South University
Master of Science in Physician Assistant Degree Program

Student Handbook
South University, Richmond
Class of 2019
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Accreditation Status

South University, Richmond has applied for Accreditation-Provisional from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). South University, Richmond anticipates matriculating its first class in January 2017, pending achieving Accreditation-Provisional status at the September 2016 ARC-PA meeting.

Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

There is no guarantee that the Physician Assistant (MS) program will receive Accreditation-Provisional status. Should the program not gain accreditation, the class anticipated to matriculate in January 2017 will receive a full refund of any deposit, fee or tuition payment paid to South University, Richmond.
South University, Richmond  
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 South University, Richmond (the “University”) Master of Science in Physician Assistant program. Please read this handbook carefully as its contents will govern your enrollment in the South University, Richmond, Physician Assistant program. Additionally, this 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 South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program’s policies and procedures. All changes or additions will be shared with you via e-mail 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 South University can be found in the South University Student Handbook or the University Catalog.

Non-Discrimination Policy

South University does not discriminate or harass on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, age, religion, veteran’s status, genetic marker, or any other characteristic protected by state, local or federal law, in our programs and activities. South University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. South University will not retaliate against persons bringing forward allegations of harassment or discrimination. The Dean of Student Affairs located at 2151 Old Brick Road, Glen Allen, Virginia, 23060, (804) 727-6831, has been designated to handle inquiries and coordinate the institution’s compliance efforts regarding the Non-Discrimination policy.

General Information

The educational goal of the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program is to provide a primary care oriented 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 as defined in the document: 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: 
http://www.nccpa.net/Uploads/docs/PACOMPETENCIES.pdf

Vision Statement

The South University Master of Science in Physician Assistant (PA) degree program strives to provide educational experiences where faculty, staff, clinical instructors, students, and other health care 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 health care system. The program encourages lifelong learning skills with proficiency in critical thinking creative problem solving, and information literacy.

Mission Statement

The South University Physician Assistant (MS) degree program exists to educate a diverse student population as providers of high quality, cost-efficient health care who will make a positive difference while practicing the art and science of medicine with physician direction.
Technical Standards

In order to ensure that patients receive the best medical care possible, the faculty of the South University Physician Assistant program has identified certain skills and professional behaviors that are essential for successful progression of physician assistant students in the program. A student must possess skills and behaviors at a level of capability to perform a variety of duties required of a physician assistant as a health care professional.

Students with disabilities who can perform these skills and successfully execute professional behavior either unassisted, with dependable use of assistive devices, or by employing other reasonable accommodations are eligible to apply for enrollment in the program. Minimum performance standards include critical thinking, communication skills, observation skills, motor skills, and interpersonal abilities. Interested parties may contact the Physician Assistant program office for additional information about South University performance standards. These skills and behaviors include, but are not limited to:

**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, requires the intellectual abilities of measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis. Candidates for the program must be able to perform demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences.

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

**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.

**Motor Skills:** Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic techniques. A candidate should be able to execute movements reasonably required to move from area to area, maneuver in small places, calibrate and use large and small equipment, position and move patients, and provide patients with general care and emergency treatment.

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

**Disability Services**

South University provides accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. The Disability Services office assists qualified students with disabilities in acquiring reasonable and appropriate accommodations and in supporting equal access to services, programs and activities at South University.

Students who seek reasonable accommodations should notify the Dean of Student Affairs who serves as the Disabilities Services Coordinator for their specific limitations and, if known, their specific requested accommodations. Students will be asked to supply medical documentation of the need for accommodation. Classroom accommodations are not retroactive, but are effective only upon the student sharing approved accommodations with the instructor. Therefore, students are encouraged to request accommodations as early as feasible with the Disability Services Coordinator to allow for time to gather necessary documentation. If you have a concern or complaint in this regard, please contact the Dean of Student Affairs, Room 239 or at (804) 727-6831. Complaints will be handled in accordance with the school’s Internal Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment.
General Expectations of Students

Program Outcomes
The following are program outcomes for the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program:

A. The program will recruit and retain a dynamic faculty with the appropriate training and experience to support the program purpose with a persistent focus on teaching excellence.

B. The program will recruit a highly qualified diverse student cohort with education and experience that will foster success in the program.

C. The program will strive to adequately prepare students for successful completion of Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE) and for placement in the healthcare workforce as competent physician assistants.

Student Learning Outcomes
The following are the South University Physician Assistant program student learning outcomes. These outcomes reflect the Physician Assistant Competencies which were written collaboratively by the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), The National Commission on Certification of the Physician Assistant (NCCPA), and the Accreditation Review Commission on Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA.). The Competencies document can be found here: [http://www.nccpa.net/Uploads/docs/PACompetencies.pdf](http://www.nccpa.net/Uploads/docs/PACompetencies.pdf)

Physician Assistant Learning Outcomes
The South University 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. Graduates will:

A. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to evaluate and manage patient complaints across the range of disease states in a diverse patient population.

B. 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.

C. Demonstrate the ability to work effectively as part of an interdisciplinary healthcare team.

D. Demonstrate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills that provide effective information exchange with patients, patients’ families, and other members of the healthcare team.

E. Develop and demonstrate characteristics of professionalism essential to be an effective physician assistant.

F. Demonstrate the ability to determine the nature of information needed, to effectively and efficiently access information, to critically evaluate the quality and relevance of information, to incorporate the information into clinical or professional practice, and to determine potential ethical and legal dilemmas associated with the use of information.

To achieve these learning outcomes, by program completion students of the South University Physician Assistant program will demonstrate competency to:

A. Perform essential clinical communication
B. Perform complete and problem focused patient histories
C. Perform complete and problem focused physical examinations
D. Formulate logical differential diagnoses
E. Select and interpret diagnostic studies  
F. Select appropriate clinical interventions and pharmaceutical therapeutics  
G. Provide effective patient education and counseling on disease prevention and treatment  
H. Display essential characteristics of professionalism  
I. Obtain and utilize biomedical information

A detailed list of specific tasks related to each of these skills can be found in Appendix A of this handbook.

Program Curriculum

Notice: South University, Richmond and the Master of Science in Physician Assistant degree program reserve 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.

Didactic Phase (5 quarters/15 months):

**Winter (10 weeks) 1st Quarter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS5102</td>
<td>Medical Interviewing and Documentation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5110</td>
<td>Physical Assessment I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5125</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5135</td>
<td>Laboratory Diagnostics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5173</td>
<td>Professional Seminar I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5210</td>
<td>Physical Assessment Lab I</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5225</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology I Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Spring (10 weeks) 2nd Quarter**

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<tr>
<td>PAS5111</td>
<td>Physical Assessment II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5126</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology II</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5175</td>
<td>Issues in Contemporary Medicine</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5180</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics I</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5211</td>
<td>Physical Assessment II Lab</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5226</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology II Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5295</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience I</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5380</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine &amp; Pharmacotherapeutics I Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Summer (10 weeks) 3rd Quarter**

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<tr>
<td>PAS5167</td>
<td>Musculoskeletal Care</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5181</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics II</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5296</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience II</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5381</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics II Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5147</td>
<td>Clinical Procedures</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5124</td>
<td>Essentials of Behavioral Medicine</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Fall (10 weeks) 4th Quarter**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS5105</td>
<td>Epidemiology and Biostatistics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5138</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Surgery</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5182</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics III</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5297</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience III</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5382</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics III Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5130</td>
<td>Diagnostic Methods</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
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Winter (10 weeks) 5th Quarter

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS5132</td>
<td>Essentials of Clinical Geriatrics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5174</td>
<td>Professional Seminar II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5183</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics IV</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5190</td>
<td>Essentials of Emergency Medicine</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5298</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience IV</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5383</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics IV Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6152</td>
<td>Medical Literature in Clinical Practice</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

Total 22 credits

Total Didactic Phase Credits 100 credits

Clinical Phase (4 quarters/12 months)

<table>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS6200</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation I</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6205</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation II</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6320</td>
<td>Special Topics in Clinical Practice I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6210</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation III</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6215</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation IV</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6330</td>
<td>Special Topics in Clinical Practice II</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6220</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation V</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6225</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation VI</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6340</td>
<td>Special Topics in Clinical Practice III</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6230</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation VII</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6235</td>
<td>Clinical Rotation VIII</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS6350</td>
<td>Physician Assistant Senior Seminar</td>
<td>4</td>
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Total Clinical Phase Credits 74 credits

Rotations must be completed in the following disciplines:

Primary Care
Internal Medicine
Pediatrics
Emergency Medicine
General Surgery
Women’s Health
Behavioral Medicine
Clinical Elective

Total Didactic Phase Credits 100
Total Clinical Phase Credits 74
Total Program Credits 174

The courses below are offered on an as needed basis:

PAS5199 Independent Study I 8 credits
PAS5299 Independent Study II 8 credits
Physician Assistant Program:

Student Rights and Responsibilities

South University is committed to the development of knowledge and ethics that are consistent with responsible professional and social behavior. During orientation to the program, each student receives a copy of the Physician Assistant program Student Handbook, the South University Student Handbook, and the South University Academic Catalog. These documents govern student activity while enrolled in the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program. Students are expected to meet academic requirements and develop a sense of responsibility and an understanding of and respect for the rights of others. The atmosphere of the University reflects these goals; and in turn, each student must be aware of his/her individual responsibility to act accordingly. By enrolling as a student at South University, Richmond, you have agreed to abide by the rules and regulations of South University. The rules concerning student behavior are outlined in the Code of Conduct section of South University’s student handbook. Specific conduct expectations of the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant student can be found in the “Standards of Conduct” section of this handbook. Alleged violations of the program’s Standards of Conduct or Standards of Professionalism will be referred to the program’s Progress Committee. Alleged violations of the University’s Code of Conduct will be referred to the University’s Dean of Student Affairs.

Financial Information

Tuition and Fees: Tuition and fees are subject to change at the end of any term. The tuition cost for a full-time course load does not include expenses for such required items such as textbooks, medical equipment and supplies, laboratory fees, clinical tracking software fees, and professional liability insurance. PA students are not eligible for part-time enrollment. In-state and out-of-state tuition are the same. For more information on tuition please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Acceptance Fee: There is a non-refundable $500 acceptance fee, subject to change, for those applicants accepted into the South University Physician Assistant program, which is applied to the tuition for the first quarter upon enrollment. If an applicant accepted into the program encounters circumstances that prevent his/her matriculation, any amount paid by the applicant that is above the non-refundable acceptance deposit will be refunded.

Application Fee: South University does not charge application fees for any of its programs. However, some programs ((Pharmacy (PharmD), Physician Assistant (MS), and Anesthesia Science (MMSc)) utilize external application processing services and students may be charged a fee for using these services. Students should contact the Senior Director of Admissions at 888-422-5076 to determine if this applies to their program.

PA Lab Fee: There is a $75 lab fee charge for each quarter of didactic course work (total of $375).

eCLAS Clinical Tracking Software: Students will be charged a $75 annual fee for use of the eCLAS clinical tracking software system. This fee is charged in the winter quarter of each year of the program. The eCLAS system is mandatory for all students to track clinical encounters and procedures during clinical experiences.

Professional Society Membership Fees: Students enrolling in the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program will incur a one-time fee for membership to the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The fee of $75 is subject to change. The fee covers membership for the entire duration of PA training. Membership includes a monthly subscription to the Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (JAAPA), periodic newsletters, and discounted admission to AAPA’s annual national continuing education meeting. Students are also required to join the Virginia Academy of Physician Assistants (VAPA).

Graduation Fee: Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Transcript Fee: Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Payment of Tuition and Fees: Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Refund Policy: Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.
Financial Aid: Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Official Withdrawal Procedure

To withdraw officially from the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program and the institution, students must contact the program office and the Office of the Registrar to provide notification of their intention to withdraw. For further information on withdrawal from the University, please see the South University Academic Catalog.

Academic Regulations and Policies

Academic regulations, including grievance procedures, are further outlined in the South University Catalog and the South University Student Handbook and are intended to give the description of South University and of its regulations as is needed by students. Students enrolled at South University, Richmond are expected to uphold, at all times, standards of integrity and behavior that will reflect credit upon themselves and South University. Registration at South University, Richmond implies the student’s acceptance of the published academic regulations and all other rules found in any official publication or announcements. Conduct regulations, are described in the South University Catalog and the South University Student Handbook.

Student Grievance Procedure

Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Veterans Benefits

Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Student Records

Educational transcripts for each student enrolled in the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program will be maintained by the South University, Richmond registrar permanently following the student’s graduation, withdrawal, or termination from the program. The program maintains a file on each student which includes documents pertinent to students’ admission and progress through the program. Student files are maintained in locked file cabinets in locked offices or storage vaults in the program office suite. Graduate files are maintained in the program’s secure file vault for 3 years following graduation then are sent to a secure off-site storage facility. Students are granted access to their own personal academic file only as requested by the student in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Please see the South University Academic Catalog for more information on FERPA.

At no time is any student allowed access to any other student’s academic records or other confidential information. Students do not have access to academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty and are not permitted in areas that house this material without permission and the accompaniment and supervision of a faculty or staff member.

Student Health

All students entering the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program must meet the following requirements: (1) provide proof of personal health insurance throughout the entire program; (2) provide proof of a satisfactory physical examination; (3) provide proof of negative Tuberculin skin testing (positive results may require further evaluation); (4) provide proof of immunization as recommended by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Immunization of Health-Care Personnel Recommendations.
Students are not permitted to seek personal health care advice or care from any full time or part time faculty member, program staff member, the program director, the medical director, the associate medical director, guest lecturers, or guests of the program. Students in violation of this rule will be referred to the Program’s Progress Committee.

At no time is a full time or part time faculty member, program staff member, the program director, the associate medical director, or the medical director allowed or expected to participate in the provision of health care to a student enrolled in the South University Physician Assistant program. Violation of this policy may be ground for disciplinary action including termination.

In an emergency situation, faculty and/or staff may assist any student who may be in imminent danger in accordance with their scope of practice and current standards of care.

**Immunizations**

The South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program Immunization Policy is aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Immunization of Health-Care Personnel: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

After acceptance into the program, but before registration can be successfully completed, all students must complete the South University Immunization Verification and Statement of Health Form. Additional immunizations may be required by some clinical training sites and are the students’ responsibility. If students choose not to be vaccinated, they will not be allowed to rotate at clinical sites that require immunizations unless expressly permitted in writing to the program by the physician preceptor at that site. If any of the core (required) rotations cannot be completed because the student voluntarily chose not to be vaccinated as required by the clinical rotation site, the student will not be eligible for graduation from the Physician Assistant program. In addition, if the number of clinical sites available to students who have not been vaccinated does not meet graduation requirements, those students will not be eligible for graduation from the Physician Assistant program.

**Health Insurance**

All PA students are required to carry adequate health insurance throughout their enrollment in the program. Evidence of health insurance coverage must be provided at the time of matriculation. Confirmation of coverage will be carried out prior to the inception of the clinical phase of the program. Lack of health insurance will suspend student participation in program activities until proof of insurance is provided.

**Student Identification**

South University, Richmond PA students will be clearly identified to distinguish them from physicians, residents, and other health professional students. In clinical settings, PA students will wear short white laboratory coats with an embroidered name or name tag attached. This will clearly state the student’s name with an underlying title of Physician Assistant student. The South University patch must be affixed to the left sleeve of the lab coat. If a situation arises when the lab coat is not worn, the name tag must be worn. Name tags are to be worn on the left side of the chest. Additionally, many of the hospitals and clinics in which program students are affiliated require them to wear distinguishing name tags or security badges while working at those facilities. Students must wear the appropriate South University identification, as well as the institution’s required badge.

Students are required to wear name tags at all times while on the South University campus.

**Communication**

*Students are required to maintain active e-mail and telephone accounts at all times.* Throughout the course of study at South University, Richmond, a variety of events occur (some unexpected, others, matters of routine business) making it necessary for students to be reached. Phone numbers, mailing addresses, and e-mail addresses are required to be current and on file in the program office. It is the students responsibility to keep these updated with the program as appropriate. *Students are required to check e-mail daily.* The South University, Richmond 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.
In addition, students will be requested to register for South University’s Alert Find system in order to be contacted in the event of a campus emergency.

Physician Assistant Program Policies and Procedures

In addition to the general academic regulations and policies as stated in the South University Catalog, the following policies and procedures pertain to all required courses taken by students enrolled in the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program.

Attendance:

University Attendance Policy

South University 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. An individual on-campus or online program may have specific policies (which in some cases may be more stringent than the general 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.

Students who receive Veteran Affairs (VA) educational benefits must understand VA benefits, including tuition and fees, the monthly housing allowance, book stipend, and Yellow Ribbon benefits are based in whole or in part on the number of credit hours certified. The school is required to monitor and report enrollment status to the VA. Adjustments in enrollment will likely affect payment of VA benefits. The school will report enrollment as follows:

- VA Students who officially withdraw, the actual last date of attendance (LDA) must be determined and reported.
- VA students who are administratively withdrawn or stops attending without officially withdrawing, the actual last date of attendance (LDA) must be determined and reported.
- VA students who complete the term with all non-punitive “F” and/or non-punitive grades, the school will determine and report the actual last date of attendance for each course.

Attendance Requirements

Students who fail to attend an on-campus class session will be given an absence for that session. Following the drop/add period, students taking on-campus classes must not miss the class meetings for 14 consecutive calendar days of the scheduled class time of the on-campus class (including on-campus classes that contain an online component). If a student misses the class meetings for 14 consecutive calendar days, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course. Following the drop/add period, if a student misses the class meetings for 21 consecutive calendar days in an 11-week on-campus course that meets once per week the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course. The last date of attendance will be the last day where the student met the attendance requirements.

Students taking online classes must post in their online course at least two days each week. For 5.5 week online classes that end on a Wednesday, students must post one day from Monday to Wednesday (the final three days of the session) to meet the weekly attendance. For 5.5 week online classes that end on a Saturday, students must post one day from Thursday to Saturday (the final three days of the session) to meet the weekly attendance. Students who fail to meet the attendance requirements for a week will be given an absence for that week (7 days). Students who fail to meet the attendance requirements for 14 consecutive calendar days (two weeks) during a course will be administratively withdrawn from the course.
Receiving a grade of F in a course and failing to meet positive attendance in the last week of that course, may impact a student's financial aid.

Students who are absent due to a medical condition (including pregnancy or any related conditions, including recovery from childbirth) will be excused for as long as a health care provider states it is medically necessary for the student to be absent. Students absent due to such medical conditions may be allowed to make up missed work. In addition to contacting their faculty, students in campus-based programs should contact the Registrar's office, and students in online programs should contact their Academic Counselor. Students seeking exceptions for medically-related reasons will be required to provide a doctor's note indicating that the absences were medically necessary. Failure to provide evidence of a medical necessity for any absence could result in the student being administratively withdrawn from school, and the student will not be allowed to make up any missed assignments. The Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations for campus based students or the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Operations for students in online programs, in consultation with the faculty member, will determine the amount of time a student will have to make up missed assignments. Upon their return to school, students will be allowed up to 12 weeks to complete missed assignments. Campus-based students whose conditions prevent them from completing all work within the 12 week timeline should contact the Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations. Online students should contact their Academic Counselor.

**Blended Course Attendance Policy (Includes Accelerated Graduate Programs)**

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classroom meetings and participate in online activities during each week of the quarter.

Students must attend the first classroom meeting of the course. Failure to attend the first classroom meeting time will result in the student being administratively withdrawn from the course. Students taking blended courses that meet face to face one (1) to two (2) times may not miss any classroom meetings. Students taking blended courses that met three (3) to five (5) times during the session may only miss one classroom meeting. Missing more than the minimum number of classroom meetings or the first classroom meeting will result in the student being administratively withdrawn from the course. Students taking blended courses that meet face to face six (6) or more times during the session may miss up to two (2) classroom meetings. Missing more than two classroom meetings or the first classroom meeting will result in the student being administratively withdrawn from the course.

In addition to the classroom meetings, students are expected to post at least once in the online classroom each week. Students who fail to meet the online attendance requirements for a week will be given an absence for that week (7 days). Students who fail to meet the online attendance requirements for 14 consecutive calendar days (two weeks) during a course will be administratively withdrawn from the course. The last date of attendance will be the last day where the student met the attendance requirements.

Students failing to meet either the classroom or the online attendance policy will be administratively withdrawn from a course.

Receiving a grade of F in a course and failing to meet positive attendance in the last week of that course, may impact a student's financial aid.

**Attendance Appeals for Administrative Withdrawals**

Students who are administratively withdrawn from a course due to attendance may appeal the decision. Students must complete the Attendance Appeal Request form and submit the form to the Registrar's office for campus-based students or to their Academic Counselor for students in online programs within 4 calendar days of being administratively withdrawn from a course.

In order to be considered for an appeal the student must have one of the mitigating circumstances listed in the South University Satisfactory Academic Progression policy. Students may be required to submit supporting documentation with their appeal.
For campus-based students, the Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations will consider the appeal. For students in online programs, the SAP Appeals Committee will consider the appeal. The decision of the Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations and the SAP Appeals Committee is considered final.

NOTE: A student's life issues and the student's transition to college are not considered mitigating circumstances under this policy.

Attendance Week

For on-campus classes beginning on a Saturday, the attendance week is defined as beginning on Saturday at 12:00 A.M. in the campus’ time zone to 11:59 P.M. in the campus’ time zone the following Friday. For on-campus classes beginning on Thursday, the attendance week is defined as beginning on Thursday at 12:00 A.M. in the campus’ time zone to 11:59 P.M. in the campus’ time zone the following Wednesday. The last week of the class begins on Thursday at 12:00 A.M. in the campus’ time zone and ends on the following Saturday at 11:59 P.M. in the campus’ time zone.

The attendance week for the Accelerated Graduate Programs, on-campus is defined as beginning on Wednesday at 12:00 A.M. to the following Tuesday at 11:59 P.M.

For online classes beginning on a Monday, the attendance week is defined as beginning on Monday at 12:00 A.M. Mountain Time (MT) to 11:59 P.M. MT the following Sunday. The last week of a 5.5-week class begins on Monday at 12:00 A.M. MT and ends on the following Wednesday at 11:59 P.M. MT. For online classes beginning on Thursday, (this includes all 5 and 10 week courses) the attendance week is defined as beginning on Thursday at 12:00 A.M. MT to 11:59 P.M. MT the following Wednesday. The last week of a 5.5-week class begins on Thursday at 12:00 A.M. MT and ends on the following Saturday at 11:59 P.M. MT. There are no half weeks in either the 5 or 10 week courses.

Additional South University, Richmond Physician Assistant Program Policies on Attendance

Attendance at Classes and Clinical Experiences: Due to the rigorous nature and limited time span to learn all material, regular attendance is essential for successful completion of the program. It is the expectation of the Progress Committee that all students will attend all scheduled classes, conferences, seminars, laboratory experiences and clinical practice. Any student (didactic or clinical) who misses a required scheduled activity must notify their respective Director (Pre-Clinical 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. Please note: attendance policies for courses in the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program are more stringent than the standard University Attendance Policy. All students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the attendance policy for each of their courses which is located in the course specific syllabi.

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 will be refused admission to the examining room. Permission for any deviation from the regular test schedule must be requested through both the Director of Pre-Clinical Education or Director of Clinical Education and the Evaluation Specialist. The Program Director will make final decisions on all requests.

Absences: Attendance will be taken in every lecture. Each instructor(s) will specify the attendance policy in the course syllabus. It is the responsibility of each student to familiarize themselves with these policies and to act accordingly. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a course of action delineated in the corresponding course syllabus. The Director of Pre-Clinical Education or Director of Clinical Education will notify the Progress Committee of any student who is consistently absent from didactic or clinical experiences. Continuous absences by a student may be referred to the Progress Committee.

Reporting of Absences: First-year students must report absences in advance via email whenever possible to the Director of Pre-Clinical Education. If circumstances do not permit immediate access to email, the student must call the Director of Pre- Clinical Education, and ultimately submit an email notification.

Second year student 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. When absence due to illness extends beyond 48 hours, a signed physician’s report will be required. This is done primarily for the student’s protection against any accusation of neglect or indifference, as well as to ensure that a proper health care provider has been sought by students in the case of illness.

**Tardiness:** Tardiness is a professional issue and will not be tolerated in either the didactic or clinical phases of the program. Students are expected to be in class/clinic and ready to participate on time.

Each didactic class will be monitored by faculty to identify those students who arrive late. The first offense will result in a verbal warning, second offense will result in a meeting with the Director of Pre-Clinical Education, and finally third offense will result in notification of the Program Director and referral of the issue to the Progress Committee.

In the clinical phase of the program, preceptors are responsible for monitoring attendance and tardiness. Students not meeting expectations in these areas will be referred to the Program Director and Progress Committee.

**Religious Observances:** The South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program recognizes that excellence in medical education cannot be dependent solely upon any calendar, since patient illness respects no calendar, be it secular or religious. Faculty members recognize, however that some students may have special needs in the scheduling of tests, final examinations, and clerkship duties because of religious beliefs and practices. To this end, individualized requests should be directed to the Program Director, Director of Pre-Clinical Education, or Director 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, tests, examinations, and/or the delivery of patient care have the opportunity to notify the Director of Pre-Clinical Education each year during their orientation.

- To minimize conflicts during the pre-clinical phase, the faculty members try to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, and regular 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, 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.

- If a student is unable to resolve a schedule conflict concerning religious holidays with the appropriate course director or immediate supervisor, the following route of appeal is available: the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant Program Director, the Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations, and finally the Dean of the College of Health Professions.

**Evaluation of Students**

It is essential for 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 didactic and clinical course work with a minimum grade of “C” for courses utilizing the letter grading system or “Pass” for courses utilizing the Pass/Fail system. Students must complete class work in its entirety. No PA course credits from another institution may transfer into the didactic or clinical year.
During the program, any performance below “C” in any course utilizing the letter grade system or a grade of “Fail” in any course utilizing the Pass/Fail system is interpreted as significant deficiency in the subject.

Students performing poorly in the didactic phase of the program should contact the Director of Pre-Clinical Education and/or the course instructor as soon as possible to solicit their help and recommendations to remediate deficiencies. Students performing poorly in the clinical phase of the program should contact the Director of Clinical Education and/or the course preceptor as soon as possible to solicit their help and recommendations to remediate deficiencies.

Faculty members are expected to provide reasonable assistance and direction to aid in this remediation process. The methods and extent to which faculty chooses to assist students with review and remediation of deficient material is at the discretion of the individual faculty member.

**General Information:** To satisfactorily complete a course, the student must earn a grade of “C” or better in courses using the letter grading system and, a Pass in courses utilizing the Pass/Fail system. However, it is critical that students understand that they must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher. The course grade may be based on multiple examinations, assignments, and a comprehensive final exam. Each exam may consist of multiple choice, matching, essay and clinical competency skills testing. The Program Director's approval is required before a student can make up any missed test or exam. Exams will be rescheduled only in the event of personal illness or family emergency. Demonstration of clinical competency skills testing will be proctored by program faculty and/or their designee, and must be completed as assigned by the course instructor or a designated faculty member. Material up to the preceding lecture before the scheduled exam may be included on the exam. Any exceptions to examination content will be announced well in advance of the scheduled exam. Basic concepts covered earlier in the quarter may be asked on later exams.

**Didactic Phase Evaluation:** The Progress Committee is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the evaluation of the progress of each student in the didactic phase of the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program. Each student is assigned a Small Group Leader for academic and professional counseling.

Evaluation of student performance in didactic course work is conducted through traditional methods such as: 1) testing the students’ knowledge of the objectives through written quizzes and examinations, 2) using laboratory and clinical practical examinations, and 3) using problem-based instruction and evaluation during objective structured clinical exams. Examinations are primarily objective multiple choice, some subjective essay, clinical skills practice and regular objective structured clinical exams (OSCEs). However, other formats may be used at the discretion of an individual course instructor. Multiple methods of evaluation may be given in each course. A comprehensive examination is administered at the end of each course.

An overall minimum grade of “C” in courses utilizing the letter grading system or a “Pass” in courses utilizing the Pass/Fail grading system is required for satisfactory completion of each course. If a student receives a course grade below a “C” or a “Fail” he/she will be dismissed from the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program.

Feedback is a vital part of the evaluation process in the didactic phase. Immediate and appropriate feedback provides students with an accurate and acute assessment of their progress within the course, and offers a concrete direction for studies.

During the didactic phase, the program will schedule brief (approximately 15 minutes) weekly review sessions where students can review formative assessments (including but not limited to tests, quizzes, and practical exams). Students may also schedule time with their small group leader to review these assessments.

Review sessions are intended to allow students the opportunity to determine the concepts in which their performance was below expectations. Any student receiving a score below 70% or a score less than 2 standard deviations below the class mean on an assessment in a course utilizing the letter grading system or a “Fail” on an assessment in a course utilizing the Pass/Fail system is required to participate in the next available review session. During the review, the student must complete a test remediation form (refer to Appendix E).

**Clinical Phase Evaluation:** The Progress Committee is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the evaluation of the progress of each student in the clinical phase of the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program. Students receive clinical experiences in both primary care and specialized (medical, behavioral, and surgical) rotations to better prepare them for the wide range of patient problems which they may encounter after graduation. Students in the clinical phase of the program are evaluated in a variety of ways by their clinical preceptors and program faculty during their clinical rotations. Feedback is provided to the students daily by the preceptors while
students are actively participating in the care of patients. During the clinical phase, evaluation is intended to address both performance and knowledge.

Clinical students must satisfactorily complete all clinical rotations as assigned. Grades in clinical course work reflect a student's cognitive, technical, attitudinal and behavioral performance and are based upon preparation, skill, attitude, and attendance, as well as patient management. Successful completion of a clinical rotation requires attainment of objectives, compliance with rotation and program assignments within the rotation period, and attendance at all scheduled activities of the clinical service.

The South University, Richmond Physician Assistant Program’s Director of Clinical Education will review the evaluations from the clinical preceptors/instructors and have final authority in assigning grades for all the clinical rotations and courses. Patient safety, proper professional conduct and the progressive demonstration of competency and independence of thought at all clinical sites is expected. The Director of Clinical Education in consultation with the Program Director may recommend that a student either stay longer at a clinical site or repeat specific components of a clinical rotation and course as deemed necessary to ensure patient safety and the student's expected level of professional development and mastery of clinical skills. This will be reviewed by the Progress Committee and a recommendation will be made to the Program Director by the Progress Committee.

An overall minimum grade of “C” is required for satisfactory completion of each clinical rotation course. The grade for each of the eight clinical rotations will be based on the evaluation from the supervising preceptor and end-of-rotation exam, and clinical logging requirements in the eCLAS clinical tracking system.

If a student does not earn a course grade of a “C” on any clinical rotation, he/she will be required to repeat that rotation. Failure to earn a grade of “C” on the repeat rotation or any subsequent rotation will result in dismissal from the program.

Any other circumstance that causes a student not to successfully complete a rotation will require the student to meet with the Progress Committee.

All evaluations not turned in and grades not calculated by the end of the rotation are reported as “I” (Incomplete) to the Registrar’s office. Late grades will be turned in to the Registrar’s office with a change of grade form once the necessary evaluation(s) have been received. All evaluations must be returned to the Clinical Coordinators’ office prior to graduation.

**Comprehensive Exams:** Completion of the didactic phase of the curriculum requires completion of a formative evaluation. The formative evaluation, consisting of both written, skills performance, and professionalism components, is administered at the end of the didactic training period. This evaluation is used to identify individual and collective weaknesses within the cohort that should be remediated and strengthened during the clinical phase of the program.

Successful completion of the program requires satisfactory completion of a comprehensive summative evaluation. The comprehensive summative evaluation consisting of written, skills performance, and professionalism evaluation components is administered up to four (4) months before the completion of the clinical training period.

The test is designed to evaluate students' mastery of multiple student learning outcomes in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains. This evaluation is used to identify competence for entry into the Physician Assistant profession and thus eligibility for graduation.

There are three (3) distinct components of the graduate candidate’s summative evaluation. Each must be successfully completed in order to earn a passing grade for the senior seminar. Minimum passing scores on the components of the summative examination are as follows:

1. **Written Exam** – Score must be greater than or equal to 2 standard deviations below the cohort mean for the exam
2. **Clinical Performance** – Scores must be greater than or equal to 80% in each area assessed on the clinical performance examination (history taking, physical examination, clinical decision making, professionalism and communication skills)
3. **Final Professionalism Evaluation** – Deemed “Competent” in each area of professionalism on the program’s summary professionalism evaluation
Evaluation of Summative Examination

Students who do not receive a satisfactory grade on any part of the comprehensive summative examination will be referred to the Progress Committee. Students will be required to remediate areas of deficiency and repeat the portion(s) of the summative evaluation in which they were not successful. In the event that significant areas of deficiency are noted, the student may be required to enroll in a self-directed independent learning seminar to remediate the deficiency/deficiencies. The Program Director will set guidelines for the remediation period if necessary. The student will not be eligible for program completion or graduation activities until they receive a satisfactory performance on each component of the summative evaluation. If the student fails the component a second time, they will again be referred to the Progress Committee for further review.

**Grading Scale:** Grades will not be changed with the exception of mathematical errors.

A: 90 – 100    B: 80 – 89    C: 70 – 79    D: 60 – 69    F: Below 60

Some courses are graded as Pass/Fail. In order to obtain a grade of pass, the student must obtain a numerical average of 70%.

**Appeal of Course Grades:**
Please refer to the South University Catalog section on Grade Reporting and Challenges.

Students at Academic Risk and 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. The program has developed the small group structure for numerous purposes. One of the primary purposes of the small group leader is to monitor student progress in developing basic mastery of medical knowledge and skills.

In the event that a student scores below a 70% on any individual examination or graded Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), that student will be required to remediate the material by completing a test remediation form. (See Appendices E and F) The purpose of test remediation is for students to review the learning objectives, to identify items missed and knowledge or skills weaknesses, and to indicate and explain correct responses for items missed. Successful completion of individual test remediation will be based on review of the test remediation form by a student's small group leader.

In the event that a student is perceived to be at academic or professional performance risk, the student may be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). Examples of situations that may prompt a student to be placed on a performance improvement plan include but are not limited to: patterns of poor academic performance, poor progress on clinical skills development, or failure to meet professional behavior standards. The PIP will be written on an official Performance Improvement Plan form (See Appendix G). The PIP is developed collaboratively by a student's small group leader with appropriate input from the Program Director, the Director of Preclinical Education or the Director or Clinical Education as needed. The plan must have definitive steps to achieve improvement and must include a timeline for completion. Students required to participate in tutoring as part of a PIP may be referred to the University’s Academic Success Center or other tutor as appropriate. Students who do not meet the requirements of a Performance Improvement Plan will be referred to the program’s Progress Committee for further review. Students are still responsible for maintain satisfactory academic standards while on a Performance Improvement Plan.

The program has a process for development of a formal remediation process should a student be found to be globally deficient in knowledge, skills, or professionalism. The development of a formal remediation plan may occur at the request of the Progress Committee. The formal remediation plan is designed to remediate students who are deemed to have global deficit, are currently in good standing in the program and who appear to have the capacity to remediate the deficit and obtain basic mastery in the deficit area. The Program Director is responsible for collaborating to develop a formal remediation plan. When deemed appropriate or necessary the Program Director may seek the assistance of a course director, content expert, the Director of Preclinical Education, the Director of Clinical Education, or a student’s Small Group leader in order to develop an appropriate formal remediation plan. The formal remediation plan must be documented on the Remediation Plan Form (See Appendix H). Failure of a student to successfully complete a formal remediation plan will result in a referral to the program’s Progress Committee.
Student Progress:

Satisfactory Academic Progress

For specific information on how to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, please refer to the Academic Catalog.

Student Progress Committee

The South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program has established the Student Progress Committee to review each student’s academic, clinical, and professional performance and personal suitability for a career in medicine. The charge of the Student Progress Committee is to make appropriate recommendations pertaining to progression through the program. The faculty has established the following guidelines and rules as the basis for promotion and graduation.

Students who do not meet the minimum performance requirements for the program will be referred to the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program Student Progress Committee for review. Any student receiving a deficient or failing final course grade (below C) or falling below the minimum GPA requirement will be automatically notified by the Program Director. The Student Progress Committee will then evaluate the student’s performance.

Although this is not a comprehensive list, the following situations may cause a student to be referred to the Progress Committee:

1. Student’s cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 (refer to Satisfactory Academic Progress).
2. A student receives a course grade below a “C”. Any course grade below a “C” in any course in the didactic phase will result in dismissal from the program.
   
   A course grade below a “C” in the clinical phase will require a student to repeat that clinical rotation. Failure to earn a grade of “C” on the repeat rotation or any subsequent rotation will result in dismissal from the program.
3. Students who do not complete a clinical rotation or are asked to leave a clinical rotation due to poor performance.
4. Students who do not receive a satisfactory grade in any part of the comprehensive summative examination or who are deemed not to be prepared to progress on to the clinical phase upon completion of the comprehensive formative evaluation.
5. Failure to abide by all South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program policies and procedures, breaches in the South University or South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program Standards of Conduct and/or Standards of Professionalism, or South University Graduate Program Honor Code violations.

Progress Committee Structure

The Committee is chaired by the Program Director who serves as a non-voting member of the committee. A quorum (defined as a simple majority of voting principal faculty members and the program’s Clinical team consisting of the Clinical Coordinator and Director of Clinical Education) must be present to commence the Progress Committee meeting.

Committee Procedure

The Committee meets at least quarterly to review each Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), professionalism evaluations, and other information that may be available to aid in evaluation of each student. For procedures on students not meeting SAP standards, see above.
At the quarterly meeting the Committee makes one of the following recommendations to the Program Director for each student’s clinical and professional progress in the program:

1. Advance in good standing
2. Advance on professional/clinical probation
3. Expulsion

If a student is being considered for placement in a status other than advance in good standing, he/she will be asked to speak formally to the Student Progress Committee before a final decision is rendered by the committee.

Any student not recommended to advance in good standing will be notified within 72 hours by the Program Director. The Program Director will notify the Dean of the College of Health Professions and the Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations on all recommendations of the Student Progress Committee other than advance in good standing and provide details and justification for the recommendation.

In cases where professional probation is recommended by the Progress Committee, the Program Director may require the student to meet with the Director of Preclinical Education or Director of Clinical Education to define an exact remediation strategy. Any remediation strategy will be approved by the Program Director. The Student Progress Committee will continue to assess the student’s progress under the plan provided to the Student Progress Committee.

In addition to quarterly meetings, the Student Progress Committee may be convened on an ad hoc basis at any time to address specific student issues.

**Appeals of the Student Progress Committee Decisions**

In cases where students do not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress, appeals will be handled according to the SAP policy.

Students may appeal decisions of the Student Progress Committee on issues regarding clinical performance or professionalism. Any student wishing to appeal a decision of the Student Progress Committee other than those based on the SAP policy must do so in writing to the Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations. Written appeals must be made within seven (7) days of being notified of the decision of the Student Progress Committee. Appeals submitted after this time will not be considered. Written appeals will only be considered for claims of the following:

1. Failure of the program or University to follow due process
2. New evidence pertinent to the student’s case
3. Punishment not appropriate for the situation

The Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations will review the student’s appeal and will determine whether the circumstances and academic status warrant reconsideration of the decision of the Progress Committee. The student may be asked to appear in person during the review process when deemed necessary by the Dean. The Dean of Academic Affairs will send formal notification to the student and appropriate academic offices of his decision.

The final level of appeal is to the Dean of the College of Health Professions. The Dean will use the reports from the Student Progress Committee and the Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations and will consult with the Program Director and Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations to reach a conclusion regarding the student’s disposition. The Dean of the College of Health Professions will send formal notification to the student and appropriate academic offices.

A student who has been expelled whose appeal is granted may be reinstated and, if otherwise eligible, receive financial aid; however, the student will be placed on professional probation at the start of the academic term. The granting of appeals for decisions other than expulsion may stipulate certain conditions as deemed necessary by the party granting the appeal for a student to continue in the program.
Student Employment

Employment during a student’s course of training is strongly discouraged. The following rules apply to PA students who wish to seek part-time employment during their training.

- Working students must comply with the program’s academic schedule and are prohibited from working more than 15 hours per week. Employment must never interfere with academic or clinical assignments.
- Any student unable to maintain adequate academic standing as outlined above may be asked to terminate his/her employment.
- At no time is a South University, Richmond, PA student allowed to or required to work for the program. Any student wishing to work during the clinical phase of the program must have the approval from the Director of Clinical Education prior to the start of the clinical year.

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Program Graduation Requirements

To receive a Master of Science in Physician Assistant degree a student must satisfy the following requirements:

- The student normally must complete the course requirements described in the catalog in effect when the student enrolled. Students who leave South University for longer than 3 quarters will be required to meet catalog requirements in effect at the time of their return.
- The student must receive a minimum grade of “C” or better in all courses.
- The student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for all course work taken while in the South University Physician Assistant program.
- The student must successfully complete a summative evaluation before graduation.

Standards of Conduct

The South University Student Handbook defines a Code of Conduct that must be followed by all students. Failure to comply with general University policies may result in dismissal from the program and the University according to defined disciplinary procedures enforced by the Dean of Student Affairs. All disciplinary actions will be reported to the Progress Committee and will be considered relative to the student’s suitability for continued participation in the program and entry into the PA profession. Each student shall be attired appropriately whenever he/she is in a clinical (patient care) environment. Failure to adhere to appropriate guidelines for attire can result in dismissal from clinical activity with a resulting penalty applied for absence. In the belief that Physicians and PA’s 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 degree, the students of the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant degree 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 South University, Richmond Physician Assistant degree 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 disciplinary proceedings. For more information on policies and expectations on PA student conduct see the South University Student Handbook.

South University Graduate Honor Council

South University publishes its Graduate Honor Code in the South University Student Handbook. All students enrolled in the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program are expected to abide by this code.
Alleged violations of the South University Graduate Honor Code will be referred to the Physician Assistant program’s Progress Committee for review. If the Progress Committee determines that there is adequate evidence of an Honor Code violation, the case will be referred to the South University Graduate Honor Council.

National Commission on Certification for the Physician Assistant (NCCPA) Code of Conduct

The South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program expects students to abide by the Code of Conduct set forth by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. Breaches in this code of conduct while a student is enrolled in the program will be grounds for referral of that student to the programs Progress Committee.

Preamble

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) endeavors to assure the public that certified physician assistants (PAs) meet professional standards of knowledge and skills. Additionally, NCCPA attempts to ensure that the PAs it certifies are upholding appropriate standards of professionalism and ethics in practice. The NCCPA’s Code of Conduct for Certified and Certifying PAs and PAs with the PA-C Emeritus Designation outlines principles that all certified or certifying PAs and PAs holding the PA-C Emeritus designation 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, suspension, revocation of certification or eligibility for certification or PA-C emeritus designation and/or other actions deemed appropriate by NCCPA. Disciplinary actions may be reported to the Federation of State Medical Boards, any state licensing authority, the federal government, the PA’s employer and other interested parties, including individuals seeking information about the PA’s certification or PA-C Emeritus designation, as solely determined by the NCCPA and in compliance with NCCPA’s information disclosure policy. This Code of Conduct represents some, though not necessarily all, of the behaviors that may trigger review under NCCPA’s Policies and Procedures for PA Disciplinary Matters.

Principles of Conduct

Certified or certifying PAs shall protect the integrity of NCCPA-issued credentials and of the processes by which those credentials are earned and awarded. Certified or certifying PAs and PAs with the PA-C Emeritus designation:

- 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.
- shall not engage in irregular behavior, as defined in NCCPA’s Policies and Procedures for PA Disciplinary Matters.
- shall not employ deceptive means, including submitting to the NCCPA any document or testimony that contains a misstatement of fact or omits a fact to obtain, attempt to obtain or assist others in obtaining or maintaining an NCCPA credential.
- shall not manufacture, modify, reproduce, distribute or use a fraudulent or otherwise unauthorized NCCPA certificate.
- shall not falsely represent themselves in any way to be a Physician Assistant-Certified (PA-C) designee, a Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) recipient, or a PA-C Emeritus or otherwise use or assist others in using fraudulent credentials, as set forth in the NCCPA’s Policies and Procedures for PA Disciplinary Matters.
- shall promptly inform NCCPA when possessing knowledge or evidence that raises a 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.
Certified or certifying PAs shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and standards related to their professional role, including but not limited to those governing clinical practice. Certified or certifying PAs:

- shall respect appropriate professional boundaries in their interactions with patients and others.
- shall avoid behavior that would pose a threat or potential threat to the health, well-being or safety of others apart from reasonable risks taken in a patient's interest during the delivery of health care.
- shall not disclose patient confidential information, publicly disclose information about a patient that the PA learned as part of the PA's practice, nor disparage any patient in a public setting, (including through social media) based on information observed or learned in the PA's practice.
- shall recognize and understand their professional and personal limitations.
- shall practice without impairment from substance abuse and shall practice without impairment from cognitive deficiency or mental illness that, even with appropriate reasonable accommodation, adversely affects their practice.
- shall maintain and demonstrate the ability to engage in the practice of medicine within their chosen areas of practice safely and competently.
- shall behave in a manner that is lawful and ethical, and that upholds accepted standards of professional practice.
- must report to the NCCPA any adverse regulatory or credentialing action within 30 days of revocation, suspension, surrender, lapse, loss or denial of or any restrictions imposed on a license, authorization, or credential to practice as a health care provider (including authorization to practice as an employee of the federal government or in a jurisdiction not requiring licensure), whether such adverse action is by decision, consent order, stipulation, or agreement.
- must report to NCCPA within 30 days convictions, guilty pleas or no contest pleas to felonies and certain misdemeanors, as described more fully in the Policies and Procedures for PA Disciplinary Matters.

National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants
12000 Findley Rd., Ste. 100, Johns Creek, GA 30097
Tel: 678.417.8100   Fax: 678.417.8135   www.nccpa.net
Last revised November 2015

Appearance and Dress

South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program students, faculty, and staff 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 health care worker. Patient trust and confidence in the health care 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 clinical education experiences. It is required that students wear name tags at all times when on campus during their first didactic quarter. 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.
On Campus and Classroom Settings:

Clothing must be clean and in good repair, allowing for freedom of movement without inappropriate exposure. T-shirts, jeans, shorts, jean jackets, army fatigues or greens, hats, tank tops, spaghetti straps and exercise clothing are unacceptable. 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.

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 for the clinical setting. No flip-flops are permitted during the didactic 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. Facial hair is not allowed, other than a well-groomed mustache. For efficient work and cleanliness, fingernails must not extend beyond the end of the fingertip. Nail polish is not allowed. Makeup must be minimal and must be appropriate.

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 South University scrubs on campus only on the day of their designated lab or small group meeting.

Due to fellow student comfort, 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.

Clinical Settings (ALEs, Clinical Rotations or other clinical experiences):

A clean waist-length clinical jacket with name tag will be issued at the beginning of the second quarter. The lab coat is to be worn at all times in clinical and hospital settings.

Clothing must be clean and in good repair, allowing for freedom of movement without inappropriate exposure. Blue jeans, shorts, t-shirts, sweatshirts, jean jackets, army fatigues or greens, hats, and exercise clothing are unacceptable. Clothing color, design, and cut must be conservative. Women must wear a dress, skirt, or dress slacks and blouse with sleeves. No tank tops or spaghetti straps. Dress length must be appropriate for a dignified and professional appearance, allowing room for modest movement without indecent exposure. Men must wear slacks, dress shirt, and a tie (unless ties are specifically prohibited by the clinical site). Hospital scrubs are worn when in the operating room and only when specified otherwise. South University scrubs are often worn during labs, or if the supervisor gives specific permission. Unless otherwise instructed, South University scrubs may be worn during the evening shift in the Emergency Department under a lab coat. Dayshift Emergency Department clothing will be regular clinical attire unless otherwise instructed.

Shoes must be clean and polished. Athletic shoes are not appropriate unless approved with scrubs. Open-toed shoes, sandals of any type, bare feet, and some styles of clogs are not appropriate. Clogs must be approved by the Director of Clinical Education. Socks or stockings must be worn. Shoes must allow for quiet, rapid movement and long periods of standing. High heels are not appropriate in a clinical setting.

Hair must be kept well-groomed, clean, neat, of a natural human color, and must be pulled back out of the way completely in a professional, conservative hairstyle. Facial hair is not allowed, other than a well-groomed mustache. For efficient work and cleanliness, fingernails must not extend beyond the end of the fingertip. Nail polish is not allowed. Makeup must be minimal and must be appropriate.

Jewelry, because of safety and sanitation issues, must be kept to a minimum. Small earrings, no more than two in each ear, may be worn. Earrings that dangle and/or cover the entire eartlobe are inappropriate. One wedding set or engagement ring may be worn. Necklaces and bracelets are not to be worn. A professional, working wristwatch with a second hand should be worn.

No visible tattoos or body piercings, other than those mentioned above will be allowed.
Due to patient and fellow student comfort, 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 to patients or colleagues.

**Special Situations**

The program Dress Code as above applies at all times with the following modifications as delineated.

**Anatomy and Physiology Lab**: South University scrubs. Sneakers allowed.

**Physical Assessment Lab**: South University scrubs then may change into sports clothes as instructed for lab practical sessions. Sneakers allowed.

**After Hours**: Students are permitted to dress comfortably (scrubs or casual clothes) while studying in the South University Library on weekends and during the week after classes are completed for the day or 6:00 p.m. Students are expected to maintain professionalism in their dress at these times.

These statements apply to all clinical and classroom settings unless otherwise allowed by the Director of Pre-Clinical Education or Director of Clinical Education. If a student is improperly dressed, he or she will not be permitted to attend class, use laboratory or library facilities, or continue at the worksite until appropriately attired. Failure to comply with the above policies may result in disciplinary procedures secondary to non-compliance with standards of professionalism.

**Clinical Settings**: In the event a clinical site has certain dress/attire requirements of personnel including students, students are expected to abide by all requirements of the clinical site.

**Academic Integrity Policy of South University Graduate Programs**

Please refer to the South University Student Handbook.

**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 South University, Richmond 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 South University, Richmond 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 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 South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program are participants in a professional training program whose graduates seek positions of high responsibility as providers of health care. Accordingly, students are evaluated not only on their academic and clinical skills but also on their interpersonal skills, reliability, appearance and professional conduct. Deficiencies in any of these areas are brought to the student’s attention in the form of a written evaluation and may result in probation, suspension or dismissal from the program. Academic grades alone are not sufficient to warrant promotion to the next class, clinical phase or graduation. The faculty reserves the right to dismiss any student when the student’s behavior is not in line with the standards of the medical profession or when the student's presence in the Physician Assistant program is considered detrimental to the student in question, the other students in the school, or to society in general. The faculty will refer students whose professionalism has been questioned to the Progress 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: [http://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 South University, Richmond 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 South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program and the University 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 Honor Code. The South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program reserves the right to take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of the campus community. The Dean of Student Affairs is charged with the welfare of all students. Accordingly, in emergency situations, this individual has full authority to deal with student conduct according to the exigencies of the emergency and for its duration. The program is not designed or equipped to rehabilitate students who do not abide by this Honor 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 Honor Code. The Dean of Student Affairs is delegated responsibility pertaining to all student organizations and student government and, has the responsibility and authority to discipline such organizations whose members are students within the program.

**Violations of Standards of Conduct or Professionalism**

Violations of the program’s Standards of Conduct or Standards of Professionalism will be referred to the Progress Committee and may be referred to the appropriate University official. Any violations of University policy will be referred to the Dean of Students.

**Resources Available to Students:**

**Guidance**

Each student is assigned a small group leader who serves at their faculty advisor soon after matriculation. Students are required to meet with their small group for advisement each quarter. Specific academic problems should first be
discussed with the individual instructor who is directly involved in the concern. Career and job concerns can be addressed to the Director of Career Services. Additional counseling for personal issues is available through the office of the Dean of Student Affairs or the Talk One to One Student Assistance Program. Students who are experiencing academic, personal, or career concerns are encouraged to schedule an appointment with the Dean of Student Affairs. Students are strongly encouraged to seek help early when experiencing difficulties because academic deficiencies, personal problems, or other issues can be detrimental to a student’s successful completion of the program. Faculty are encouraged to urge students to seek help for personal issues early thought the Dean of Student Affairs and to provide information on the Talk One to One program to students. The University provides free access to the Talk One to One Student Assistance Program to all students. This service provides access by telephone to professional counseling services 24 hours per day/7 days per week. In the event that a student may need additional counseling beyond services offered by the University, the Dean of Student Affairs will help students with referrals to outside counseling services. Program faculty may not participate in mental health counseling or treatment of students.

Student Affairs

The Dean of Student Affairs is responsible for all aspects of student life outside of the classroom, including but not limited to bookstore services, campus security, career services, counseling, disability services, graduation, financial aid information, fire evacuation, medical procedures, orientation, tutoring, parking, student activities and clubs, student lounge and other common areas, veterans affairs, weather announcements, approval for advertisement and on-site fundraising activities, alcohol and drug information, and student discipline. Please see the South University Academic Catalog and South University Student Handbook for detailed information on each of the above topics.

Career Services

Students should seek the assistance of the Director of Career Services, during or prior to their last quarter of enrollment. Information is available regarding resume/CV writing and job search strategies and techniques. The Director of Career services provides individualized job search assistance with pursuing full time employment. Career workshops as well as theme weeks based on academic majors are held throughout the school year to aid students in their professional development. All programs are open to any student at no charge.

Professional Liability Insurance

Students in the program are covered by a malpractice policy that insures all employees and students at South University. This policy covers any liability risks that may be incurred by a student or instructor of the program. This also covers liability risks incurred by clinical preceptors or their employing institutions. For most PA students, this coverage meets their needs. Those wishing to extend their coverage may purchase a personal liability insurance policy through the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA).

Library Services

The South University, Richmond campus library is located on the Richmond campus with the main building, providing convenient access for the students before and after their classes. It encompasses approximately 2,273 square feet, most of which is dedicated to the main seating, welcome, and collection areas. Over 5,230 volumes and the print periodical collection are housed there. The main room provides seating and study tables for thirty-three, with four study carrels, and nine computer workstations, a group study room that can be reserved by students in 2 hour blocks. The library computer lab gives patrons a place to access to over 300,000 electronic books, 50,000 journals with over 350 million articles most in full-text, 500 U.S. and International newspapers, and 3 million full-text dissertations. All online resources are available to students, faculty, and clinical preceptors on campus and via remote internet access. Besides Internet access, the computer workstations provide access to an office suite, tutorials and class support-software. Students may use their laptops anywhere on the premises, since the library is wireless-capable. Students and faculty have access to interlibrary loan services at no additional charge. This requires students to complete and submit an interlibrary loan request form.
To assist students in retrieving the latest information, the library subscribes to over sixty periodicals in print format and several thousand full-text sources on-line. Duplicating services, interlibrary loan and tutorial services are also available in the library. The library provides access to the Internet, Microsoft Office Suite, and general and subject-specific on-line databases.

ID/Library cards are made available within the first week of class. Valid cards are required to check out materials. If a card is lost, the student should report the loss to the bookstore as soon as possible. Most materials may be checked out for a two-week period. Students will be fined for overdue reserves or audiovisuals and charged a replacement fee for all materials that are not returned. Reference materials, pamphlets, vertical files, and periodicals are available for use in the library only. All items must be properly checked out at the circulation desk. Failure to comply is an infringement of library policy and the “Code of Conduct.” Students will be held responsible for the loss or damage of materials while in their possession and are subject to the library rules and regulations as outlined in the Library Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Computer Labs**

South University, Richmond makes available computer and network resources, which may be used by the students, faculty and staff. These resources are intended to be used for educational and purposes. The privilege of using computer and network resources is extended by the University to specific individuals and organizations and is not transferable. This privilege may be permanently revoked by the University if this policy is violated. The South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program makes available computer and networking resources, which periodically may be used during lecture and classroom experiences. Unless directly related to class material, students are prohibited from the use of internet during class time. All modes of internet access must be disconnected. Computers are only to be used to take notes or record lectures. Internet access may be used prior to lectures to download or transfer files and during class breaks. Individuals should be aware that any information, files, or software which they store or transfer on the University’s computers or networks remains subject to the University’s control, and thus can be examined, confiscated, or deleted in the same manner as any school property. Users may not attach or load any school’s system with personal equipment or software. Individuals who make use of the network and computer resources must abide by this computer policy and by the policies, regulations, and guidelines of South University as specified in the Student Handbook.

Please refer to the South University Student Handbook for more details.
Appendix A

Functions and Tasks

**Function: Perform essential clinical communication**
Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

**Tasks:**

1. Communicate effectively with a patient and his/her family by using a vocabulary that is familiar to both.
2. Demonstrate the communication skills necessary to elicit an accurate differential diagnosis.
3. Demonstrate the ability to interpret body language and other non-verbal cues during a patient encounter.
4. Demonstrate the traits of respect, genuineness, and empathy.
5. Give emotional support to patient and family.
6. Present to the physician a brief synopsis of the patient’s current illness, pertinent positive and negative findings, and the diagnostic and therapeutic regimen instituted or proposed.
7. Create and maintain healthy professional and peer relationships with adequate support and supervision.
8. Be able to educate patient and family on durable power of attorney, advance directives, and end of life care issues.
9. Recognize the importance of patient education in effecting change in the health status of both in individuals and groups.
10. Demonstrate the ability to educate the patient and family on various aspects of care by using a vocabulary that is familiar to both including:
   a. Diagnosis
   b. Lab and other diagnostic studies
   c. Pharmacologic treatments
   d. Clinical procedures and surgeries
   e. Follow-up
   f. Prognosis
   g. Health Maintenance and Prevention
11. Formulate an initial problem list and maintain ongoing problem lists.
12. Write orders in a logical and organized fashion.
13. Fill out routine request forms for diagnostic studies.
14. Write clear, concise, and relevant progress notes in a problem oriented format.
15. Write requests for consults and/or referrals in the proper format.
16. Write appropriate interval notes and a discharge summary.
Function: Perform complete and problem focused patient histories
Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

Tasks:

1. Establish the patient’s major problem(s) establishing a “chief complaint”.
2. Acquire a history of present illness to include the setting, chronology, quality, quantity, alleviating/aggravating factors, bodily location, and onset of symptoms.
3. Obtain a history of allergies, transfusion reactions, and reactions to medications, and other substances.
4. Procure a social history to include relationships, substance use, spirituality, diet, exercise, and sexual history.
5. Elicit a Past Medical History to include past health, surgeries, hospitalizations, injuries, and childhood illnesses.
6. Elicit an interval history in patient with chronic illness.
7. Obtain the family history with attention to familial predisposition to disease and exposure to illness.
8. Acquire specific information with the use of direct questions, yes/no questions, probing questions, and laundry list.
9. Obtain a brief but pertinent history from patient, friend or family in an emergency situation. Utilize the general concept of triage in an individualized fashion.
10. Open an interview topic with use of facilitation, open-ended questions, and bridging phrases.
11. Focus on interview topics (as needed) through confrontation, reflection, probing, interpretation, and summation.
12. Assist the patient’s narrative with appropriate use of support and reassurance, empathy, confrontation, reflection interpretation, silence, modified laundry list, and touch.
13. Develop specific strategies in dealing with the following types of patients:
   a. Suicidal patients
   b. Dysphasic patients
   c. Non-English speaking patients
   d. Patients who are hearing impaired
   e. Manipulative patients
   f. Fearful patients
   g. Uncooperative patients
   h. Depressed patients
   i. Mentally ill patients
14. Close the interview in a proper fashion.

Function: Perform complete and problem focused physical examinations
Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

Tasks:

1. Gain the patient’s confidence and provide reassurance about the examination.
2. Demonstrate the use of instruments for the physical examination to include the following tools:
   a. Blood pressure cuff
   b. Pulse oximeter
c. Thermometers
d. Visual screening charts (literate/illiterate)
e. Pen light
f. Ophthalmoscope
g. Otoscope
h. Ear/nasal speculum
i. Tongue depressor
j. Stethoscope
k. Tuning forks
l. Cotton wisp
m. Reflex hammer
n. Cotton tipped applicators
o. Gloves and lubricant
p. Vaginal speculum
q. Microscope
r. Tape measure

3. Perform a complete physical examination in a logical and ordered fashion.
4. Perform an appropriate limited exam pertaining to progression, regression, and stability of chronic illness.
5. Perform a pertinent but cursory examination on a patient in an emergency situation.
6. Perform a focused problem oriented examination on a patient with an acute illness. This will include selection of various components (by system) of a complete exam to perform for signs of a particular disease based on knowledge of history and the presentation of symptoms.
7. Modify the physical examination according to the needs of a particular patient.
8. Identify normal and abnormal physical findings based on patient’s age, sex, and race.

**Function: Formulate logical differential diagnoses**

Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

**Tasks:**

1. Demonstrate ability to organize and integrate data from the medical history, physical examination, and diagnostic studies.
2. Identify the most common medical problems by system and their modes of presentation.
3. Develop a thorough differential diagnosis and diagnostic impression at each stage of data collection.
4. Demonstrate sound critical thinking and medical judgment in formulating a differential diagnosis and reaching a diagnostic impression.
5. Demonstrate the skills necessary to accurately record and present data in a manner appropriate to the clinical setting.

**Function: Select and interpret diagnostic studies**

Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

**Tasks:**

1. Assess the patient’s symptoms and identify those studies procedures indicated to assist with determining a diagnosis.
2. Employ the proper sterile techniques indicated in procedures performed.

3. Exercise precautions to prevent complications of diagnostic procedures performed or ordered.

4. Know the names of and indications for use of the routine hematological, chemical, bacteriological, and cytological tests.

5. Know serial tests utilized to monitor a patient's condition and/or effectiveness of therapy.

6. Know methods, indications, contraindications, and complications of the diagnostic procedures performed or ordered.

7. Recognize the signs and symptoms of complications of diagnostic procedures performed or ordered.

8. Recognize normal findings of other diagnostic labs and procedures and the systems with which they are most associated.

9. Know the diseases with which abnormal findings are most often associated.

10. Understand the principles of routine specimen collection:
    a. Urine - sterile and non-sterile
    b. Blood - venous and arterial
    c. Sputum – sterile and non-sterile
    d. Bacteriological samples
    e. Stool

11. Perform basic laboratory tests:
    a. Urinalysis
    b. Complete blood cell count
    c. Rapid strep test
    d. Fluorescein stain
    e. Wet prep
    f. KOH prep
    g. Gram stain
    h. Blood glucose (finger stick)

12. Perform and interpret a 12 lead electrocardiogram (ECG) or rhythm strip: Recognize normal sinus rhythm and major dysrhythmias, determine rate, and calculate intervals, identify acute coronary events, blocks, hypertrophy, and common manifestations of electrolyte abnormalities.

13. Determine the most appropriate situations in which to order imaging studies to diagnose or follow a patient's condition(s) including:
    a. Radiographs
    b. Ultrasound/Echocardiography
    c. CT
    d. MRI
    e. Nuclear Imaging

14. Make preliminary assessment of routine radiographic studies including:
    a. Chest
    b. Gastrointestinal (GI)
    c. Extremity Films
    d. Kidneys, Ureters, and Bladder
    e. CT scans

15. Know routine preparation for radiographic studies in regard to diet, bowel preparation, and post-study care.

16. Obtain Pap smear, collect vaginal or urethral cultures, and prepare slides for detection of genitourinary pathogens.
17. Know patient preparation, indications, contraindications, and complications of the following procedures:
   a. Upper endoscopy (EGD)
   b. Anoscopy/Proctoscopy
   c. Sigmoidoscopy
   d. Colonoscopy
   e. Pericardiocentesis
   f. Thoracentesis
   g. Bronchoscopy
   h. Pulmonary function tests
   i. Lumbar puncture
   j. Paracentesis
   k. Excisional biopsy
   l. Punch/shave biopsy
   m. Arthrocentesis

**Function:** Select appropriate clinical interventions and pharmaceutical therapeutics

Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

**Tasks:**

1. Collect the proper equipment, set up, and administer intravenous (IV) infusions to include a familiarity with the technique of performing a peripherally inserted central catheter and indications for ordering placement.

2. Administer injections by a variety of routes including intradermal, subcutaneous, intramuscular, and intravenous.

3. Perform venous punctures and understand the technique involved with arterial blood sampling.

4. Calculate an accurate infusion rate.

5. Correctly insert a nasogastric tube.

6. Catheterize the urinary bladder of both male and female patients.

7. Perform a variety of methods of skin closure including:
   a. Simple interrupted suture
   b. Continuous suture
   c. Interrupted mattress suture
   d. Continuous mattress suture
   e. Subcutaneous closure
   f. Wound stapling
   g. Steri-Strips
   h. Skin adhesive

8. Demonstrate basic splinting skills.

9. Identify materials available and necessary for splinting and problems/complications that may develop in splinted/casted patients.

10. Know the various blood products utilized in treatment of patients and know the indications and complications of their use including:
    a. Whole blood
    b. Packed red cell
    c. Platelets
    d. Cryoprecipitate
    e. Fresh frozen plasma (FFP)
    f. Clotting factors

11. Identify the composition of and indications for the various IV fluid replacement solutions including:
12. Relationships between serum electrolytes and IV therapy and the need to adjust therapy based on lab results and physical signs or symptoms.
13. Appropriately utilize the techniques of Basic Life Support (BLS).
14. The techniques of Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS).
15. Initiate appropriate homeostasis in patients with hemorrhage to include:
   a. Direct pressure
   b. Compression dressing
   c. Elevation
   d. Pressure points
16. Apply knowledge of the following principles of medications to the judicious use of agents within all common pharmaceutical classes:
   a. Pharmacology
   b. Indications
   c. Contraindications
   d. Common interactions
   e. Common adverse reactions and/or side effects
17. Recognize, treat, and support a patient having an anaphylactic reaction.
18. Be familiar with reference sources pertaining to toxic substances, such as telephone contact with regional poison control center or knowledge of other written references on toxic emergencies.

**Function: Display essential characteristics of professionalism**

Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

**Tasks:**

1. Understand legal and regulatory requirements placed on PAs by various legislative and credentialing entities.
2. Demonstrate commitment to work within the role of the physician assistant in the clinical setting.
3. Recognize and respond appropriately to the needs of patients served.
4. Demonstrate the objectivity necessary to permit logical perspective, assessment, and solution of the health problem.
5. Consistently demonstrate respect, compassion and integrity.
6. Recognize limitations and seek assistance when appropriate.
7. Exhibit flexibility.
8. Demonstrate commitment to ongoing professional development.
9. Possess the ability to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries with faculty, supervisors, and patients.
10. Relate well to fellow members of the health care team and patients.
11. Respect diversity of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or socioeconomic status of all individuals.
12. Maintain standards of professionalism in dress, language, and conflict resolution.

13. Demonstrate commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices.

14. Respect the patient’s right to information regarding:
   a. Treatment options
   b. Health care costs
   c. Current health status, prognosis
   d. Individuality and privacy

15. Communicate their personal philosophy of health care including one’s own definition of, perceived role in, and goals regarding health care.

**Function: Obtain and utilize biomedical information**

Upon completion of the program, graduates should be able to:

**Tasks:**

1. Know the common types of studies used in biomedical research and understand the appropriate use of the various study designs.

2. Comprehend and apply the epidemiological and statistical results to current medical practice.

3. Identify and utilize appropriate resources for biomedical information.

4. Identify the presence of bias in biomedical research.

5. Apply biomedical research findings to current practice.
South University

Appendix B

South University, Richmond, Physician Assistant Program Infection Control

Policy:

The objective of the following guidelines is to prevent the spread of infection and avoid exposure to blood and body fluid pathogens.

General:

It is the policy of the South University, Richmond, Physician Assistant program to follow the guidelines and recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding STANDARD PRECAUTIONS. Before beginning any clinical education experience through the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program, students must receive training regarding CDC STANDARD PRECAUTIONS.

Standard Precautions

Standard Precautions combine the major features of Universal Precautions and Body Substance Isolation and are based on the principle that all blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, non-intact skin, and mucous membranes may contain transmissible infectious agents.

Standard Precautions include a group of infection prevention practices that apply to all patients, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status, in any setting in which healthcare is delivered. These practices include:

1. Hand hygiene
2. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

In addition to Standard Precautions, students will receive training in the three categories of Transmission-Based Precautions:

1. Contact Precautions
2. Droplet Precautions
3. Airborne Precautions

Transmission-Based Precautions are used when the route(s) of transmission is (are) not completely interrupted using Standard Precautions alone.

Students may access details of this information at any time at the following website: http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/2007IP/2007ip_part4.html

Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens

Strict adherence to STANDARD PRECAUTIONS and other infection control measures should prevent a student’s exposure to blood borne pathogens. Should a student sustain a possible exposure (including a needle stick injury) to blood borne pathogens during a clinical training experience, the student is responsible for immediately notifying their supervisor, instructor, preceptor, or department manager. The student should then follow the steps outlined in the section titled “Post-Exposure Procedure” and “Student Injuries or Exposures”. Exposure is defined as a demonstrated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.
THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE SHOULD BE ADHERED TO AFTER AN EXPOSURE:

Post-Exposure Procedure:

1. **Aggressive local wound care** to the site of exposure should be initiated immediately. Percutaneous wounds should be expressed to promote bleeding. The site should be cleansed thoroughly with soap and water using a surgical hand brush when possible. It may be beneficial to use an antiseptic such as chlorhexidine gluconate (Foam Carer CHG), an iodophor (EZ Scrub, Betadine), or Dakins solution (dilute 1:9 buffered sodium hypochlorite). Difficult to scrub areas should be soaked in chlorhexidine gluconate (Foam Carer CHG) or other antiseptic. Non-intact skin should be cleansed with soap and water. It may be beneficial to use an antiseptic as described above. Mucous membrane exposures (e.g., eye splashes) should be irrigated thoroughly with tap water using the nearest eye washing station (or faucet if none available).

2. **The incident should be reported immediately** to the student’s supervisor, instructor, preceptor, or department manager.

3. **Post Exposure Prophylaxis protocol should be initiated.** The student may access the post exposure hotline by the following methods:
   
   http://nccc.ucsf.edu/clinician-consultation/post-exposure-prophylaxis-pep/

   OR

   **PEP line: The National Clinicians’ Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline**
   Phone: 1-888-448-4911
   Hours: 24 hours / 7 days a week

4. **Access to emergency health care is recommended,** and the student is urged to become informed about current PEP guidelines in order to receive most effective treatment within the recommended time frame.

5. Finally, the student must notify the Director of Clinical Education or if unavailable, the Clinical Coordinator or Program Director. In addition, the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program incident form must be completed and sent to the program.

**Student Injuries**

Incidents involving an injury to a student (such as a fall, or other accidental injury) during a clinical education experience will follow a similar protocol.

1. The injury should be reported to the student’s supervisor, instructor, preceptor, or department manager.

2. Students should report to the nearest Emergency Room for treatment.

3. The program should be notified as soon as it is possible to do so. The student must notify the Program Director or if unavailable, the Director of Clinical Medicine or if unavailable, the Clinical Coordinator. In addition, the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program incident form must be completed and sent to the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program.

If a potentially infectious exposure occurs, do not allow feelings of embarrassment, a large workload, or misplaced peer pressures to prevent you from reporting the event immediately. Needle sticks and other exposures can be life-threatening. Responsible health care providers recognize that unintentional injuries and occupational exposures may occur and must be evaluated by competent, objective, and experienced medical professionals.

**IMPORTANT:**

All charges incurred by PA students for physician visits, labs or x-ray studies, and prescribed medications related to an injury, needle stick; blood or body fluid exposures are the student’s responsibility. **Students must maintain health insurance throughout their educational experience at the South University, Richmond Physician Assistant program. All medical or health care services (emergency or otherwise) that the student receives or requires are the student’s responsibility and are at the student’s expense.**
South University Physician Assistant Incident Form

Student Name: ________________________________________________________________
Incident Date: ____________________ Time: ________ AM/PM
Location of Incident: ____________________________________________________________
Nature of Injury: _______________________________________________________________
Incident Cause: ________________________________________________________________

Give brief description of incident, including predominating and contributing causes:

State corrective action taken to prevent recurrence. Indicate if further investigation is warranted:

Did you seek medical care?  □ Yes  □ No
Date/Time of Report: __________________________
Date/Time/Method Program Was Notified: __________________________
Name of Faculty/Advisor reviewing the report: __________________________
Signature of Student Injured: ____________________________________________
SOUTH UNIVERSITY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM
FINAL PROFESSIONALISM COMPETENCY EVALUATION FORM

Student ______________________________ Date/Quarter: ___________________________

The following professionalism standards have been reviewed by the Physician Assistant program’s Progress Committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professionalism Standards</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Not Competent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Role</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands legal and regulatory requirements placed on PAs by various legislative and credentialing entities.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates commitment to work within the role of the physician assistant in the clinical setting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognizes and responds appropriately to the needs of patients served.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Attributes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistently demonstrates respect, compassion and integrity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognizes limitations and seeks assistance when appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibits flexibility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Committed to ongoing professional development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Possesses the ability to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries with faculty, preceptors, and patients.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relates well to fellow students and patients in a learning environment.</td>
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<td><strong>Adherence to Standards of Conduct</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Respects diversity of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or socioeconomic status of all individuals.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains professionalism including the following: dress, language, and conflict resolution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: ____________________________________________________________________________

Program Director Signature: __________________________ Date: ____________________________
Appendix E

Written Test Remediation Improvement Plan

Student Name: _____________________________________ Course Title: _____________________________________

Academic Advisor: ___________________________________ Date: _____________________________

1. Review of exam/quiz/activity:
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Areas of difficulty/Students comments:
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Plan of Action (Objectives):
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

4. Re-Assessment (Outcomes):
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

Remediation Improvement Plan (RIP) Objectives completed:

YES ☐ NO ☐ Date of Completion: ____________________________

If NO, why:
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Academic Advisor: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

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Appendix E (continued)

Written Test Remediation Form

Student Name: _____________________________________________________________

Date: __/__/____

Course: ___________________________________________________________________

Test Name: ________________________________________________________________

In the space below, please include the following for each item missed on the test:

a.) Item number
b.) Brief description of test item
c.) Related objective(s) from course syllabus
d.) Incorrect answer given
e.) Correct answer to the item
f.) Explanation of the incorrect and correct answers

Successful Test Remediation Completion Verification:

Course Instructor: ______________________________ Small Group Leader: __________________________

Date: __/___/____
Skills Test Remediation Form

Student Name: __________________________________ Course: ______________________________________________

Date: ___ / ___ Test Name: ______________________________________________________________________

In the space below, please include the following for each item missed on the test:

a.) Brief description of the skills portions skipped or performed incorrectly.
b.) Describe the nature of the error for each item skipped or performed incorrectly (e.g. forgot, technique was incorrect, etc.).
c.) Describe the correct performance of each items skipped or performed incorrectly and the rationale for its relevance to the skills assessment.

Successful Test Remediation Completion Verification:

Course Instructor: __________________________ Small Group Leader: __________________________

Date: ___ / ___ / ___
Appendix G

Performance Improvement Plan

Student Name: __________________________________________________________

Form Completed by: ______________________________ Date: __/__/____

Rationale for Entering Student in Performance Improvement Plan:

Description of the Performance Improvement Plan (Must include timeline):

Results:

Acknowledgement of Performance Improvement Plan:

I acknowledge understanding of and agree to the Performance Improvement Plan set forth above.

Student: ______________________________________________________________

Successful Performance Improvement Plan Completion Verification:

Course Instructor: ______________________________ Small Group Leader: __________________________

Program Director: ______________________________ Date: __/__/____
Appendix H

Remediation Plan Form

Student Name: __________________________________________________________

Form Completed by: ______________________________ Date: __/__/____

Issue: (check all that apply)

☐ Knowledge Deficit  ☐ Skills Deficit  ☐ Professionalism Deficit

Description

Summary of Action Plan (Must include timeline)

Results

Acknowledgement of Remediation Plan:

I acknowledge understanding of and agree to the remediation plan set forth above.

Student: ______________________________________________________________

Successful Remediation Plan Completion Verification:

Course Instructor: ______________________________ Small Group Leader: __________________________

Program Director: ______________________________ Date: __/__/____
Appendix I

ARC-PA Standards of Accreditation

A3.01 Program policies must apply to all students, principal faculty and the program director regardless of location.

ANNOTATION: A signed clinical affiliation agreement or memorandum of understanding may specify that certain program policies will be superseded by those at the clinical site.

A3.02 The program must inform students of program policies and practices.

A3.03 Students must not be required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. The program must coordinate clinical sites and preceptors for program required rotations.

ANNOTATION: Coordinating clinical practice experiences involves identifying, contacting and evaluating sites and preceptors for suitability as a required or elective rotation experience. Students may make suggestions to principal faculty for sites and preceptors but are not required to do so. Student suggested sites and preceptors are to be reviewed, evaluated and approved for educational suitability by the program.

A3.04 PA students must not be required to work for the program.

A3.05 Students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty.

ANNOTATION: Students with specific prior knowledge, experiences and skills may assist faculty in didactic and laboratory sessions to share their knowledge and skills. Students are not to be the primary instructor or instructor of record for any component of the curriculum.

A3.06 Students must not substitute for clinical staff during supervised clinical practical experiences.

A3.07 The program must have and implement a policy on immunization of students and such policy must be based on current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for health professionals.

ANNOTATION: Programs offering rotations at international sites are expected to have policies that include information on CDC recommendations for international travel.

A3.08 The program must inform students of written policies addressing student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards before students undertake any educational activities that would place them at risk.

ANNOTATION: Policies related to infectious and environmental hazards are expected to address methods of prevention; procedures for care and treatment after exposure, including definition of financial responsibility; and the effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on student learning activities.

A3.09 Principal faculty, the program director and the medical director must not participate as health care providers for students in the program, except in an emergency situation.

A3.10 The program must have written policies that provide for timely access and/or referral of students to services addressing personal issues which may impact their progress in the PA program.

A3.11 The program must define, publish and make readily available to faculty and students policies and procedures for processing student grievances and allegations of harassment.
A3.14 The program must define, publish and make readily available to enrolled and prospective students general program information to include:

a) the program’s ARC-PA accreditation status,

ANNOTATION: The program is expected to post on its website the accreditation status statement provided by the ARC-PA.

b) the success of the program in achieving its goals,

c) first time PANCE rates for the five most recent graduating classes,

ANNOTATION: The program is expected to publish on its website the PANCE performance data of its graduates by publishing the NCCPA PANCE Pass Rate Summary Report, as provided by the NCCPA through its program portal, of the most recent five-year first time graduate performance. The program is expected to update this performance data in a timely manner. The program may supplement this information with concise and factually accurate evidence of the soundness of its operation and its overall effectiveness in meeting its mission. Examples of information may include graduation rates, job placement rates and attrition rates.

d) all required curricular components,

e) academic credit offered by the program,

f) estimates of all costs (tuition, fees, etc.) related to the program,

g) policies and procedures for refunds of tuition and fees and

h) policies about student employment while enrolled in the program.

ANNOTATION: The program may supplement the above general program information with concise and factually accurate evidence of the soundness of its operation and its overall effectiveness in meeting its mission. Examples of information may include graduation rates, job placement rates and attrition rates.

A3.17 The program must define, publish and make readily available to students upon admission academic performance and progression information to include:

a) any required academic standards,

b) completion deadlines/requirements related to curricular components,

c) requirements for progression in and completion of the program,

d) policies and procedures for processing student grievances,

e) policies and procedures for withdrawal and dismissal,

f) policies and procedures for remediation and deceleration and

g) policies and procedures for processing allegations of harassment.

A3.20 PA students must not have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty.

A3.21 Student health records are confidential and must not be accessible to or reviewed by program, principal or instructional faculty or staff except for immunization and tuberculosis screening results which may be maintained and released with written permission from the student.

ANNOTATION: The ARC-PA does not consider needle stick/sharp reports, results of drug screening, or criminal background checks, a part of the health record.
South University

Appendix J

South University Physician Assistant Program

Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I, ________________________________, have read the information contained within the South University, Richmond Master of Science in Physician Assistant Degree Program Student Handbook. I understand my obligation to successfully complete all didactic requirements in the outlined time frame.

I fully understand this information and hereby agree to abide by the Physician Assistant program policies and procedures contained within the South University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Degree Program Student Handbook. Additionally, I agree to abide by all rules and regulations as set forth in the South University catalog and in the South University Physician Assistant program Clinical Policy Manual.

I understand the outlined requirements for graduation from the South University Master of Science in Physician Assistant degree program. The South University 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.

Student Signature: ___________________________________________ Date: __________

Printed Name: __________________________________________________________________
Program Faculty and Staff Contact Information

Physician Assistant Program  
2151 Old Brick Road  
Glen Allen, Virginia 23060  
Office: (804) 727-6894  
Fax: (804) 727-3793

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