter the grade but may recommend a reexamination, additional assignment, or further investigation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATION APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. Initial Appeal to the Program Director

A student appealing an academic integrity violation must submit a written appeal through the completed *Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form* to the Program Director within ten (10) class days of receiving the *Academic Violation Form*. The appeal must specify the reasons for disputing the charge or penalty. If the Program Director issued the violation, the appeal should be directed to the dean of the College of Health Sciences.

2. Program Director Review

The Program Director will review the appeal and issue a written decision within ten (10) class days. If no reasonable cause is found, the appeal may be denied. If reasonable doubt exists, the Program Director will meet with the student and instructor before issuing a final decision. If the appeal is upheld, the Program Director may direct the Registrar to remove the *Academic Violation Form* from the student's record.

3. Academic Integrity Appeals Committee Appeal

A student dissatisfied with the Program Director's decision may forward the written appeal (*Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form*) to the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee within ten (10) class days. The Committee will review the appeal and issue a written decision within fifteen (15) class days. The Committee may (1) deny the appeal, (2) reduce penalties in extenuating circumstances, or (3) direct removal of the *Academic Violation Form* from the student's record. All committee outcomes are reported to the Program Director, the Dean of the College of Health Sciences, the Dean of Students, and the Provost. **The Committee's decision is final.**

NOTE: The **Academic Integrity Appeals Committee** consists of five members: three (3) faculty and two (2) graduate students from different graduate programs, all appointed by the Program Director, as needed. If a committee member is unavailable, directly involved in the case, or must recuse themselves, the Program Director will appoint a replacement.

PROFESSIONALISM VIOLATION APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. Initial Appeal to the Program Director

The student must submit a written appeal through the completed *Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form* to the Program Director within ten (10) class days of receiving the violation, stating the reasons for the dispute. If the Program Director issued the violation, the appeal should be directed to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences.

2. Review by Program Director

If the Program Director finds no reasonable cause, the appeal may be denied. If reasonable doubt exists, the Program Director will meet with the student and instructor and issue a decision within ten (10) class days. If upheld, the Program Director may request that the violation be removed from the student's record.

ACADEMIC PROBATION APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. Initial Appeal to Program Director

To appeal an academic probation notice, the student must submit a written appeal through the completed *Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form* to the Program Director within ten (10) class days of receiving the notification. The appeal must clearly state the reasons for the dispute and any supporting information. If the Program Director issued the probation notice, the appeal should be directed to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences.

2. Program Director Review

The Program Director will review the appeal and notify the student and relevant faculty in writing within ten (10) class days. If reasonable cause exists, the Program Director will meet with the student and faculty and issue a written decision. If not, the appeal may be denied without further action.

3. Academic Appeals Committee

A student dissatisfied with the Program Director's decision may forward a written appeal (*Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form*) to the Academic Appeals Committee within ten (10) class days. The committee will issue a written decision within fifteen (15) class days and may uphold, rescind, or modify the probation. All committee outcomes are reported to the Program Director, the Dean of the College of Health Sciences, the Dean of Students, and the provost. **The committee's decision is final.**

DISMISSAL APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. Initial Appeal to Program Director

A student appealing a program dismissal must submit a written appeal through the completed *Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form* and request an interview with the Program Director within ten (10) days of receiving the dismissal letter. The meeting must occur within ten (10) days of the request to review the reasons for dismissal and grounds for reconsideration.

2. Appeal to Ad Hoc Committee

If reasonable doubt exists regarding an error or malfeasance, the Program Director will appoint a three-member ad hoc committee within ten (10) days to review the case. The committee will issue a written decision to the student, instructor, and *Program Director* within ten (10) days.

3. Appeal to the Faculty Appeals Committee

A student dissatisfied with the committee's decision may forward the appeal to the Faculty Appeals Committee within ten (10) days. While the committee cannot overturn a dismissal, it may recommend that the academic dean investigate the process if procedural violations are identified. **The dean's decision is final.**

All final appeal decisions will be reported to the student, the Program Director, the instructor/course director (when applicable), the Dean of the College of Health Sciences, the Dean of Students, and the Provost.

SECTION 7: GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate from the CSU PA Program and be awarded a Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies, a student must:

1. Successfully complete all coursework within five academic years according to university and program-defined academic standards.
2. Achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at program completion.
3. Successfully pass all components of the Summative Evaluation within four months of graduation, demonstrating all Program Learning Competencies (PLCs) have been mastered.
4. Be in good professional standing with the program.
5. Complete the CSU graduation application process.
6. Complete the payments of tuition, program fees, graduation fees, and outstanding university fees or library charges.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure all degree requirements have been met to qualify for graduation. A graduating student must apply for their degree through the Registrar's Office no later than the start of their final semester preceding said graduation.

STUDENT ADVISEMENT POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

Academic advising is a structured, intentional process designed to support students throughout the program by addressing academic performance, professional development, and personal well-being. While the curriculum is lockstep and does not require students to design an individualized educational plan, advising is crucial in mentoring/guiding, resource referral, and student support. The program aims to establish a supportive mentorship dynamic for each student.

Each CSU PA student is assigned a faculty advisor on the first day of enrollment. Advising evolves as the student progresses through the program. Early meetings may focus on study strategies, learning styles, student support systems, and adapting to graduate-level expectations. As students progress, advising will focus on reviewing their academic progress, GPA, test performance, professionalism, and readiness for clinical practice.

Faculty advisors are expected to meet formally with each advisee at least once per didactic unit and three times during the clinical year. Additional meetings are encouraged as needed, and students are encouraged to seek their advisor's support when necessary. The advisor monitors their advisees' academic and professional performance, identifies concerns, and provides timely guidance or referrals to institutional resources.

Faculty advisors complete a *Student Advising Form* for each formal session to ensure continuity and documentation. The advising process is intended to foster a supportive, mentorship-based relationship that promotes academic success and professional growth.

SECTION 2: ADVISING MEETING SCHEDULE

2.1 Didactic Year Meetings

Each advisor connects with their group of advisees over lunch during orientation as an informal way for all to come together and engage collectively. Following orientation, each student must meet with their advisor a minimum of once each unit, as outlined below.

Unit	Topics/Focus
1	Transition to graduate education; study styles/strategies, student support system, and adjustment to relocation.
2	Progression through Unit 1, academic performance/concerns, and student-specific needs.
3	Progression through Unit 2 and increased academic rigor, self-care, burnout prevention, and student-specific needs.
4	Progression through Unit 3 and academic rigor, self-care, burnout prevention, and student-specific needs.
5	Progression through Unit 4, clinical-year readiness, PACKRAT performance, and developing a PANCE study plan.

NOTE: Group meetings will not replace the minimum number of individual advisor/advisee meetings in each unit.

2.2 Clinical Year Meetings

Each student must meet with their advisor at least once per semester following the designated schedule below.

Semester	CBD #	Topics/Focus
Spring	3	Clinical experiences, preparation for the PANCE, and student-specific needs
Summer	5	Clinical experiences, PANCE preparation, and student-specific needs
Fall	7	PACKRAT and EOC exam performance, Summative assessment performance, clinical year experiences, graduate readiness for clinical practice, and student-specific needs

Academic advising is an ongoing educational process that connects students to the university. Advisors serve as mentors, representing and interpreting university policies and procedures for students while helping them navigate the institution's academic and organizational pathways.

Includes excerpts from the [CSU Student Handbook](#).

STUDENT GRIEVANCES, HARASSMENT & MISTREATMENT POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

The CSU PA program has policies and procedures for processing student allegations of harassment and mistreatment, as well as student grievances and appeals. Students are informed of program policies and practices through the *PA Program Student Handbook*, which is posted to Blackboard and to the CSU PA program's website. In addition, the Program Director and faculty review all CSU PA program policies with the students at New Student Orientation.

SECTION 2: STUDENT GRIEVANCES

The PA program abides by the CSU Policy for Student Grievances, Student Complaint Process, and Student Appeal Procedure outlined in the *annual CSU Student Handbook* under *Student ADA/Section 504 Grievance Procedure*, and on the CSU Student Support website, where the CSU Student Handbook can also be found:

<https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/student-life/student-support/>. Students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination based on disability or have been denied access to services or accommodations required by law have the right to use the grievance procedure.

CSU PA program's **Academic & Professionalism Policy** outlines the *Academic and Professionalism Grievances & Appeals Policy and Procedure* for PA students wishing to appeal a course final grade and an academic integrity violation, or a professionalism violation. This section can be found in the *PA Program Student Handbook*.

SECTION 3: ALLEGATIONS OF HARASSMENT/TITLE IX

The CSU PA program upholds the CSU commitment to maintaining an environment free from all forms of coercive, implicit, or explicit harassment. Harassment or discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, or any other protected status is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This includes forms of aggressive pressure, intimidation, or hostile behavior that interfere with an individual's academic or professional environment.

Under Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex includes sexual harassment, rape, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual violence. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX and Title IV. Sexual harassment encompasses unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior of a sexual nature.

All reports of harassment or discrimination will be reviewed and addressed in accordance with university policy and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program/university. Students who experience harassment or discrimination may seek confidential assistance from the **Title IX Coordinator, Summer Cora**, at titleix@csuniv.edu or (843) 863-7374. The Title IX Office is located on the 2nd floor of the Student Center.

Students wishing to file a formal complaint related to institutional policies, practices, or student life should contact the Dean of Students Office (Student Center, second floor) or submit a complaint electronically at <https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/student-life/student-support/>. Complaints may be submitted by signed

letter or email. The Dean of Students will review the complaint, determine the appropriate channel for resolution, and, if necessary, forward it to the relevant department. The receiving department will acknowledge the complaint within 15 business days of receipt and provide an institutional response within 30 business days of receipt.

The university recognizes the sensitive and confidential nature of many student complaints. Documentation and correspondence are kept confidential and shared with other departments/university officials who have a legitimate need to know.

SECTION 4: ALLEGATIONS OF MISTREATMENT

The CSU PA program is founded on principles of respect, dignity, and inclusion and is committed to maintaining a learning environment free from mistreatment. Mistreatment includes any behavior or action that is disrespectful, demeaning, or inconsiderate of a person's well-being, and that interferes with a student's ability to learn or participate in the educational process. Such conduct may involve inappropriate comments, humiliation, intimidation, or other unprofessional behavior by peers, faculty, staff, or clinical preceptors.

All reports of mistreatment are taken seriously and will be addressed in accordance with university policy. Verified instances of mistreatment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program/university.

Students who experience or witness mistreatment are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office (Student Center, second floor) or submit an electronic complaint at <https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/student-life/student-support/>. Complaints may be submitted by signed letter or email.

Complaints will be acknowledged within 10-15 business days, and an institutional response will be provided within 30 business days of receipt. All reports are handled with confidentiality and shared only with university officials who have a legitimate need to know.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

The CSU PA program recognizes the importance of and is committed to supporting students' academic success and professional development. Due to the intensive and rigorous nature of the curriculum, students are strongly encouraged to dedicate their full attention to their education and training. As such, the program strongly discourages any form of employment while enrolled as a PA student. This intensive graduate-level training requires full-time attendance during the didactic and clinical years.

Outside work obligations will not be considered an acceptable excuse for poor performance or absence from scheduled course activities.

SECTION 2: DIDACTIC YEAR

In the didactic year, the CSU PA Program:

- Does not allow students to work for the program in a paid or volunteer capacity under any circumstances.
- Does not allow students to substitute for or function as instructional faculty, regardless of their prior knowledge, education, and/or experience(s).
- Students are not to be the primary instructor or instructor of record for any component of the curriculum under any circumstances.

SECTION 3: CLINICAL YEAR

In the clinical year, during rotations:

- CSU PA students are prohibited from being used to replace or substitute for regular clinical or administrative staff under any circumstances. If asked to do so during a clinical rotation, the following steps must be taken:
 - Student notifies the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) within one calendar day of the event.
 - The DCE will collect information and review the report with the Program Director to assess the appropriateness of continued use of the preceptor.
 - In response, the program may initiate a site visit, communicate directly with the preceptor (and office manager, if appropriate), or remove the clinical site or preceptor from future student placements.
 - If needed, preceptor assignments will be adjusted to ensure all students achieve the required Program Learning Competencies at program completion.

INFECTIOUS & ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS EXPOSURE POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

The CSU PA program adheres to guidelines issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards.

SECTION 2: POST-EXPOSURE PROCEDURES FOR CARE & TREATMENT

Exposure to bloodborne pathogens and hazardous substances is a known risk for all healthcare providers and students in clinical training. The program provides specific training on infectious and environmental hazards before any educational activities that may place students at risk for exposure.

During the clinical year, students must familiarize themselves with the specific policies and procedures of each clinical site regarding standard precautions, exposure control, and reporting requirements.

When an injury or exposure to blood, body fluids, or hazardous materials occurs, either in the laboratory or at the clinical site, the incident must be **immediately reported** to the appropriate person after initial first aid and safety procedures have been completed. Failure to report an accident or injury promptly may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

2.1 On-Campus Exposure Procedures

- If an incident occurs in the laboratory or classroom setting, the affected student(s) must immediately notify the instructor.
- The student(s) should go to Trident Medical Center (9330 Medical Plaza Drive, N. Charleston, SC 29406) for evaluation and treatment, if indicated. All medical expenses are the financial responsibility of the affected student(s).
- The incident must be reported to the DDE via the *Incident Report Form* within 48 hours of the event.
- For anatomy laboratory-specific exposure, refer to the *College of Health Sciences Human Anatomy Lab Policies and Procedure Manual*.

2.2 Off-Campus Exposure Procedures

- If an incident occurs at a clinical training site, the affected student(s) must immediately notify the designated clinical preceptor.
- The student will follow each clinical site's exposure protocol and seek evaluation and treatment according to that site's protocol.
- If the clinical site lacks a defined protocol, the student should seek treatment at the nearest emergency department for evaluation and care. All medical expenses are the sole financial responsibility of the affected student(s).
- The student must report all incidents to the DDE by submitting an *Incident Report Form* within 48 hours of the event.

In case of an emergency, call 911 for rapid treatment and transport to the nearest emergency room.

SECTION 3: PREVENTION - STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

Standard precautions protect healthcare professionals and reduce the risk of exposure to infectious and hazardous substances from recognized and unrecognized sources. Such precautions apply to all patient care and laboratory or clinical training experiences. These precautions apply to all patient care and clinical or laboratory activities.

Adherence to universal precautions is a professional responsibility of all faculty and students. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program. PA students must behave as if any patient may have a transmissible infectious disease and avoid direct contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, contaminated items, or any other potential hazard source. Sharps must be handled with extreme caution and disposed of immediately in designated puncture-resistant containers.

3.1 Hand Hygiene

According to the CDC, hand hygiene encompasses handwashing, antiseptic handwash, alcohol-based hand rub, and surgical antisepsis, and is crucial in reducing the risk of transmitting infectious agents. Hand hygiene is required:

- Before and after all patient care
- Before performing aseptic tasks
- After contact with blood, body fluids, or contaminated surfaces, even on the same patient
- After glove removal

Use an alcohol-based hand rub for hand hygiene unless hands are visibly soiled; in those cases, soap and water must be used. For visible contamination or after caring for patients with known or suspected infectious diarrhea (*C. difficile* or norovirus), wash immediately with soap and water. Refer to [CDC Hand Hygiene Guidelines for Healthcare Workers](#) for details.

3.2 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn whenever there is a potential for exposure. Protective apparel should not be worn from one patient or procedure to another and must be properly removed and disposed of after use. Types of PPE in healthcare include, but are not limited to:

- Gloves – protect hands from infectious materials.
- Gowns/Aprons – protect skin and clothing.
- Face masks – protect the mucous membranes of the mouth and nose.
- Respirators – prevent inhalation of infectious materials.
- Goggles – protect eyes.
- Face shields – protect the entire face, mouth, nose, and eyes.

Perform hand hygiene immediately after removing PPE.

3.3 Needles and Other Sharps

- Do not recap, bend, or manipulate used needles by hand.
- Use safety devices such as self-sheathing needles and/or needleless systems when available.
- Dispose of all sharps immediately in a puncture-resistant container after use.

3.4 Handling Contaminated Articles & Surfaces

- Handle patient-care equipment, linens, and laundry in a manner that prevents the transfer of microorganisms.
- Clean or dispose of contaminated materials per university and/or clinical site policy.
- Clean & disinfect all clinical and laboratory areas after every patient interaction.

3.5 Respiratory Hygiene & Cough Etiquette

- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- Dispose of tissues properly and perform hand hygiene afterward.
- Wear a mask or respirator when appropriate to prevent aerosol transmission.
- Maintain distance from others when coughing or sneezing.

The above precautions follow current CDC and OSHA infection-control guidelines.

SECTION 4: STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Program Director, Medical Director, and principal faculty WILL NOT participate as healthcare providers for students enrolled in the program except in an emergency.

Before enrollment, all students must provide **proof of health insurance** through the program's designated third-party agency.

- Proof of coverage must be updated upon renewal or any policy change.
- Continuous coverage is required throughout enrollment; failure to maintain coverage constitutes grounds for dismissal.

All costs associated with medical evaluation, treatment, or care following an exposure or injury are the responsibility of the student and their respective insurance provider.

Continued participation in the activities of the PA program following accidental exposure or injury will be reviewed on an individual basis by the Program Director.

STUDENT HEALTH POLICY

SECTION 1: HEALTH INSURANCE & FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Before enrollment, all students must provide proof of health insurance through a third-party agency selected by the program. Proof of health insurance must be updated through the third-party agency upon policy renewal or if there is a change in coverage. This health insurance policy must remain active throughout each student's involvement in the PA program. Failure to do so is grounds for dismissal. The financial burden of such insurance is the sole responsibility of the individual student.

CSU does not have medical staff or a first-aid dispensary. However, for minor injuries such as cuts and abrasions, the University maintains a well-stocked first-aid kit in the Residence Life Office on the second floor of the Student Center. All Residence Life and Campus Security personnel are trained in basic first aid and CPR. First aid assistance may be obtained at any time by contacting Campus Security.

In addition, Trident Regional Medical Center, with emergency room facilities, is located across the street from campus at 9330 Medical Plaza Drive, North Charleston, SC 29406.

Students are neither employees of CSU nor the clinical rotation site; therefore, payment for medical evaluation, treatment, and care is the sole responsibility of each student and their insurance carrier for any care needed while in the program. Each student must carry their own health insurance throughout their enrollment in the program.

SECTION 2: STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS & RELEASE FORM

The PA program contracts a third-party agency to record and certify student health records required for the program. Such an agency will notify the program of each student's up-to-date immunization status. All forms and health records must be submitted to this agency by the students and not to the CSU PA program. The PA program requires students to sign a release form allowing CSU to provide preceptors with the status or results of immunizations, TB screenings, drug screenings, background checks, and other necessary documentation. This release form and documentation that the student has met program health screening and immunization requirements will be maintained in the student's file.

SECTION 3: STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS & TB SCREENING POLICY

The program aligns its vaccination recommendations with those routinely advised by the CDC, particularly for healthcare personnel, and with the onboarding requirements of our clinical partnerships. TB screening and documentation of vaccine/immunity status are required for enrollment and continued progression in the CSU PA Program.

TB screening and immunization/immunity documentation must be dated, signed, or stamped by a healthcare provider or office before submission to the designated third-party health record service. The pre-enrollment deadline for submission of vaccine and immunity documentation and TB screening is December 1.

The following tables summarize the immunization and TB screening requirements for enrollment and progression in the CSU PA Program. While these requirements align with CDC guidelines for healthcare workers, they are subject to change or update based on clinical site policies.

Students are solely responsible for any healthcare-related costs incurred while enrolled, even when following policy requirements.

3.1 Immunization Requirements

Vaccine/Test/Timing	Requirement	Notes/Alternatives
MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) Pre-enrollment requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two doses at least 28 days apart, OR Positive MMR titer demonstrating immunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If negative titer, repeat 2-dose series. Titer not needed if 2 doses are documented.
Varicella (VZV) Pre-enrollment requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of 2 doses \geq28 days apart, OR Positive varicella (VZV) titer test demonstrating immunity, OR Healthcare provider-confirmed history of varicella or herpes zoster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative titer: must receive 2 doses, 4 weeks apart. US-born before 1980 still must provide evidence.
Tdap/Td Pre-enrollment requirement, but may require updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Tdap within the past 10 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If 10+ years, obtain Tdap or Td booster.
Influenza (Flu) Pre-enrollment requirement with required updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proof of annual flu vaccine for the current influenza season <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receipt from pharmacy Note from healthcare provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 3 times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-matriculation Clinical year preparation Completion of clinical year Typically obtained in Sept/Oct annually Alternate vaccines are available for individuals with egg allergies.
Hepatitis B Pre-enrollment requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proof of completed vaccine series, AND Positive quantitative Hep B titer (anti-HBs or HBsAb) showing immunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If negative, repeat the CDC-recommended series AND titer 1 month after the last series dose. After 6 doses AND 2 negative titers, the student is a 'non-responder,' and must notify the program.
COVID-19 Pre-enrollment requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDC recommends healthcare workers receive an updated 2024–2025 Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech, or Novavax Unvaccinated students are encouraged to initiate the vaccination process before matriculation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of the vaccine may prevent clinical year placement at specific sites. Alternate placements are not guaranteed, which could prevent clinical year completion, delay graduation, or prevent program completion.

Vaccine Exemption Statement: Certain clinical partners may grant a **vaccine exemption** on medical or religious grounds, subject to site approval. Sites are not required to accept exemptions. Students are responsible for requesting and securing exemption approval directly from the clinical site.

The CDC recommends screening all US healthcare personnel for tuberculosis (TB) upon hire (i.e., preplacement). TB screening is a process that includes baseline individual TB risk assessment, TB symptom evaluation, a TB test (e.g., TB blood test or a TB skin test), and additional evaluation for TB disease as needed. Furthermore, the clinical partners of the CSU PA program have strict requirements for clinical year PA students because of the increased risk of exposure to TB as a healthcare worker. The program aims to comply, which is reflected in the TB screening requirements below. More information on the CDC recommendations on TB screening/testing frequency for healthcare personnel can be found [here](https://www.cdc.gov/tb-healthcare-settings/hcp/screening-testing/frequency.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/tb-healthcare-settings/hcp/screening-testing/frequency.html>).

3.2 TB Screening Requirements

Pre-enrollment Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Accepted students must complete a 2-step PPD, valid only for one year from the 2nd test. Another 2-step PPD will be required for clinical year preparation requirements.
Clinical Year Preparation Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All PA students must complete a 2-step PPD, valid only for one year from the 2nd test.Another 2-step PPD may be required to complete the clinical year.**Many clinical sites require TB testing completed within 30 days of a rotation start date.Additional testing may be necessary to meet site-specific requirements.
Additional Guidelines:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Positive PPD: Submit a clear chest X-ray during clinical year preparation, and again six months later, depending on clinical site policies.TB Blood Test (QuantiFERON®-TB Gold Plus or T-SPOT®.TB)<ul style="list-style-type: none">A negative TB blood test may be acceptable in lieu of the 2-step PPD, unless otherwise specified by a clinical siteMandatory for individuals who previously received the BCG vaccine.

NOTE: Clinical sites and preceptors may require additional vaccinations and documentation, and the financial burden of any and all such vaccinations and/or documentation shall remain the sole financial responsibility of the individual student.

SECTION 4: INTERNATIONAL ELECTIVES & GLOBAL MISSIONS TRIPS

Students participating in international elective rotations or global mission trips must adhere to the CDC Travelers' Health recommended immunizations and health guidelines for travelers. Compliance with these guidelines ensures the safety and well-being of the students and the communities they serve and is **mandatory for participation in our international programs**. Visit the [CDC Travelers' Health](#) page for more information.

SECTION 5: MEDICAL CARE DURING ENROLLMENT

The principal faculty, the Program Director, and the Medical Director WILL NOT participate as healthcare providers for students enrolled in the program except in an emergency situation.

SECTION 6: COUNSELING SERVICES

Faculty advisors can assist students by providing timely referrals to student counseling services for addressing

personal issues that may impact their progress in the PA Program. However, faculty advisors cannot and will not act as medical providers or mental health counselors for students.

CSU Counseling Services provides professional mental health counseling to students through individual counseling for various issues. Counseling Services also offers special events throughout the academic year to promote student wellness. Counseling Services are available to all enrolled CSU students at no cost. Information shared in counseling sessions is kept confidential according to the American Counseling Association standards. Students can call 843-863-8010 to request a non-urgent appointment or visit the Counseling Services office on the 2nd floor of Russell West during normal business hours. In an emergency, students are directed to call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. More information regarding student counseling resources can be found at this [LINK](https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/current-students/counseling-services/counseling-resources/) (<https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/current-students/counseling-services/counseling-resources/>).

BACKGROUND CHECK & URINE DRUG SCREEN POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

The CSU PA Program requires a background check and urine drug screen of all conditionally admitted applicants and enrolled students. These screenings are conducted to promote the safety and integrity of patients, students, faculty, and staff in both academic and clinical environments. The purpose of these screenings is to identify past conduct, incidents, or behaviors that may pose a potential risk to patients, the university community, or affiliated clinical partners.

Completion of these requirements and admission to the CSU PA program do not imply or guarantee eligibility for state medical licensure or national certification upon graduation, as licensing agencies may apply additional criteria or independent review processes.

All fees and associated costs related to background checks and urine drug screens are the sole responsibility of the applicant or student. The university and the PA program do not assume financial responsibility for these requirements.

SECTION 2: PRE-ENROLLMENT SCREENING

- All applicants conditionally admitted to the CSU PA program must complete a background check (BGC) and urine drug screen (UDS) before enrollment.
- Step-by-step instructions for fulfilling these requirements are provided once the enrollment seat deposit is paid. Admission is contingent upon satisfactory results from both screenings.
- Failure to complete the required screenings or the discovery of findings deemed serious in nature may result in the revocation of the offer of admission.

SECTION 3: POST-ENROLLMENT TESTING

- All enrolled CSU PA program students must complete a background check (BGC) and urine drug screening (UDS) **annually**, or more frequently at the program's discretion.
- Refusal to complete these requirements, or the discovery of findings that violate the program or university policy, or that are deemed serious in nature, may result in disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal.
- Background check or drug screening results that limit the program's ability to secure required clinical placements may hinder the student's ability to progress through the clinical phase and could delay or prevent graduation.

SECTION 4: REVIEW OF BGC & UDS RESULTS

All screening results are first reviewed by the admissions coordinator and shared with the Program Director. Any findings that may pose a risk to patients, students, faculty, or staff in academic or clinical settings are reviewed in consultation with the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and discussed directly with the student. Final enrollment decisions, continued participation, or dismissal are made by the Program Director in collaboration with the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and/or the provost. All such decisions are final and not subject to appeal by applicants and enrolled students.

When evaluating background check findings, the following may be considered:

1. Nature, circumstances, and frequency of any reported offense(s)
2. Length of time since the offense(s) occurred
3. Evidence of rehabilitation or mitigating circumstances
4. Accuracy of information disclosed by the applicant/enrolled student in their application materials
5. Relationship between the offence(s) and the responsibilities inherent in PA training

SECTION 5: DRUG-FREE POLICY

CSU maintains a **zero-tolerance** policy regarding the use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs on or off campus. Violations of this policy may result in immediate disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program/university.

RECORDS POLICY

SECTION 1: STUDENT FILES

Student files maintained by the program comply with CSU and ARC-PA requirements. These include the following:

1. Demonstrating that the student met published *admission criteria*.
 - Application Screening Form
 - Technical Standards Attestation Form
 - Copy of CASPA application
2. Demonstrating that the student met the institution and program health screening & immunization requirements.
 - Record of Health Screening & Immunization Completion Form
 - Student Records Release Authorization Form
3. Demonstrating student academic performance while enrolled.
 - Student Advising Forms
 - Unofficial Student Transcripts
 - Letter of Recommendation for Progression from Didactic to Clinical Year from the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee (APPC).
4. Demonstrating remediation efforts and outcomes.
 - Didactic Phase Remediation Form
 - Clinical Phase Remediation Form
 - Summative Assessment Remediation Form
5. Summaries of any formal academic or professional (behavioral) disciplinary action against the student.
 - Professionalism Infraction Form
 - Academic Violation Form (University Form)
 - Academic Probation Letters – Notification of placement
 - Academic Probation Letters – Notification of Removal Letters
 - Academic Standing Notification Acknowledgment Form
 - PA Student Appeal Form
6. The following documentation for students enrolled in the PA program will be included in the students' files:
 - PA Program Student Handbook & Policy Acknowledgment Form
 - PA Student University Statements Acknowledgment Form
 - Health Sciences Building Key Card Access Agreement Form
 - Confidentiality Statement Agreement Form
 - Emergency Contact Form
 - Incident Report Forms
 - Patient Assessment and Ultrasound Evaluation Disclaimer
 - Clinical Year Absence Request Form
 - Technical Standards Student Attestation
 - Didactic Phase Professionalism Assessment Form
 - Program Completion Form
 - Student Authorization for Accommodation Information Disclosure Form
 - Professionalism Citation/Violation Acknowledgment Form

The Program Director completes the *Program Completion Requirement Form* for each graduate before degree conferral, and the form is maintained in the student's file. The Office of the Registrar keeps the official records demonstrating that the student has met the requirements for program completion.

SECTION 2: STORAGE OF STUDENT FILES

2.1 Digital Records Retention

All official student and program files are scanned and saved on CSU's secure digital network for a minimum of ten (10) academic years. Access is limited to authorized personnel.

2.2 Paper Records

Any paper records created for PA program students are housed in the Health Science Building, where the program offices are located. These records are retained for up to two (2) academic years or the length of the student's enrollment in the program. Physical access is restricted to PA Program faculty and staff who are granted key access by the Program Director.

2.3 Confidentiality & Access

In accordance with ARC-PA Standard A3.17, unauthorized individuals, including PA students, are prohibited from accessing the academic records or confidential information of other students, faculty, or staff. Students do not have login access to the CSU secure digital network, which houses confidential electronic files, and will never be issued keys to physical storage areas in the Health Science Building.

2.4 Student Health Records

Consistent with ARC-PA Standard A3.18, student health records are confidential and are not accessible to, or reviewed by, program faculty or staff, except for immunization, screening, and compliance results that are required for program participation and may be maintained with the student's written permission. The CSU PA Program contracts with a confidential third-party student health record service to collect, verify, and maintain required immunization, drug screening, tuberculosis screening, and background-check information. The service reports compliance status only to the program; individual medical records are not shared.

Students must submit all required documents directly to the contracted vendor and complete the **Student Records Release Authorization Form**, authorizing CSU to verify compliance and share results with clinical preceptors as necessary.

2.5 Student's Right to Review

Students may request access to review the contents of their own personal academic file in accordance with the procedures outlined in the CSU Student Handbook. The university's *Policy-R-42: What Constitutes a Permanent Graduate Student File*, outlines materials considered part of a graduate student's permanent academic record.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

The CSU PA Program understands the federal regulations addressing patient healthcare confidentiality, as described in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Students receive HIPAA training as part of their annual updates and as specified by the agencies to which they are assigned. Records of the training are maintained in their student files.

A PA student will hold in confidence all personal client information and agency information entrusted to them. Confidential clinical information and research data (written or oral) given to a PA student is considered privileged within the context of the learning site and/or the enrolled course.

A PA student will limit his or her discussion of client, family, and/or agency to structured learning situations, such as but not limited to conferences and/or clinical learning experiences. At no time are patients, clients, families, or agencies to be discussed in any public setting, such as, but not limited to, lunch tables, clinical or university dining facilities, elevators, or dormitories.

Failure to comply with the above policy represents unethical conduct for a PA student and may result in failure of the course in which the incident occurs, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

SECTION 2: CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

All CSU PA students receive the **PAS.011 – Confidentiality Policy**, which they must review before enrollment. Then, all CSU PA students must sign the **PAS.005 – Confidentiality Statement Form** at the time of enrollment in the program. The student is expected to comply with the terms of such a statement throughout their enrollment in the program. A copy of the signed statement is maintained in the student's file.

CLINICAL PHASE ROTATION POLICY

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

In compliance with the ARC-PA *Standards*, the CSU PA Program has developed a Clinical Phase Rotation Policy to define our recruitment process, preceptor requirements, and the initial and ongoing evaluation of clinical sites and preceptors to ensure clinical phase rotations meet all program-defined expectations and competencies for clinical year training.

SECTION 2: RECRUITMENT

The Director of Clinical Education (DCE), under the leadership of the Program Director and in collaboration with the Dean of the College of Health Sciences, ensures that the program can secure sufficient clinical sites to enable all students to meet the program's learning outcomes for supervised clinical practice experiences.

2.1 Preceptor & Site Solicitation

Neither prospective nor enrolled students will be required to provide or solicit preceptors or clinical sites for the program-mandated clinical rotation component of the curriculum.

Students may voluntarily submit the name(s) of potential preceptors and/or clinical sites not already affiliated with the CSU PA program by completing a *Request for New Rotation Development Form*. Submission of this form does **not** imply or guarantee assignment to any requested site or preceptor, including those already affiliated with the program. The DCE determines whether each proposed site and preceptor is appropriate for use in rotations. Students may request the development of a maximum of two new rotation sites.

The DCE also determines whether a student may request or participate in a rotation at a clinical site associated with a family member, friend, or any individual whose relationship with the student may influence the objective evaluation of clinical performance.

2.2 Preceptor Availability

The *Preceptor Availability Form* is distributed to preceptors each clinical year to identify their available dates for student supervision. The clinical education team reviews this information before finalizing student rotation placements. However, preceptor availability is subject to change throughout the clinical year.

2.3 Clinical Site Agreements

All clinical sites must have a fully executed Clinical Site Affiliation Agreement with CSU PA program before student placement.

2.4 Geographic Catchment Area

The program has established a faculty-approved clinical rotation site geographic catchment area within a 60-mile radius of CSU. Recruitment and placement efforts are primarily focused within this region to maintain sufficient site availability and foster sustainable partnerships with clinical affiliates. While the goal is for the majority of clinical rotation sites to be within this catchment area, students may be required to attend rotations at a site outside of this area and will be responsible for all expenses related to such assignments.

SECTION 3: INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY

Clinical preceptors are considered *instructional faculty* for the CSU PA program. For the purposes of this policy, they will be referred to as “*preceptors*.”

The CSU PA program designates at least one preceptor at each clinical site who is responsible for supervising and assessing the PA student’s progress toward achieving the program’s defined learning outcomes. For each rotation, the program will inform each student of the preceptor assigned to this role and provide their contact information. Preceptors will consist primarily of practicing physicians and PAs.

3.1 Instructional Faculty Requirements

All instructional faculty serving as preceptors are evaluated by the DCE and the clinical education team, as outlined in the following requirements.

QUALIFICATIONS & EFFECTIVENESS

- All instructional faculty serving as preceptors are qualified through academic preparation and experience to teach assigned subjects and must demonstrate knowledge of course content and effectiveness in instruction.
- Effectiveness is determined through ongoing review of *the Student Evaluation of Preceptors* by the clinical education team and the Curriculum Committee.

LICENSURE

- All instructional faculty serving as preceptors hold a “valid, unrestricted, and unencumbered license to practice” at the clinical site. The program verifies the licensure for physician and PA preceptors at initial evaluation and again upon license renewal, as long as the provider remains an active preceptor for the program.
- Licensure of other health care providers is verified with the appropriate professional agency.
- When an employer (e.g., U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, U.S. Department of Defense) does not require licensure but has approved the provider for practice, the Medical Director and the DCE complete and sign the *Non-Licensed Preceptors Form* following the principal faculty approval of the preceptor.

CERTIFICATIONS

All instructional faculty serving as preceptors must meet the following certification requirements, which are confirmed by CV review and/or review of national certification databases:

- PA preceptors hold NCCPA certification
- Physicians hold or have held board certification
- Advanced practice nurses hold or have held board certification.
- Other Healthcare Providers (<10% of preceptors) are vetted by the program as qualified, according to the following requirements:
 - Other licensed healthcare clinicians are considered non-physician, non-PA, and non-APPN preceptors.
 - Using the following requirements, the clinician is evaluated by the DCE, validated by the Medical Director, and presented to the principal faculty for approval to use as a preceptor.Requirements are as follows:
 1. CV reviewed to confirm education, training, and experience.

2. Confirmed clinician is licensed to practice in their area of instruction.
3. If required, the clinician has a collaborating physician.
4. Clinician has a minimum of two (2) years of experience providing care in the medical discipline where they will serve as preceptors.

REQUIRED ROTATION DISCIPLINES

- Rotations will occur with preceptors who enable students to meet program-defined learning outcomes in emergency medicine (including emergent care), internal medicine (including elderly patient care), surgery (including intra-, pre- and post-operative care), pediatrics (including care for infants, children, and adolescents), women's health (including prenatal and gynecologic care), and behavioral and mental health care; occur in the following settings: outpatient, inpatient, emergency department, and operating room; including preventive, acute, and chronic patient encounters.
- Preceptors practicing in various subspecialties may be utilized for elective rotations.
- The overall clinical site experience and collaboration of care with other healthcare providers must align with the program expectations for the rotation in which they will serve as preceptors.

SECTION 4: CLINICAL SITE & PRECEPTOR EVALUATION

The CSU PA Program ensures that all clinical sites and preceptors used for rotations are evaluated initially and in an ongoing basis to confirm that students can meet program-defined learning outcomes with appropriate access to physical facilities, patient populations, and supervision.

4.1 Initial Evaluation

- *Clinical Site & Preceptor Profile Form:* Each prospective preceptor will complete the *Clinical Site and Preceptor Profile Form*, which is reviewed in detail by the clinical education team. This form provides essential information for determining whether the site can support the achievement of program learning outcomes through adequate physical facilities, patient populations, and supervision.
- *Review & Determination:* The DCE reviews each completed profile form to determine whether the clinical site and preceptor can provide sufficient opportunities for students to meet program learning outcomes.
- *Pre-Rotation Verification:* Before any student placement, a member of the clinical education team contacts the preceptor to verify that the site continues to provide the necessary access to physical facilities, patient populations, and supervision.
- *Initial Site Visit:* When indicated, a member of the clinical education team conducts an initial site visit to validate the information provided in the *Clinical Site and Preceptor Profile Form*. During the site visit, the *Clinical Site and Preceptor Initial Site Visit Form* is completed to confirm or deny the site and preceptor for ongoing program use.
 - *Local sites* (Charleston, Dorchester, and Berkeley Counties) are visited in person whenever feasible.
 - *Non-local sites* may be evaluated through mail, email, telephone, video telecommunication, or a combination of these modalities when in-person visits are impractical (e.g., distance or scheduling limitations such as night shifts).
- *Preceptor Orientation:* All preceptors are oriented to the course learning outcomes, assessment methods, and instructional objectives for rotations in which they serve as the primary preceptor. Orientation materials include the *CSU Preceptor Handbook* and the corresponding discipline-specific rotation

syllabus. The *Clinical Site and Preceptor Profile Form* includes the **Preceptor Attestation**, acknowledging receipt and understanding of these materials, and is kept in the preceptor's file.

4.2 Ongoing Evaluation

Annual Review: Active clinical sites and preceptors are evaluated biannually to ensure students continue to have access to physical facilities, patient populations, and supervision to fulfill learning outcomes.

Follow-Up Site Visits: Additional site visits are conducted as needed. Documentation of these visits, including any substantive changes since the prior evaluation, is recorded on the *Clinical Site and Preceptor Follow-Up Site Visit Form*.

- **Monitoring Student Experiences:** The clinical education team routinely reviews student-logged patient encounters throughout the clinical year to confirm adequate exposure to:
 - preventive, emergent, acute, and chronic patient encounters, care across the life span, to include infants, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly, for women's health (to include prenatal and gynecologic care), for conditions requiring surgical management, including pre-operative, intra-operative, post-operative care, and for behavioral and mental health conditions as described in each rotation syllabus.
 - These reviews ensure alignment with each discipline-specific rotation syllabus and the *Clinical Rotation Minimum Exposure Requirements Policy*.
- **Rotation Scheduling Verification:** To ensure each student's clinical education includes rotations in the emergency department, inpatient, outpatient, and operating room settings, the DCE personally schedules each student's clinical rotation sequence. The annual review of patient-encounter logs verifies that these setting-based requirements are met, consistent with each discipline-specific rotation syllabus and the *Clinical Phase Minimum Exposure Requirements Policy*.
- **Student Evaluations of the Site & Preceptor:** At the conclusion of each rotation, students complete both the *Student Evaluation of Clinical Site* and the *Student Evaluation of Preceptors*. These evaluations include items assessing whether the clinical site and preceptor enabled the student to meet the course (rotation) learning outcomes.
 - Sites or preceptors receiving an overall rating below "Met Expectations" trigger a program review to determine suitability for continued use.
 - The DCE documents the investigation process, findings, and decision regarding continued use; all documentation is retained in the site or preceptor file. Investigations include:
 - Student interviews
 - Preceptor interviews
 - Clinical site and preceptor site visits
- **Recurrent "Low" Evaluations:** If a clinical site or preceptor received three separate ratings below "Met Expectations" within a clinical year, the DCE presents the case to the Curriculum Committee for review. The committee may recommend gathering additional information, conducting a formal site visit, or removing the site/receptor from future program use.
- **Program Adjustments:** **Clinical sites and preceptors are modified or replaced as necessary to ensure that all students meet expected learning outcomes by program completion.**

SECTION 5: SCHEDULING OF CLINICAL ROTATIONS

All CSU PA students will complete nine (9) rotations, five (5) weeks in length, over the 12-month clinical phase of the program.

- **Mandatory Core Rotations:** All PA students will complete **seven (7) mandatory “core” rotations** in the following disciplines: *family medicine, emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, women’s health, and behavioral/mental healthcare*
- **Elective Rotations:** Students are given the opportunity to discuss their **top 3-4 choices** for ELECTIVE rotations with the DCE before the completion of the clinical year schedule. These rotations are designed to allow students to pursue further training in key areas of professional interest. Elective placements may also be program-assigned for remediation or to address limited exposure to required clinical experiences. Final placement decisions are made by the clinical education team, in consultation with the Program Director. ***Placement in a specific elective rotation is not guaranteed.***
- **Geographic Placement:** The majority of clinical sites are located within a 60-mile radius of the Charleston area. Students may be required to attend rotations outside of this radius and are responsible for all expenses related to such assignments, including travel, lodging, and meals.
- **Core Rotation Assignments:** The clinical education team, in consultation with the Program Director, will determine the seven (7) CORE rotation placements for each student to ensure coverage of all required disciplines and adequate learning opportunities.
- **Student Notification of Placements:** Students will receive **electronic notification** of their clinical site placements through **Typhon**. Before scheduling, students will be offered individual meetings with the clinical education team to discuss preferences and goals. Once placements are confirmed, schedule changes will only be made to accommodate programmatic needs or preceptor availability.
- **Rotation Changes:** While the program strives to be as accommodating as possible, rotation assignments cannot be changed for reasons associated with finances, housing, transportation, or personal events. A student's request to modify a rotation may result in a delay in graduation. The program reserves the right to make changes to clinical rotation schedules as needed to ensure appropriate educational experiences. Students will be notified of any changes to their clinical site schedule as far in advance as possible.
- **Clinical Site Contact:** Students **must not** contact preceptors or site personnel directly without explicit permission from the DCE. Unauthorized communication or solicitation of rotations may jeopardize the program's affiliation agreements and a student's standing in the program.

SECTION 6: INTERNATIONAL ROTATIONS

The program does not offer international core rotations. Elective rotations outside the United States may be available; however, all expenses related to travel, housing, and food are the student's responsibility.

SECTION 7: TELEHEALTH/TELEMEDICINE

The program strives to place students in rotations that provide in-person direct patient care experiences. No CSU PA student will have more than 20% of rotation experiences conducted via telehealth/telemedicine, except for psychiatry (behavioral health), which may include up to 100% telehealth/telemedicine experiences due to the nature of the medical discipline.

PROGRAM STUDENT FORMS

ALL ASSOCIATED PA STUDENT FORMS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE BLACKBOARD IN THE CSU PA PROGRAM CLASS OF 2027 FOLDER.

- 1. PA PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK & POLICY ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**
- 2. PA STUDENT UNIVERSITY STATEMENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**
- 3. HEALTH SCIENCE BUILDING KEY CARD ACCESS AGREEMENT FORM**
- 4. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**
- 5. STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT AGREEMENT FORM**
- 6. STUDENT ADVISING FORM**
- 7. INCIDENT REPORT FORM**
- 8. ACADEMIC STANDING NOTIFICATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**
- 9. REQUEST FOR NEW ROTATION DEVELOPMENT FORM**
- 10. CLINICAL YEAR ABSENCE FORM**
- 11. TECHNICAL STANDARDS STUDENT ATTRITION FORM**
- 12. STUDENT RECORDS RELEASE FORM**
- 13. PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT & ULTRASOUND EVALUATION DISCLAIMER FORM**
- 14. STUDENT AUTHORIZATION OF ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION DISCLOSURE FORM**
- 15. PA STUDENT APPEAL FORM**
- 16. HEALTH SCREENING & IMMUNIZATION COMPLETION FORM**

PA Program Student Handbook & Policy Acknowledgment Form



The CSU PA Program Student Handbook provides an overview of current policies, procedures, and expectations for students enrolled in the PA Program at Charleston Southern University. This handbook is not designed to replace the university policies and procedures. Students are expected to comply with both the PA Program and the University policies and procedures. Because of the unique requirements of healthcare educational programs, PA Program policies take precedence over university policies in the event of a conflict.

The CSU PA Program Student Handbook is published annually. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy at the time of publication; however, the program reserves the right to revise policies, procedures, and calendar dates at any time to reflect current standards, regulations, or institutional needs.

By initialing each policy listed below, I confirm that I have received, read, and understand the policies outlined in the CSU PA Program Student Handbook. I acknowledge that these policies apply to me at all times throughout my enrollment in the program, regardless of setting or location.

_____	Policy No. PAS: 001	Academic & Professionalism
_____	Policy No. PAS: 002	Student Advisement
_____	Policy No. PAS: 003	Student Employment
_____	Policy No. PAS: 005	Infectious & Environmental Hazards Exposure
_____	Policy No. PAS: 006	Student Grievances, Harassment, & Mistreatment
_____	Policy No. PAS: 007	Student Health
_____	Policy No. PAS: 010	Background Check & Urine Drug Screen
_____	Policy No. PAS: 011	Confidentiality

Attestation

By signing below, I affirm that I have reviewed the Charleston Southern University PA Program Handbook in its entirety and agree to comply with all stated policies, procedures, and requirements throughout my enrollment in the program.

Student Full Name

CSU ID #

Student Signature

Date

PA Student University Statements Acknowledgment



Upon enrollment in the CSU PA Program, students are required to review each statement below and initial each area to indicate understanding and agreement.

Financial Obligation Statement

I understand that as a student at Charleston Southern University, I will be responsible for all financial obligations I incur.

Photo Release Authorization

I do hereby agree that photographs taken of me while I am a student at Charleston Southern University may be used in university-sponsored publications, advertisements, commercials, social media, and the CSU website.

I do not agree to the use of my photographs in any university-sponsored media or publications.

Attestation

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with each statement as outlined by the university.

Student Full Name

CSU ID #

Student Signature

Date

Health Science Building Key Card Access Agreement Form



By initialing next to each statement listed below, I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to comply with each expectation in this agreement form.

- I acknowledge receipt of a College of Health Sciences (CoHS) key card granting me 24-hour access to the Charleston Southern University Health Science Building, including designated PA program areas.
- I understand that this key card is for my individual use **only** and **must not** be used by or shared with any other person. Under no circumstances am I permitted to grant building access to others at any time.
- I accept full responsibility for the safekeeping of the key card and will promptly report any loss to the PA Program Administrative Assistant.
- I understand that lost key cards are my responsibility to report, and I must pay for the replacement card. Failure to do so will be considered a professionalism violation.
- I understand that failure to return my assigned key card at the completion of the CSU PA program, by the designated date before graduation, makes it my sole financial responsibility to replace it before the commencement ceremony.
- I understand that all costs associated with replacing a lost key card are solely my responsibility and are determined by the company providing the replacement, up to \$50, payable directly to the CSU PA Program.

Attestation

By signing at the end of this form, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the expectations of this agreement.

Student Full Name

CSU ID #

Student Signature

Date

PA Student Emergency Contact Information Form



Upon enrollment in the CSU PA Program, students are asked to voluntarily provide the following information for the program to keep on file in the event of an emergency.

Student Information

Full Name _____ CSU ID # _____

Cell Phone # _____ Personal Email Address _____

Local Address _____
Street # and Name _____ City, State _____ Zip _____

Roommate(s), if applicable _____

Emergency Contact #1

Full Name _____

Relationship to Student _____ Personal Email Address _____

Address _____
Street # and Name _____ City, State _____ Zip _____

Cell Phone # _____ Home Phone # _____

Employer _____ Work Phone # _____

Emergency Contact #2

Full Name _____

Relationship to Student _____ Personal Email Address _____

Address _____
Street # and Name _____ City, State _____ Zip _____

Cell Phone # _____ Home Phone # _____

Employer _____ Work Phone # _____

Emergency Contact #3

Full Name _____

Relationship to Student _____ Personal Email Address _____

Address _____
Street # and Name _____ City, State _____ Zip _____
Cell Phone # _____ Home Phone # _____
Employer _____ Work Phone # _____

Medical Provider Contact

Provider Name _____ Phone # _____
Provider Name _____ Phone # _____

Attestation

By signing below, I acknowledge that I voluntarily provide the contact information and authorize CSU PA Program and its representatives to contact any of the above on my behalf in the event of an emergency.

Student Full Name _____ **CSU ID #** _____
Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

Confidentiality Statement Agreement Form



Upon enrollment in the CSU PA Program, PA students are required to sign a confidentiality statement. The PA student is expected to comply with the terms of the statement throughout the program. A copy of the signed statement is maintained in the student's file.

Confidentiality Statement

I, _____, acknowledge my responsibility to
(print first & last name)
abide by applicable federal law and the **PA Program Confidentiality Policy**, to keep
confidential any information regarding a patient, client, or agency. By signing below, I agree
not to reveal to any person or persons except authorized agency staff and associated
personnel any specific information regarding any patient, client, or agency, and further agree
not to reveal to any third party any confidential information of an agency, except as required by
law or as properly authorized by an agency.

I further understand that any unauthorized disclosure of confidential information may result in
failure of the course in which the incident occurs and may include dismissal from the
program.

Student Signature

CSU ID #

Date

PA Student Advising Form



The faculty advisor will complete and discuss this form with their advisee at every formal advising session. If an action plan is needed/developed, the student must sign the form, acknowledging they understand the recommended plan. Every PA Student Advising Form must be filed within the student's file each time there is an individual meeting between the advisor and advisee. Completed forms must be given to the PA Administrative Assistant to file in the secure student's electronic file.

Student Name: _____

CSU ID #: _____

Unit/Callback Day: _____ **Week:** _____

Cohort Year: _____

Advisor Name: _____

Meeting Date: _____

Academic Progress Rating – place an (X) next to the appropriate rating.

	Progress Rating	Description
	Progressing as Expected	Meets academic expectations; no current concerns
	Needs Support	Minor academic concerns; targeted support or monitoring recommended
	At Risk/Concerned	Significant academic concerns that may impact progression; intervention is required

Comments: _____

Professionalism Progress Rating – place an (X) next to the appropriate rating.

	Progress Rating	Description
	Demonstrates	Meets professional expectations by consistently displaying professional behavior, accountability, and communication.
	Needs Development	Occasional lapses in professional behavior; constructive feedback provided; ongoing monitoring recommended.
	At Risk/Concerned	Significant or repeated professionalism concerns; behavior not aligned with program standards; formal remediation may be required.

Comments: _____

Wellness/Coping Overall Rating – place an (X) next to the appropriate rating.

	Progress Rating	Description
	Stable & Resilient	Well-adjusted, managing stress effectively, and maintaining healthy coping mechanisms.
	Monitor & Support	Some signs of stress or mild burnout. May benefit from wellness check-ins & supportive resources.
	At Risk	Significant signs of distress, fatigue, poor coping skills. Referral to support services is strongly recommended.

Comments: _____

- Counseling Services at CSU were discussed with the student.
- The student was referred to counseling services at CSU.
- The student refused referral to counseling services at CSU.
- Other: _____

Action Plan for areas of Concern or At Risk:

Faculty Advisor Signature

Date

***If an action plan is developed, the student must sign the Student Advising Form with the faculty advisor.**

Student Signature

Date

Incident Report Form



In the event of an injury, the student's priority is to obtain prompt medical care. Do not delay seeking treatment to complete this form or make notifications.

Clinical students: Follow all accident/injury and exposure protocols established by the clinical site. If no site protocol exists, seek immediate treatment at the nearest emergency department.

Student Information:

Student Name:

CSU ID#:

Rotation or Course:

Location of Incident:

Incident Details:

Date of Incident:

Approximate Time:

Type of Incident (e.g., needlestick, laceration, exposure, contusion):

Did the incident involve (possible) exposure to bloodborne pathogens? No Yes

Description of Incident:

Medical Treatment:

Describe immediate first aid or actions taken:

Was a medical evaluation or treatment obtained? No Yes

Date of Treatment:

Healthcare Facility Name:

Notifications:

Person/Office Notified	Date & Time of Notification	Signature (if applicable)
Course Instructor OR Clinical Preceptor		
Onsite Health Services / Employee Health / Occupational Health OR Emergency Department		
Director of Clinical Education or Director of Didactic Education		

Corrective Action Recommendations:

What actions or changes do you recommend to prevent recurrence?

Student Acknowledgment:

By signing below, I confirm that the above information is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Student Signature

Date

Submission Instructions: Please include all copies of documentation from incidents at clinical sites with the form. Submit via email (*preferred*) paprogram@csuniv.edu or by fax at (843) 863-7393.

Do Not Complete Below – For Program Use Only

Received in the PA Program Office on (date):

Received by (print first/last name):

Additional Follow-Up (Program Use Only)

Acknowledgment of Academic Standing Notification Form



By signing below, I hereby acknowledge receipt of the letter outlining the findings and recommendations of the Academic and Professionalism Progress Committee, as determined through a review of my academic and/or professionalism performance. I affirm that I have read and understand the contents of the notification, including all recommendations, requirements, and conditions set forth therein.

Student Full Name

Student Signature

CSU ID #

Date

Clinical Year Absence Request Form



This **Clinical Year Absence Request Form** aligns with the *Academic and Professionalism Policy* for clinical phase absences during the program. In all situations, students are to complete an Absence Request form in a timely manner (within 48 hours of the absence). Failure to do so will result in a professionalism warning.

Please follow the steps below to request an absence from the assigned clinical year rotation.

Step 1: All absence requests must be submitted to the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) for review and approval first.

Step 2: Once approved to proceed by the DCE, the preceptor must sign the Clinical Year Absence Request Form

Step 3: The DCE approves or denies the request, signs the document, and communicates the decision to the student and the preceptor.

Step 4: The completed Clinical Year Absence Request Form is included in the student's file.

- One form is required for each day of absence.
- Students can use three (3) clinical absence days over the entire clinical year.
- No absence should exceed two clinical (2) days in any given rotation.
- Exceeding three (3) clinical day absences will result in a *professionalism warning* along with the following:
 - Supplemental coursework/clinical days
 - Making up missed clinical time, which may result in the delay of graduation.
- Absences are prohibited during Callback Days, the Summative Evaluation, and Board Review Week.

Student Name: _____ **CSU ID #:** _____

BucMail: _____ **Phone:** _____

Date of Absence: _____ **Clinical Year Absence** **#1** **#2** **#3**

Reason (attach documentation, if applicable):

*REQUIRED SIGNATURE SIGNIFYING APPROVAL OF ABSENCE FROM ROTATION

Preceptor Signature: _____ Date: _____

OFFICE USE BELOW

This absence request is: **Approved:** **Denied:**

Director of Clinical Education Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Technical Standards Student Attestation Form



By initialing each category, the student confirms that they have read and understood the Technical Standards for the CSU PA Program.

Initials *Technical Standard*

- _____ *A. Observation*
- _____ *B. Communication*
- _____ *C. Motor*
- _____ *D. Cognitive*
- _____ *E. Behavioral*

Attestation

- I attest that I have read and understand the *Technical Standards* outlined above and that I am able to meet these standards, with or without reasonable accommodation.
- I understand that these standards represent the essential abilities and skills required for participation in all academic and clinical components of the program.
- I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to contact the **CSU Office of Accessibility Services** should I require accommodation to meet any of these standards. I further understand that approval for accommodations is determined solely by that office and must be communicated to the appropriate course coordinator prior to implementation.
- I understand that failure to demonstrate or maintain the ability to meet these technical standards, with or without accommodation, may affect my continued enrollment or progression in the program in accordance with university policy.

Student's Full Name

CSU ID #

Student's Signature

Date

Students seeking reasonable accommodations must contact

CSU Office of Accessibility Services

(843) 863-7159

<https://www.charlestonsouthern.edu/academics/student-success/accessibility-services/>

Accessibility Services will review documentation and determine appropriate accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Approved accommodations must not compromise essential program requirements, technical standards, or patient safety.

Student Records Release Authorization Form



CHARLESTON
SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITY

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Student Full Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Phone:

CSU ID #: _____ BucMail: _____

Address: _____

Street

City

State Zip

Purpose

This form authorizes the release of specified student records by the Charleston Southern University (CSU) PA Program to affiliated clinical sites and institutions to secure and maintain required clinical rotations.

Authorization

I hereby authorize the CSU PA Program to release the following records, as requested by affiliated clinical sites:

- Immunization records
- Tuberculosis (TB) screening results
- Drug screening results
- Criminal background check results
- Other health or credentialing documentation as required by clinical sites

I understand that these records may be shared electronically or in print, as required by the clinical site, and only for purposes directly related to clinical education and placement.

This authorization remains in effect for the duration of my enrollment in the CSU PA Program unless revoked in writing. Revocation must be submitted to the Director of Clinical Education and will not apply to records already released.

I acknowledge that refusal to provide this authorization may affect my ability to participate in required clinical experiences, potentially impacting progression in the program.

Attestation

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the purpose of this authorization and consent to the release of the specified records by the CSU PA Program for the purposes of securing and maintaining required clinical placements.

Student Signature

Date

Physical Assessment & Ultrasound Evaluation Disclaimer



Any assessment provided in the CSU PA Program is not to be used as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of any health condition or problem. Participants should not rely on information provided by any courses in this program for personal medical decision-making and should direct all questions regarding medical matters to their healthcare provider. Any physical or ultrasound assessment conducted during this program does not create an express or implied provider-patient relationship.

CSU does not retain information pertaining to physical assessment or diagnostic results. Users should consult with a professional healthcare provider prior to making any decision or undertaking any action or undertaking any action related to any healthcare problem. In participating in this program, you agree that neither CSU nor any other party is or will be liable or otherwise responsible for any decision made or any action taken, or any action not taken, regarding your personal health. These courses are intended for educational purposes only.

I hereby provide my consent for both physical assessments and the use of ultrasound during my involvement in the CSU PA Program, acknowledging the aforementioned disclaimer.

Student Full Name (Print)

CSU ID#

Student Signature

Date

Adapted from the University of Iowa's Assessment Disclaimer

Student Authorization of Accommodation Information Disclosure



Student Full Name _____

(please print)

CSU ID# _____ BucMail _____

The CSU PA Program is committed to supporting students through reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To ensure support and continuity of accommodations across didactic and clinical experiences, the student may authorize disclosure of accommodations and relevant information among select PA Program faculty and staff.

By signing below, I authorize the CSU PA Program to disclose information regarding my approved accommodations to program faculty and/or staff, as needed, for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of accommodations and supporting my academic progress.

I understand that:

- Only information necessary to implement my accommodations will be shared.
- This information will be treated as confidential and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.
- This authorization **does not permit** disclosure of my diagnosis or detailed medical information unless I have separately authorized such disclosure.

I may revoke this authorization at any time in writing, but revocation will not apply to information already disclosed.

Student Signature

Date

Academic & Professionalism Grievance & Appeal Form



Student Information

Student Name: _____

CSU ID: _____ Cohort: _____

BucMail: _____ Date of Submission: _____

The PA student must complete **Sections A, B, C, D, E (E1, E2, E3, E4, or E5)**.

- Select ONE appeal type in Section A.
- Complete Sections B–D.
- Then, in Section E, complete ONLY the corresponding section (E1–E5) to the appeal type selected in Section A.
- Submit this form and all supporting documentation within ten (10) class days per policy.

Section A: Appeal Type

Select ONE type of appeal below.

<input type="checkbox"/> Course Grade Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Probation Appeal
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Integrity Violation Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> Program Dismissal Appeal
<input type="checkbox"/> Professionalism Violation Appeal	

Section B: Case Details

Please complete all that applies below:

Decision/Action BeingAppealed (title/brief): _____

Date of Decision/Notification: _____

Course # and Name (if applicable): _____

Instructor/Reporter (if applicable): _____

Section C: Grounds for Appeal

Students must be clear about the reasons why they believe that an academically related decision is incorrect before lodging an appeal. Check the box(es) below to indicate the grounds on which your appeal is being made.

- Calculation/Clerical error
- Misapplication of stated criteria/policy
- Procedural error
- New information or evidence not previously considered
- Extenuating/mitigating circumstances
- Dispute of finding (facts in dispute)

Other: _____

Section D: Student Statement & Supporting Documentation

Please provide a clear narrative explaining the reason(s) for your appeal.

Appeal Outcome

Please state what you would like to see as the outcome of your appeal.

Supporting Documentation

List below the supporting documents you are submitting with your appeal, and attach them to this form. Submission of the appeal form should not be delayed while awaiting additional evidence; however, please note any evidence that is pending and indicate when you expect to submit it. If medical documentation is provided, it should describe the degree of impairment and explain how the period of illness affected your academic performance. It is the student's responsibility to determine what supporting evidence to include and to ensure all documentation is submitted in a timely manner.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Supporting Documentation

List below the supporting documents you are submitting with your appeal, and attach them to this form. Submission of the appeal form should not be delayed while awaiting additional evidence; however, please note any evidence that is pending and indicate when you expect to submit it. If medical documentation is provided, it

should describe the degree of impairment and explain how the period of illness affected your academic performance. It is the student's responsibility to determine what supporting evidence to include and to ensure all documentation is submitted in a timely manner.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Section E: Appeal Type-Specific Addenda

Please complete ONLY the section that aligns with the type of appeal indicated in Section A.

E1. Course Grade Appeal Addendum

Course # and Name: _____

Final Grade Posted (date): _____ Unit/Semester: _____

Nature of Appeal (check one):

Error in calculation Misapplication of grading criteria Other: _____

E2. Academic Integrity Violation Appeal Addendum

Course # and Name (if applicable): _____

Date of Violation Notification: _____ Violation type/penalty: _____

Appeal Focus (check all):

Dispute finding Dispute penalty Procedural error Other: _____

E3. Professionalism Violation Appeal Addendum

Date of Violation: _____ Reporting Faculty/Staff: _____

Category (check one or more):

Attendance/Punctuality Communication/Conduct Clinical Behavior Integrity/HIPAA

Other: _____

E4. Academic Probation Appeal Addendum

Date of Probation Notice: _____ Term Affected: _____

Grounds (check all):

Grade miscalculation Remediation in progress Extenuating circumstances Procedural error

E5. Program Dismissal Appeal Addendum

Date of Dismissal Letter: _____ Date appeal requested: _____

Grounds (check all):

Procedural error New evidence Mitigating/extenuating circumstances

Other: _____

Section F: Acknowledgments & Signatures

By signing below, I affirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge, and that I submit this appeal within the timelines specified by CSU PA Program policy.

Student Signature

Date

Program Director Signature (upon receipt)

Date

Section G: Program Use Only

Routing Based on Appeal Type (check all that apply):

Instructor/Course Director meeting completed (Grade Appeal) – Date: _____

Program Director Review – Date decision issued: _____

Ad Hoc/Standing Committee Review – Committee: _____ Decision Date: _____

Registrar notified (if record update required) – Date: _____

Final Decision/Outcome:

Record of Health Screening & Immunization Completion Form



Student Name: _____

Student ID #: _____ **BucMail:** _____

This form verifies the status of all pre-matriculation immunization and health screening requirements for enrollment in the CSU PA Program.

Pre-matriculation Requirement	Completed ✓	Date Met	Notes/Follow-Up
MMR			
Varicella			
Tdap/Td			
Influenza			
Hepatitis B			
COVID-19			
Tuberculosis (TB) Screening			
Other: _____			

Additional Notes/Comments:

Reviewed by (print): _____

Reviewer Signature _____

Date _____

CSU PA PROGRAM STUDENT POLICIES & ARC-PA STANDARDS

ARC-PA Standards	A&P Policy	Student Advisement Policy	Student Grievances, Harassment, & Mistrustment Policy	Student Employment Policy	Infectious & Environmental Hazards Exposure Policy	Student Health Policy	BGC & UDS Policy	Confidentiality Policy	Records Policy	Clinical Phase Rotation Policy
A1.02	X		X							X
A1.04						X				
A1.10										X
A2.01										X
A2.05		X								
A2.14										X
A2.15										X
A2.16										X
A2.17										X
A3.03				X						X
A3.04				X						
A3.05					X					
A3.06					X	X				
A3.07						X				
A3.08										X
A3.09						X				
A3.14	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	
A3.16										X
A3.17										X
A3.18										X
A3.19										X
A3.20										X
B3.01										X
B3.02										X
B3.03										X
B3.04										X
B4.01	X									
B4.03	X									