

**East Carolina University  
Physician Assistant Studies Program**



**Physician Assistant  
Student Handbook**

Revised September 8, 2008

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# SECTION ONE

## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook has been prepared to orient you to current policies and procedures, guidelines and resources relevant to your participation in the professional phase of the East Carolina University (ECU) Physician Assistant Studies Program (PADP). It is designed to be your guide through the twenty-seven months of the ECU PA Program. Please do not file it and forget it. If you have any questions about the policies of the program, refer to the handbook first. You will also be introduced to your rights as a student and to our expectations concerning your professional development.

Periodically, additional policies or procedures may be established or changes made in the program curriculum for which you will be held responsible. The ECU PADP reserves the right to alter its curriculum, policies or procedures. All changes or additions will be made in the online handbook. The latest revision date will be on the cover page and the revision will be documented on the last page of the handbook. Check this frequently.

We hope this manual will be useful to you. Please feel free to contact the PA Department Chair or your PA Program faculty advisor if you have any questions.

## **PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM STATEMENTS AND GOALS**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of the East Carolina University Physician Assistant Studies Program is to offer our students educational and experiential opportunities that will allow them to exceed national standards of medical competence as graduates and to develop the professional discernment and human empathy that will facilitate their ability to merge “high tech and high touch” throughout their careers as Physician Assistants.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Physician Assistant Studies Program is to provide educational experiences which prepare Physician Assistant graduates to enhance the access to primary medical care for the citizens of rural and medically underserved Eastern North Carolina and beyond in an educational community where faculty, staff, clinical instructors, students and other health care providers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, cooperation, compassion and commitment.

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

We are dedicated to providing the highest quality education and instruction possible by immersing faculty and students in an environment that cultivates a sense of academic, professional and service excellence. We respond to suggestions for modification and enrichment of the program from all who participate in the educational process because we view learning as a reciprocal and collegial interaction.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

These specific Goals and Objectives support the Mission and Vision of the Physician Assistant Studies Program:

Goal 1. To maintain a primary care-oriented and a rural-based educational program which graduates competent Physician Assistants.

Objectives:

- Provide optimal resources, environment and opportunities for learning with an emphasis on primary care medical services.
- Maintain full accreditation by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA).
- Prepare students to pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE), administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, Inc. (NCCPA) with a pass rate at or above the national average.
- Focus on awareness of the health care needs of rural communities and medically underserved areas during didactic and clinical training.

Goal 2. To incorporate innovative approaches to interdisciplinary didactic and clinical education which prepare Physician Assistants to be integrated into the health care team and contribute to solving significant human problems in their professional practices.

Objectives:

- Provide training and experiences which will prepare students for their roles in disease prevention and health promotion.
- Provide awareness of health care needs of the poor, minority, disadvantaged, young and elderly in all phases of training.
- Provide training and experiences with other health care professionals which will prepare students for their

interdisciplinary health care team roles in prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Goal 3. To recruit, select and educate a highly qualified, culturally diverse student population with strong representation from rural communities.

Objectives:

- Attempt to increase minority and disadvantaged representation in student and graduate pool.
- Maintain high rural representation in the student and graduate pool when possible.
- Educate academic advisors about the opportunities of the PA profession and needs in medically underserved rural areas.
- Cultivate a greater awareness of the health care needs of the communities served by ECU through cooperative educational partnerships (AHEC).
- Increase awareness and sensitivity of PA students in general to the nature and scope of rural health issues and diversity issues of this country.

### **CAHS Mission Statement**

To improve the quality of health through leadership, excellence, and innovation in the delivery of progressive baccalaureate, master's, doctoral, and continuing education programs, providing professional and clinical services and conducting basic, clinical and applied research.

### **CAHS Code of Ethics**

#### **Preamble**

Faculty and students of the College of Allied Health Sciences, believing in the dignity and worth of each individual, respect an individual's right to receive the highest quality of health care. To this end, the following commitments are made:

#### **1) Commitment of the Faculty**

- a) Faculty is committed to assisting individuals in meeting their health care needs through the medium of teaching students in the various Allied Health Sciences fields. In fulfillment of this commitment, each student, as a member of the health care delivery system, is encouraged and aided in realizing their potential.

The Faculty:

- i) Shall strive for mastery of subject material to be presented;
- ii) Shall use a variety of teaching methods;
- iii) Shall serve as role models for students;
- iv) Shall avoid intentionally embarrassing any student;
- v) Shall be non-discriminating in relationships with students;
- vi) Shall hold in confidence privileged information unless disclosure is professionally or legally required;
- vii) Shall share with students the basis for evaluation;
- viii) Shall strive to attain excellence in instruction.

## **2) Commitment of Students**

- a) Inherent in acceptance of a place in the College of Allied Health Sciences is acceptance of the ethics of the profession for which the student is preparing and a commitment to learning. Certain ethics are basic to all health professions. Students abiding by these:
  - i) Shall be self-disciplined and morally responsible;
  - ii) Shall show respect and concern for other individuals;
  - iii) Shall take the responsibility for learning the materials, information, etc., as identified by the course instructor;
  - iv) Shall present a personal appearance which will inspire confidence in all clients;
  - v) Shall hold in confidence privileged information unless disclosure is professionally or legally required;
  - vi) Shall undertake without supervision only those procedures involved in patient care in which competency has been determined by the instructor;
  - vii) Shall perform only those functions which lie within the realm of the individual's profession;
  - viii) Shall make every effort to uphold the code of ethics of the individual's chosen profession.

More information regarding CAHS student resources may be found at <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/ah/studentresources.cfm>

### **American Academy of Physician Assistants Code of Ethics**

The American Academy of Physician Assistants recognizes its responsibility to aid the profession in maintaining high standards in the provision of quality and accessible health care services. The following principles delineate the standards governing the conduct of physician assistants in their professional interactions with patients, colleagues, other health professional and the general public. Realizing that no code can encompass all ethical responsibilities of the physician assistant, this enumeration of obligations in the Code of Ethics is not

comprehensive and does not constitute a denial of the existence of other obligations, equally imperative, though not specifically mentioned.

**Physician Assistants** hold as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings.

**Physician Assistants** uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice.

**Physician Assistants** recognize and promote the value of diversity.

**Physician Assistants** treat equally all persons who seek their care.

**Physician Assistants** hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.

**Physician Assistants** assess their personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve their medical practice.

**Physician Assistants** actively seek to expand their knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.

**Physician Assistants** work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.

**Physician Assistants** use their knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.

**Physician Assistants** respect their professional relationship with physicians.

**Physician Assistants** share and expand knowledge within the profession.

## **SECTION TWO**

# CURRICULUM

## Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Curriculum

SCH=Semester Credit Hours  
hours per week

LECT=Lecture contact hours per week

LAB=Laboratory contact  
hours per week

### Didactic Curriculum

		<i>Contact Hours</i>		
		<u>SCH</u>	<u>LECT</u>	<u>LAB</u>
<u>Fall I</u> (16 Weeks)				
Clinical Gross Anatomy	PADP 6030	5	5	0
Human Physiology	PADP 6040	5	5	0
Role of the Physician Assistant	PADP 6000	1	1	0
Introduction to Clinical Medicine	PADP 6050	3	2	2
History and Physical Exam I	PADP 6200	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
<b>Total SCH</b>		<b>16</b>		
<b>Total weekly contact hours</b>		<b>18</b>		
<u>Spring</u> (16Weeks)				
Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics	PADP 6500	4	3	2
History and Physical Exam II	PADP 6210	3	2	2
Clinical Medicine I	PADP 6150	5	4	2
Diagnostic Methods I	PADP 6010	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
<b>Total SCH</b>		<b>15</b>		
<b>Total weekly contact hours</b>		<b>19</b>		
<u>Summer</u> (11 Weeks)				
Diagnostic Methods II	PADP 6020	3	3	2
Health Promotion/Disease Prevention	PADP 6850	2	2	1
Clinical Medicine II	PADP 6250	4	4	2
History and Physical Exam III	PADP 6220	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
<b>Total SCH</b>		<b>12</b>		
<b>Total weekly contact hours</b>		<b>19</b>		
<u>Fall II</u> (16 Weeks)				
Medical Ethics/Jurisprudence	PADP 6810	2	2	0
Introduction to Clerkship	PADP 6680	4	2	4
Behavioral Medicine	PADP 6800	2	2	0
Surgery and EM Skills	PADP 6650	4	2	4
Research Project	PADP 6980	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total SCH</b>		<b>16</b>		
<b>Total weekly contact hours</b>		<b>20</b>		

**Didactic Total 59**

### Clinical Curriculum

<u>Spring, Summer, Fall</u>		<u>SCH</u>	
Behavioral Medicine Practicum	PADP 6310	5	6 weeks
Internal Medicine Practicum	PADP 6320	5	6 weeks
Family Medicine Practicum	PADP 6330	5	6 weeks
Surgery Practicum	PADP 6340	5	6 weeks
Emergency Medicine Practicum	PADP 6350	5	6 weeks
Pediatrics Practicum	PADP 6360	5	6 weeks
Women's Health Practicum	PADP 6370	5	6 weeks
Geriatrics Practicum	PADP 6380	5	6 weeks
	<b>Total SCH</b>	<b>40</b>	
	<b>Total Weeks</b>		<b>48</b>
	<b>Total Program SCH</b>	<b>99</b>	

Course descriptions may be found in the online program brochure and in the Graduate School catalog. <http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/>

### East Carolina Physician Assistant Program

East Carolina University  
College of Allied Health Sciences  
Dept. of Physician Assistant Studies  
4310 Health Sciences Building  
Greenville, NC 27858-4353  
252-744-1100

### **Faculty/Staff Directory**

Larry Dennis, MPAS, PA-C (Department Chair)  
Dale Newton, MD (Medical Director)  
Kelly Brilliant, MPH, PA-C (Faculty)  
Spencer Cole, MPAS, PA-C (Faculty)  
Julie Daniel-Yount, MHS, PA-C (Clinical Ed. Coord.)  
Peggy "Dody" McMillen, MPAS, PA-C (Faculty)  
Carolyn Pugh, MHS, PA-C (Didactic Ed. Coord.)  
Jane Trapp, MS, PA-C (Faculty)  
Shawn Wagner, MMS, PA-C (Faculty)  
Jean Merenda (Education Technology)  
Patricia Cannon (Administrative Assistant)  
Angie Prewitt (Administrative Assistant)  
Jan Aycock (Academic Advisor)

## **Technical Standards**

A student admitted into the East Carolina Physician Assistant Program must meet basic and essential requirements that are necessary for obtaining employment and performing as a Physician Assistant. The technical standards each student must master include cognitive, physical and behavioral characteristics. Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis, but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. All students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The following skills are required, with or without accommodation:

**Critical Thinking.** The ability to solve problems, a skill that is critical to the practice of medicine, requires the intellectual abilities of measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Candidates for the program must be able to perform demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences.

**Communication Skills.** A candidate should also be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written forms.

**Visual Ability.** Candidates must also be able to observe a patient accurately, both at a distance and close at hand. This ability requires the functional use of vision and somatic sensation.

**Hearing and Tactile Abilities.** Candidates should have sufficient motor and auditory function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic techniques.

**Mobility and Fine Motor Skills.** A candidate should be able to execute movements reasonably required to move from area to area, maneuver in small places, calibrate and use large and small equipment, position and move patients, and provide patients with general care and emergency treatment.

**Interpersonal Abilities.** A candidate for the PA program must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities required for the diagnosis and care of

patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, families, and colleagues.

### Typical Demands and Performance Requirements

The following outlines some examples of the demands and performance requirements required of the ECU PA student. (Examples included are not limited to training opportunities offered at the ECU program.)

Mental Demands:

The ECU PA student must possess the ability to:

1. Process, retain, comprehend, integrate, analyze, synthesize, and apply a large volume of data related to the art and science of medicine, including legal, ethical, and moral concepts
2. Be present during long hours in the following settings: classrooms, laboratories, clinicals, and self-directed study situations and environments
3. Respond appropriately and timely responses to constructive faculty feedback
4. Effectively communicate through written and verbal communication skills
5. Participate in educational activities that include tests, examinations, demonstrations, simulations, presentations, written communication skills, frequent and exacting evaluations
6. Demonstrate the ability to gather patient data and report, perform the physical examination, conduct patient assessment and evaluation, formulate a treatment plan, and perform patient education

Typical Physical Demands:

The ECU PA student must possess:

1. Full range of body motion including assisting patient movement, manual and finger dexterity, and eye-hand coordination
2. Normal visual and hearing acuity
3. Physical capacity to stand and walk for extended hospital and clinic visits, and during frequent and prolonged patient and professional interactions
4. Physical capacity to sit for long periods during classroom and laboratory experiences

5. Capability to work in physically and mentally stressful situation with long and irregular hours and with exposures to communicable diseases and body fluids

Typical Working Conditions:

The ECU PA student must be able to:

1. Work in clinical and classroom environments with possible exposure to communicable diseases, toxic substances, ionizing radiation, medicinal preparations, hostile individuals, and other such conditions common to the medical and surgical environments
2. Interact with a diverse patient populations of all ages with a range of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions

**Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities**

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs%2Dstudentlife/dss/dssdept@ecu.edu>. 252-737-1016

It is the policy of East Carolina University College of Allied Health Sciences to conduct educational programming in a place and manner accessible to individuals with disabilities, and to make reasonable modifications and accommodations necessary to achieve this purpose in compliance with Americans with Disabilities standards.

Procedure:

- 1) A student must apply and be accepted for admission to East Carolina University through regular admissions procedures in the Graduate School.
  - a) It is the student's responsibility to apply for accommodations under ADA.
  - b) Complete and return an Application and Accommodations form to the East Carolina University Disability Support Services.
  - c) Submit sufficient evidence of a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity, as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- 2) The East Carolina University Disability Support Services will determine what accommodations if any are necessary. A letter will be sent to all faculty involved, and the College of Allied Health Sciences Student Affairs Office; and a copy placed in the student's

file stating the nature of the accommodation and instructions to faculty concerning special arrangements.

- 3) It is the program's responsibility to see that all provisions of the accommodation are implemented in a fair and reasonable method.

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 ((252) 737-1016 (Voice/TTY)).

## **SECTION THREE**

## **EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. OPERATION POLICIES**

Fair Practices All aspects of ECU and the ECU PA Program are accurately reflected in brochures, bulletins, catalogs, handbooks, manuals and other forms of information and advertising published by or endorsed by ECU and the ECU PADP. East Carolina University is committed to equality of opportunity and does not discriminate against applicants, students or employees based on race, religion, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation or disability. All policies concerning equal opportunity/affirmative action, sexual harassment, discrimination, and conflicts of interest are found in the East Carolina University Graduate Catalog Bulletin at: <http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/> and The Student Handbook Online at: <http://www.ecu.edu/studenthandbook/>.

Students have certain rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). ECU's annual notification appears in the Graduate Catalog. Please become familiar with these rights. <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/brochures/postsec.html>

You are responsible for the following ECU Graduate policies and procedures. Information for each can be found at the following web address with the associated area of identification. <http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/>

- Substance Abuse Policy
- Affirmative Action/EEO Policy
- Sexual, Racial and Ethnic Harassment Policy
- Admission, Readmission and Withdraw
- Refund Policy
- Course Credits/Registration
- Grading System
- Retention Standards
- Termination or Continuation of Graduate Study

Grievance Procedures are found at the CAHS web site (<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/ah/studentresources.cfm>), in the ECU Student Handbook (<http://www.ecu.edu/studenthandbook/>) and in the Graduate Catalog.

Registration at ECU implies the student's acceptance of the published academic regulations and all other rules found in any official

publication or announcements. It is important to note that these regulations stipulate that software piracy and copyright violations are not tolerated and will result in adverse actions up to and including dismissal from the program and the University.

## **EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES (CAHS) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The CAHS adheres to ECU policies and procedures including grievance resolution. The policies and procedures may be found at:

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/ah/studentresources.cfm>

## **EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Academic Support and Counseling Centers**

*ECU Center for Counseling & Student Development*

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentlife/counselingcenter/>

The ECU Counseling Center (316 Wright Auditorium, 328-6661) provides academic, personal and vocational counseling services to all ECU students. Physician Assistant students will find the classes offered in stress and time management, assertiveness training and anxiety reduction particularly helpful. This Center will also evaluate a student's study habits and offer suggestions to improve study skills.

*Personal Counseling Center*

<http://www.ecu.edu/personalcounselingcenter/>

The Personal Counseling Center (PCC) at BSOM seeks to provide the students of the Division of Health Sciences with confidential counseling and psychiatric services designed to assess sources of stress, facilitate personal and academic growth, develop improved coping strategies, and serve as an advocacy service for students. PCC also provides outreach programs and consultation services to students, faculty and staff, classroom teaching, and training.

*Department of Disability Support Services*

Students who believe that they may have testing or learning difficulties that require special accommodations should contact the Department for Disability Support Services at 252-737-1016 or <http://www.ecu.edu/cs%2Dstudentlife/dss/>

## **Academic Resources**

### *Computer Resources*

All students who enter the program are required to have laptop computers. Limited computer support services are available within the PA program. ITCS may be contacted at 252-328-9000.

### *Writing Center*

<http://www.ecu.edu/writing/writingcenter/>

The ECU Writing Center (309 Austin Bldg., 328-6399) is available to all ECU students. Students may receive free tutorial assistance in writing for any course. The Writing Center also provides workshops on specific writing problems and to enhance research skills.

*Academic Advising* may be obtained with the student's faculty advisor and at the Academic Advising and Support Center at <http://personal.ecu.edu/vaughnv/ahsadvising.htm>

## **Address/Telephone Changes**

It is the responsibility of each student to maintain a current local address, telephone number, and assigned **East Carolina e-mail address** with the PA Program, the College of Allied Health Sciences and the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.

Students should provide the Registrar's office with the address of choice to receive notice of grades, semester bills, and all other correspondence sent by this office and the Cashier's office.

The College of Allied Health Sciences and the PA Department will not be held responsible for consequences incurred due to address changes that are not reported or for e-mail correspondence that goes unheeded.

## **BLS Certification**

The Physician Assistant Program requires that all students be certified in Basic Life Support. All students are required to provide the Program office assistant with a copy of the Basic Life Support (CPR) card by orientation of the didactic year the student is enrolled. Re-certification must be maintained during the complete course of the program. Only the Red Cross for Professional Rescuers or the American Heart Association for Healthcare Providers will be accepted.

## **HIPAA and Universal Precautions**

Students must complete the initial training for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Universal Precautions at the start of the PA professional curriculum, and then they must renew the training annually online, print the certificate and present the certificate to the clinical coordinator. Clinical rotations will not begin until this training is completed and documented. The student is responsible for these updates. The web sites are:  
<http://www.ecu.edu/prospectivehealth>  
<http://www.ecu.edu/hiss/>

## **Health Screening Requirements- Immunization**

The only Department health screening requirement is that students must be in full compliance with the North Carolina immunization law before entering the PA Program. Details and the appropriate form to complete may be found at <http://www.ecu.edu/studenthealth/immunization.htm>. Although ECU requires only those immunizations listed under **Section A**, the Program requires that those listed under **Section B** must also be completed by PA students or verified by blood titers. The Meningococcal Vaccine is optional. An annual Influenza Vaccination is recommended per the CDC guidelines for healthcare providers and will be available each fall through Student Health. The Program must have documentation of completion of immunizations or titers no later than June 15 prior to the fall semester of matriculation. Failure to meet that deadline will result in the applicant's removal from the Program and an alternate selected. Physician Assistant students must have a current PPD or chest x-ray and be in full compliance with the PA Program immunization policy at all times during enrollment. The Program will retain a copy of the immunization record and will require and retain documentation of an annual and up to date PPD.

## **Health Insurance and Health Care**

Students are responsible for maintaining personal health insurance throughout the Physician Assistant Program. Documentation of insurance coverage must be submitted to the program at the beginning of the professional phase of the program. Documentation must be current; therefore, any changes in insurance coverage must be submitted to the Program immediately. CAHS policy requires that students maintain personal health insurance because ECU assumes no long term responsibility for the care of students who are exposed to infectious agents during their enrollment in an ECU professional

program. The CAHS policy is included in this handbook as an attachment. You are responsible for being knowledgeable about the content of this policy and for premium costs. Personal health insurance may be obtained through the university at:

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentlife/studenthealth/index.cfm>

Students are eligible for health care by appointment or on an urgent care basis in the ECU Student Health Center as a part of their general university fees. The costs of services of off-campus providers and at agencies other than the Student Health Center are not included in the ECU health fee. A medical record is maintained in the Student Health Center for each student. Medical records are available only to the professional staff of the Student Health Center and are considered confidential and privileged. Records are retained five years after the student leaves the university and subsequently are destroyed. PA Department faculty does not provide any health care, including immunizations, to PA students.

### **Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screening**

Due to certain federal, state and local institutional regulations, the CAHS has established a policy regarding criminal background checks and drug screening. That policy is included in this handbook as a signature attachment. You are responsible for being knowledgeable about the content of this policy and for any expenses incurred.

### **Financial Aid**

Financial aid information can be obtained by contacting the East Carolina University Office of Financial Aid at (252) 328-6610 or <http://www.ecu.edu/financial/>. A general information brochure is available in the financial aid office. The University Cashier's Office (UCO) ([http://www.ecu.edu/financial\\_serv/cashier/](http://www.ecu.edu/financial_serv/cashier/)) (252-328-6886) serves as the central collection center for student accounts receivable.

Students are encouraged to obtain financial aid, if needed, rather than seek employment during their professional education because of the academic and clinical time demands of the curriculum.

### **Library Resources**

#### **Joyner Library**

The main (east) campus library at ECU is Joyner Library. This facility contains over one million bound volumes, more than one million pieces of microfilm, and 5,668 serial titles. Access to information resources is

provided by CD-ROM and on-line services located in the reference department, and the newspaper files on microfilm are extensive and serve as an important library resource.

Phone: (252) 328-6514 <http://www.ecu.edu/lib/>

### **Laupus Library**

The Health Sciences Library serves as the primary information resource facility for the university's health sciences programs, and supports the clinical, research, and instructional activities of the Colleges of Allied Health Sciences and Nursing, the Medical School and Social Work. The HSL is located in the Health Sciences Building on the ECU West Campus. The HSL is fully automated using the Horizon system, which is loaded on a network and accessible in the library and through the campus network. A network of databases including Medline, MDConsult, InfoPoems, CINAHL, OVID, Cochrane, PsychoInfo, and others are available; CD-ROM products including Micromedex, StatRef, Mayo Clinic Family Health Book, Statistical Abstracts, and Scientific American Medicine are also available in the HSL.

For hours of operation, please check with the individual libraries.

Phone: (252) 744-2219 <http://www.hsl.ecu.edu/>

### **Professional Liability**

Students in the ECU PA Program must pay to be covered by a malpractice policy that insures all employees and students at East Carolina University. This policy covers any vicarious liability risks which an instructor may assume by working with students. Every ECU PA student and PA or physician instructor is covered under the ECU professional liability coverage. Malpractice insurance fees are determined and collected every September both in the didactic and clinical years. Students who are not current with malpractice liability will not be permitted to partake in any clinical experience or rotations.

### **Registration**

The Office of the Registrar notifies students as to the time of registration. Tuition and fees are paid at the time of registration. For further information concerning registration procedures, contact the Registrar's office at (252)-328-6747. Further information can be obtained at: <http://www.ecu.edu/registrar/Students.htm>.

## **Scholarships**

Scholarship information is available through the Office of Financial Aid at (252)-328-6610. Further information can be obtained at: [www.ecu.edu/financial/scholarships.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/financial/scholarships.cfm), with the College of Allied Health Sciences at: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/ah/scholarships.cfm> or in the PA program brochure.

## **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition rates are reviewed and set annually by the North Carolina legislature. Fees are approved by the university's Board of Trustees with final approval pending the Board of Governors of the Greater University of North Carolina System review. Figures are based on **approved** rates for each year. Information on current tuition and fees may be obtained through the cashier's office at: [http://www.ecu.edu/financial\\_serv/cashier/](http://www.ecu.edu/financial_serv/cashier/). Further information on fees may be found in the program online brochure. Criteria for residency may be found at: <http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/>.

## **Refund of Tuition and Fees**

A student who officially withdraws from the East Carolina School of Health Sciences during the course of an academic year may be entitled to a refund of tuition and fees in proportion to the length of time between the first class day of each semester and the date of official withdrawal in accordance with the published schedule. Further information can be obtained through the cashier's office at: [http://www.ecu.edu/financial\\_serv/cashier/](http://www.ecu.edu/financial_serv/cashier/).

## **Attendance and Tardiness**

Regular and prompt attendance at classes, laboratory sessions, scheduled conferences with faculty or advisors and clinical rotations is expected of all students. A tremendous amount of didactic material is covered in each scheduled class. Due to the sequential and experiential nature of the professional phase curriculum, knowledge gained in every class is vital for subsequent learning. Your commitment to professional education implies your commitment to punctual and regular class and rotation attendance. In the event of a planned absence, students are required to notify the course director/s or clinical coordinator and the Department Chair in writing (e-mail) beforehand. In the case of unplanned absences, students must explain in writing to the clinical coordinator or course director and the

Department Chair. All missed assignments must be made up as determined by the course director or clinical coordinator. Students are responsible for reading each class or clinical rotation syllabus and understanding the course specific attendance requirements. They are also responsible for reading and understanding the attendance policies as stated in the Clerkship Manual.

Tardiness is considered to be unprofessional conduct, and habitual tardiness is unacceptable behavior. Promptness is expected in all professional curriculum activities.

The following are considered to be reasons for excused absence:

- a) A personal illness with medical attention at the ECU Student Health Center or from a personal health care provider. A signed medical note of excuse may be required.
- b) Illness of a family member. Documentation by a signed note from a health care provider may be required.
- c) Death in the immediate family. Documentation by a signed note or obituary notice may be required.
- d) Military deployment or call to active duty in times of a national disaster or declared emergency.

### **Program Academic Advising**

At the beginning of the professional curriculum, each student will be assigned an academic advisor and each student will meet with his or her academic advisor no later than midterm of each fall and spring semester during the didactic curriculum. Documentation of the encounter must be placed into the student's file in the "Didactic" folder within one week of the encounter. Additional meetings with a student's academic advisor will be scheduled on an as needed basis."

### **Grading**

All courses presented in the didactic and clinical phases of the professional curriculum of the ECU PA Program will be subject to the following grading scale:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

F = 69% or Below

For the duration of any semester, all numerical grades earned by a student for any course requirements such as tests, quizzes, assignments, or final exams will be calculated by Black Board. Final grades will rounded to the nearest whole number. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Department Chair. Course directors may review test questions for compliance with test standards and might discard question(s) to make the test scores more relevant and fair. If questions are discarded from an exam, a quiz or a final, the number of discarded questions (whether answered correctly or incorrectly by a student) will be deducted from the total number of questions given; that number will become the denominator of the ratio for the grade. The numerator of the ratio will be the number of correct answers for the questions excluding the discarded questions (whether answered correctly or incorrectly by a student). The ratio of the two figures will be the student's numerical grade. This grading system might not be used in courses taught by BSOM faculty.

Students are a vital and integral component of the on-going PA program self-study process and ARC-PA accreditation. To address these commitments, students are required to complete the ECU PA Program course/instructor evaluations for every course at the end of each semester.

### **Incomplete Grade**

The symbol "I" (incomplete) may be given by an instructor when a student's work in a course has not been completed at the end of a semester and when the failure to complete the work has been due to causes beyond the student's control. It is not used as a substitute for an "F". When an "I" stands for a year without action on the part of the student, it may become an "F".

### **Student Records**

PA students will be able to view their test results, assignments and course grades on Blackboard for each course in which they are registered that semester. Blackboard only allows access for students to see their own scores.

Records for each student enrolled in the ECU PA Program will be retained by the Department for a period of 5 years following a

student's graduation or suspension from the Program. The ECU Registrar permanently retains the transcripts. Student files are in locked and secured areas. Only faculty and staff have access to student files. If files are removed, they are kept in locked offices and are signed in and out.

### **Student Identification**

ECU PA students will be clearly identified to distinguish them from physicians, medical students and other health professions students and graduates. Physician Assistant students will wear short, white student coats with a name tag attached above the left breast pocket. The name tag will clearly state the student's name followed by "PA-S" with an underlying title of "Physician Assistant Student." There will be no other identifying names or titles. Pertinent hospital or clinic name tags may be necessary. Students will be required to sew onto the left breast pocket of their white laboratory coat an ECU PA Program cloth patch.

### **Appearance and Dress**

During the didactic year, students will spend most of their time in a classroom or laboratory environment with some limited patient contact. Members of the faculty have the authority and responsibility to maintain professional standards of student dress and grooming within classrooms, clerkship sites, offices and other areas of public presentations. Extremely casual or bizarre attire as determined by the faculty should be avoided. Well-groomed hair and beards are acceptable during pre-clinical training (didactic phase). Dress code for routine classroom lectures during the didactic component of the Professional Phase of the PA Program includes jeans, dress pants, shorts of modest length, skirts, shirts, sweaters, etc. No low cut or revealing tops, clothes that expose undergarments, halter tops or bikini tops or bottoms are allowed in the classroom, clinics or hospitals. No caps or hats will be worn in the classrooms or professional sites.

Professional attire, as outlined below, is required for special guest presentations, seminars, patient interviews or any clinical or classroom related course work off campus. As health care professionals, students should understand the importance of being neatly dressed and well groomed.

In all portions of training with patient contact or in a health care setting, the following dress code will apply:

1. Women: Dress skirt or pants and a blouse with a short white student jacket. No low cut or revealing tops, clothes that expose undergarments, halter tops or bikini tops or bottoms are allowed in the classroom, clinics, hospitals or labs. The jacket must have the cloth ECU PA Program emblem sewn onto the left breast pocket of the white laboratory coat and the student name tag clearly visible and labeled, "Physician Assistant Student". Pertinent hospital (or clinic) ID may be required. No low cut shirts or capris pants are allowed. Students should also wear closed toe and heel shoes while in the hospital/clinic setting. Exposed body piercings other than in the ear lobes are not allowed and only ear posts are acceptable. Body art including tattoos must be covered. Finger nails must be clean and trimmed so as not to extend past the tip of the finger. Only clear nail polish is acceptable and acrylic nails are not allowed. There will be no chewing gum or tobacco products in the professional or classroom setting.

2. Men: Dress pants, dress shirt, and short, white student jacket. No low cut or revealing tops, clothes that expose undergarments, halter tops or bikini tops or bottoms are allowed in the classroom, clinics, hospitals or labs. The jacket must have the cloth ECU PA Program emblem sewn onto the left breast pocket of the white laboratory coat and the student name tag clearly visible and labeled, "Physician Assistant Student". Pertinent hospital (or clinic) ID is required. Ties will be required while on rotations. Students must also wear closed toe and heel shoes while in the hospital/clinic setting and must wear socks. Exposed body piercings other than in the ear lobes are not allowed and only ear posts are acceptable. Body art including tattoos must be covered. Finger nails must be clean and trimmed so as not to extend past the tip of the finger. Only clear nail polish is acceptable and acrylic nails are not allowed. There will be no chewing gum or tobacco products in the professional or classroom setting.

3. There are several departments and/or clinical practice sites which prohibit long hair (for men or women) and beards. Some departments of surgery and/or surgical practices, for example, stipulate that no beards be worn in the operating rooms and that all exposed hair must be kept trimmed. Male students should be prepared to shave prior to entering any clinical surgical rotations. Fingernail polish is also unacceptable. The wearing of perfume and cologne should be kept to a minimum.

4. Anytime surgical scrub suits are required to be worn in a professional setting, they must be a navy blue, matching set. They must be clean and in good condition, and they must not bear any institutional markings or logos. When on clinical rotations, separate

institutions may have their own policies regarding scrubs which the student will follow.

5. Appropriate attire in the physical examination lab will be: a) Men-tee shirts, shorts or swimming trunks, not briefs. b) Women-sport bras or tank tops and shorts. Please refrain from wearing bikini tops or bottoms. Any exceptions will be noted by the course director.

### **Professional Behavior**

As students enter the professional phase of the ECU PA Program, they are expected to develop behaviors and habits expected of a professional physician assistant. The American Academy of Physician Assistants Code of Ethics of the Physician Assistant Profession is a public statement of the value and principles used to promote and maintain the high standards of behavior for physician assistants. Students should read, be familiar with and follow these principles and values which are stated in this Handbook.

<http://www.aapa.org/manual/23-EthicalConduct.pdf>

Students are expected to demonstrate conduct and behaviors appropriate for a health care professional. Thus, students are expected to adhere to CAHS Student Conduct Code and ECU Student Code of Conduct. <http://www.ecu.edu/studenthandbook/III.htm>  
(<http://www.ecu.edu/ah/studentcode.htm>)

To facilitate the development of professional behavior in students, the PADP faculty will not only be evaluating the students' academic achievements during the program, but will also be evaluating students' professional behavior. Upon entering the ECU PA Program, applicants become professional graduate students. It will be their responsibility to develop professional attitudes and clinical judgment. The faculty and staff are completely committed to supporting the students in their academic and clinical endeavors and are available to help students in their commitment to furthering their education. Students must adhere to all patient confidentiality policies addressed in HIPAA.

Guests, including family, will not be allowed in classrooms, labs or at clinical sites without prior permission of the course director or clinical coordinator. Nor will Department faculty or staff be asked or be expected to babysit.

## **SECTION FOUR**

## **PA PROGRAM ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The didactic and experiential content in PA education can be of a very sensitive, personal and sometimes disturbing nature. Students are reminded that the purpose of the PA Program professional curriculum is to prepare individuals to provide physician-supervised, primary health care to all persons in all environments without regard to the student's own personal beliefs and biases.

In addition to the general academic regulations and policies as stated in the East Carolina University Graduate Catalog Bulletin (<http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/>), the following policies and procedures pertain to all required courses taken by students enrolled in the ECU Physician Assistant Program.

### Reading Assignments

A syllabus containing objectives and an outline for each course and each class will be provided. Required reading assignments will appear in the syllabi. Ancillary texts are not mandatory, but such references help the student when further reading is necessary for complete understanding of subjects and material discussed. Purchasing the required textbooks is mandatory. On-line editions will not be acceptable because they will not meet academic needs. We strongly recommend that you not sell these books after a course because they may be used in other didactic courses, and many will be used as required texts for clinical rotations. Texts such as physiology and anatomy will be invaluable resources even after the classes are completed.

### Examinations

Examinations will vary with each course taught throughout the professional didactic and clinical phases of the Program. Test items will come from the objectives, lectures and reading assignments for each course. Questions may be taken directly from lecture material not necessarily found in the text. Typically, 1 to 1½ minutes will be allowed for each test question. If a student believes that he or she needs more time on an examination or quiz, the student must have documentation from the Department for Disability Support Services.

Examinations must be taken on the scheduled day and time. Any repeat of an examination, other than the final exam, will be at the discretion of the course director and the Chair.

Final examinations will be held at the close of each term in all courses. There will be no departure from the printed schedule of examinations.

Changes for individual emergencies of a serious nature will be made only with the approval of the course director and the Chair. The Chair will, if a serious emergency is believed to exist, forward a written request to the Office of the Registrar, setting forth the nature of the emergency. A student who is absent from an examination without an excuse may be given a grade of F in the course. The instructor may issue an incomplete (I) in the case of a student absent from the final examination who has presented a satisfactory excuse or an official university approved by the Chair.

Individual test reviews may be allowed only upon special request by the student to the course director and only for one week following the exam. Any other test review is at the discretion of the course director. There will be no final exam review.

The course director and the Department Chair must be provided with a written explanation of any absence and with any required corroborating documentation. An excused absence is granted only for one of the following reasons or at the discretion of the Department Chair:

- a) A personal illness with medical attention at the ECU Student Health Center or from a personal health care provider. A signed medical note of excuse may be required.
- b) Illness of a family member. Documentation by a signed note from a health care provider may be required.
- c) Death in the immediate family. Documentation by a signed note or obituary notice may be required.
- d) Military deployment or call to active duty in times of a national disaster or declared emergency.

An unexcused absence from an examination may result in an assigned grade of zero (0) with no recourse of a make-up examination. Patterns of abuse will be handled by the Department Chair.

Extra time to complete the test will not be given to any student who arrives late for an examination.

#### End of Course and End of Rotation Evaluations

At the end of every didactic course and clinical rotation, each student will fill out a course or rotation evaluation. The evaluations are mandatory, anonymous and confidential. They will not be discussed

with the students by the course director or preceptor, and there will be no retaliation against students for being fair and honest in their assessments. The evaluations by the students are crucial sources of data for the improvement of our curriculum.

#### Clinical Experiences Outside the Professional Curriculum

Any clinical experiences or patient contact not scheduled by the PA Program must be approved by the Department Chair if the expectation is to participate officially as students of the ECU PA Program. Unapproved clinical experiences or patient contact in which students represent themselves as enrolled in the ECU PA Program without Department Chair approval may result in disciplinary action.

#### Student Responsibilities

It is essential to professional development that students adopt and exhibit a self-directed responsibility for the mastery of knowledge and skills. It is the student's sole responsibility to maintain the required academic standards and to initiate the appropriate activities needed to resolve deficiencies in any area. Students who have been made aware of a deficiency should contact the course director and their faculty advisors as soon as possible to solicit their help and recommendations to remediate deficiencies.

Students who have personal, ethical or religious constraints against being involved in certain medical procedures or tasks must inform their faculty advisors and the Chair at the beginning of the professional curriculum. Such proscriptions will be noted in the students' files. The students should also remind the clinical coordinators of any concerns prior to the scheduling of rotations; however, a student may be assigned to a clinical site where the procedure in question is performed. The student will not be forced to participate in the procedure, but the student will be required to complete the rotation at the scheduled site. Students **will not** be excused from didactic lectures because of personal, ethical or religious prohibitions. The material must be taught and learned as part of the body of current medical knowledge.

The responsibility of having functional computers for examinations rests with each student. Defective computers need to be repaired or replaced as necessary. ECU provides technical support through ACE, located in room 3330 of the Allied Health Sciences Building. Software glitches with Blackboard or Secure Exam often can be resolved by contacting Jean Merenda at 252.744.1106.

The PA department will lend laptop computers to students only if theirs become defective during a test. Students should arrive to the test site with a functioning laptop. If a student has a computer problem, he or she may borrow a computer through Laupus Library.

### Graduate School

#### Basis for Satisfactory Academic and Professional Status

Please see the Graduate Catalog for Graduate School retention policies under the section Scholastic Standards.

<http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/>),

#### Requirements for Continuation in the Program and for Graduation

To remain in good standing throughout the professional phase of the PA curriculum and to meet the requirements for graduation, a student must do the following:

1. Meet at a minimum the Graduate School's standards for retention.
2. Maintain an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher and achieve a "C" or better letter grade in all didactic and clinical courses required by the ECU PA Program listed on pages 10-11 in this handbook.
3. Meet at a minimum the standards of ethical academic, clinical and professional conduct performance as specified in the American Academy of Physician Assistants Code of Ethics, the East Carolina University Code of Student Conduct and the Professionalism in Physician Assistant Education signature page in this handbook.
4. Abide by all PADP policies and procedures.
5. Complete the following Summative Evaluations: a) a comprehensive written exam twice (PACKRAT), once prior to the clinical year and again at the end of the clinical year; b) a Clinical Skills Exam prior to graduation near the end of the program. A "Pass" on the Clinical Skills Exam is required. Failure to do so by a student will lead to specific action taken as determined by the program Faculty and/or the Department Chair.

#### Basis for Academic Probation and Dismissal from Program

### **Didactic Courses**

Any student who does not meet the minimum requirements of the Graduate School's Retention Standards and the Departmental Retention Standards may have his or her professional program terminated; however, a student might be placed on academic probation with the consent of the Curriculum Committee and/or the Chair. Probationary status in such instances must be removed by the end of the following semester with the return of the overall GPA to a minimum of 3.0. If the GPA does not return to a minimum 3.0, the student's professional program will be terminated. If the student's GPA ever again falls below 3.0, there will be no probation; and the student's professional program will be terminated.

Students who receive a letter grade below a "C" for any required single course in the didactic phase of the PA program at any time must discontinue in the program.

If a student's professional curriculum is discontinued for any reason, there will be no re-entry into the Program other than to reapply through CASPA and compete with other applicants.

### **Clinical Courses**

1. A letter grade less than a "C" in any clinical rotation will require that the student's continuation in the program be determined by the Curriculum Committee and/or the Department Chair (a minimum of a "C" must be obtained in all aspects of the rotation as outlined in the student *Clerkship Manual*). If allowed to continue, the student must repeat the rotation and must be placed on probation. If the student fails the rotation a second time or fails another rotation, the professional program will be terminated for that student. The maximum grade a student may obtain in a repeated rotation is 80%.

Students who do not complete a clinical rotation or are asked to leave a clinical rotation due to poor performance will not receive a passing grade for that clinical experience. Clinical practicum rotations may be repeated only once. Graduate School and PA Program policies apply to clinical rotations as they do with didactic courses.

Students on clinical rotations must work all hours designated by the preceptor and must be available a minimum of 40 hours per week. Should the student not comply with the designated hours required (including Call or Hospital Rounds), he/she will be subject to review by the Department Chair for disciplinary action. Students who are unable to complete a clinical rotation due to unexpected medical conditions or circumstances beyond the control of the student or university will be rescheduled for another similar clinical experience. The location of a

repeated clinical experience will be subject to available sites and at the discretion of the clinical coordinator(s) or Department Chair.

If a student earns a letter grade of less than a "C" on the end of rotation exam, the student will be required to take another exam of the same length and covering similar material. The student will retake the exam within 10 days of notification of failure as scheduled by the faculty. A minimum letter grade of "C" must be earned on the remediation test, and a maximum grade of 70% will be awarded for the test. Failure of the remediation test will mean failure of the rotation.

All students are required to attend the end of rotation exam review. To fail to do so without an appropriate excuse as determined by the clinical coordinator and/or Department Chair will lead to the student's being placed on probation. Attendance at Grand Rounds is mandatory. Unexcused absence from any part of Grand Rounds may result in failure of the rotation. The student will be required to repeat the rotation and in that case will not graduate with the rest of the class.

2. The ECU PA Program Clinical Coordinators review the evaluations from the clinical preceptors/instructors and assign final grades for all of the clinical practicum rotations. The Clinical Coordinators, with the approval of the Department Chair, have the authority to require a student to stay longer at a clinical site, repeat specific components of a clinical rotation or repeat the complete practicum as deemed necessary to ensure patient safety and the student's expected level of professional development and mastery of clinical skills.

3. Clinical rotations will be assigned by the program and the clinical coordinators with a prescribed amount of input from the students. Once the clinical site or schedule has been assigned, changes will be made only in the instance of extreme necessity and with written approval by the Department Chair. All rotation sites will be in Eastern North Carolina.

Students **will not** negotiate with potential preceptors or for potential clerkship sites, nor will they negotiate with AHEC. The student may inform the clinical coordinator of a clerkship prospect and then provide the clinical coordinator with site contact information. Any communication with the potential preceptor site or its representative will be made by ECU PA Program personnel. Students do not represent the ECU PA Program as anything other than students, and it is the business solely of the ECU PA Program and its employed staff and

faculty to negotiate with preceptors. Violation of this policy could lead to disciplinary action taken against the student.

4. The student should be ready for travel by personal vehicle. Since many clinical rotation sites are away from the Greenville area, all students should expect to be assigned to these away sites and should anticipate the need to find housing in these areas during the clinical portion of the program. Clinical coordinators will work with AHEC about potential housing at these away sites; however, neither AHEC nor the Program guarantees to provide housing.

5. Criminal background checks are becoming mandatory at medical institutions as a requirement by some local, state or federal institutions. ECU and the PA Program are not responsible for reviewing background checks, ordering them or paying for them. If a student cannot finish the clinical portion of the PA program professional curriculum because of a negative criminal background check, that student will not graduate. Neither ECU nor the PA Program will be held liable for a student's failure to graduate or failure to obtain a state license because of a criminal background.

6. Pagers are required by many of the institutions to which we send students for clinical experience. All students will be required to obtain a pager to be carried during the clinical year. The Dept. of Physician Assistant Studies does not provide pagers for students; therefore, students must provide their own. Students will not be excused from rotation requirements such as "Call" for lack of a pager. Incomplete participation in all required rotation activities will be considered to be non-professional behavior, and the Department may require the student to repeat the rotation. Further repetition may lead to dismissal from the Program.

7. Anti-nepotism and Non-fraternization Policies-Occasionally students request to serve a rotation with a family member (mother, father, sibling, grandparent or significant other), friend or a close acquaintance who is also a health care provider serving as a preceptor. Because of the possibility that such close personal relationships can interfere with the clinical evaluation process, which is both objective and subjective in nature, such rotation arrangements are prohibited.

Similarly, a student may find himself or herself attracted to a preceptor (or vice versa) or other personnel at the site(s) where the student is serving a rotation. Pursuit of such relationships during the rotation period compromises the integrity of the education and evaluation processes and is therefore prohibited. Engaging in such a

relationship will also make the student ineligible for a subsequent rotation with that preceptor, and potentially the remainder of the site, if multiple rotations are offered.

Students failing to comply with the above policies will be withdrawn from the rotation and may incur a delay in progression in their clinical education. Students with questions or concerns about the above issues should immediately consult the clinical faculty.

### Cheating

Students should be familiar with the University definitions of cheating, including plagiarism, as stated in the Constitution of the Student Government Association, Article II, Code of Conduct, Penalties, and Hearing Procedures for Students found at: <http://www.ecu.edu/studenthandbook/III.htm>.

Any student observed or suspected of cheating on an examination by a proctor and/or a faculty member will be subject to the following ECU PA Program policies:

1. The ECU PA Department Chair, with the advice of the Faculty, will determine what action will be taken subsequent to a first offense of cheating. At the least, a first offense will result in a written report which will become a part of the student's permanent record. Further, the student will be assigned a "zero" for the examination in question.
2. A subsequent offense or lack of change in behavior will result in suspension or dismissal from the program. Students have the right to appeal the Department Chair's decision and then, if appropriate, may submit an appeal to the Dean, College of Allied Health Sciences, as stated in the CAHS Student Conduct Code.
3. All instances of cheating, including plagiarism, will be dealt with as outlined in the ECU Student Handbook.

### Physical Examination and Teaching Laboratory Use

No student or students will occupy the PE Lab, 4335, or the Teaching Lab, 2335, without faculty supervision. These rooms will be unlocked for a scheduled lab, practical or class only by the course director or by a faculty member who will remain and supervise the students. Manikins and models will not be touched without prior faculty permission. All scheduled labs, practicals or classes are mandatory unless otherwise noted by the course director, and students will attend and remain until released by the course director. There will be no loitering in the hall outside these rooms. If a function is scheduled in

4335, wait in the Graduate Student Lounge. If a function is scheduled in 2335, wait in the first floor lobby.

Computer policy <http://www.ecu.edu/studenthandbook/computer.htm>

Any violations related to the computer policy as outlined in the ECU Student Handbook, particularly attempts to hack into computers or computer software, selling copyrighted material or plagiarizing internet material will be brought before the faculty with the possible recommendation of dismissal.

#### Remediation and Grade Reporting Procedures

Students will be notified no later than mid-term of a failing grade in a given course. Faculty are expected to provide reasonable assistance to students in determining the specifics of deficiencies and direction to aid in the remediation process. The method and extent to which course directors choose to assist students with review and remediation of deficient material is at the discretion of the course director, but it will address deficiencies in a student's knowledge or skills. The remediation plan will be signed by the student and the course director. Failure to complete the remediation plan as directed may result in academic probation. All deficient exam performances are to be reported to the Department Chair by the course director. Recurring problems with students will be discussed at scheduled faculty meetings.

#### Academic Appeals Process

A student must try to resolve grade disputes with the course director and participating course faculty. Grade disputes that are not resolved with the course director will be brought to the attention of the Department Chair who may elect to conduct an informal inquiry. Clearly, grade decisions remain within the jurisdiction and rights of the course director.

Decisions for probation and/or dismissal from the ECU PA Program follow the criteria presented in the ECU Graduate School Catalog <http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/> and the PA Program Student Handbook. Students have the right to appeal to the Physician Assistant Studies Program for an exception to the probation and/or dismissal policy based on extraordinary circumstances. The student should direct the formal, written appeal to the Department Chair within 5 days of receipt of notice of probation or dismissal. These exceptions will be evaluated by the Curriculum Committee and the Department Chair with notification of their findings sent to the student within 10 days after receipt of the student's appeal. Exceptions to the probation/dismissal policy will be made only in very rare cases.

Further appeal will follow the guidelines of ECU at: <http://www.ecu.edu/studenthandbook/>).

#### Withdrawal and Readmission

Any student desiring to withdraw, or withdraw and later apply for readmission to the ECU PA Program must follow the procedures for withdrawal and readmission found in the Graduate Catalog.

The student must meet with the Department Chair and present a letter of withdrawal to the Department Chair prior to initiating any procedures with the Graduate School. Arrangements must be made by the student with financial aid if applicable.

#### Guidance

To assist students in their academic programs, the Department has established a system of academic counseling whereby each student is assigned to a faculty member who serves as his/her advisor. The advisor helps the student understand the academic program, keeps a record of his/her progress, assists in understanding university and Program policies, addresses academic concerns and is available throughout the year for additional counseling.

#### Student Employment

Part-time employment by PA students at ECU is ***strongly*** discouraged; however students who choose to work will find that part-time work-study jobs are available through ECU. Application for work-study can be made through the ECU Financial Aid Office <http://www.ecu.edu/financial/>... The following rules apply to PA students who wish to work during their training:

1. Any part-time employment must be reported in writing to the Department Chair. Working students must comply with the ECU PA Program's academic schedule. Any student unable to maintain adequate academic standing as outlined above will be asked to terminate his/her employment.
2. PA students are not allowed to work within the PA Program and are not required to perform clerical or administrative work for the program.
3. PA students may not be used to substitute for regular clinical or administrative staff during clinical rotations. Any such request at clinical sites must be reported to the clinical coordinator or the Department Chair immediately.
3. Students will not be allowed to work during the clinical year due to time requirements at the rotation sites.

## Graduation Policies and Procedures

Upon successful completion of all academic and clinical requirements of East Carolina University, students will receive a Master of Science degree in Physician Assistant Studies. Upon graduation, students will be eligible to sit for the PANCE administered by the NCCPA and to apply for licensure. However, graduation does not necessarily imply credentialing, license to practice or employment as a PA. All states, including North Carolina, have additional components to their application process to be completed before a graduate PA can practice

The following must be done to prepare for graduation:

1. Application for Graduation-Application for graduation must be made on a form provided by the Registrar at least one semester prior to completing the requirements of the degree as stated by the Graduate Catalog

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/aa/upload/grcat0607.pdf>

2. Licensure - Temporary licensure is no longer granted by the North Carolina Medical Board. Students must register and pass the PANCE prior to receiving a license to practice in North Carolina. In order to practice in North Carolina, write or call:

North Carolina Medical Board  
P.O. Box 20007  
Raleigh, NC 27619  
Phone (919) 828-1212 / Fax: (919) 828-1295  
<http://www.ncmedboard.org/>

Remember: It is each student's responsibility, and NOT the responsibility of the Physician Assistant Studies Program, to deal with student licensure requirements! Students should begin the application process at least **3 months** prior to anticipated graduation.

3. Permanent Address-

It is essential that you leave your permanent address, telephone number and e-mail address with the PADP prior to leaving campus so you can receive important information and can be contacted if any problems might arise with any of the above procedures.

4. Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination-

For information about certification or the NCCPA, you may contact:

National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants.  
NCCPA  
12000 Findley Road  
Suite 200  
Duluth, GA 30097  
678-417-8100  
web site: <http://www.nccpa.net>

### General Performance Functions and Tasks of Graduates of the Physician Assistant Program at ECU

Please see the signature page under Section 5.

## **TECHNOLOGY/MEDIA POLICY**

### Purpose

The purpose for this policy is to ensure that students, faculty and staff are aware of the current policies and support that will be offered by the Department in regards to computers, network and World Wide Web resources offered through the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### Computers

The current computer configuration recommended by the Department will be the only computer supported by the university's computer center. If you choose not to purchase the required computer it is your responsibility to obtain help from outside resources. The system configuration is updated annually and will be provided to you 6 – 8 weeks before your orientation.

### Software

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies utilizes several software packages from different vendors; however only software listed below will be supported. Below is a list of supported software that will be used during the program. The Department reserves the right to make modifications to this list as seen fit. E-mail notifications will be sent to students, staff, and faculty of the program if any changes occur, and when updates are available along with a location of where to obtain the updates.

\* = required program

Microsoft Windows XP Professional or Vista\*

Microsoft Office 2003 or Office 2007 (all files should be saved in Office

2003 format) – Excel, Power Point, Word, Access, and Outlook\*  
Microsoft Media Player\*  
Windows/MSN Messenger\*  
Microsoft Internet Explorer\*  
Adobe Acrobat Reader\*  
Symantec AntiVirus Corporate Edition\* provided by University  
Securexam\* provided by the Department during orientation  
Roxio Easy CD Creator 5.0 Platinum for Windows XP

Netscape Navigator is a known issue when running both Internet Explorer and Netscape. You may choose to run this program but it may result in problems.

Wired Local Area Network – The systems located at the Health Sciences Building are for academic use only and are to be used as such. Please see the section labeled Academic Use Policy for more information. If your system is found to be the cause of network issues, the administrator may remove your system from the Wired Local Area Network without advance notification.

Wireless Local Area Network (802.11b Standard) – The wireless Ethernet system located at the Health Sciences Building is for academic use only and should be used as such, please see the section labeled Academic Use Policy for more information. The wireless Local Area Network is offered as a service to the students by the Physician Assistant Studies Department, it should not be used in cases where a traditional Local Area Network is available as it ties down network resources to those who are using it for acceptable reasons. An 802.11b standard Ethernet card is required to access this service. If you need help in locating an appropriate vendor, please see the administrator for a list of possible vendors. Programs that are banned from use on the Wireless Network include all file sharing programs (i.e. – Morpheus); these programs exchange large amounts of information and take away resources. In addition, downloading illegal copies of copyrighted material is against State and Federal Law and against University Policy. If your machine is found to be running this program, as a client or server, your machine's identification will be added to the wireless network's router to block access. You will have to speak with the administrator in order to have it added back to the network.

### Web Resources

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies maintains two forms of web resources which are the only authorized web sites of the Department; Blackboard, and the PA Studies Web Portal.

These two resources are monitored on a constant basis to make sure that they are both reliable and contain accurate information. These sites are to be used for academic use only and should be used as such. Please see Academic Use Policy for more information regarding this policy.

Material gained from either of these resources shall not be copied or distributed without expressed written consent of the copyright holder.

### Smart Classrooms

The Smart Classroom is essential in providing classroom time to the Physician Assistant Students and therefore must be maintained in an organized and technically safe manner. The resources available in the classroom are off limits to students unless under direct supervision by a member of the faculty or the administrator during class time. If a presentation is to be made using the Smart Classroom by a student, the student must submit the document to the administrator no less than one week prior to the presentation for scan of malicious code. No modifications to the Smart Classroom will be made; modifications to presentations must be made to adhere to the requirements of the Smart Classroom. If the presentation was made using the approved software listed above, it meets the requirements. [DM1] Offenses will be reviewed by the Faculty and may result in a reprimand or suspension from the program.

### Technical Support

Limited Departmental Technical Support is offered to students of the Physician Assistant Studies Department by the CAHS Educational Technology Department only if the student adheres to the regulations of this policy. The software listed above are the only programs currently required by the Department in order to successfully complete the program, and will be the only programs supported by the Department. In order to request technical support you must submit a web portal ticket for review to determine which course of action is necessary to resolve the situation. Below is a list of available technical support resources and responses. If you are having trouble accessing the internet, contact your internet service provider for help. If you are having trouble with getting the machine to boot or operate properly during non business hours, contact your computer manufacturer for support, otherwise contact ACE

### Web Portal Technical Issues

The Web Portal Technical Issues page will be updated as seen fit to include known problems and solutions for issues that students, staff and faculty have had with certain software, hardware, and configuration issues.

### E-mail Address Recognition

E-mail accounts are provided to Students by the University. This e-mail account is where all official correspondence from the Department will be sent. Check it frequently. If you have difficulties with your e-mail account password, call the University Help Desk at (252) 328-9866 to have your password reset.

## **SECURITY AND SAFETY**

### I. Building Safety and Security

#### A. Building Hours

The Health Sciences Building on the West Campus is open from 7:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. During after-hours, students will not be given access to the Health Sciences Building without being accompanied by a PADP faculty or staff representative.

#### B. Safety and Security

Students who believe they have witnessed suspicious activity should immediately inform PADP faculty/staff, who will promptly investigate the situation and/or immediately report such to campus security (252-744.2246 or by calling 911). In the event that a faculty member is not available, students may use one of the emergency call boxes located immediately in the parking lot. The call box is identified by the blue light located at the top of the structure.

### II. Emergency Procedures

A. A copy of the ECU Emergency Procedures Manual, a brochure describing University policies and procedures for Emergency situations, is available on line at <http://www.ecu.edu/oehs>

B. Fire drills are conducted regularly by the ECU Office of Environmental Health and Safety. When the fire alarm is heard, all students and personnel should leave their respective areas immediately, close all doors upon exiting, evacuate to a safe distance from the building which is designated as the east parking lot near duck pond. Students should then immediately report to PADP faculty/staff upon reaching the east parking lot near duck pond so that their safety can be accounted for. Students, faculty, and staff should remain outside the building until instructed by personnel from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety

C. Notices regarding University operating hours and building closings for severe weather are posted on the ANNOUNCE listing on the ECU e-mail system and at <http://www.ecu.edu/alert/>.

D. In case of tornado or hurricane, students, faculty and staff should proceed to interior areas where there are no windows. In case of fire,

vacate the building according to posted fire escape routes or follow the stair exit signs. Do not use the elevators in case of fire.

### III. CPR Assistance

A. A listing of individuals who are certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and willing to assist in this type of emergency is posted in the PADP office.

B. Individuals who are CPR certified should notify their departmental office to update their certification or when their certification expires.

C. CPR training for interested faculty/staff may be offered on an annual basis.

IV. First Aid Supplies-A first-aid kit is available in the PADP office.

V. Some points of importance in time of emergency:

- In case of any emergency requiring evacuation of the building, each instructor is responsible for the evacuation of the students in that classroom.
- The PA Department evacuation assembly area is on the east side of the parking lot adjacent to the pond. If that is not available, the secondary assembly area is the north side of the parking lot adjacent to Route 43. Designated faculty or staff will be available to take attendance of all faculty, staff and students in our department. Do not leave assembly area without notifying responsible parties.
- While evacuating, move expeditiously, but do not run. Help disabled personnel during the evacuation. If you cannot get them out of the building, move them to a fire resistant area, such as a stairwell, and notify ECU police or firefighters on the scene.
- Know where the nearest stairs are at all times (from your office, your classroom, restrooms, library, etc.). The evacuation floor plans are posted throughout the building. Do not use the elevators!
- In the presence of smoke, the clearest air is close to the floor - get down and crawl. Walking in smoke can cause you to pass out or get lost. In poor visibility, hold onto the persons ahead and behind you to keep people from becoming lost.
- If unable to evacuate, close doors, seal cracks with cloth and signal for help by hanging an object out the window.

Emergency numbers: 911 or 744-2246 - report nature of emergency, your name and location.

Weather emergency information can be found at:  
<http://www.ecu.edu/alert/>

## **BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN**

### Exposure to Bodily Fluids

Exposure to blood, infectious body fluid, serum or unfixed tissue by needle stick, cut or splash onto mucous membrane or non-intact skin needs to be evaluated immediately at the facility in which you are working. If the student is working at another hospital outside ECU or PCMH, follow the procedures for exposure as detailed at the facility in which you are working in addition to contacting Student Health Services at 252-328-6317 and the PA Program immediately. You may be given post exposure prophylaxis depending on risk assessment for HIV. Employees must follow up with Prospective Health 252-744-3545 during working hours for follow-up/surveillance.

The following is a condensed procedure listing to be followed by students or employees who suffer exposure to possible blood borne pathogen by needle stick, cut, or splash onto mucous membrane or non-intact skin. The full ECU infection control policy can be found at the following web site: <http://www.ecu.edu/prospectivehealth> and clicking on infection control in upper right side.

### ECU Employees

When an employee is involved in an exposure at ECU, contact the Office of Prospective Health at 744-2070 or 744-3545, Monday – Friday 8AM to 5PM.

When an employee is involved in an exposure on PCMH property, the employee will:

1. Report the incident to PCMH Occupational Health (847—0095)
2. Report the incident to ECU Office of Prospective Health

For blood exposure at ECU in a nonclinical setting during evening or weekend hours, consult the Blood Exposure Hotline at 847-8500 for advice.

For blood exposure at PCMH during evening or weekend hours:

1. Consult the Blood Exposure Hotline at 847-8500 for advice, if needed
2. Contact the PCMH nursing coordinator to:

- a. Assess source patient risk for HIV infection
  - b. Facilitate testing of source
  - c. Complete referral form
  - d. Send employee to the Emergency Department with referral to obtain HIV prophylaxis (PEP) **IF HIV POSITIVE OR HIGH risk**
  - e. Employees shall contact Prospective Health for continued surveillance and PEP monitoring on the next regular work day.
3. If no known HIV or risk factors, emergency PEP is not indicated. Report to Prospective Health during regular working hours for initiation of long-term surveillance on non-emergent basis.

### ECU Students

#### Student exposure at BSOM

1. Report incident to faculty/supervisor and program director
2. Complete Non-Patient Incident Report
3. Report exposure to Prospective Health
  - a. Prospective Health will investigate source patient
  - b. Student evaluation, treatment, followups at Student Health Services

#### Student exposure at other ECU Health Science Center facility

1. Report incident to faculty supervisor and program director
2. Faculty supervisor will contact Prospective Health for assistance in completing source patient evaluation
3. Faculty supervisor will refer the student to SHS for evaluation, followup and/or treatment

#### Student exposure at other ECU facility

1. Student will report exposure to ECU faculty/supervisor
2. Faculty supervisor will perform the source patient evaluation and may contact Prospective Health for advice
3. Faculty supervisor will refer the student to Student Health Services for evaluation, treatment and/or followup

#### ECU Student exposure at PCMH

1. Student will report exposure to faculty supervisor and program director
2. Student will report exposure to PCMH Occupational Health at 847-0095
3. Faculty supervisor will refer student to Student health Services for evaluation, followup and/or treatment  
ECU Student exposed at other facility

1. Report exposure to faculty supervisor on site AND clinical coordinator as well as program director
2. Complete facility incident report
3. Facility will evaluate source patient
4. Faculty supervisor will refer student for evaluation:
  - a. At Student Health Services or Prospective Health if student returns to Greenville daily
  - b. At facility if return to ECU is not possible
  - c. Student surveillance will continue at SHS/PH upon return to campus, if initiated at facility
  - e. Costs of student surveillance to facility to be handled per ECU agreement with facility

Other student issues:

1. If the exposure adversely affects the academic or curricular performance of the student, the Dean of the school or director of the curriculum may be notified by the physician caring for the student (with the student's consent) or by the faculty supervisor. If the student develops HIV or chronic Hepatitis B, modification of the curriculum may be required to limit performance of high-risk procedures in the spirit of NCAC (15a NCAC 19A. 0207).
2. Student evaluation or treatment at SHS may result in charges not covered by student fees. Charges for these services should be submitted to the student's health insurance for coverage.

## **SECTION FIVE**

# Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession

## Preamble

In 2003, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) initiated an effort to define PA competencies in response to similar efforts being conducted within other health care professions and growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice. The following year, representatives from three other national PA organizations, each bringing a unique perspective and valuable insights, joined NCCPA in that effort. Those organizations were the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the body that accredits PA educational programs; the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP), the membership association for PA educators and program directors; and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the only national membership association representing all PAs.

The resultant document, *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession*, is a foundation from which each of those four organizations, other physician assistant organizations, and individual physician assistants themselves can chart a course for advancing the competencies of the PA profession.

## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to communicate to the PA profession and the public a set of competencies that all physician assistants regardless of specialty or setting are expected to acquire and maintain throughout their careers. This document serves as a map for the individual PA, the physician-PA team, and organizations that are committed to promoting the development and maintenance of these professional competencies among physician assistants.

The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Professional competencies for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, systems-based practice, as well as an unwavering commitment to continual learning and professional growth, and the physician-PA team, for the benefit of patients and the larger community being served. These competencies are demonstrated within the scope of practice, whether

medical or surgical, for each individual physician assistant as that scope is defined by the supervising physician and appropriate to the setting.

The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes required and provides educational experiences as needed in order for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies.

## **Medical knowledge**

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

Physician assistants are expected to:

- Understand etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical conditions
- Identify signs and symptoms of medical conditions
- Select and interpret appropriate diagnostic or lab studies
- Manage general medical and surgical conditions to include understanding the indications, contraindications, side effects, interactions, and adverse reactions of pharmacologic agents and other relevant treatment modalities
- Identify the appropriate site of care for presenting conditions, including identifying emergent cases and those requiring referral or admission
- Identify appropriate interventions for prevention of conditions
- Identify the appropriate methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual
- Differentiate between the normal and the abnormal in anatomy, physiology, laboratory findings, and other diagnostic data
- Appropriately use history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate a differential diagnosis
- Provide appropriate care to patients with chronic conditions.

## **Interpersonal & communication skills**

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass verbal, nonverbal, and written exchange of information. Physician assistants must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in

effective information exchange with patients, their patients' families, physicians, professional associates, and the health care system.

Physician assistants are expected to:

- Create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- Use effective listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning, and writing skills to elicit and provide information
- Appropriately adapt communication style and messages to the context of the individual patient interaction
- Work effectively with physician and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
- Apply an understanding of human behavior
- Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
- Accurately and adequately document and record information regarding the care process for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.

## **Patient care**

Patient care includes age appropriate assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of wellness.

Physician assistants are expected to:

- Work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient centered care
- Demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
- Gather essential and accurate information about their patients
- Make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence, and clinical judgment
- Develop and carry out patient management plans
- Counsel and educate patients and their families
- Competently perform medical and surgical procedures considered essential in the area of practice
- Provide health care services and education aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health.

## **Professionalism**

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

Physician assistants are expected to demonstrate:

- Understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
- Professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
- Respect, compassion, and integrity
- Responsiveness to the needs of patients and society
- Accountability to patients, society, and the profession
- Commitment to excellence and ongoing professional development
- Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
- Sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' culture, age, gender, and disabilities
- Self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative.

## **Practice-based learning and improvement**

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

Physician assistants are expected to:

- Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team
- Locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health problems

- Obtain and apply information about their own population of patients and the larger population from which their patients are drawn
- Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
- Apply information technology to manage information, access online medical information, and support their own education
- Facilitate the learning of students and/or other health care professionals
- Recognize and appropriately address gender, cultural, cognitive, emotional, and other biases; gaps in medical knowledge; and physical limitations in themselves and others.

### **Systems-based practice**

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

Physician assistants are expected to:

- Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
- Effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
- Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
- Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
- Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
- Partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery of health care and patient outcomes
- Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care
- Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
- Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide more effective, efficient patient care

- Utilize the systems responsible for the appropriate payment of services.

Footnote:

1 In 1999, the Accreditation Council for Graduation Medical Education (ACGME) endorsed a list of general competencies for medical residents. NCCPA's Eligibility Committee, with substantial input from representatives of AAPA, APAP and ARC-PA, has modified the ACGME's list for physician assistant practice, drawing from several other resources, including the work of Drs. Epstein and Hundert; research conducted by AAPA's EVP/CEO, Dr. Steve Crane; and NCCPA's own examination content blueprint.

## **GENERAL PERFORMANCE FUNCTIONS AND TASKS OF GRADUATES OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM AT ECU**

The didactic and experiential content in PA education can be of a very sensitive, personal and sometimes disturbing nature. Students are reminded that the purpose of the PA Program professional curriculum is to prepare individuals to provide physician-supervised, primary health care to all persons in all environments without regard to the student's own personal beliefs and biases.

In keeping with the Mission and the Educational Goals and Objectives of the ECU Department of Physician Assistant Studies, functions performed by graduate PAs include (at a minimum) the following general categories of services. To provide these services in a compassionate, competent, and efficient manner as members of the "health care team," students in the ECU PA Program will achieve the following performance functions and tasks by the time of graduation.

*Evaluation:* Initially approaching a patient of any age group in any setting to elicit a detailed and accurate history, perform an appropriate physical examination, and delineate problems and record and present data.

*Monitoring:* Assisting the physician in conducting rounds in acute and long-term inpatient care settings, developing and implementing patient management plans, recording progress notes and assisting in the provision of continuity of care in office-based and other ambulatory care settings.

*Diagnostics:* Performing and/or interpreting at least to the point of recognizing deviations from the norm, common laboratory, radiologic, cardiographic and other routine diagnostic procedures used to identify pathophysiologic processes.

*Therapeutics:* Performing routine procedures such as injections, immunizations, suturing and wound care, managing simple conditions produced by infection or trauma, assisting in the management of more complex illness and injury, which may include assisting surgeons in the conduct of operations, and taking initiative in performing evaluations or therapeutic procedures in response to life-threatening situations.

*Counseling:* Instructing and counseling patients regarding compliance with prescribed therapeutic regimens, normal growth and development, family planning, emotional problems of daily living and health maintenance.

*Referral:* Facilitating the referral of patients to the community's health and social service agencies when appropriate.

## **SPECIFIC TASKS, FUNCTIONS, COMPETENCIES, AND TECHNICAL PROCEDURES OF THE ECU PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT TRAINING PROGRAM**

This is a summary of major tasks, skills, competencies, and technical procedures offered during the ECU physician assistant training program. This listing includes major concepts and techniques but is not limited to all experiences and opportunities presented during matriculation at the ECU physician assistant program.

## Subjective Data Gathering And Utilization

The ECU physician assistant graduate should be able to:

1. Take a complete medical history
2. Perform a comprehensive physical exam
3. Order and interpret a complete basic laboratory work (CBC, urinalysis, gram stain, etc.)
4. Obtain a history, gather patient data, and perform a physical examination in a reasonable period of time
5. Identify data from the history and physical examination which is relevant to the patient's illness
6. Synthesize all abnormal data collected in the data base into a separate problem or a collection of problems
7. Develop a list of problems and properly separate them into active and inactive groups in a reasonable period of time
8. Refine problems to the maximum extent possible with consistent accuracy and state clearly the overall goal for each problem
9. Develop accurate therapeutic plans for each problem that are relevant to the resolution of the patient's problems
10. Write thorough progress notes that include subjective and objective information as well as an assessment and plan
11. Write and record accurate progress notes within a reasonable period of time
12. Possess a general knowledge of pathophysiology of common diseases and disposition of patients

## Objective Data Collection

The ECU physician assistant graduate should be able to perform, order, and interpret:

1. Routine and special radiographs (chest, abdomen, skull, skeletal, and barium) studies
2. Chemistry studies and fluid and electrolyte balance
3. Hematology studies
4. Culture results
5. Electrocardiography interpretations
6. Abnormal laboratory/diagnostic data

## Counseling And Patient Education

The ECU physician assistant graduate should be able to:

1. Provide counseling and patient education for problems and procedures, methods of treatment in a manner consistent with the understanding of the patient population and medical practice
2. Assist individuals and families in identifying strengths to resolve their problems
3. Inform individuals and families about available community resources
4. Counsel parents and families on child rearing

5. Counsel individuals and families about addictions (food, alcohol, drugs, etc.) and methods to cope with these addictions
6. Provide sex education
7. Provide proper information and assistance to terminally ill patients
8. Counsel and assist patients who are suffering from stress, depressions or losses (job, divorce, death of a loved one, etc.)
9. Provide information about common medical problems and explain laboratory, x-ray, and surgical procedures
10. Provide information on preventative measures for communicable diseases including AIDS and other HIV-related diseases
11. Provide information on healthy lifestyles and intervention/modification for at-risk behaviors.

### Technical Skills

The physician assistant graduate should be able to perform the following technical skills:

1. Venipuncture
2. Arterial punctures
3. IV catheterization
4. Urinary catheterization
5. Nasogastric intubation
6. Aseptic techniques
7. Wound care and closure of lacerations
8. Immunizations (children and adult)
9. IV medication administration
10. Collection of various cultures (blood, sputum, urine) and performance of some laboratory procedures (rapid strep, urinalysis, KOH prep)
11. Vision screening
12. Splint applications
13. Explanation of procedures to patient, parent, and family
14. Instruction about prescribed medication and other therapies
15. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
16. Emergency response to adverse reactions following administration of parenteral or any medication
17. Mini-mental status examination
18. Administration of local anesthesia
19. Control of external hemorrhage
20. Removal of superficial foreign bodies of the skin, ear and eye
21. Glucometer readings
22. Tissue biopsy

### Other Skills

Assist in surgery

1. Identify and use appropriate surgical instruments
2. Demonstrate appropriate operating room conduct
3. Suture
4. Dress wounds

Management of emergency situations

1. Cardiac arrest
2. Respiratory distress
3. Burns
4. Hemorrhage and hemorrhagic shock
5. Trauma
6. Anaphylaxis
7. Ingestion of toxic substances
8. Myocardial infarction
9. Acute abdomen
10. Septic joint
11. Urinary tract infection
12. Wound infection

Critical evaluation

1. Locate and retrieve medical literature
2. Discuss practice implications
3. Apply ethical decision-making skills
4. Apply the Physician Assistant Ethical Code of Ethics
5. Read medical literature on an on-going basis
6. Discuss current and controversial medical knowledge with colleagues and physicians
7. Critically evaluate new medical knowledge

I have read these functions and tasks.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**HANDBOOK RECEIPT**

I have received instruction regarding the on-line copy of the Student Manual for the Physician Assistant Studies Program. I understand that I am responsible for the information contained in this Manual, and I will abide by the policies and procedures as stated in this Manual. I also understand that, at any time, the Physician Assistant Studies Program may change a policy or procedure, and that I will be responsible for any changes.

I also acknowledge that this Manual not only contains information that is helpful to me as a new student in the East Carolina University Physician Assistant Studies Program, but also contains information about graduation, licensure, and certification. Therefore, since this Manual may be the only source of such information, and will be referred to by the faculty of the Physician Assistant Studies Program, I will keep this Manual available for use throughout my education in this professional Program.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Print)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## **TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

A student admitted into the East Carolina Physician Assistant Program must meet basic and essential requirements that are necessary for obtaining employment and performing as a Physician Assistant. The technical standards each student must master include cognitive, physical and behavioral characteristics. Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis, but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. All students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The following skills are required, with or without accommodation:

Critical Thinking The ability to solve problems, a skill that is critical to the practice of medicine, requires the intellectual abilities of measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Candidates for the program must be able to perform demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences.

Communication Skills A candidate should also be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written forms.

Visual Ability Candidates must also be able to observe a patient accurately, both at a distance and close at hand. This ability requires the functional use of vision and somatic sensation.

Hearing and Tactile Abilities Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic techniques.

Mobility and Fine Motor Skills A candidate should be able to execute movements reasonably required to move from area to area, maneuver in small places, calibrate and use large and small equipment, position and move patients, and provide patients with general care and emergency treatment.

Interpersonal Abilities A candidate for the PA program must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities required for the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, families, and colleagues.

I am able to meet the Technical Standards described above.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Print)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Recent developments in American politics and society underscore the importance of one crucial American value: Honesty. It is more important than ever that young adults provide a model of integrity to younger (and older) generations of Americans. This means that the ECU PA Program will NOT TOLERATE any form of cheating or dishonesty inside or outside the classroom. To cheat is to do, at a minimum, one or more of the following:

- Use of other people's work as your own (except in cases of group collaboration as defined by the professor)
- Unauthorized copying of another person's work
- Plagiarism (using a term paper from the internet or lifting passages from texts not written by you)
- Improper citation of sources (proper footnotes are REQUIRED on all written work)
- Downloading text from the internet and submitting it as your own.

For a more specific definition of cheating, please reference The Student Handbook Online at: <http://www.ecu.edu/studenthandbook/>. Anyone who cheats will be prosecuted according to the East Carolina University Code of Student Conduct and policies of Academic Integrity.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed this statement on academic honesty, and that I understand the terms outlined herein.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**NCCPA AND AAPA PERSONAL INFORMATION RELEASE FORM**

I authorize the East Carolina University Department of Physician Assistant Studies to release to The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants my social security number, name, date of birth, gender, address, e-mail address, graduation date or other information that they may require to ensure my eligibility to take the PANCE.

I authorize the East Carolina University Department of Physician Assistant Studies to release to the American Academy of Physician Assistants my name, date of birth, gender, address, e-mail address, graduation date or other information that they may require, excluding social security number, to ensure my eligibility to be a member of the SAAAPA or a future member of the AAPA.

**Exclusions:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Print)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**POLICY ON CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS AND DRUG SCREENING  
ON STUDENTS FOR CLINICAL FIELD SITE PLACEMENT**

ECU COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

Due to certain federal, state or local regulations that now require students to provide criminal background checks and, in some cases, drug screenings to prospective clinical sites, the following policy is being established for students in the College of Allied Health Sciences.

It is a student's responsibility, when applying for placement in a clinical site associated with the completion of degree requirements, to obtain and provide required reports/copies of the requested criminal background checks and/or drug screens to the appropriate official(s) at the prospective clinical site for review and consideration in determining acceptance for the clinical field experience placement. Students are responsible for arranging, paying for, and submitting the required documentation to any and all clinical sites that are being considered for placement. Academic Departments, the College of Allied Health Sciences, the Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University are not responsible for arranging, paying for, or submitting the required reports, or determining the student's eligibility for placement at the clinical site as a result of the contents of the required reports. Academic Departments, the College of Allied Health Sciences, the Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University are not responsible or liable for nor will they intervene in any way in the decision by a clinical site to not accept a student based on the contents of required reports. Decisions by clinical sites are final and have no reflection on or responsibility to the student's academic department.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Print)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**POLICY REGARDING STUDENT INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR EXPOSURE TO BLOOD AND OTHER POTENTIALLY INFECTIOUS MATERIALS**

ECU COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

Due to the potential for student exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials during educational and clinical experiences it is the student's sole responsibility to pay for the total costs of screening, diagnosis, short and long-term treatment, and disability compensation arising from any and all forms of exposure to infectious materials. As a result, students are required to provide for their own medical and disability insurance policies that will cover screening, diagnosis, treatment, and short and long-term disability compensation resulting from such exposure. Any screening, treatment, or disability maintenance costs not covered will be the sole responsibility of the student. All covered, uncovered, or related costs are not the responsibility of the student's academic department, College of Allied Health Sciences, Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**RELEASE OF IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION AND TB TEST RESULTS**

I authorize the East Carolina University Department of Physician Assistant Studies to release my personal information regarding immunization status and TB test results to preceptors, hospitals or other institutions that require that information to allow me to function in the role as a PA student in their areas of authority.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Print)

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Video Consent and Release**

In consideration of being permitted to participate in video recordings at East Carolina University (“ECU”), I hereby grant to ECU the absolute and irrevocable right and unrestricted permission in respect of my name, photographic portraits or pictures, likeness, or voice or any or all of them or in which I may be included with others, to copyright the same, in ECU’s own name or otherwise to use, re-use, publish and re-publish the same in whole or in part, individually or in any and all media now or hereafter known, and for any purpose whatsoever for illustration, promotion, art, editorial, advertising, or any other purpose whatsoever without restriction as an alternation.

In consideration of being permitted to participate in video recordings, I hereby release and discharge ECU from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of my photograph, name, likeness, or voice including without limitation any and all claims for libel or invasion of privacy with my participation in video recordings.

I fully understand that my participation in video recordings is completely voluntary and this confirms that I am of full age and have the right to contract in my own name. This acknowledges that I have read the foregoing and fully understand the contents thereof. This release shall be binding upon me, my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns.

In witness thereof, I have caused this Consent and Release to be executed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

Witness:

Participant:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

## **Professionalism in Physician Assistant Education**

The Physician Assistant Student:

**Scholarship & Commitment to Learning:** Is punctual; attends classes, clinics or other required events; seeks additional knowledge and skills; seeks feedback; is willing to assist other learners; is self aware of areas of needed improvement.

**Accountability & Initiative:** Is flexible; delegates effectively; accepts personal responsibility for mistakes; asks for help when needed; discloses medical error when appropriate.

**Self-Care & Self-Growth:** Maintains personal health and hygiene; cares for self; seeks advice, counsel or tutoring when needed; avoids harmful behaviors.

**Responsibility & Sense of Duty:** Completes assigned duties; sets and achieves realistic goals; follows policies; responds promptly when called; is detail-oriented; places patient needs first.

**Compassion & Respect for Others:** Is considerate and cooperative; displays empathy and respect for others; is respectful of different socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural traditions; respects authority.

**Integrity & Trustworthiness:** Displays honesty and forthrightness; adheres to ethical standards; is truthful in all communications; maintains confidentiality; reports inappropriate behavior by colleagues.

**Teamwork & Professional Demeanor:** Works well with others; maintains composure in difficult circumstances; inspires trust; avoids inappropriate remarks; adheres to local dress codes; treats faculty and fellow students with dignity

**Concern for the Welfare of Patients:** Treats patients and families with dignity; respects patient privacy and cultural values; maintains accurate information in patient records; advocates for patients.

(Adapted from the ECU Brody School of Medicine, *Professionalism in Medical Education*: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/medicaleducation/profMedicalEducation.cfm>.)

I acknowledge that I have reviewed this statement on Professionalism, and that I understand the terms outlined herein.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**REVISIONS IN HANDBOOK****DATE**

Clinical Experiences Outside the Professional Curriculum	10/25/04
Withdrawal and Readmission	11/22/04
Tardiness	12/01/04
Rounding off grades/course evaluations	12/13/04
Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure Procedure	12/15/04
Technical Standards	03/08/05
Performance Functions and Tasks	03/08/05
Academic Policy on Criminal Background Checks	04/21/05
End of Rotation Exam Review	06/27/05
Basis for Academic Probation and Dismissal from Program in Clinical Rotations	09/21/05
Caps or Hats in the Classrooms or Professional Sites	10/05/05
Planned Absences	10/19/05
End of Course and End of Rotation Evaluations	11/15/05
Final Examination Review	12/13/05
Grading	02/03/06
Rotation Changes	03/27/06
Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession	04/07/06
Student Pagers during the Clinical Year	05/09/06
Clarification on Required Clinical Rotation Work Hours	07/05/06
Change in PADP 6680 Intro. to Clerkship Contact Hours	08/22/06
BLS Clarification	08/29/06
Health Screening-Immunization	09/28/06
Video Consent and Release	10/04/06
Scrub Suit Policy	10/25/06
Revised Technology/Media Policy	10/26/06
Graduate School Retention Standards Revised	11/13/06
Anti-nepotism and Non-fraternization Policies	11/17/06
Emergency Procedures Manual	12/13/06
Professionalism in Physician Assistant Education	01/10/07
Add Lab to Pharmacology Increase Contact Hours	05/07/07
PE and Teaching Lab Use	05/24/07
Revised Attendance and Tardiness Policy	07/02/07
Annual Influenza Vaccination Recommendation	07/14/07
Guests in Classroom	09/25/07
Purchasing Required Texts	10/31/07
Clarification of <u>Basis for Academic Probation and Dismissal from Program</u>	01/09/08
Laboratory Dress	02/06/08
Bloodborne Pathogen Policy Clarification	02/11/08
Addition to <u>Student Responsibilities</u> concerning procedures or tasks	03/26/08
New Graduate School <u>Scholastic Standards</u>	07/31/08

Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan (revised)	08/04/08
Policy on Grand Round Attendance during clinical phase	09/04/08
Departmental laptop computer use by students	09/08/08