

**Mississippi College Physician  
Assistant Program**

**Student Handbook**

**2020 - 2021**



*(Revised July 28, 2021)*

**Program Address:** Physician Assistant Program  
Mississippi College  
Box 4053  
Baptist Healthplex, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Clinton, MS 39058

**Telephone Number:** 601-925-7371

**Fax Number:** 601-925-7374

**Core Faculty and Staff:**

Steve Martin, PA-C, EdD, AGC, MPAS, DFAAPA, Dept. Chairman and Program Director, Professor  
[sdmartin@mc.edu](mailto:sdmartin@mc.edu)

Daniel Watkins, PA-C, MS, Associate Program Director, Associate Professor  
[dwatkins@mc.edu](mailto:dwatkins@mc.edu)

Margaret Davis, MD, MBA, Medical Director, Associate Professor  
[mmdavis@mc.edu](mailto:mmdavis@mc.edu)

Kenneth R. Butler, Jr., PhD, FAHA, CT (ASCP), Director of Admissions, Associate Professor  
[krbutler@mc.edu](mailto:krbutler@mc.edu)

Rachelle Dye, PA-C, MPAS, Preclinical Director, Associate Professor  
[rdye@mc.edu](mailto:rdye@mc.edu)

Stephanie Keith, PA-C, MMS, Clinical Director, Assistant Professor  
[skeith@mc.edu](mailto:skeith@mc.edu)

Joanna Mason, PA-C, MMS, Associate Pre-Clinical Director, Assistant Professor  
[Jmason1@mc.edu](mailto:Jmason1@mc.edu)

Justin Goebel, PA-C, MSPAS, Associate Clinical Director, Assistant Professor  
[jgoebel@mc.edu](mailto:jgoebel@mc.edu)

Andrew Porter, DMSc, MSM, PA-C, Assistant Professor  
[dporter@mc.edu](mailto:dporter@mc.edu)

Georgia Dewey, MS, ATC, LAT, Enrollment Specialist  
[gdewey@mc.edu](mailto:gdewey@mc.edu)

Deirdre Folkes, Clinical Coordinator  
[dfolkes@mc.edu](mailto:dfolkes@mc.edu)

William Trammel, Audiovisual and Information Technology Specialist  
[wtrammel@mc.edu](mailto:wtrammel@mc.edu)

Suzette Purvis, Administrative Assistant  
[spurvis@mc.edu](mailto:spurvis@mc.edu)

## Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Nondiscrimination policy	5
General Information	6
Philosophy & Mission	6
Goals	7
Technical Standards	7
General Expectations of Graduates	9
Description of the PA Profession	9
NCCPA Code of Conduct for Certified & Certifying Pas	10
MC PA Program Curriculum	12
General Departmental Guidelines	
Program Policies	14
Drug Violations	14
Student Grievance Procedures	15
Admissions Policy and Requirements	15
Advanced Standing	15
Students with Disabilities	16
Reasonable Accommodation	16
Religious Observances	17
Communication	18
Cancellation of Classes for Emergencies or Inclement Weather	19
Class Attendance Policy	19
Absences	20
Reporting of Absences	20
Tardiness	20
Leaves of Absence	21
Classroom Instruction/Service Work by Students	21
Classroom Policy	21
Social Media Policy	22
Student Dress Code	23
Program Name Tags	25
PA Student Professional Behavior and Conduct	25
Standards of Professionalism	26
Academic Honesty	28
Student Progress	29
Mandatory Remediation	30
Optional Remediation	31
Academic Deceleration	32
Grading System	32
Academic Conduct Warnings	33
PA Professional Probation	33
Examinations	34
Testing Guidelines	34
Duration to Complete the Program	36
Recording Devices	37
Advisors	37

Visitation at PA Program Offices _____	37
PA Program Office Copy Machine _____	37
Public Safety _____	38
Immunizations & Health History _____	38
Health and Disability Insurance _____	38
Professional Liability Insurance _____	38
Name Changes _____	39
Financial Aid _____	39
Student Employment during the Program _____	39
Student Counseling _____	39
Medical Equipment _____	40
Other Equipment _____	40
Conclusion _____	41

The Physician Assistant Program offered at Mississippi College is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA). (12000 Findley Road, Suite 150, Johns Creek, GA, 30097; Phone: 770-476-1224. [www.arc-pa.org](http://www.arc-pa.org)).

See [www.mc.edu/academics/departments/pa/](http://www.mc.edu/academics/departments/pa/) for program duration, tuition, fees, and other costs, median debt, federal salary data, alumni success, and other important info.

# Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to orient you to current policies and procedures, guidelines, and resources relevant to your participation in the Mississippi College, Master of Science of Medicine. Please read this student handbook carefully as its contents will govern your enrollment in the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program. Additionally, this student handbook contains information about the Physician Assistant (PA) profession and its professional organizations. Periodically, additional policies and/or procedures may be established or changes made in the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program's policies and procedures. All changes or additions will be shared with you via email as they become effective. We hope this handbook will be useful to you. Please feel free to contact the Program Director or your faculty advisor if you have any questions. Other policies and procedures regarding enrollment in Mississippi College can be found in the Mississippi College Student Handbook or the program catalog.

The Mississippi College Physician Assistant (PA) Program strives to provide educational experiences where faculty, staff, clinical instructors, students, and other healthcare providers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, cooperation, and commitment. The program's focus is on the continuous operation of a quality PA educational program which will prepare graduates to participate in clinical leadership roles in an evolving healthcare system. The program encourages lifelong learning skills with proficiency in critical thinking, creative problem solving, and information literacy.

## NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Mississippi College does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, color, or national origin in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to admission or employment. Mississippi College is committed to the principle that no form of illegal discrimination or harassment will be tolerated.

Complaints of illegal discrimination, harassment, and abuses of social justice principles will be addressed in an objective and timely manner. Investigations will afford all parties with the right to present relevant information. The confidentiality of all parties involved shall be strictly respected insofar as it does not interfere with Mississippi College's obligation to investigate allegations of discrimination and to take corrective action. Faculty, staff, students, and applications are protected from retaliation for filing complaints or assisting in an investigation.

The Title IX/EEO Coordinator for Mississippi College is Dr. Debbie Norris, Vice President for Planning and Assessment, located in Nelson Hall, Room 202. A student may report an alleged violation of this policy to a faculty member or a staff member. A student may also report an alleged violation to the Student Counseling Center. The contact shall be reported within 24 hours to the Title IX/EEO Coordinator for consideration. It is also acceptable for complaints to be filed directly with the Title IX/EEO Coordinator. In the event that the complaint is against the Title IX/EEO Coordinator, the student

shall report the complaint to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program was established in 2010. The educational goal of the program is to provide a primary care focused training program for Physician Assistants. The educational objectives of the program are based on the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education as established by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for Physician Assistants, Inc. (ARC-PA). The program strives to prepare graduates to meet competencies expected of clinically practicing physician assistants (PAs) as defined in the document: "5 Competencies for the PA Profession." This document was developed through a collaborative effort between four key professional organizations in the PA field including: The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and the ARC-PA. The key competency areas are: medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice.

**A copy of the Physician Assistant Competencies can be found at the NCCPA Website:**

<https://prodcmsstoragesa.blob.core.windows.net/uploads/files/PACompetencies.pdf>

## **PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION**

The PA faculty shares the philosophy and mission of Mississippi College and supports its commitment to provide and promote higher education in Mississippi. The members of the PA Program faculty understand that to produce graduates of the highest quality, the curriculum, both preclinical and clinical, must reflect the belief that the program exists within a larger world that shapes, and is shaped by their efforts in teaching and service.

The primary mission of the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program is to help students acquire core competencies, as well as specialized knowledge and skills, necessary to perform effectively as physician assistants and to prepare physician assistants to provide primary healthcare services in medically underserved areas of Mississippi and other medically underserved communities.

The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program focuses on a primary care curriculum including: family medicine, geriatric medicine, pediatric and adolescent medicine, general internal medicine, women's health to include obstetrics and gynecology, behavioral medicine, general surgery, and emergency medicine. It is within these areas that the program directs its efforts, seeking to prepare PA graduates who can improve access to primary healthcare and coordinate the delivery of healthcare of the highest caliber. The curriculum emphasizes the role of the physician assistant as a patient advocate. The preclinical portion of the program uses systems theory to integrate health promotion, preventive medicine, and medical treatment modalities, as well as to introduce scholarly research, and inculcate an ethical standard of medical practice. The curriculum as a whole emphasizes interdisciplinary and team-based learning. Faculty members and clinical preceptors serve as mentors to students, modeling professional behaviors and attitudes and imparting the requisite medical knowledge and skills.

## GOALS

The physician assistant curriculum is closely related to the purpose and goals of the institution as well as to the degree. The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program offers a Master of Science of Medicine degree that promotes lifelong learning, critical thinking, and varied academic experiences to provide students with the expertise and work ethic required to achieve personal and professional fulfillment.

The goals of the program are to:

- Recruit a highly qualified, diverse student population similar in qualifications and diversity to the published national averages
- Recruit at least 50% of our students from the pool of applicants who are Mississippi residents
- Incorporate innovative approaches to interdisciplinary preclinical and clinical education and remediation which foster student success such that the attrition rate is comparable to the published national average among Physician Assistant Programs
- Prepare physician assistant students who possess depth of knowledge, clinical reasoning, skill, professional behaviors, and an investigative attitude toward research, education, and leadership in order to routinely receive satisfactory evaluations on the program's published competencies
- Continue to foster student success in order to achieve program graduation rates comparable to the published national averages among physician assistant training programs
- Prepare physician assistant graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve at least a 90% first time pass rate on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) and an average PANCE score at or above the national average
- Prepare graduates who will obtain post-graduation positions in disciplines consistent with the goals of the program; namely primary care

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS

In order to ensure that patients receive the best medical care possible, the faculty of Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program have identified certain skills and professional behaviors that are essential for successful progression of physician assistant students in the program. A candidate for the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program must have the following abilities and skills stipulated by the faculty, Accreditation Review Committee on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), and state of Mississippi for admission to and continuance in the program. Minimum performance standards include critical thinking, integrative and quantitative abilities, communication skills, observation skill, sensory, motor, coordination, and function skills, and behavioral and social attributes.

These standards have been developed as evaluative criteria for admission and continuance in the Physician Assistant Program, and are subject to continuing revision and improvement.

Critical Thinking: 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 ability to solve problems, a skill that is critical to the practice of medicine, is essential.

Integrative and Quantitative Abilities: Abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Candidates must be able to independently access and interpret medical histories or files; identify significant findings from history, physical examination, and laboratory data; provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnosis, prescribed medications, and therapy; and recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner. The ability to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and the medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans is essential. Good judgment in patient assessment, diagnosis, and therapeutic planning is essential. Students must be able to identify and communicate their knowledge to others when appropriate. In addition, the candidate must be able to perform assigned duties in the appropriate time frame.

Communication: Candidates should be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written English. Communications include the ability to speak intelligibly, hear sufficiently and observe patients accurately in order to formulate an appropriate assessment of mood and general appearance to assimilate the components of non-verbal communication. They must possess the ability to read at a level sufficient to accomplish curriculum requirements, comprehend technical materials, medical and/or laboratory reports, medical texts and journals in English to define complex problems and prepared solutions. They also must possess the capability of completing appropriate medical records, documents and plans according to protocol in a thorough and timely manner.

Observation Skills: Candidates must 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.

Sensory, Motor, Coordination, and Function: Candidates are required to possess abilities dependent to the practice of medicine and provision of healthcare including motor skills to perform palpation, percussion, auscultation, and observation. Such actions requiring coordination of gross and fine muscular movement, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision include but are not limited to airway management, visualization techniques of ophthalmic and otoscopic examinations, catheter placement, application of adequate pressure for bleeding control and auscultation of heart and lung sounds. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and other sensory modalities. Candidates will be required to demonstrate their proficiencies in these tasks.

Behavioral and Social Attributes: Candidates must possess the emotional health for full utilization of their intellectual capacity, to exercise good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities, attend to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. It is required of the candidate to possess emotional stability to withstand stress, uncertainties, and changing circumstances that characterize the dependent practice of medicine. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the preclinical year and during clinical training. The students must be able to use supervision appropriately and act independently, when indicated. Compassion, integrity, ethical standards, concern for others, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that will be assessed during the admission and educational process. They also must have the interpersonal skills to cooperate and interact at all levels with faculty, healthcare professionals, preceptors, students, staff, the public, employees, and patients.

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF GRADUATES**

The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program expects the following outcomes for each graduate of the Program. The program uses achievement of these outcomes as metrics for student competence



and Program effectiveness.

- Students will obtain the knowledge and skills to evaluate and manage patient complaints across the range of disease states in a diverse patient population
- Students will demonstrate the ability to provide patient care that is effective, patient-centered, efficient, and equitable for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of wellness.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to work effectively as part of an interdisciplinary healthcare team
- Students will be able to demonstrate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills that provide effective information exchange with patients, patients' families, and other members of the healthcare team
- Students will develop and demonstrate characteristics of professionalism essential to be an effective physician assistant
- Select and interpret diagnostic studies
- Select appropriate clinical interventions and pharmaceutical therapeutics
- Provide effective patient education and counseling on disease prevention and treatment
- Display essential characteristics of professionalism
- Obtain and utilize biomedical information

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSION\***

- I. The Physician Assistant is academically and clinically prepared to provide healthcare services with the direction and responsible supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. Within the physician/physician assistant relationship, Physician Assistants make clinical decisions and provide a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive and health maintenance services. The clinical role of Physician Assistants includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Physician Assistant practice is centered on patient care and may include educational, research and administrative activities.
- II. The role of the Physician Assistant demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, the ability to relate to people and the capacity to react to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. An attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient's welfare are essential attributes.
- III. The specific tasks performed by individual Physician Assistants cannot be delineated precisely because of the variations in practice requirements mandated by geographic, political, economic and social factors. At a minimum however, Physician Assistants are educated in those areas of basic medical science, clinical disciplines and discipline-specific problem solving. Physician Assistant practice is characterized by clinical knowledge and skills in areas traditionally defined by family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, surgery, and psychiatry/behavioral medicine. Physician Assistants practice in ambulatory, emergency, inpatient and long-term care settings. Physician Assistants deliver healthcare services to diverse patient populations of all ages with a range of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions. They need knowledge and skills that allow them to function effectively in a dynamic healthcare environment.

- IV. Services performed by Physician Assistants while practicing with physician supervision include, but are not limited to the following:
- A. Evaluation – Elicit a detailed and accurate history, perform an appropriate physical examination, order, perform and interpret appropriate diagnostic studies, delineate problems, develop management plans, and record and present data.
  - B. Monitoring – Implement patient management plans, record progress notes, and participate in the continuity of care.
  - C. Therapeutics – Perform therapeutic procedures and manage or assist in the management of medical and surgical conditions, which may include assisting surgeons in the conduct of operations and taking initiative in performing evaluation and therapeutic procedures in response to life-threatening situations.
  - D. Patient Education – Counsel Patients regarding issues of healthcare management to include compliance with prescribed therapeutic regimens, normal growth and development, family planning, and emotional problems of daily living.
  - E. Referral – Facilitate the referral of patients to other healthcare providers or agencies as appropriate.

*\* Adapted from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA).*

## **NCCPA CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CERTIFIED AND CERTIFYING PAs\***

### Preamble

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants endeavors to assure the public that certified Physician Assistants meet professional standards of knowledge and skills. Additionally, NCCPA attempts to ensure that the Physician Assistants it certifies are upholding appropriate standards of professionalism and ethics in practice. The NCCPA’s “Code of Conduct for Certified and Certifying Physician Assistants” outlines principles that all certified or certifying Physician Assistants are expected to uphold.

Breaches of these principles may be cause for disciplinary review. Disciplinary actions taken at the conclusion of that review may include formal censures, fines, revocation of certification or eligibility for certification and/or other actions as deemed appropriate by NCCPA. Some disciplinary actions are reported to the state licensing authorities and the National Practitioner Data Bank. This “Code of Conduct” represents some, though not necessarily all, of the behaviors that may trigger review under NCCPA’s Disciplinary Policy.

### Principles of Conduct

Certified or certifying Physician Assistants shall protect the integrity of the certification and recertification process.

- They shall not engage in cheating or other dishonest behavior that violates exam security

(including unauthorized reproducing, distributing, displaying, discussing, sharing or otherwise misusing test questions or any part of test questions) before, during, or after an NCCPA examination.

- They shall not obtain, attempt to obtain or assist others in obtaining or maintaining eligibility, certification, or recertification through deceptive means, including submitting to the NCCPA any document that contains a misstatement of fact or omits a fact.
- They shall not manufacture, modify, reproduce, distribute or use a fraudulent or otherwise unauthorized NCCPA certificate.
- They shall not represent themselves in any way as a Physician Assistant-Certified (PA-C) designee unless they hold current NCCPA certification.
- When possessing knowledge or evidence that raises substantial question of cheating on or misuse of questions from an NCCPA examination, fraudulent use of an NCCPA card, certificate or other document or misrepresentation of NCCPA certification status by a physician assistant or any other individual, they shall promptly inform the NCCPA.

Certified or certifying Physician Assistants shall comply with laws, regulations and standards governing professional practice in the jurisdictions and facilities in which they practice or are licensed to practice.

- Certified or certifying Physician Assistants shall respect appropriate professional boundaries in their interactions with patients.
- Certified or certifying Physician Assistants shall avoid behavior that would pose a threat or potential threat to the health, well-being or safety of patients apart from reasonable risks taken in the patient's interest during the delivery of healthcare.
- Certified or certifying Physician Assistants shall recognize and understand impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency, or mental illness.
- Certified or certifying Physician Assistants shall maintain and demonstrate the ability to engage in the practice of medicine within their chosen areas of practice safely and competently.

*\*Adapted from the National Commission for Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)*

## MC PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM CURRICULUM

### PHASE I: PRECLINICAL PHASE (approximately 15 months) (77 credit hours)

The preclinical phase spans five (5) semesters and incorporates basic medical sciences, applied behavioral sciences, clinical instruction and the professional role of the physician assistant. Selected patient contact experiences are also integrated throughout the preclinical curriculum.

<b><i>Semester I Summer (12 weeks)</i></b>			<b>Total 19cr</b>
BIO 6516	5cr	Human Anatomy	
BIO 6517	3cr	Human Physiology	
PAS 6010	1cr	Diagnostic Medicine I Lecture	
PAS 6011	1cr	Diagnostic Medicine I Lab	
PAS 6020	2cr	Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics I	
PAS 6030	3cr	Fundamentals of Medical Science I	
PAS 6040	2cr	Professional Development I	
PAS 6050	2cr	Behavioral and Community Medicine I	

<b><i>Semester II Fall (15 weeks)</i></b>			<b>Total 20cr</b>
PAS 6100	7cr	Clinical Medicine I	
PAS 6110	2cr	Diagnostic Medicine II Lecture	
PAS 6111	2cr	Diagnostic Medicine II Lab	
PAS 6120	2cr	Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics II	
PAS 6130	1cr	Fundamentals of Medical Science II	
PAS 6140	1cr	Professional Development II	
PAS 6151	3cr	Evidence Based Medicine I	
PAS 6160	2cr	Cross Cultural Medicine	

<b><i>Semester III Spring (15 weeks)</i></b>			<b>Total 18cr</b>
PAS 6200	7cr	Clinical Medicine II	
PAS 6210	2cr	Diagnostic Medicine III Lecture	
PAS 6211	2cr	Diagnostic Medicine III Lab	
PAS 6220	2cr	Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics III	
PAS 6230	1cr	Fundamentals of Medical Science III	
PAS 6240	1cr	Professional Development III	
PAS 6250	2cr	Behavioral and Community Medicine II	
PAS 6270	1cr	Essentials of Musculoskeletal Care	

<b><i>Semester IV Summer II (12 weeks)</i></b>			<b>Total 20cr</b>
PAS 6300	6cr	Clinical Medicine III	
PAS 6310	2cr	Diagnostic Medicine IV Lecture	
PAS 6311	2cr	Diagnostic Medicine IV Lab	
PAS 6320	2cr	Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapeutics IV	
PAS 6330	2cr	Fundamentals of Medical Science IV	
PAS 6340	2cr	Professional Development IV	
PAS 6350	1cr	Behavioral and Community Medicine III	
PAS 6370	3cr	Emergency Medicine I	

**PHASE II: CLINICAL PHASE (approximately 15 months) (66 credit hours)**

The clinical phase is composed of eight (6) six-week clinical practicums (PAS 6510-6580), end of practicum seminars, an end-of-clerkship seminar, and summative reviews for students who successfully complete the preclinical curriculum. Students will complete the following required clinical practicums (40 credit hours):

PAS 6510	Clinical Practicum I	5 credit hours
PAS 6520	Clinical Practicum II	5 credit hours
PAS 6530	Clinical Practicum III	5 credit hours
PAS 6540	Clinical Practicum IV	5 credit hours
PAS 6550	Clinical Practicum V	5 credit hours
PAS 6560	Clinical Practicum VI	5 credit hours
PAS 6570	Clinical Practicum VII	5 credit hours
PAS 6580	Clinical Practicum VIII	5 credit hours

Supervised clinical experiences will be assigned at each practicum such that students will complete assignments in family medicine, internal medicine, emergency medicine, pediatrics, women’s health, behavioral health, surgery, and an elective. Students will be assigned to specific sites to ensure patient experiences in the above disciplines. Housing cannot be guaranteed for any rotation or clerkship. Housing is the responsibility of the student. It is the responsibility of the director of clinical education to secure and schedule rotation or clerkship sites for students. Additional guidelines are discussed in the Clinical Phase Manual, as well as class discussions with students during the preclinical phase, and at “orientation-to-rotations” at the beginning of the clinical phase.

Additional courses during PHASE II: Clinical Phase includes:

PAS 6640	Advanced Professional Seminar I	2 credit hours
PAS 6650	Advanced Professional Seminar II	2 credit hours
PAS 6660	Advanced Professional Seminar III	4 credit hours
PAS 6670	Advanced Professional Seminar IV	2 credit hours
PAS 6152	Evidence Based Medicine II	2 credit hours
PAS 6700	Advanced Clerkship	14 credit hours

**Rotation times and/or dates are not to be negotiated by students.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Total Preclinical Phase credits:	77
Total Clinical Phase credits:	66
Total Master of Science in Physician Assistant credits:	143

Notice: The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program reserves the right to modify curriculum requirements as necessary to ensure the academic integrity of its Program. Students will be notified of any changes in curriculum or Program requirements prior to implementation in accordance with ARC-PA Standards.

## **GENERAL DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES**

### **PROGRAM POLICIES**

Upon matriculation, all students will be provided with a copy of the Mississippi College Student Handbook and Graduate Catalog. Students are expected to review and be familiar with all policies as detailed therein. Policies and guidelines stated in this student handbook may supersede similar Mississippi College policies. Any questions should be directed to the PA program faculty.

### **DRUG VIOLATIONS**

Physician Assistant students must adhere to policies as put forth from Federal, State and Local agencies in addition to policies of both Mississippi College and the MC Physician Assistant Program. Use, possession, distribution, sale, manufacture, or evidence of consumption of narcotics, controlled substances or illegal drugs on or off Mississippi College property, or at a Mississippi College-sponsored events or programs in accordance with any agency policy is grounds for immediate dismissal from the Program.

Examples of violations include, but are not limited to:

1. Misuse of over-the-counter drugs
2. Misuse or sharing of prescription drugs
3. Possessing, using, being under the influence of, distributing, or manufacturing any form of illegal drug
4. Possessing paraphernalia (i.e. rolling papers, pipes, bongs, grinders, etc.) for intended or implied use of any form of illegal drug
5. Possessing paraphernalia that contains or appears to contain illegal drug residue
6. Purchasing or passing illegal drugs from one person to another
7. Using mail services to purchase, pass, or distribute illegal drugs

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND SCREENINGS**

Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program is committed to protecting the safety, health, and welfare of its faculty, staff, students and the community of interest including patients and staff in clinical agencies. To this end, the Physician Assistant Program prohibits the illicit use, possession, sale, conveyance, distribution and manufacture of illegal drugs, intoxicants, and/or controlled substances in all instances. The program may require all students to submit to drug testing under any or all of the following circumstances:

1. Upon confirmation of successful completion of criteria for continuation into clinical level course work
2. Random testing
3. Testing as required by clinical agencies
4. For cause

Failure of a drug screen will be dealt with consistent with the policy of the Physician Assistant Program, and may include failure and/or dismissal from the program.

For more information about Mississippi College Drug & Alcohol Prevention Program & drug violation policies, please use the link below:

[https://www.mc.edu/students/policies/application/files/8215/1864/0226/MC\\_DAAPP\\_2017-2018\\_1.pdf](https://www.mc.edu/students/policies/application/files/8215/1864/0226/MC_DAAPP_2017-2018_1.pdf)

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Students who have complaints that they want to have addressed about any aspect of the collegiate experience should submit the complaints in writing to the course director/section leader or to the program director.

The student also has the right to submit concerns about any aspect of his/her experience in the Program to the Dean of Science and Mathematics, Dr. Stan Baldwin ([sbaldwin@mc.edu](mailto:sbaldwin@mc.edu)) or the Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Debbie Norris ([dnorris@mc.edu](mailto:dnorris@mc.edu)). The student may do so in writing or in person.

Any complaint or issue regarding Title IX (sexual harassment) may be addressed by contacting Dr. Debbie Norris, Title IX Officer, at [dnorris@mc.edu](mailto:dnorris@mc.edu).

No student filing complaints or concerns will be retaliated against. See Mississippi College Policies 1.09 (Retaliation Policy) and 1.18 (Whistleblower Policy).

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS**

Application to the Physician Assistant Program is a very competitive process. Satisfaction of the specified educational prerequisites does not guarantee an applicant an interview or admission to the Physician Assistant Program at Mississippi College. In evaluating applicants, the program will try to consider all relevant aspects of the applicant's record prior to matriculation into the program and suitability for graduate study at Mississippi College.

Matriculates to the PA program must hold at a minimum a bachelor's degree. Admission to the PA program may be provisional. A provisional admission incorporates incomplete requirements that are currently being satisfied and must be completed by a set time to be removed from provisional status to full status.

In compliance with federal law, including provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Mississippi College does not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, or military service in admissions, in the administration of its education policies, programs, and activities or in employment. Under federal law, the program may exercise religious preferences in employment in order to fulfill its mission and purpose.

## **ADVANCED STANDING**

**No student will be given advanced standing in either preclinical or clinical courses in the professional phase, regardless of academic or healthcare experiences.** Advance standing is defined as substituting a course previously taken at another learning institution or a course taken in another medical field for a PA Program course.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Mississippi College has a history of aiding students with disabilities. In addition to moral responsibility and the Program commitment to access, there is a legal imperative which is embodied in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

To comply with these mandates, Mississippi College ensures that comparable educational programs and services offered to other qualified students are available to qualified students with disabilities. A qualified student with disabilities is one who, with reasonable accommodation, can meet all educational program requirements notwithstanding the disability.

To accomplish this goal, both physical and programmatic access is provided. This means that reasonable accommodations are made in the instructional process to ensure appropriate educational opportunity. This principle applies to teaching strategies and modes, as well as to institutional and departmental policies. It does not mean, however, that essential elements of a course or program will be deleted or substantially altered because of the disability. The objective is to assist the student in meeting established academic standards, not to provide a program different in substance from that provided to other qualified students.

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Mississippi College accommodates students with disabilities in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Any student with a documented disability is eligible for assistance in meeting the needs for accommodations. To request accommodations, students should follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Initial contact. Students should contact the director of Student Counseling Services to make an initial request for accommodations relating to a disability. The director can be contacted at Alumni Hall, Room 4, and reached by phone at 601.925.7791. Forms to be completed in conjunction with a request for accommodation are located in the Student Counseling Services in Alumni Hall. It should be emphasized that students who desire accommodations for disability must assume responsibility for making the initial contact and for providing supporting documentation.
2. Written documentation of disability. It is the responsibility of the student to provide written documentation of the disability for which accommodation is requested. The following guidelines should be followed to assure that the diagnostic evaluation report is appropriate for verifying accommodation needs:
  - Testing must be comprehensive.
  - Testing must be current which, in most cases, means that the test results must be no more than three years old.
  - There must be clear and specific evidence and identification of a disability.
  - Professionals conducting the assessment must be qualified, as evidenced by appropriate licensure or certification.
  - Diagnostic reports must include the names and titles of the evaluators as well as testing dates, together with particular recommendations for educational



interventions.

3. Confidentiality. Material submitted to verify a disability and to determine whether accommodations are warranted is treated as confidential information; that is, such information is not stored with the student general files but is kept in the Student Counseling Center where access is strictly limited. This information will be released to one or more of the students' teachers only if the involved student gives permission. Consequently, a student must contact the director of the Student Counseling Center every semester to renew his or her request for accommodations; otherwise, the appropriate faculty members cannot be informed of the student's needs.
4. Recommendation on Appropriate Accommodations. The director of the Student Counseling Center thoroughly reviews each request for accommodation, together with the supporting documentation, before making his recommendation as to the accommodations, if any, that are warranted in particular cases. The director's decision making process will involve consultations with the student and may include a solicitation of advisory opinions from other Mississippi College personnel. At the conclusion of this process, an effort will be made to adopt accommodations that are mutually acceptable to the program and the student.
5. Changing Needs. The student is obliged to keep the program informed as to changes relating to his or her needs for accommodations. The process for establishing accommodations in the first instance (see above) should also be followed in requesting a change in accommodations.
6. Appeals Process. Students who are displeased with some aspect of the accommodations recommended by the director of the Student Counseling Center may have the recommendation reviewed by following the procedures set forth below.
  - An appeal must be filed in writing with the Committee on Disabilities within thirty days after a final recommendation has been communicated to the student by the director of the Student Counseling Center. This appeal should be addressed to the vice president for Academic Affairs, at P.O. Box 4002, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS 39058, who will in turn forward the appeal to the Committee on Disabilities.
  - The Committee on Disabilities will interview the student to obtain a complete account of the reasons for the appeal. The committee and student will seek to reach an agreement on a compromise which is satisfactory to the student.
  - If the student remains unsatisfied with the Committee's accommodations, a further appeal may be filed with the president of Mississippi College at Box 4001, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS 39058. Such an appeal must be in writing and filed within 30 days of the Committee's action. The president will make whatever investigation is warranted and thereafter render a prompt decision.

## **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program recognizes that excellence in medical education cannot be dependent solely upon any calendar, be it secular or religious. Faculty members recognize,

however, that some students may have special needs in the scheduling of quizzes, examinations, and clerkship duties because of religious beliefs and practices. To this end, individualized requests should be directed to the program director, director of preclinical education, or director(s) of clinical education. The faculty strives continually to provide the highest quality of education to students and remain ever responsive to patient care needs while respecting students' privileges and rights. In a further attempt to assist students with their special needs due to religious beliefs and practices, guidelines and related factors are as follows:

- Students who anticipate conflicts with regularly scheduled classes, quizzes, examinations, and have the opportunity to notify the director of preclinical education each year during their orientation
- To minimize conflicts during the preclinical phase, the faculty members try to avoid scheduling quizzes, examinations, and classes on Saturdays, Sundays, and religious holidays. When scheduling causes conflicts with the religious observances of students, the students should be given the opportunity to make up work at the earliest convenience of the responsible faculty member and the students
- During the clinical phase, when the schedule of patient care and clinical conferences conflicts with a student's religious observances, the student should arrange substitutions and make-up work in consultation with, and in agreement with, the director of clinical education or clinical coordinator and the immediate clinical supervisor (attending, resident, intern, etc.). Due to the "non-scheduled" nature of the clinical training, each student is expected to recognize his/her own personal responsibility for patient care and his/her own learning experience. Preparing students to assume the responsibility for patient care is the nature of clinical training and is critical to students' professional training
- The faculty continues to be sensitive to the religious observances of students. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the involved parties (i.e., course directors, attending physicians, house officers, and the program director) of any necessity to modify scheduled work because of religious observances. This notification should be made at least 15 calendar days in advance of the conflicting date(s) and made through designated channels as noted above. It is the joint responsibility of students, faculty, and house officers to schedule make-up or substitute work at the earliest possible date convenient to those involved.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Students are required to maintain an active MC email address. Email is the primary route of contact during both preclinical and clinical phases. The student must advise the office of any changes in their email address immediately. Students are required to check email daily and should make every effort to respond to faculty/staff inquiries in a timely fashion.

Student mailing addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers are required to be current and on file in the program office. Throughout the course of study at Mississippi College, a variety of events occur (some unexpected, others, matters of routine business) making it necessary for students to be reached. The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program is not responsible for information missed by students who have not maintained up-to-date, reliable contact information with the program office.

## **CANCELLATION OF CLASSES FOR EMERGENCIES OR INCLEMENT WEATHER**

It is program policy to remain in operation whenever possible. When weather conditions are so severe as to require reduced operations, students will be notified through announcements on radio stations and/or through the MC Alert system. The PA Program utilizes the MC alert system to disburse important announcements. MC Alert is Mississippi College's online resource for information regarding campus alerts and emergency notifications. In situations such as inclement weather, power outages, or other hazardous situations or campus emergencies, you will notice an "MC Alert" icon towards the top of each page on the site. This link will bring you to our MC Alert homepage with detailed information regarding the situation.

The PA office is open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. An automated voice mail system is operational after hours.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Mississippi College maintains an institutional attendance policy to support the academic achievement of its students. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class, laboratory, and examination periods each week. Students, whether present or absent from class, are responsible for knowing all that is announced, discussed, and/or lectured upon in class or laboratory, as well as for mastering all assigned reading. In addition, students are responsible for submitting (on time) all assignments and examinations as required in the class.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled activities that are part of the class, including those activities scheduled during class time and those scheduled outside of class time. The PA Program may have specific policies (which in some cases may be more stringent than the Mississippi College attendance requirements) as to the effect of attendance on class meetings, course assignments, off-campus activities, internships/externships, clinical and practicum activities, and other program requirements.

Due to the rigorous nature and limited time span to learn all material, regular attendance is essential for successful completion of the PA Program. It is the expectation of the Progress and Promotions Committee that all students will attend all scheduled classes, conferences, seminars, laboratory experiences and clinical practice. Any student (preclinical or clinical) who misses a required scheduled activity must notify their respective director (preclinical or clinical) of the absence. Please see reporting of absences below. The student assumes the responsibility for obtaining all materials and making up all work that is missed during an absence.

The Baptist Healthplex building hours are 5 am to 10 pm, Monday through Thursday, 5 am to 8 pm Friday, 7 am to 5 pm Saturday, and 1 pm to 6 pm on Sunday. The students are allowed to be in the front student PA lounge during the listed hours. The classroom and examination rooms are available from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday thru Friday. Lecture scheduling for both program faculty and non-program faculty may require evenings and Saturdays as needed.

## **ABSENCES**

Attendance may be taken in every lecture. **Any student signing in for another student may be dismissed from the program for unprofessional behavior due to dishonesty.** Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a course of action delineated by the course director/section leader.

The director of preclinical education or director of clinical education will notify the Progress and Promotion Committee of any student who is consistently absent from preclinical or clinical experiences. Continuous absences by a student may be referred to the Progress and Promotions Committee.

## **REPORTING OF ABSENCES**

Physician assistant students during the preclinical year, (PA-SI) must report absences in advance via email whenever possible to the director of preclinical education, PA office, and faculty member(s) responsible for the course(s) of that day. Failure to notify the program of the absence may be reviewed by the Progress and Promotions Committee. If circumstances do not permit immediate access to email, the student must call the PA office, and ultimately submit an email notification. Second year student (PA-SII) absences must be reported to the director of clinical education or the clinical coordinator. Students unable to meet as scheduled with individual clinical preceptors must notify the preceptor personally, as well as their clinical coordinator.

In order for an absence to be excused, it is the student's responsibility to:

1. Contact the PA Program office, the director (preclinical or clinical), and the course director/section leader(s) prior to the absence from a scheduled program class/activity. This may be done by telephone (601.925.7371) or by email.
2. Provide the PA Program office with an original copy or faxed copy of an excuse from a physician, attorney, etc. on the first day back to class. The excuse must include the date and time of the appointment and date when cleared to return to class.

If an absence is considered excused, based on the above instructions, the student in accordance with the course syllabus and the course director/section leader, may make-up any missed assignment, quiz or exam.

Students are allowed two (2) absences during each semester of the preclinical phase. Absences greater than two (2) may warrant a Progress and Promotions Committee meeting. The preclinical phase begins the first day of Semester I (Summer) and ends on the last day of Semester V (Summer B).

## **TARDINESS**

Tardiness is a professional behavior issue and will not be tolerated in either the preclinical or clinical phases of the program. Students are expected to be in class/clinic and ready to participate on time. Each preclinical class will be monitored by faculty to identify those students who arrive late. In the clinical phase of the program, preceptors are responsible for monitoring attendance and tardiness. Students not meeting expectations in these areas may be referred to the program director and Progress and Promotions Committee. Students who foresee being late for a scheduled program class/activity must notify the PA Program office. Any tardiness may result in an academic warning. A tardiness may result in a zero (0) score for any announced or unannounced assignment, quiz,

evaluation, or exam administered.

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

In exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence from the PA Program may be granted by the program director. Due to the cohort progression of the preclinical curriculum, leaves of absence during the preclinical phase may result in withdrawal from all PA courses. Students may be required to reregister and retake courses in their entirety when they are reinstated.

All requests for student-initiated leaves of absence must be made in writing to the program director, citing specific circumstances that warrant the leave. The program director may deny any request that does not cite due cause for the requested leave. Requests for reinstatement must be made in writing to the program director. The student must show that the problems leading to the leave of absence have been resolved such that success in the program will follow if the student is reinstated.

## **CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION/SERVICE WORK BY STUDENTS**

**At no time** will students replace faculty/course instructors. Students will not be required to work for the Program. Likewise, in the clinical phase, **at no time** may students replace or substitute for clinical site employees.

## **CLASSROOM POLICY**

As a graduate student in a professional medical program, you must demonstrate professionalism in every setting. This applies in the classroom, labs, clinics, hospitals and other locations, including your online presence.

Mississippi College Physician Assistant classroom:

1. It is expected that students will arrive 15 minutes prior to lecture, prepared to discuss relevant topics. Attendance policies are outlined elsewhere in the PA Student Handbook.
2. Texting, e-mail, and other electronic social networking activities are not permitted during class. Relevant internet searches are permitted as long as this privilege is not abused.
3. Every manner of respect should be given to the lecturer. Any student who is disrespectful to any lecturer may be brought before the Progress and Promotions Committee.
4. Only spill proof containers are permitted in the classroom
5. No food/snacks of any type are allowed in the classroom

UMMC Hospital classroom:

1. It is expected that students will arrive 15 minutes prior to lecture, prepared to discuss relevant topics. Attendance policies are outlined elsewhere in the PA Student Handbook.

2. Texting, e-mail, and other electronic social networking activities are not permitted during class. Relevant internet searches are permitted as long as this privilege is not abused.
3. Every manner of respect should be given to the lecturer. Any student who is disrespectful to any lecturer may be brought before the Progress and Promotions Committee.
4. Coffee, tea, soda is allowed in the UMMC classroom
5. No food/snacks of any type are allowed in the classroom
6. Do not leave any items in the hallway outside the classroom

#### Online Class Etiquette

1. Be alert & look interested; NO sleeping - if you're tired, temporarily turn off your video and return standing or after you wake yourself up
2. Dress should be acceptable and be aware of hygiene (brush your hair);
3. NO HATS, unless for religious purposes
4. Make sure your space is private, quiet and well-lit
5. **center your face** on the camera; display your name on your video feed (first and last)
6. no cell phone or other device use while attending lectures
7. remove distractions (TV, music, children, pets, roommates, family, etc.) while in lectures
8. no eating; drinks ok
9. keep your microphone muted while listening; "raise your hand" or unmute and wait for a pause to ask a question
10. Every manner of respect should be given to the lecturer. Any student who is disrespectful to any lecturer may be brought before the Progress and Promotions Committee.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Social media are internet-based tools designed to create a highly accessible information highway. They are powerful and far reaching means of communication that, as a physician assistant student at Mississippi College, can have a significant impact on your professional reputation and status. Examples include, but are not limited to, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Second Life, Flickr, You Tube.

Students are liable for anything they post to social media sites and the same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines are expected to be maintained as if you were interacting in person. The Mississippi College PA Program supports your right to interact knowledgeably and socially. Guidelines have been developed to outline appropriate standards of conduct for your future and the reputation of our program.

#### Guidelines

1. Social networking (or 'friending') MC PA Program faculty and staff, guest lecturers, clinical preceptors, or current/former patients is strictly prohibited.
2. Take responsibility and use good judgment. Incomplete, inaccurate, inappropriate, threatening, harassing posts or use of profanity on your postings is strictly prohibited.
3. Think before you post as your reputation will be permanently affected by the Internet and email archives.

4. HIPAA laws apply to all social networking so it is the utmost priority to protect patient privacy by not sharing information or photographs.
5. You must protect your own privacy as to not let outsiders see your personal information.
6. Social networking is permanently timed and tracked. Therefore, in order to respect work commitments, social networking during class, program activities, and clinical time is strictly prohibited.
7. If you state a connection to the Mississippi PA Program, you must identify yourself, your role in the program, and use a disclaimer stating that your views are that of your own and do not reflect the views of the Mississippi College PA Program.
8. All laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material must be followed.
9. Consult your faculty advisor or the program director if you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of social networking use.
10. You are strictly prohibited from communicating with a member of the media or outside source attempting to gather information regarding the MC PA Program through the social network. Refer all questions regarding program information, policies and procedures to the MC PA program director.
11. Failure to follow the above stated guidelines may be considered a breach of appropriate professional behavior and be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal from the program

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program students are required to place a high value on personal behavior and appearance, including attire. The reasons are rooted in concerns for infection control, professionalism, the facilitation of trust and good communication with patients and colleagues, and sensitivity to diverse cultural mores and attitudes. This section briefly describes standards for dress and appearance necessary to meet the service and safety objectives of placing patient comfort and welfare first, and the educational objectives of preparing the student to assume the role of a professional healthcare worker. Patient trust and confidence in the healthcare provider are essential to excellent care. The message communicated by the caregiver by his/her dress and appearance plays a fundamental role in establishing this trust and confidence. Students should consider the cultural sensitivities of their most socially conservative patients and families. PA students should present themselves in a manner that will demonstrate respect, inspire trust, and ensure patient comfort. Recent trends in clothing, body art, and body piercing, which may be personally attractive in some social situations, may not be accepted by some patients and should not be worn or displayed by PA students in professional settings. Each student's name tag must be worn during all preclinical and clinical education experiences. It is required that students wear name tags at all times when on campus. Professional dress is required at all PA classes and clinical activities. Students must realize from the outset that the public views them as representatives of the PA profession. Therefore, when contact with the public is anticipated, students must dress appropriately. The following standards of dress and appearance are to be observed while on campus, within clinical settings, and small group activities as outlined below. The professional image a Mississippi College PA Program student projects is very important to both the program and the PA profession. **Students should bear this in mind when selecting their attire.**

### **Preclinical**

- Any clothing which exposes, or presents the illusion of exposing, the cleavage, lower abdominal or buttocks areas is considered inappropriate. Tight pants or short skirts are considered inappropriate.
- Clothing must be clean and in good repair, allowing for freedom of movement without

- inappropriate exposure.
- Photo ID tags must be worn during all Physician Assistant Program functions and classes during both the preclinical and clinical phases.
- Clothing color, design, and cut must be conservative.
- Dress length must be appropriate for a dignified and professional appearance, allowing room for modest movement without indecent exposure.
- Casual business attire (for men, slacks/trousers and long sleeve button up shirts or neat polo shirts, for women, skirts/slacks and sweater/blouse).
- Jeans, cargo pants, and capri pants are prohibited except where otherwise stated.
- Leggings, jeggings, sweatpants, cut-offs and shorts are prohibited at all times.
- No t-shirts, tank tops, spaghetti straps, and exercise clothing.
- Shoes must be clean and polished. Athletic shoes are not appropriate unless approved with scrubs. Open-toed shoes, sandals with open toes, bare feet, and some styles of clogs are not appropriate. No flip-flops during the preclinical or clinical phase.
- Hair must be kept well-groomed, clean, and neat, of a natural human color and must be in a professional, conservative hairstyle.
- Jewelry, because of professional appearance in the classroom setting, must be kept to a minimum and must be of a conservative nature. Small earrings, no more than two in each ear, may be worn.
- No visible tattoos or body piercing, other than those mentioned above will be allowed.
- Students are allowed to wear Mississippi College PA Program scrubs on campus only on the day of their designated lab.
- In the interest of the comfort of your fellow students, good personal hygiene is to be maintained at all times. This includes regular bathing, use of deodorants/antiperspirants, and regular dental hygiene. Avoid distracting perfumes or colognes, odors due to smoking, and halitosis that may precipitate allergic responses or be sensitizing or disturbing.

#### **Anatomy Laboratory**

- White lab coats, black scrub tops, and black scrub pants, as well as closed-toed shoes and socks are required apparel in the laboratory. Lab coats and other apparel are to be laundered weekly.
- Opened-toed shoes, thongs, sandals, or flip-flops are unacceptable footwear in the laboratory. Socks must be worn with all footwear.
- No CAPS or HEAD APPAREL of any type will be worn in the laboratory.
- You must wear your special Anatomy ID in the laboratory. You may not enter the lab without this ID.

#### **Diagnostic Medicine Laboratory**

- Official MC PA blue scrubs as designated by the program must be worn during lab time. Female students should wear a sports bra under their scrubs. Some labs may require wearing sports shorts. These shorts must be grey in color, made of cotton, and of modest length and design. They must not have lettering or designs on them other than small manufacturer's logos (such as the Nike logo).
- Patient gowns are provided and can be worn during a physical examination in the examination rooms. Women must wear a sports bra underneath the gown.
- Casual shoes are permissible, but do not include opened-toed shoes, thongs, sandals, or flip-



flops.

- Official MC PA Program scrubs are allowed to be worn on Diagnostic Medicine Lab day, for all classes, the entire class must wear them on that day.

#### **Clinical Year Regardless of Location**

- A clean waist-length white MC PA jacket should be worn during all Physician Assistant Program functions and classes, as well as all clinical sites. The white jacket should have the MC PA Program patch sewn onto it as instructed by the program.
- Hair should be neat.
- No facial piercing or visibly offensive tattoos. Simple small earrings are acceptable for women outside of the surgical setting.
- A minimum of jewelry such as wedding rings or class rings is acceptable outside of the surgical setting.
- Clothing must be clean and in good repair, allowing for freedom of movement without inappropriate exposure.
- Dress shirts and ties for men, professional blouse or sweater for women, unless instructed or approved to wear scrubs by your attending.
- No jeans, cargo pants, capri pants or cut-offs.
- Shoes should be neat and clean, and always with closed toes. Do not wear sandals, flip flops/thongs. Clean sneakers/clogs when wearing scrubs are acceptable.
- Refrain from excessive use of fragrant hairspray, perfume and cologne.
- Fingernails should be of a modest length and should not interfere with your patient's care and minimize excessively bright, dark or creatively-colorful nail polish. No false nails of any type are acceptable.
- Any clothing which exposes, or presents the illusion of exposing, the cleavage, lower abdominal or buttocks areas is considered inappropriate for professional students. Tight pants, short skirts or dresses are considered inappropriate for professional students.

Any student who violates the dress code may be sent home and directed to return dressed appropriately. Any PA student who does not adhere to the dress code may be given an academic warning concerning their dress violation. Further violations of the dress code, may result in that student wearing a mandatory uniform as set forth by the program director.

#### **PROGRAM NAME TAGS**

Students are required to obtain a photo ID badge from the Office of Public Safety on the ground floor of Alumni Hall. These badges are to be worn at all times during both the preclinical and clinical phases. Students may be issued and required to wear other ID badges at times, from hospitals for example, but students must still wear the Mississippi College ID badge while on campus. In all clinical settings, students MUST be clearly identified to distinguish them from physicians, medical students, and other health profession students and graduates. The MC PA Program has issued you a specific name tag for this purpose which clearly identifies you as a "Physician Assistant Student".

#### **PA STUDENT PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT**

As students in our professional program, you will be looked at by other health professional students as the prototypes for those who follow. It is imposed upon each PA student to assure that his/her commitment to the profession reflects personal and professional integrity in every aspect of his/her participation in the activities of the program, community and PA profession. It is the responsibility of

each PA student to see that his/her study and participation in all aspects of the academic process and clinical training is so conducted that there can be no question concerning his/her integrity or professionalism.

Students will conduct themselves in a professionally ethical and responsible manner, which will reflect credit upon themselves and Mississippi College. In terms of professional responsibility, morality, honor, truth, and good citizenship; they will observe high standards of conduct so that the integrity of the program and physician assistant profession may be preserved. A student will avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all activities; and abide by program and Mississippi College policies of conduct, local, state, and federal law and the Code of Ethics for the Physician Assistant Profession.

All students are expected to pay attention and show respect to the lecturer. Talking between class members, studying for other classes and/or causing a disturbance (i.e. cell phones, instant message, texting, internet surfing, etc.) will not be tolerated. Anyone engaging in these behaviors will be asked to leave the room, which may result in an academic warning, an absence and the lowering of the student's final course grade.

All PA students who attend any function that represents Mississippi College must not consume alcoholic beverages. **This rule applies to ALL PA students during the preclinical as well as clinical phase of their training.** This is not limited to, but includes dinners and functions provided by various drug representatives during or after class hours. You are representing the PA Program, Mississippi College and the PA profession, please be on your best behavior! Remember, you must wear your ID, and preferably your MC PA white coat, to all functions. At certain functions, your program sanctioned white coat may be mandatory attire.

Students whose behavior is disruptive or inappropriate for a medical professional shall be brought to the attention of the program director. The program director may, at his/her discretion, sanction any PA student who has failed to adhere, to the requirements of professional behavior and conduct.

## **STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONALISM**

In the belief that physicians and PAs are called to the highest standards of honor and professional conduct and understanding that this responsibility begins at the inception of one's medical education rather than upon receipt of a degree, the students of the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program must uphold the following standards that serve as an embodiment of the conduct and integrity to which they aspire. These standards are intended to promote an atmosphere of honesty, trust, and cooperation among the students, the faculty, their patients, and society. Students in the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program are expected to demonstrate behavior that is considered appropriate for a career in medicine. Appropriate behavior includes, but is not in any way limited to honesty, trustworthiness, professional demeanor, respect for the rights of others, personal accountability, and concern for the welfare of patients – all of which are outlined below. Violations of these Standards of Professionalism may result in referral to the Progress and Promotions Committee.

### **Honesty**

Being truthful in communication with others.

**Trustworthiness**

Maintaining the confidentiality of patient information; admitting errors and not intentionally misleading others or promoting self at the patient's expense.

**Professional Demeanor**

Being thoughtful and professional when interacting with patients and their families; striving to maintain composure under pressures of fatigue, professional stress or personal problems; maintaining a neat and clean appearance and dress in attire that is reasonable and accepted as professional to the patient population served.

**Respect for the rights of others**

Dealing with professional, staff, and peer members of the health team in a considerate manner and with a spirit of cooperation; acting with an egalitarian spirit toward all persons encountered in a professional capacity regardless of age, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, gender, sexual preference, socioeconomic status, or veteran/Reserve/National Guard status; respecting the rights of patients and their families to be informed and share in patient care decisions; respecting patients' modesty and privacy.

**Personal accountability**

Participating responsibly in patient care to the best of your ability and with appropriate supervision; undertaking clinical duties and persevering until they are complete; notifying the responsible person if something interferes with your ability to perform clinical tasks effectively.

**Concern for the welfare of patients**

Treating patients and their families with respect and dignity both in their presence and in discussions with others; discerning accurately when supervision or advice is needed and seeking these out before acting; recognizing when your ability to function effectively is compromised and asking for relief or help; not using alcohol or drugs in a way that could compromise patient care or your own performance; not engaging in romantic, sexual, or other nonprofessional relationships with a patient, even upon the apparent request of a patient.

**Personal Aptitude for Medicine**

Awarding a degree from the Physician Assistant Program is predicated on the determination by the faculty that a student is suitable for the practice of medicine in terms of his/her personal characteristics and conduct as well as scholastic achievement. Students in the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program are participants in a professional training program whose graduates seek positions of high responsibility as providers of healthcare. Accordingly, students are evaluated not only on their academic and clinical skills but also on their interpersonal skills, reliability, appearance and professional conduct.

The faculty will refer students whose professionalism has been questioned to the Progress and Promotions Committee. Students in the program are expected to develop behaviors and habits expected of a professional physician assistant. The American Academy of Physician Assistants Guidelines for Ethical Conduct is a statement of the values and principles used to promote and maintain the high standards of behavior for physician assistants. Students must read, be familiar with, and follow these principles and values located on the American Academy of Physician Assistants website:

[www.aapa.org/workarea/downloadasset.aspx?id=815](http://www.aapa.org/workarea/downloadasset.aspx?id=815)

The primary purpose for the imposition of non-academic discipline in the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program is to protect and preserve the quality of the educational environment in the campus community. This purpose entails several basic expectations: that the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program and Mississippi College at large assume high standards of courtesy, integrity, and responsibility in all of its members; that each student is responsible for his/her conduct and that continuation as a student is conditional upon compliance with the requirements of student conduct expressed or implied in this code. The Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program reserves the right to take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of the campus community.

The program is not designed or equipped to rehabilitate students who do not abide by this Code. It may be necessary to remove those students from the program and to sever the institution's relationship with them as provided in this code.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

As professional students, PA students are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical behavior. In addition to the guidelines detailed in this manual, Mississippi College publishes policies relevant to student conduct.

Cheating, plagiarism, lying or deception of any matter and material are viewed as a form of academic dishonesty and will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and cheating as defined in Mississippi College Student Handbook and graduate catalog. Students who are found to be lying, cheating, and/or stealing may be dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program with no opportunity of readmission.

Academic dishonesty and cheating as defined by the PA Program may occur prior to, during, and/or following examination administration. Academic dishonesty and cheating may include, but are not limited to, participation in any of the following:

- Seeking and/or obtaining PA examination materials prior to the examination
- Plagiarism
- Copying answers from another examinee or classmate, or permitting one's answers to be copied
- Stealing examination materials for later use by self or others
- Using notes, books or other unauthorized materials during examination administration
- Failing to adhere to proctors' instructions and/or examination procedures
- Altering answers, scores, examination materials during review of graded examination
- Any other behavior that undermines the program's examination process or that tends to undermine the integrity of the program, the profession, and/or the examinations.
- Attempting to remove, copy, record or otherwise reproduce PA examination components or materials, or in any other way providing and/or receiving unauthorized information concerning the examination content. If a student discovers that he or she is in possession of questionable materials or notes this should immediately be brought to the attention of a PA Program faculty member.

## STUDENT PROGRESS

Admission to the Mississippi College PA Program and acceptable grades represent the minimum criteria necessary for successful completion. While grades are important, the decision to promote a student is based on the composite picture of the ability of the student to perform satisfactorily in the next preclinical or clinical phase of training. If a student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory academic, attitudinal, or behavioral performance, or if the faculty does not believe the student is prepared to assume patient care responsibilities, a student may be required to complete a specified remediation regimen.

It is essential for their professional development that students adopt and exhibit a self-directed responsibility for their mastery of knowledge and skills. Students are required to pass all requisite preclinical and clinical course work. Students must complete class work in its entirety.

The following criteria will be used as the basis for promoting preclinical PA students to the clinical phase and for recommending clinical PA students for graduation from the PA Program. Students who fail to meet all promotion criteria may be suspended or dismissed from the PA Program if they do not successfully complete the remediation regimen as set forth by the Progress and Promotions Committee.

1. Maintain an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 or higher. If the overall grade point average is below a 3.0, the student will be placed on academic probation.
2. A student should not be on academic probation for two consecutive semesters. If that situation arises, the Progress and Promotions Committee may consider Program dismissal.
3. All students must pass a comprehensive preclinical summative evaluation before entering the clinical phase of the program. This evaluation will consist of written, clinical performance, and professional components. If a student fails the written or clinical performance exams twice, he/she will be required to complete a specified remediation regimen for at least five (5) weeks and will start clinical rotations on a delayed cycle. A passing score on the written component must be no more than two standard deviations below the class mean.
4. An overall preclinical grade point average of at least 3.0 is required to progress to the clinical phase of the program. If a student does not meet the minimum GPA, he/she will be required to remediate for the duration of at least five (5) weeks (but could be increased in five (5) week increments) in areas of individual academic needs.
5. A PA Program GPA of 3.0 must be achieved in order to graduate from the program.
6. If a student does not maintain an average program GPA of 3.0, he/she must remediate to the satisfaction of the Progress and Promotions Committee before graduation will be granted.
7. Demonstrate acceptable levels of maturity, integrity and other attitudes and behaviors normally expected of health professionals before progressing to the clinical phase and before releasing a student for graduation
8. Students must be free from professional probation status in the Physician Assistant Program before progressing to the clinical phase and before graduating.
9. Students must be free of any impediments to licensure or performance as a PA.

Program Suspension (behavioral) is defined as a formal mandate by the program director that a student suspend all activities as a student with the Physician Assistant Program for a specified period of time. The program director may define requirements, time lines, or procedures expected of the student prior to being reinstated in the program. Requirements may include, without limitation, professional counseling, community/volunteer service, attendance in behavior modification courses, written reports, and/or other procedures deemed appropriate to the specific violation. Reinstatement occurs when the student meets all requirements to the satisfaction of the program director.

Program Dismissal is defined as a formal action of administrative withdrawal from all Physician Assistant Program courses and the Physician Assistant Program with no opportunity for readmission. Students who are dismissed from the program may receive an "F" in all courses in which the student was registered at the time of dismissal, but in which the student has not yet completed.

#### Academic Standing

- Students will be placed on academic probation if their overall GPA falls below 3.0. Probationary status in such instances must be removed by the end of the following semester by the return of the overall GPA to a level equal to or greater than 3.0. Two consecutive semesters with an overall GPA below 3.0 will be grounds for academic dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program.
- A student who receives a course grade below 70% (C) during the preclinical phase will be automatically put on academic probation and referred to the Progress & Promotions Committee for remediation recommendations.
- A student needing to remediate more than one course per semester during the preclinical phase of the program or more than two courses during the entire preclinical phase of the program constitutes grounds of dismissal from the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Program.
- An overall letter grade less than 70% (C) in any clinical practicum course rotation will require the repeat of the clinical practicum. 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 rotations may be repeated only once. The location of a repeated clinical experience will be subject to available sites and at the discretion of the Clinical Coordinator with input from the Progress & Promotions Committee. Two clinical rotation course grades below a 70% (C) will be grounds for academic dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program.

Students performing poorly in the preclinical phase of the program should contact the director of preclinical education and/or the course director/section leader as soon as possible to solicit their help and recommendations to remediate deficiencies.

### **MANDATORY REMEDIATION**

The program expects each student to obtain a basic mastery in each area of medical knowledge and

skills. However, the program also recognizes that each student may progress at different rates in obtaining this mastery. Remediation is included in all PA courses in the form of additional assignments and/or a remediation evaluation. Any exams in which a student scores below 70% will be subject to mandatory remediation. For courses of 3 credit hours or less, only ONE failed evaluation grade will be replaced with a 70% if the student successfully remediates the material as determined by the course director/section leader. For courses of 4 or more credit hours, TWO failed evaluation grades will be replaced with a 70% if the student successfully remediates the material as determined by the course director/section leader. The maximum score that can be credited to a student on a remediation evaluation will be no more than 70% (C) regardless of the actual score on the evaluation. Failure of a remediated evaluation will result in failure of the course (or course section for Clinical Medicine), regardless of the overall score in the course. The student may choose to participate in optional remediation as outlined below after a failure of a course (or section of Clinical Medicine) due to a failed remediation exam. Failed clinical practicums/clerkships must be repeated/remediated at the completion of the full clinical rotation schedule. No more than two failed clinical practicums or clerkships may be repeated/remediated during the student's progression through the program. Failure of a repeated/remediated clinical practicum or clerkship, or failure of more than 2 practicums during the program is grounds for immediate dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program.

## OPTIONAL REMEDIATION

Optional remediation is offered as a remedy to PA Program courses where our assessment has revealed high attrition rates. Please refer to individual syllabi for classes that may offer optional remediation. This remediation is offered where it is feasible to correct the student's insufficiency so the progression in the program will not be prolonged. Students may choose not to participate in optional remediation.

If the student fails a PA Program course that offers optional remediation, he/she may elect to participate by enrolling in PAS 6900 series – Selected Topics in Medicine. The cost of optional remediation is determined annually by Mississippi College per credit hour per student. The course will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Financial Aid may not cover the cost of this course.

1. If offered, the student *must request* optional remediation of a failed course using a form that is available in the PA Program office.
2. Participation in optional remediation does NOT guarantee passage of the failed course.
3. The student must successfully complete all prescribed material during the semester following the failed course and pass **all** exams/quizzes/case studies with at least an 80% before the remediation will be considered as a passing grade.
4. The instructor will determine the "retake" policy for exams/quizzes/case studies during PAS 6900 coursework.
5. The instructor(s) will determine the materials to be remediated and the means of measuring the student's success of remediation, i.e. exams, quizzes, case studies, and/or hands-on patient contact (with instructor's supervision).
6. Successful completion of PAS 6900 coursework will result in a passing grade of no more than 70% for the failed course regardless of the scores earned on individual exams/quizzes/case studies comprising PAS 6900 courses.

7. The student must be on time and only absences of documented emergencies or serious illness will be considered excused. **Any** unexcused tardiness or absence from optional remediation will result in a failing grade.
8. A student may request optional remediation for a total of no more than one course per semester during the preclinical phase of the program for a total of no more than two courses during the entire preclinical phase of the program. There is no optional remediation for clinical practicums or clerkships.

### **Academic Deceleration**

Every semester of the Physician Assistant Program is very challenging. Despite the fact that students enter the program with very good grades from undergraduate programs, many may have had insufficient rigor to prepare them for the challenges of Physician Assistant School. Other students struggle with personal issues which ultimately impact their academic performance during the program. In the event that a student fails a portion of the semester, academic deceleration may be recommended.

1. The purpose of academic deceleration is to allow students who previously matriculated into the program but experienced academic difficulty to be given an opportunity to retake courses. This is possible only if the Progress and Promotions Committee feels that it is appropriate and necessary for the student to successfully complete the program.
2. A Deceleration Agreement will be drafted and recommended by the Progress and Promotions Committee for approval by the Program Director before restarting the program with the next cohort. If, during the deceleration period, the student is not meeting the expectations prescribed in the deceleration agreement the committee may recommend termination or modification of the agreement.
3. In most cases the student will be required to re-start the program with the matriculating cohort, although it may not require that all coursework be repeated. This may require the student to retake courses he or she previously passed. Exceptions to this requirement will be considered by the committee on a case-by-case basis.
4. The Academic Deceleration Program is to be used for reasons of academic failure or, in the absence of failure, demonstration of significant knowledge deficit in the program.
5. The committee may, at any time during the deceleration process, recommend termination or modification of the deceleration agreement and/or dismissal from the program.

### **GRADING SYSTEM**

The following grading system will generally be used for all PA Program courses, unless explicitly described as different in the individual course syllabus. Course director/section leader may adjust/curve grades for individual exams.

A	90 – 100	Excellent work
B+	86 – 89	Good work
B	80 – 85	Average work
C+	76 – 79	Fair work
C	70 – 75	Minimum standards of PA Program
F	≤69	Failure



## **ACADEMIC CONDUCT WARNINGS**

Observed breaches of conduct may result in written academic warnings from the PA Program faculty. These warnings are intended to serve as reminders of infractions that, if repeated, may result in disciplinary action. The academic warnings become part of the student's file. The student may be required to appear before the Progress and Promotions Committee after the third offense. Serious offenses could result in immediate referral to the Progress and Promotions Committee.

## **PA PROFESSIONAL PROBATION**

PA professional probation is a designation that is incurred when a student's professional behavior through the program is not satisfactory. Professional probation occurs when there is demonstration of attitudes or behaviors unbecoming of a medical professional student.

**Unprofessional behavior/attitude may be defined as:** Cheating, lying, plagiarism, fabrication of clinical data, repeated unexcused absences, engaging in criminal activity, falsifying preceptor/faculty grade evaluations, collaborating on individual take home assignments, copying/reproducing examination questions, informing other students of examination questions, misrepresentation of role/identity in a preclinical or clinical setting, breach of patient confidentiality, using drugs or alcohol during assigned Program activities, sexual harassment of patients/peer/colleagues, engaging in discrimination on the basis of a legally protected status, performing any clinical activities without adequate training and supervision, breaking state or federal laws governing physician assistant practice, exploiting the professional role for personal gain, and rude and/or disruptive behavior or attitude.

\*This list is not meant to be wholly inclusive. Other behaviors deemed unprofessional by Program faculty will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The PA Program director may place a student on professional probation based on the recommendation of the Progress and Promotions Committee. Professional probation includes a formal written reprimand placed in the student's file stating the student's professional bearing (i.e. attitudinal, professional or behavioral performance) is below expected standards. The program may define any requirements, timelines, or procedures expected of the student prior to removing the student's probationary status. Requirements may include, without limitation, professional counseling, community/volunteer service, attendance of behavior modification courses, written reports, and/or other procedures deemed appropriate to the specific violation.

The PA Program director will remove any student from professional probation when the student has demonstrated adequate professional progress. Removal from probation occurs when the student meets the requirements established by the program director when instituting the professional probation; however, the written reprimand will remain in the student's file. Further violations while the student is on professional probation may result in immediate dismissal from the PA Program with no opportunity for readmission.

No student on professional probation in the preclinical phase may progress to the clinical phase. No student on professional probation in the clinical phase may be recommended for graduation.

## EXAMINATIONS

Attendance is mandatory for all examinations, both written and oral. Students are responsible for being present at the beginning of all examinations. Exams will begin **ON TIME**. Students who arrive after an examination has begun may be refused admission to the examining room. If a student is tardy for an exam, and allowed admission to the exam, the student must complete the exam in the set exam time. Permission for any deviation from the regular test schedule must be requested through both the director of preclinical education or director of clinical education and the course master/section leader. The program director will make final decisions on all requests.

## TESTING GUIDELINES

### PROTOCOL FOR IN-CLASS OR "FACE-TO-FACE" TESTING:

Academic dishonesty is in direct violation of both individual accountability and integrity and cannot be tolerated in those who seek to become physician assistants. In order to discourage cheating during exam taking, the PA faculty implements and enforces the following procedure:

The proctor may assign students to designated seats during examinations. There will be no materials on a student's desk during an examination other than the writing instrument, eraser, exam and answer sheet. An exam item query sheet is provided to each student for use, but must be signed and turned in at the completion of the exam. Any other items must be approved in advance by the course director/section leader. Student name, date and examination name/course must be recorded on the answer sheet and on exam booklet. Failure to do so may result in no grading of the answer sheet or test booklet. During the administration of all PA Program examinations, written or practical, the proctor will not answer any questions concerning an examination question. In the event a student identifies a typographical error or other error in the examination structure, the proctor will announce the correction to the entire class.

1. Talking during an examination is absolutely prohibited. Talking under any circumstances will be construed as cheating.
2. The testing environment must be quiet, free of interruptions and disturbances, and proctored with fairness of all students.
3. The proctor of the examination will not provide or display the answer key to any student during the scheduled exam time.
4. If a student needs assistance or needs to leave the test room for any reason, the student will so indicate by raising his/her hand and wait to be acknowledged. When the student is acknowledged to leave the exam room, he/she will take the examination and answer sheet to the proctor before leaving and pick it up when returning. No more than one student may leave the exam room at one time. If there is more than one proctor in the exam room, one proctor may accompany the student. No student who has not completed the examination will be allowed to leave the exam room when a student who has already completed the examination has left the test room.
5. Students will remain in their assigned seat during the examination.

6. Upon finishing the examination, the student will hand the examination, answer sheet and scratch paper to the proctor and leave the room immediately. The proctor cannot answer any questions at this time. Only one student is allowed with the proctor at one time.
7. Examinations must be returned in the same condition and in its entirety, i.e., no torn pages, no missing pages.
8. Students who have completed the examination are to leave the immediate vicinity of the testing room and refrain from talking within hearing distance of the testing room. Do not stand in the halls after an examination.
9. No student will be allowed to enter the test room to begin the examination after a student who has completed the examination has left the test room OR more than twenty (20) minutes after the examination has begun. Arriving more than twenty (20) minutes late for an exam will constitute a zero (0).
10. Students are expected to take course examinations at the designated time.
11. In the event of illness on the day of an examination, the student must contact the PA Program office **before** the exam, reporting that the student is unable to take the exam due to illness. A student who has missed an examination due to an excused absence must take the examination at the time limit and discretion of the course director/section leader. If the absence was unexcused, the student's grade for the exam will be a zero (0). See definition of excused/unexcused absences.
12. Students who have a serious and/or prolonged illness will be reviewed individually, and arrangements may be made accordingly at the discretion of the course director/section leader.
13. The duration of each exam will be determined by the course director/section leader. Standard program testing guidelines recommend one (1) minute per question for multiple choice examinations.
14. Any questions or discrepancies regarding the exam must be addressed in writing, citing the discrepancy. The written request should be placed on the exam item query form given at the beginning of each exam. Books listed on the syllabus and/or handouts given in class are the only reference materials to be used.
15. PA Program faculty and/or staff will proctor the administration of exams to assure integrity of the testing process.
16. Individuals may discuss their performance by appointment with course directors/section leaders. Course directors/section leaders may hold exam reviews as a class activity if time permits.
17. Unannounced quizzes may be given during class periods at the discretion of the course director/section leaders.
18. Any student who has been absent for two (2) exams in one course may result in automatic administrative withdrawal of that course and may receive an "F" in that course.

## TESTING VIA ONLINE PLATFORMS

**In the event that testing is completed in an online format, the following protocol will be used:**

1. A meeting link will be provided by your proctor. Please join the Google Meets/Zoom link at the time indicated so that your workspace can be approved by your proctor prior to receiving the password to start the exam. You should have your area prepared before testing time.
2. You may have ear-plugs, a whiteboard, eraser and one writing implement if you wish. You will have to show this whiteboard before (blank) and after (erased) you complete the exam. If you do not have a whiteboard, you may use a blank piece of paper and follow the same directions.
3. All exams must be taken while seated at a table and in a room where no other student or person is present.
4. Your workspace must be clear of books, bags, papers, bottles, and food. There is no drinking or eating during an exam.
6. We will be inspecting your workspace through Google Meets/Zoom. You must have your phone (or other camera enabled device) charged and streaming you live at all times during the exam. Head/torso and hands must be visible at all times.
7. We reserve the right to ask you to show us your space at any time during the exam.
8. If we feel the workspace is not appropriate, we reserve the right to not have you take the exam.
9. It is the exam-taker's responsibility to make sure their environment is distraction free and the Program cannot be held accountable for any distractions that occur in your home.
10. You may not wear any electronic/digital watches (e.g. Apple watch, Fitbit etc.).
11. Other than religious headwear, you are not allowed to wear any hats, caps etc.
12. During test-taking, please refrain from the habit of "mouthing" the words as you read or acting out the questions by moving your limbs and/or head, as it will be considered suspicious behavior.
13. Your Google Meets/Zoom device must be on mute during the exam. If you have a question type it into the private chat box or write it on the white board/paper. Your proctor may unmute you at any point during the exam.
14. Once you have completed the exam, you, upload to Examsoft and notify your proctor ("thumbs up sign" or private chat). Your proctor will verify that the test has been uploaded and make a final "sweep" of your area before instructing you to log out.
- 15. All exams will be recorded through Google Meets/Zoom**

## DURATION TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM

From initial entry into the PA Program, no student will be allowed more than thirty-six (36) months to complete phase I, the preclinical courses.

The entire length of the program (PHASE I: Preclinical and PHASE II: Clinical Phases) may not be greater than forty-eight (48) months.

## **RECORDING DEVICES**

Students are prohibited from using recording devices (audio/video) of any kind during course lectures, meetings, PA Program functions or events unless approved by the lecturer or through the director of preclinical medicine to accommodate a disability.

## **ADVISORS**

Each student will be assigned to a learning team. Each team will have a faculty advisor, who will supervise a student's progression through the program. Students will meet with their advisor regularly to review their progress.

## **VISITATION AT PA PROGRAM OFFICES**

In the PA Program office, there is a lot of activity in a confined amount of space. Consultation with PA faculty members outside of published office hours is by appointment only. Students must not congregate in the PA Office space. This will preserve the confidentiality of student records maintained there. However, please feel welcome to come to the office if you have an urgent problem or situation that needs our assistance.

## **PA PROGRAM OFFICE COPY MACHINE**

The copy machine in the PA Office is for faculty and staff use only.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

The role of the Office of Public Safety is to work toward ensuring the safety of all individuals while on campus and provide for the security of all properties of the college. In doing so, it is recognized that security at Mississippi College is everybody's business. Although no community can be totally risk-free in today's society, the office works toward securing partnerships with students, faculty, staff, administration and guests in creating an atmosphere that is safe and conducive to learning. The office is also responsible for the control, regulation and flow of traffic on Mississippi College property. The Office of Public Safety is located on the First Floor of Alumni Hall and can be reached at 601.925.3204 or [security@mc.edu](mailto:security@mc.edu).

Mississippi College goes to great lengths to ensure safety on campus for all individuals. Some of the measures we take include, but are not limited to:

- \* Emergency Code Blue phone units are strategically placed around the campus. In addition to calling 911 and MC's Office of Public Safety, these phones may be used to report emergencies.
- \* Buildings are secured on campus during non-operating hours by the Office of Public Safety. Once a building is secured, access may be gained only by authorized persons with Mississippi College issued identification cards.
- \* All campus buildings, facilities, and grounds belonging to the institution are regularly patrolled by both vehicle and foot patrol by security officers. Specific areas of campus are also monitored by cameras.
- \* Within all residence halls, outside entrance doors, other than front door lobby doors, are locked at dusk. All nonresidents entering the halls after that time must use the front door entrance. All lobbies which remain open are monitored by lobby workers from 3:00 p.m. to midnight seven days per week.
- \* All nonresidents must be acknowledged by the lobby worker. All entrances are closed at midnight with access gained only by Mississippi College issued identification cards.
- \* Upon request, security officers will provide escort services from vehicles to buildings or from buildings to buildings should individuals feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

\* With safety concerns in mind, the College maintains appropriately manicured trees and shrubbery around buildings and on campus grounds. Appropriate campus lighting is also a priority in an effort to reduce the opportunity for criminal activity.

\* Mississippi College provides informative Programs to students and employees on the following topics Campus Security Procedures and Practice, Crime Prevention and Awareness, Drug and Alcohol Abuse Education, Sexual Assault and the Prevention of Sex Offenses.

Security of the PA Program areas is very important. Only known individuals should be allowed access. Do not allow anyone unknown to you to follow you through the card-controlled door in the lobby. If someone states they are here to meet faculty or staff, ask them to please wait and notify a faculty or staff member to verify their access. Report any suspicious persons to faculty to staff immediately.

### **VACCINATIONS & HEALTH HISTORY**

Consistent with recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for Healthcare Personnel Vaccination, all students are required to complete vaccinations for vaccine preventable diseases **prior** to matriculation (requirements are distributed with the enrollment packet materials). All vaccination requirements must be completed **prior** to enrollment in the program, unless a special exception is granted. Failure to do so may result in the inability to matriculate into the Physician Assistant Program. These requirements may change throughout the student's time in the program due to changing recommendations from the CDC. If requirements do change, consideration will be given in registering for preclinical courses, but all must be completed before clinical practicums begin or the student will not be promoted to the clinical phase.

In addition, all students must obtain a repeat TB screening annually. All students must obtain annual influenza vaccination unless special circumstances prevent this. Students will not be allowed to progress until these requirements are met.

NOTE: Failure to comply with vaccination requirements and standards WILL result in disciplinary action by the program.

### **HEALTH AND DISABILITY INSURANCE**

All students must show proof of medical insurance **prior** to matriculation in the PA Program. This must include both health and hospitalization and must be maintained throughout the duration of the program. Students without medical insurance, or any lapse in coverage, may result in withdrawal from all PA courses, or delay/cancel clinical practicums. Additionally, all students are **strongly encouraged** to carry disability insurance to cover possible consequences in the event of a needle stick injury or other potential exposure to HIV infection or similar catastrophic event.

### **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Students are required to secure coverage by professional liability insurance while enrolled or participating in supervised clinical experiences. This is included in tuition and fees and will be attained by the PA Program.

## **NAME CHANGES**

Any PA student who changes their name while enrolled in the PA Program (i.e. marriage, divorce) is responsible for filing the appropriate forms with Mississippi College requesting a name change. The student must inform the program when the name has been changed.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

All inquiries about financial aid information should be directed to the Financial Aid Office. The program has no control over the financial aid process.

## **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT DURING THE PROGRAM**

**PA Program students may not be employed while enrolled in the program due to the rigors of the program. Petitions for exceptions to this guideline will require written approval by the program director.**

The program recognizes absences due to military duty as EXCUSED. Students who need to attend military obligations should notify the program director and course director/section leader at least one week before the scheduled class or scheduled activity or as soon as possible after the student receives notice that he/she will be called to active duty.

Under no circumstances will a PA student be accepted for employment as a 'work study' within the PA Program office or as an aid to any PA instructors.

## **STUDENT COUNSELING**

The Program may assist in arranging counseling with the Mississippi College Student Counseling Center. The center serves students as they explore educational options, establish career directions and cope with personal adjustments. Because each individual is viewed as a whole person with personal, academic, and career concerns that are interrelated, the center offers a variety of services.

- Personal and career counseling
- Study skills and tutorial assistance
- Services to students with disabilities
- Personnel and contact information
- Serious concerns about a friend, roommate, or family member
- Coping with a traumatic incident
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse
- Suicidal thoughts
- Lack of concentration
- Relationship conflicts
- Stress
- Isolation and loneliness
- Grief
- Lack of confidence and/or self-esteem
- Eating disorders
- Test anxiety

- Sexual assault
- Phobias
- Family problems
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Depression

All information and communication between a student and counselor are confidential. Exceptions are made if information is disclosed pertaining to the harm of oneself or someone else. This is mandated by law. No student record in the counseling center is used on any transcript. Through career counseling, students are assisted in the clarification of values and interests, the identification of abilities, the choice of an academic major, and the analysis of career options. Referrals to other agencies are made when needed.

Personal concerns of any type may be discussed privately with an experienced counselor.

### **MEDICAL EQUIPMENT**

All students are required to have their own medical equipment. A list of medical equipment required will be distributed with the enrollment packet and it is required to purchase the equipment package available during student orientation. These diagnostic equipment packages will be charged to the student's MC account.

### **OTHER EQUIPMENT**

Computer: You will be required to have a computer (not a tablet or other smart device) that meets the following specifications:

- Hardware
  - Modern, network-aware operating system
    - Up-to-date Windows operating system, Mac OS Mavericks or above
  - WiFi Wireless network capability
    - 802.11n is strongly recommended
  - Sound capable with a headphone jack
  - At least one USB port
  - 720p or greater webcam
  - Long-life battery\*
  - Printer\*\*
- Software
  - Malware protection
    - Current, fully-patched operating system
    - Anti-virus software installed and up to date
    - Anti-spyware software installed and up to date
  - Modern, standards-compliant Web browser
    - Google Chrome, Vivaldi, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Safari, or Opera are good choices.
  - Standards-based email client
    - Must be capable of accessing campus email.
    - Some students may wish to use the campus email exclusively.
  - Standard "runtime" environment for Java programs
  - Software to read/write Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint formats\*\*\*
  - Ability to read PDF files



\* Laptop batteries have a limited lifespan. It is very common for students to experience less than one-hour battery life. This is a sign that the battery is old and should be replaced. Given the length of the school day, we strongly encourage students to replace old, failing batteries; and invest in a second spare battery. The Lithium-ion (LiION) battery type is preferred.

\*\* Printers should be able to produce large numbers of copies at a low price.

\*\*\*Microsoft Office is available at no cost for the duration of enrollment.

## **CONCLUSION**

This program is very demanding, and stress will be felt by everyone, individually and in groups, in different ways, and at different times. This will include your support systems also. Each semester of the program has its own unique stresses and rewards. We expect you to develop functional ways of dealing with stress. Dysfunctional coping styles are a specific risk for all healthcare providers. The PA Program faculty can be a resource for you in dealing with stress, as well as advisors/counselors in Student Services. We encourage you to contact a faculty member to take advantage of counseling and advising services.

**PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM  
MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE**

**STATEMENT OF STUDENT ADVISEMENT**

RE: Student Handbook

*Class of 2022*

I certify that I have been provided access to the Student Handbook for the MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE Physician Assistant Program

I certify that I have read and understand all institutional and program policies and requirements. By signing my name below, I acknowledge my agreement to comply with all institutional and program policies and requirements as listed in the above policy and procedure manual.

Should I have any questions, I understand that it is my responsibility to ask program faculty/staff for clarification.

Furthermore, I understand that noncompliance with the stated policies and requirements may result in disciplinary action and may be grounds for my dismissal from the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Mississippi College Department of Physician Assistant Studies Speaker Copyright Release Form

It is the MC Physician Assistant Department's policy to disseminate and preserve presentations at events sponsored by the school and affiliated organizations. This form is intended to streamline the process by which the MC PA Department faculty, staff, and guest lecturers give their permission to be recorded for such events throughout an academic year. Faculty, staff, and guest lecturers who sign this release can still refuse their permission in writing on a case-by-case basis.

Events are usually recorded; some events may be broadcast live via the Internet ("webcast") or by other means. Recordings of events will normally be catalogued, made available for viewing through Blackboard and/or Moodle, and indexed in the department's public catalog. The recordings, or excerpts from them, including derivative works, may also be used for other purposes, including but not limited to the development of education or other video products. The recordings may be reproduced in copies or in derivative works, and may be distributed, performed or displayed as required or necessary for such purposes.

### Statement of Release

This speaking commitment and copyright release applies to the participation of

\_\_\_\_\_ as a contributor to all events at the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Department for the academic year beginning May 1, 2020 and ending April 30, 2021

Contributor's presentation may be a contribution to a collective work. As such the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Department has the right to reproduce and distribute your contribution as part of the collective work.

Contributor grants to the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Department a non-exclusive license to:

- a. Transfer or grant sub-licenses to others so that the presentation may be broadcast, edited, reproduced on audio tape, video tape, or other media.
- b. Reproduce or distribute such contributions or presentations for sale, archival or other purposes.

Subject to right granted to the Mississippi College Physician Assistant Department in this release, contributor retains all other rights to his or her work and presentation. Should contributor publish or give permission to publish this presentation at a later date, however, he or she shall indicate that the work was produced as part of that specific event in which it was presented.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mississippi College Department of Physician Assistant Studies Photo Release Form

It is the MC Physician Assistant Department's policy to disseminate and preserve photographs at events sponsored by the school and affiliated organizations. This form is intended to streamline the process by which the MC PA Department faculty, staff, and students give their permission to be photographed for such events throughout an academic year. Faculty, staff, and students who sign this release can still refuse their permission in writing on a case-by-case basis.

### Statement of Release

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that photographs taken at MC Physician Assistant Department events, classes, and location may be used for any and all publications, including website entries, without payment or any other consideration. I understand and agree that these materials will become the property of the MC Physician Assistant Department and will not be returned. I hereby irrevocably authorize the MC PA Department to edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish or distribute these photographs for purposes of publicizing the program or for any other lawful purpose. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written or electronic copy, wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of the photographs. I hereby hold harmless and release and forever discharge the MC PA Department from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have by reason of this authorization.

I have read this release before signing below and I fully understand the contents, meaning, and impact of this release. I understand that, unless a written request is filed on a case-by-case basis, this release will be in effect for the academic program beginning May 2020 and ending December 2022.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_