Master of Science in
Physician Assistant Program
Student Handbook
Class of 2022

South University, Tampa
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Accreditation Status
The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program, sponsored by South University. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA Standards.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next comprehensive review of the program by the ARC-PA will be March 2027. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.
South University, Tampa
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, Tampa (the “University”) Master of Science in Physician Assistant Program. Please read this handbook carefully as the contents will govern your enrollment in the South University, Tampa, 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 to the South University, Tampa 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 and the University Catalog.

General Information

The South University, Tampa PA Program was established in 2009. The educational goal of the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program is to provide a primary care-oriented training program for physician assistants. The educational objectives of the program are based upon 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 in the domains of medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities.

Vision Statement

The South University, Master of Science in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree Program strives to provide educational experiences where students, faculty, staff, clinical instructors, and other health care providers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, cooperation, and commitment. The program’s primary focus is on the development of physician assistants capable of expanding into clinical leadership roles by demonstrating proficiency in critical thinking and creative problem solving, using evidence-based skills gained through innovative approaches.

Mission Statement

The South University Physician Assistant (MSPA) Program exists to educate a diverse student population as providers of high quality, cost-efficient health care who will make a positive impact while practicing the art and science of medicine with physician collaboration.

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:** A student 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. Students must be able to perform demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences.

**Communication Skills:** A student 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 student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written forms.

**Observation Skills:** A student must be able to observe a patient accurately, both at a distance and in close proximity. This ability requires the functional use of vision and somatic sensation.

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

**Interpersonal Abilities:** A student 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 professionalism through mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, families, and colleagues.

**Disability Services**
Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog for the policy.

**Program Goals**
The following are goals for the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program:

- The program will recruit a highly qualified, diverse student cohort that will foster success in the program.
- The program will strive to adequately prepare graduating students to achieve a first time pass rate that exceeds the national average upon completion of the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE).
- The program will provide students service-learning opportunities that allow them to use their skills and education to demonstrate compassion and commitment to the community.

**Physician Assistant Learning Outcomes (Graduate Competencies)**
The following are the program learning outcomes (graduate competencies) for the South University Physician Assistant program.

Prior to graduation from the program, students will:

- PLO-1. Integrate behavioral, social, and **medical knowledge** established from the evolving biomedical and clinical sciences in recognizing, evaluating, and managing patient disease states across the lifespan during acute, chronic, preventative, and emergent encounters.

- PLO-2. Demonstrate the **interpersonal and communication skills** required to sustain effective, multi-directional information exchange within a diverse population of patients, their caregivers, and members of the healthcare team.
PLO-3. Demonstrate the ability to elicit an accurate patient history, perform an appropriate physical examination, and perform appropriate clinical procedures using essential **clinical and technical skills** to provide quality patient care.

PLO-4. Collaborate effectively as part of an interdisciplinary healthcare team through **clinical reasoning and problem-solving skills** to formulate a logical differential diagnosis, select and interpret appropriate diagnostic studies, and synthesize a comprehensive, patient-centered management plan for the promotion of wellness and disease prevention.

PLO-5. Demonstrate the ability to interpret and integrate an evidence-based approach to clinical and professional practice through **clinical reasoning, problem solving**, and decision-making processes to improve patient care practices.

PLO-6. Demonstrate **professionalism** through personal behaviors, sensitivity, and accountability essential to patients, society, and the profession.

**Program Curriculum**

Notice: South University, Tampa and the Master of Science in Physician Assistant 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 Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PASS102</td>
<td>Medical Interviewing and Documentation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS110</td>
<td>Physical Assessment I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS125</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS135</td>
<td>Laboratory Diagnostics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS173</td>
<td>Professional Seminar I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS210</td>
<td>Physical Assessment Lab I</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS225</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology I Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 17 credits

**Spring (10 weeks) 2nd Quarter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PASS111</td>
<td>Physical Assessment II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS126</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology II</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS175</td>
<td>Issues in Contemporary Medicine</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS180</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics I</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS211</td>
<td>Physical Assessment II Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS226</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Physiology II Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS295</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience I</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS380</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine &amp; Pharmacotherapeutics I Lab</td>
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Total 21 credits

**Summer (10 weeks) 3rd Quarter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>PASS167</td>
<td>Musculoskeletal Care</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS181</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics II</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS296</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience II</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>PASS381</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics II Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS130</td>
<td>Diagnostic Methods</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total 18 credits

**Fall (10 weeks) 4th Quarter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PASS105</td>
<td>Epidemiology and Biostatistics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS124</td>
<td>Essentials of Behavioral Medicine</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS138</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Surgery</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS182</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine and Pharmacotherapeutics III</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS297</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience III</td>
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</table>

Total 6 credits
### Winter (10 weeks) 5th Quarter

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS5132</td>
<td>Essentials of Clinical Geriatrics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS5147</td>
<td>Clinical Procedures</td>
<td>2</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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</tbody>
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**Total** 20 credits

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### Total Didactic Phase Credits 100 credits

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### Clinical Phase (4 quarters/12 months)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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**

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Rotations must be completed in the following disciplines:

- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Emergency Medicine
- General Surgery
- Women's Health
- Behavioral Medicine
- Clinical Elective

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| Total Didactic Phase Credits | 100 |
| Total Clinical Phase Credits | 74  |
| Required Total Credits       | 174 |

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**Note(s):**

No physician assistant credits from another institution may transfer into the didactic or clinical phase. Master of Science in Physician Assistant students must complete the entire 27 month program (174 credit hours) at South University.

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**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, Tampa Physician Assistant Program. Students are expected to meet academic requirements and demonstrate a sense of responsibility with 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, Tampa, a student agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of South University. The rules concerning student behavior are outlined in the Code of Conduct section of the South University Student Handbook. Specific conduct expectations of the South University, Tampa 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 Student Progress Committee. Alleged violations of the University’s Code of Conduct will be referred to the University’s Dean of Student Affairs.

Non-Discrimination Policy
Please refer to the South University Academic catalog for the Non-Discrimination policy.

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, credentialing costs, 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 $1000 acceptance fee for those applicants accepted into the Physician Assistant Program at South University, Tampa

Membership Fees: Students enrolling in the Physician Assistant Program will incur a one-time fee for membership in the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The current fee of $75 is subject to change. Students are also required to join the Florida Academy of Physician Assistants (FAPA) for a nominal fee.

Other Estimated Costs which are subject to change, for the MSPA Degree:
- Professional Instruments: $1,000.00 (Approximate)
- Textbooks: $1740.00 (approximate, digital textbooks $10.00 per credit)
- Surgical Scrubs: $55.00 (Approximate)
- Laptop Computer: $1,500.00
- Background Check and Drug Screening Fees: $200.00-$400.00 (Additional fees may apply to the base package fee contingent upon credentialing requirements of individual clinical sites.)

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: Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Academic Regulations and Policies

Academic regulations, including grievance procedures, are further outlined in the South University Academic Catalog and the South University Student Handbook. Students enrolled at South University, Tampa 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, Tampa 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 Academic 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, Tampa Physician Assistant Program will be maintained by the South University 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 progression through the program. Student files are maintained in locked file cabinets in program office suite locked offices, storage vaults, and/or digitally on a secure drive. 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.

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, Tampa 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, guest lecturers, or guests of the program. Students in violation of this rule will be referred to the program’s Student Progress Committee.

At no time is a full-time or part-time faculty member, program staff member, the Program 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, Tampa Physician Assistant Program Immunization Policy is in compliance 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 immunizations, health screening, Basic Life Support (BLS) certification, background, and drug testing screening through the program’s designated compliance company. Additional immunizations and drug testing screening 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 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, Tampa PA students will be clearly identified to distinguish themselves 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 their name tags at all times while on the South University campus.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Students are prohibited from use/misuse of, or being under the influence of: alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or drugs which impair judgment while on duty in any health care facility, school, institution or other work location as a representative of the Physician Assistant Program. Drug screen testing will be conducted prior to matriculation, prior to the clinical year, and then repeated as per the credentialing requirements of the clinical site.

When a faculty/clinical instructor/preceptor perceives the odor of alcohol or observes behaviors such as, but not limited to, slurred speech, unsteady gait, or confusion, and these behaviors cause the faculty or clinical instructor to suspect that the student is impaired by alcohol or drugs, the following steps are to be taken:

1. The student will be removed from the patient care area or classroom and the Physician Assistant Program Director notified for further direction.
2. With the student’s consent, the instructor will contact a transportation service to arrange transport off clinical site if applicable.
3. Medical assessment/treatment will be incurred at the student’s expense.
4. If the student’s behavior is threatening or belligerent, the instructor and/or agency supervisor may notify the police to have the student escorted from the premises.
5. The procedure for Code of Conduct violations in the Student Handbook will be initiated by the instructor filing a Code of Conduct violation by memo to the Dean of Student Affairs within one business day of the incident.

Communication

Students are required to maintain active e-mail and telephone accounts at all times. Throughout the course of study at South University, Tampa, a variety of events occur (some unexpected, some 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 and in the clinical logging system and updated appropriately. Student mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers are required to be current and on file in the program office and in the clinical logging system. All student email correspondence with the program must be through their South University student email account. Students are required to check their South University student e-mail daily. The South University, Tampa 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, who have not checked their South University email daily. It is the Students responsibility to keep contact information updated with the program as appropriate.
In addition, students will be requested to register for South University’s RAVE system in order to be contacted in the event of a campus emergency.

Recording Policy

Students are not permitted to tape or digitally record any class without receiving prior permission from the instructor and completing the Recorded Lecture Policy Agreement (see Appendix F) provided by the Program Director.

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. 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, Tampa PA student allowed to or required to work for the program.

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, Tampa Physician Assistant Program. Program policies apply to all students, principal faculty and the Program Director regardless of location. Students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty.

Attendance Policy

For the University policy on attendance, please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Additional South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program Policies on Attendance

**Attendance at Classes and Clinical Experiences:** Attendance policies for courses within the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program are more stringent than the standard University Attendance Policy. All PA students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the following attendance policy: Due to the rigorous nature of the coursework and the accelerated pace of learning, regular attendance is essential for successful completion of the program. It is the expectation of the Student Progress Committee that all students will attend all scheduled classes, conferences, seminars, laboratory experiences and clinical practicums. Any student who misses a required scheduled activity (didactic or clinical) must notify the Course Director, as well as the respective Director (Didactic or Clinical) of the absence. The student assumes full responsibility for obtaining all materials and making up all course work that is missed during an absence. All students are responsible for reviewing and abiding by the attendance policy for each course, which is located in the course-specific syllabus.

**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 testing room. No exams will be given prior to the scheduled test administration time for any reason. Students who are excused from the regularly scheduled administration of a test will be required to set up a time with the Course Director to make up the missed test as soon as possible. Permission for any deviation from the regular test schedule must be requested through the Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education. The **Program Director will make final decisions for 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. Continuous absences by a student may be referred to the Student Progress Committee. The Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education will notify the Student Progress Committee of any student who is consistently absent from didactic or clinical experiences.

**Reporting of Absences:** First-year students must report absences in advance via email whenever possible to the Course Director and/or Director of Didactic Education. If circumstances do not permit immediate access to email, the student must call the Director of Didactic Education, and ultimately submit an email notification.
Second year student absences must be reported to the Director of Clinical Education. Students unable to meet as scheduled with individual clinical preceptors must notify the preceptor personally, as well as the Director of Clinical Education. When absence due to illness extends beyond 48 hours, a signed healthcare provider’s note will be required. The PA Program will not accept any healthcare provider documentation from the student that includes personal protected health information. 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. Any subsequent offenses will be reflected in the student’s professionalism evaluation and will result in referral of the issue to the Student 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 Director of Clinical Education and Student Progress Committee.

**Religious Observances**: The South University, Tampa 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 Director of Didactic Education during the didactic phase of the program and to the Director of Clinical Education during the clinical phase of the program. 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 Didactic Education each year during their orientation.

- To minimize conflicts during the didactic 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 and agreement with the Director of Clinical Education and the primary clinical preceptor. Due to the “non-scheduled” nature of 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. This notification should be made at least 30 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 preceptors 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 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 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 Didactic Education and 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 the clinical 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 assist students with review and remediation of deficient material is at the discretion of the individual faculty member. Please refer to the “Students at Academic Risk and Remediation” section below.

**General Information:**
To satisfactorily complete a course, the student must earn a grade of “C” or better in courses using the letter grading system or, a “Pass” in courses utilizing the Pass/Fail system. Additionally, students must maintain an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher throughout the duration of their enrollment in the PA program. Each 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 and assigned readings covered up to the lecture preceding 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 Student Progress Committee is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the evaluation of the progress of each student during the didactic phase of the South University, Physician Assistant Program. Each student is assigned a Faculty Advisor for academic and professional advisement.

Evaluation of student performance during the didactic phase is conducted through traditional methods such as:
1) written quizzes and examinations,
2) practical examinations, and
3) problem-based instruction and evaluation during objective structured clinical exams (OSCEs).

Examinations are primarily objective multiple choice, laboratory practical, clinical skills practical, and 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 final examination is administered at the end of most courses.

The course director will utilize statistical analysis to review the reliability of each multiple-choice exam/quiz. Please refer to the syllabus for further details regarding the statistical analysis utilized in the individual course.

If a student receives, a course grade below a “C” in a course utilizing the letter grading system or a “Fail” in a course utilizing the Pass/Fail system in any didactic course he/she will be referred to the Student Progress Committee and will be subject to dismissal from the South University, Physician Assistant Program.

**Clinical Phase Evaluation:**
The Student Progress Committee is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the evaluation of the progress of each student in the clinical phase of the South University, Tampa 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 achievement of competency in knowledge, interpersonal, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required for PA practice.

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 timely completion of
credentialing documents and requirements, attainment of objectives and learning outcomes, compliance with rotation and program assignments within the rotation period, attendance at all scheduled activities of the clinical service, applicable key experience measures and competencies, and attainment of passing scores on preceptor evaluations, end-of-rotation examinations, and other faculty assessments which can include OSCEs (objective structured clinical examinations) and practical examinations.

The South University, Tampa 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 achieving learning outcomes and independence of thought at all clinical sites is expected. The Director of Clinical Education in consultation with the Student Progress Committee 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 learning outcomes. This will be reviewed by the Student Progress Committee and a recommendation will be made to the Program Director.

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 multiple components including the evaluation from the primary preceptor, faculty evaluations of the student, end-of-rotation exam (an assignment will replace an end-of-rotation exam for the elective rotation), and clinical logging requirements in the clinical tracking system. Please refer to the discipline-specific clinical rotation syllabus for further details.

If a student does not earn a course grade of at least a “C” on any clinical rotation, he/she will be required to repeat that rotation. Failure to earn a grade of at least a “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 Student 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 satisfactory completion of a formative evaluation. The formative evaluation, consists of written examination, 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 summative evaluation consists of written examination, clinical performance, and professionalism components. This is administered near the end of the clinical training period. The evaluation includes assessment of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem solving abilities in patient care, and professionalism behaviors. This evaluation is designed to assess competency in the program’s defined learning outcomes, as well as to determine eligibility for graduation from the program.

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 (medical knowledge)
2. **Clinical Performance** – Scores must be greater than or equal to 70% in each area assessed on the clinical performance examination (medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities in patient care, and professionalism behaviors)
3. **Final Professionalism Evaluation** – Deemed “Competent” in each area of professionalism on the program’s final professionalism evaluation
Students who do not receive a satisfactory grade on any part of the comprehensive summative examination will be referred to the Student 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 Student 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 achieve 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 competency in each area of medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required for PA practice. However, the program also recognizes that each student may progress at different rates in obtaining these basic competencies. The program has developed the small group structure for numerous purposes. One of the primary purposes of the small group advisor is to monitor student progress in developing basic competency in the domains of medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required for entry into the PA profession.

Below, the program defines the process for the development of a Formal Remediation Plan, Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), and Deceleration or Dismissal from the program. These action plans are developed when students are identified as deficient in individual performance/practical evaluations, learning outcomes, and standardized skills assessment performance, satisfactory academic progression, programmatic progression, and violation of professionalism and/or behavioral policies.

**Remediation Plans**

The program develops a formal remediation plan when a student is globally deficient in knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical skills, or professionalism. The development of a formal remediation plan may occur at the request of the Student Progress Committee. The purpose of test remediation is for students to review the learning objectives, to identify items missed, to recognize knowledge or skill weaknesses, and to comprehend and correct these deficiencies in order to obtain basic mastery in the deficient area(s). The course director is responsible for collaborating to develop a formal remediation plan. When deemed appropriate or necessary, the course director may seek the assistance of a content expert, the Director of Didactic/Clinical Education, or the Student Progress Committee, in order to develop an appropriate formal remediation plan. The formal remediation plan is documented on the Remediation Forms (See Appendix C).

Successful completion of individual remediation can include but is not limited to: reading assignments, review of lecture materials or previous case studies, individual focused faculty led tutoring (especially when related to skills deficiencies), and breakout sessions. The course director will evaluate the student’s proficiency once remediation is completed. This could be, but is not limited to, the following: oral question / answer session, written exam, written paper, and written responses to selected examination questions. The course director will provide a final re-assessment score related to the remediation process. All remediation must be completed as per the discretion of the course director and within the time frame as determined by the course director.

Remediation is required for all students with unsatisfactory performance, which is defined as a student scoring below:

1.) 70% on all written and final exams during the didactic year;
2.) 70% on an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), practical, or technical skills exam
3.) "The established assessment criteria for an End-of-Rotation Exam, Preceptor Evaluation, clinical logging, self-assessment activities, or other assessment modalities as defined in the clinical syllabus of the rotation."

*Programmatic progression during the clinical year is determined by the Student Progress Committee. Students who are unsuccessful in meeting the established assessment criteria as defined in the clinical syllabus of the rotation will be referred to the Student Progress Committee for further action regarding programmatic progression.

Performance Improvement Plans
In the event that a student is observed to be at academic or professional performance risk, the student will 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 learning outcomes and clinical skills development, failure to meet standards for quarterly academic progress or failure to meet professional behavior standards.

If a student’s overall cumulative GPA is less than 3.2, or there is a noted learning outcomes or competency skill deficit, the student will be placed on a PIP.

The PIP will be written on an official Performance Improvement Plan form (See Appendix D). The PIP is developed collaboratively by the student’s faculty advisor with appropriate input from the PA program faculty and the Student Progress Committee as needed. The plan will have definitive steps to achieve improvement and a timeline for completion. Students required to participate in tutoring as part of a PIP may be referred a content expert or other tutor as appropriate. Students who do not meet the requirements of a Performance Improvement Plan will be referred to the program's Student Progress Committee for further review. Students are responsible for maintaining satisfactory academic standards while on a Performance Improvement Plan.

Programmatic progression during the clinical year is determined by the Student Progress Committee. Students who are unsuccessful in meeting the established assessment criteria for an End-of-Rotation Exam, Preceptor Evaluation, Clinical/Technical Skills testing, clinical logging, self-assessment activities, or other assessment modalities as defined in the clinical syllabus of the rotation will be referred to the Student Progress Committee for further action regarding programmatic progression. At the discretion of the Student Progress Committee, these actions include remediation, deceleration, or dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to obtain basic competency in professional behaviors. This includes following the program’s Standards of Conduct (see “Standards of Conduct” below) and professionalism throughout the didactic and clinical curriculum phases of the program. Violations of the program’s Standards of Conduct or Standards of professionalism will be referred to the appropriate University official (i.e. Dean of Student Affairs, Faculty Advisor, Student Progress Committee). Depending upon the severity of the violation, the Student Progress Committee will issue a professionalism warning or professionalism probation with a PIP.

Deceleration Policy:
If for any academic or nonacademic reason a student in good standing elects to withdraw from the Physician Assistant Program, the student will be required to abide by the South University withdrawal policies and procedures in the University catalog. If a student withdraws from the program in good standing, the student may be allowed to re-enter the program at a later time. Under no circumstances may a student re-enter the program if they have been withdrawn for more than four (4) consecutive academic quarters. The decision to allow a student to re-enter the program is made by the program’s Student Progress Committee and approved by the campus Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations (DOAAO). A student may be allowed to re-enter at a decelerated pace at the discretion of the Student Progress Committee. If a student is allowed to re-enter the Physician Assistant program at a later date, the program’s Student Progress Committee will create a re-entry plan for that student. This plan must be approved by the campus DOAAO. The student will be required to review and sign the re-entry plan. The plan will be maintained in their permanent record. As part of the re-entry plan the student may be required to participate in course work or other educational activities to ensure retention of essential knowledge and skills required of a PA student. If an enrolled student is unable to maintain the typical pace of the program curriculum, that
student may be allowed to decelerate his/her progression through the program. The decision to allow a student to decelerate his/her pace of progression is at the discretion of the program’s Student Progress Committee. The final decision to allow a decelerated pace is made by the campus DOAAO. A deceleration plan will be written by the program’s Student Progress Committee and approved by the campus DOAAO. The student will be required to review and sign the re-entry plan, which will then be maintained in their permanent record. A student not currently in good standing in the program will not be allowed to decelerate his/her pace of progression. Regardless of the reason for withdrawal/deceleration, a student of the Physician Assistant Program must complete all curricular requirements within 45 months of their initial matriculation into the South University PA Program.

Student Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress
Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog.

Student Progress Committee

The South University, Tampa 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, Tampa 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 Student Progress Committee:

1. Student’s cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 (refer to Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy in the Academic Catalog).

2. A student receives a course grade below a “C” in courses utilizing the letter grading system or a “Fail” in courses utilizing the Pass/Fail grading system. Any course grade below a “C” or a “Fail,” he/she will be dismissed from the South University, Physician Assistant Program.

3. 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.

4. Students who do not complete a clinical rotation, are asked to leave a clinical rotation due to poor performance, or are dismissed from a clinical rotation under any other circumstance that prevents successful completion of a rotation will be required to meet with the Student Progress Committee.

5. 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 will be required to meet with the Student Progress Committee.

6. Students who fail to abide by all South University Physician Assistant Program policies and procedures; breach the South University Physician Assistant Program Standards of Conduct and/or violate the Standards of Professionalism; and/or South University Graduate Program Honor Code will be required to meet with the Student Progress Committee.

Note: All Physician Assistant Program policies apply to all students, principal faculty, and the Program Director regardless of location (i.e., didactic or clinical).
Student 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) must be present to commence the Student Progress Committee meeting.

Committee Procedure

The Committee meets at least quarterly to review Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), professionalism evaluations, and other relevant information available to aid in evaluation of each student. In addition to quarterly meetings, the Student Progress Committee may be convened on an ad hoc basis to address specific student issues. 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 in good standing with a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
3. Advance on academic warning with a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
4. Advance on professional/clinical probation
5. Dismissal

Academic Warning

A student not achieving the minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be placed on academic warning/financial aid warning. Students must achieve a minimum CGPA of 3.00 (Please refer to the Academic Catalog.). The Student Progress Committee will develop a Performance Improvement Plan to guide the student's remediation and progress throughout the quarter.

Professional/Clinical Probation

A student will be placed on probation in the following situations:
1. Inadequate practicum performance.
3. Breach of ethical, moral, or professional conduct.
4. Repeat violation after professionalism warning.

If a student is being considered for placement in a status other than advance in good standing, he/she may be required to speak formally to the Student Progress Committee before a final decision is rendered by the committee. Students advancing with Academic Warning are also afforded the opportunity to meet with the Student Progress 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 any recommendations of the Student Progress Committee other than “advance in good standing”, and provide details and justification for such recommendation.

In cases where professional/clinical probation is recommended by the Student Progress Committee, a Performance Improvement Plan will be defined for the student.

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 Student 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 of the decision to the student and appropriate academic offices.

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 dismissed and 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 dismissal may stipulate certain conditions as deemed necessary by the party granting the appeal for a student to continue in the program.

### 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 must complete those 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 the 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 the summative evaluation before graduation.

The typical pace of the Physician Assistant Program curriculum is 27 months. Students must complete all graduation requirements for the Master of Science of Physician Assistant Degree within 45 months of their initial matriculation into the South University PA Program.

### 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 Student Progress Committee and will be considered relative to the student’s suitability for continued participation in the program and /or 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. One of South University Physician Assistant Program’s core tenets is that Physicians and PAs are called to the highest standards of honor and professional conduct. It is critical that our students understand this responsibility begins at the inception of medical education rather than upon receipt of degree; and they must uphold the following standards that serve as an embodiment of these beliefs. 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, Tampa 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.

South University Graduate Honor Code

South University publishes its Graduate Honor Code in the South University Student Handbook. All students enrolled in the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program are expected to abide by this code.

Violations of the South University Graduate Honor Code will be referred to the Physician Assistant Program’s Student Progress Committee for review. If the Student 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. Above and beyond the Graduate Honor Council decisions, the Student Progress Committee has the authority to add additional sanctions and/or remediation.

National Commission on Certification for the Physician Assistant (NCCPA) Code of Conduct For Certified and Certifying PAs and PAs with the PA-C Emeritus Designation

The South University, Tampa 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 program’s Student Progress Committee.

South University does not guarantee third-party certification/licensure. Outside agencies control the requirements for taking and passing certification/licensing exams and are subject to change without notice to South University.

Preamble

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants endeavors to assure the public that certified physician assistants meet professional standards of knowledge and skills. Additionally, NCCPA attempts to ensure that the physician assistants it certifies are upholding appropriate standards of professionalism and ethics in practice. The NCCPA’s Code of Conduct for Certified and Certifying PAs and PAs with the PA-C Emeritus Designation outlines principles that all certified or certifying PAs and PAs with 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 Disciplinary Matters.

Principles of Conduct

Certified or certifying physician assistants shall protect the integrity of the NCCPA-issued credentials and of the process 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 the NCCPA’s Policies and Procedures for 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 as 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 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 physician assistants shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and standards, including but not limited to those governing professional practice. Certified or certifying physician assistants:

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 patients apart from reasonable risks taken in the 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, legal or credentialing action within 30 days of (i) revocation, suspension, surrender, lapse, loss or denial of a license 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.

PAs with the PA-C Emeritus designation shall not use the PA-C Emeritus designation in any clinical setting or in the context of any clinically-related interaction, including clinical volunteer service.
Appearance and Dress

Students, faculty, and staff of the South University Tampa Physician Assistant Program are required to place a high value on personal behavior and appearance, including attire. The highest standards for personal behavior and professional appearance is necessary to convey professionalism, facilitate trust and good communication with patients and colleagues, and show 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 healthcare provider through his/her attire 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 the professional setting. 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 that the public views them as representatives of the PA profession. Therefore, when contact with the public is anticipated, students must dress appropriately. In cases where inappropriate attire is worn, students may be dismissed until professional attire is displayed. 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. Military fatigues or greens, shorts, T-shirts, hats, tank tops, ripped clothes, 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. 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. For efficient work, cleanliness, and patient comfort, fingernails should not extend beyond the end of the fingertip. 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. No visible tattoos or body piercing other than those mentioned above will be allowed.

Students are allowed to wear South University scrubs on campus on the designated lab days.

At various times, students will be required to wear clothing that will easily allow physical examination by another student. Examples of modestly appropriate attire include sports bras, exercise wear, and shorts. For any questions or concerns with this requirement, please contact the course director.

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, military 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. No tank tops or spaghetti straps are permitted. 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. 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 should be well-groomed. For efficient work and cleanliness, fingernails should not extend beyond the end of the fingertip. Makeup must be minimal and must be appropriate. Jewelry, because of safety and sanitation issues, must be kept to a minimum.

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 Directors of Didactic and/or 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

One of South University Physician Assistant Program’s core tenets is that Physicians and PAs are called to the highest standards of honor and professional conduct. It is critical that our students understand this responsibility begins at the inception of medical education rather than upon receipt of degree, and they must uphold the following standards that serve as an embodiment of these beliefs. 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, Tampa 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 Student 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 – Interacting with professional, staff, and peer members of the healthcare 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, gender identity, 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 non-professional relationships with a patient, even upon the apparent request of a patient, or with a preceptor.

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, Tampa 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 Student 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 upholding non-academic discipline in the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program is to protect and preserve the quality of the educational environment in the campus community. This is founded upon the following expectations:

1. The South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program and the University at large requires high standards of courtesy, integrity, and responsibility in all of its members.
2. Each student is responsible for his/her own conduct.
3. Continuation as a student is conditional upon compliance with the requirements of student conduct expressed or implied in this Honor Code.

The South University, Tampa 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...
Violations of Standards of Conduct or Professionalism

Violations of the program’s Standards of Conduct, Standards of Professionalism, or University policy will be referred to the appropriate University official (i.e. Faculty Advisor, Dean of Student Affairs, Student Progress Committee).

Resources Available to Students:

Guidance

Each student is assigned a small group advisor who serves as 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 problems 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 through 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 Office of Student Affairs is responsible for offering programs and services that augment academic programs by stimulating the personal and professional development of students at South University. The Office of Student Affairs also acts as a point of contact for military and veteran students as well as eligible family members.

Program Outcomes

As an extension of the philosophy and mission of South University, the student affairs program strives to inform, educate, and encourage students in their endeavors. In order to achieve its goals, the Office of Student Affairs provides the following in particular:

- An orientation that will inform students of university policies, programs, and activities.
- Support and assistance to students in making realistic decisions about academic and nonacademic concerns.
- International student advising.
- Academic accommodations to students with disabilities in the classroom.
- Resolution for student concerns.
- Programs and activities that will encourage student and alumni involvement and participation in campus life.

The student development program is designed to enhance student life by offering programs and services that add to the classroom experience and encourage personal and professional development. Specifically, the Student Affairs staff is responsible for the following: orientation, counseling services, community referrals, disability support services, organizations and activities, graduation, alumni engagement, and student conduct.

These student services are described in more detail below. Also included in this section are services offered by the University that do not fall under the supervision of the office of student affairs but are considered to be in the category of student services.

Career Services

While the primary focus of the Career Services office is to assist students upon graduation, any enrolled student may seek employment information through this office. Although South University does not guarantee employment, it is vitally important to both the graduate and the University that each student obtains appropriate employment. Therefore, as students approach the final year of their programs, specific and personalized assistance is provided in the preparation of
professional resumes and cover letters, as well as in job search strategies and interviewing skills. Career services are provided to South University graduates at no additional charge.

Please see the Career Services Advisor or Dean of Student Affairs for assistance or information.

**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, Tampa library is located on the Tampa campus within the main building, and provides convenient access for the students before and after their classes. It encompasses approximately 2,000 square feet, most of which is dedicated to the main seating, welcome, and collection areas. Over 500 volumes and print periodical collections are housed there. The main room provides seating and study tables, and the attached computer lab has nine computer workstations. Two group study rooms are located outside the library and can be reserved by students in 2 hour blocks. The library computer lab gives patrons a place to access over 300,000 electronic books, 50,000 journals with over 350 million articles, 500 U.S. and International newspapers, and 3 million full-text dissertations. All on-line 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 both 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, Tampa 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 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, Tampa 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. 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.
Appendix A: Infection Control Plan

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, Tampa, 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, Tampa Physician Assistant Program, students must receive training regarding CDC STANDARD PRECAUTIONS.

Standard Precautions

Standard Precautions are the minimum infection prevention practices that apply to all patient care, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status of the patient, in any setting where healthcare is delivered. 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.

These practices include:

1. Hand hygiene
2. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g., gloves, gowns, masks)
3. Safe injection practices
4. Safe handling of potentially contaminated equipment or surfaces in the patient environment, and
5. Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette

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:

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 INITIATED AND FOLLOWED 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:

   - **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, Tampa 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 Education or if unavailable, the Clinical Coordinator. In addition, the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program incident form must be completed and sent to the South University, Tampa 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, Tampa 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.**
Appendix B: Incident Form

Student Name: ________________________________________________________________

Incident Date: ______________ Time: _________ AM/PM

Location of Incident: ____________________________________________________________

Nature of Incident: __________________________________________________________________

Incident Cause: ___________________________________________________________________

Give brief description of incident, including predominating and contributing causes as well as actions taken following the incident:

__________________________________________________________________________________________

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

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Did you seek medical care?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

Date/Time/Method Program was notified: ________________________________________________

Date/Time of Report to preceptor/clinical department manager: _______________________________

Name of Faculty/Advisor reviewing the report: _____________________________________________

Signature of Injured Student: ____________________________________________________________
Appendix C: Remediation Form

South University - Tampa
Physician Assistant Program

Remediation Plan

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<th>Course Number and Name</th>
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This Remediation Plan has been created by the faculty and me with the specific purpose of correcting issues or deficiencies.

The specific objectives of this Remediation Plan are:

Some of the suggested actions I will take to accomplish my objectives are:

If I do not meet the above objectives, I understand that there are or may be specific consequences such as:

I understand that I must complete the above actions before:

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Results of Remediation Plan

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<th>Student</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>Course (Name &amp; PA #)</td>
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</table>

The specific results of this Remediation Plan are:

Any remaining suggested actions that I will take to accomplish these objectives are:

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<th>Student signature</th>
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<td>Faculty signature</td>
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Appendix D: Performance Improvement Plan

Student Name: ___________________________ Date:__/__/____

☐ Didactic Year  ☐ Clinical Year (plan must include clinical site visit)

Form Completed by: _______________________

Rationale for Entering Student in Performance Improvement Plan

Description of the Performance Improvement Plan (Must include timeline)

Date and results of site visit (if clinical year)

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

Student ___________________________
Director of Didactic Education _________________
Faculty Mentor __________________________
Program Director ________________________

Date:___/___/____
Follow up of PIP (Date and results of Performance Improvement Plan)

☐ Continue Performance Improvement Plan (outline changes/additions below)

☐ Successful completion of Performance Improvement Plan

Successful Performance Improvement Plan Completion Verification:
Student:_______________
Director of Didactic Education:_______________
Faculty Mentor: _________________
Program Director: ________________
Date: ___/___/___
Appendix E: Participation of Students as Human Subjects Form

There are multiple physical examination and skill activities taught during the program. In addition to educating students in their roles as practitioners, having students fill the role of patients during these activities helps them become more sensitive to the patient perspective. Furthermore, active participation and repetition reinforce learning. Therefore, the South University Tampa PA Program:

- Requires the participant of students as human subjects during selected courses.
- Expects its students to willingly participate in all aspects of physical exam and technical skills training in a professional and cooperative manner.

At various times, students will be required to wear clothing that will easily allow physical examination by another student. Examples of modestly appropriate attire include sports bras, exercise wear, and shorts.

For any questions or concerns with this policy, please contact the course director.

I hereby signify that I have read and understand this policy and am willing to participate as a human subject as described.

Student Signature:_________________________ Date:_________________

_________________________________________________________________

Print Legibly Student’s Full Name
Appendix F: Recorded Lectures Policy Agreement

You have been permitted to tape or digitally record class lectures for your personal study only. Lectures taped for this purpose may not be shared with other people without the consent of the lecturer. Information contained in the recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without the express consent of the lecturer and without giving proper identity and credit to that person.

In order to maintain the integrity of the services offered and to honor copyright law, I certify and agree as follows:

I agree to abide by the following rules for obtaining and using recorded course materials:

- I will not copy or reproduce the educational material (recordings) being provided nor allow anyone else to do so.

- I will not allow anyone else to use the educational material (recordings).

- Violation of this Agreement may be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in penalties including suspension and expulsion. Violations may also constitute a violation of federal and/or state laws and may result in civil or criminal prosecution, payment of fines or other moneys to the copyright holder, and/or incarceration.

I, the undersigned student, understand the rules listed above and will comply.

Student Signature ___________________________ Date ________________

Program Director Signature ________________________________________
Appendix G: Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I, _____________________________________, have read the information contained within the South University, Tampa Physician Assistant 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 Physician Assistant 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 including clinical learning outcomes for graduation from the South University Master of Science in Physician Assistant 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: _______________________________________________
Appendix H: 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,
STUDENT HANDBOOK

ANNOTATION: The program is expected to post on its web site 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 web site 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.
Appendix H: Program Faculty and Staff Contact Information

South University, Tampa Physician Assistant Program
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