



SCHOOL OF
MEDICINE

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

UNM Physician Assistant Program PA Student Handbook

Department of Family and Community Medicine

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This is not a controlled document if printed. The user of this document must ensure the current, approved version of the document is being used. The current PA Student Handbook may be found on the [PA Program website](#). The current document replaces all previous versions. The University of New Mexico School of Medicine and the Physician Assistant Program reserve the right to change any information regarding policies and procedures as deemed necessary.

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GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Administration Overview

The University of New Mexico (UNM) Physician Assistant (PA) Program is administered within the Department of Family & Community Medicine (A1.02a-f). Student instruction is provided by Physician Assistant Program faculty and by interprofessional instruction from School of Medicine, College of Pharmacy, and College of Population Health faculty. The program is bound by policies and procedures of:

- Physician Assistant Program (PA Program)
- Department of Family & Community Medicine (DFCM)
- School of Medicine (SOM)
- Health Professions Programs (HPP)
- Health Sciences Center (HSC)
- University of New Mexico (UNM)
- The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA)
 - You will notice letters and numbers in parentheses throughout this handbook, i.e. (A3.01). These references are included in order to identify which ARC-PA standards are met by policies and procedures included in the Student Handbook. Other notations may include a certain competency that can be linked to course syllabi.

This handbook provides information on many policies and procedures adhered to by the Physician Assistant Program; however, it is NOT all-inclusive. Handbook questions should be emailed to your assigned PA Faculty Advisor. This handbook is reviewed and updated at least once per academic year.

The University of New Mexico and the Physician Assistant Program reserve the right to change any information regarding policies and procedures as deemed necessary. Notification of modified policies and procedures will be made via email and will be in effect thirty (30) days from the date of notification.

UNM PA Program policies apply to all PA students, faculty, staff, and the Program Director. Program policies are described in the PA Program Student Handbook (A3.01, A3.02). Additional policies regarding Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs) that may supersede UNM PA Program policies during the SCPE portion of the curriculum are set forth in the associated Training Affiliation Agreements with the clinical sites.

Accreditation

(A3.12a)

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

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the *Standards*. The approximate date for the

next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be September 2034. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation *Standards* and ARC-PA policy.

The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-university-of-nm/>.

Mission Statement

(B1.01a)

The mission of the University of New Mexico Physician Assistant (PA) Program is to educate PA students to become exemplary providers with a focus on primary care medicine for the underserved and rural populations of New Mexico.

Program Goals

(A3.12b, B1.01a)

The University of New Mexico Physician Assistant Program strives to meet the following goals:

1. Recruit and enroll a diverse student body consisting of an average of at least 50% of matriculated students from one or more of the following, based on self-reported data, from the 3 most recently matriculated cohorts:

- The first generation in the family to attend college (neither mother nor father attended college)
- Graduated from a high school from which a low percentage of seniors receive a high school diploma
- Graduated from a high school at which many of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches
- From a family that receives public assistance (g. Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps, Medicaid, public housing) or the individual receives public assistance
- From a family that lives in an area that is designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area or a Medically Underserved Area
- Participated in an academic enrichment program funded in whole or in part by the Health Careers Opportunity Program
- High-school drop-out who received AHS diploma or GED
- From a school district where 50% or less of graduates go to college or where college education is not encouraged
- Economically disadvantaged background based on parent's family income
- English is not primary language
- From isolated rural (population <2,500) geographic area
- Have served in the United States Military

The UNM PA Program has met this goal based on self-reported data from the three most recently matriculated cohorts.

The PA Program faculty and staff participate in a minimum of six outreach activities per year targeted toward sharing information with prospective students from rural and underserved backgrounds.

Additionally, the PA Program offers individual pre-application and post-application advisement appointments for all New Mexico residents, in alignment with our mission, to support prospective PA students from across our state in achieving their educational goals.

2. Prepare graduates to work in rural and underserved areas of New Mexico.

UNM PA Program students receive training on work with rural and underserved populations throughout the didactic curriculum. Students participate in the Health of New Mexico course at the start of the PA curriculum. This course focuses on identifying some of the major health problems in New Mexico, the history of the efforts to improve health in the state, and the role of PAs in addressing these issues. Students also discuss the social determinants in causes and solutions for major health concerns in New Mexico. Throughout the remainder of the didactic curriculum, instruction on caring for and communicating with the demographic populations and ethnic diversity of New Mexicans is woven into courses such as the Geriatrics and Clinical Skills series courses.

UNM PA students' clinical curriculum includes a significant focus on training for rural and underserved populations. To best prepare UNM PA graduates to work in rural and underserved areas, each student partakes in two or more rural and/or underserved rotations. While this is the minimum, students often complete significantly more clinical rotations in rural or underserved areas. Through this, not only do students become acquainted with the socioeconomic difficulties of underserved, rural areas, but the experiences encourage them to become invested in the communities in which they serve and grow. Furthermore, UNM PA students participate in a HRSA grant project awarded to the UNM PA Program, titled "Enhancing Physician Assistant Training to Serve Rural and Underserved Communities of New Mexico." As part of this project, we have partnered with five underserved healthcare communities throughout the state, allowing students to remain in the same rural, underserved location for three consecutive months, creating an even more robust learning experience. In return, our program and students are developing future clinician hiring and community investment pipelines within these rural and underserved areas.

The UNM PA Program has met this goal through the education delivered to students in the didactic and clinical curriculum as described above. The UNM PA Program's focus on rural and underserved communities is clear in the post-graduation survey data collected by the program UNM PA 5-year Post Grad/Alumni Profiles Table, showing a large portion of graduates who provide care to these populations following graduation.

3. Maintain an 85% or better average graduation rate for the 3 most recently graduated cohorts (average of 3 cohorts together).

The UNM PA Program's average graduation rate for the Cohorts 2021, 2022, and 2023 is currently 100%, as seen in the program's post-graduation survey data.

Note: students are considered graduated at the time all program components have been completed and all requirements have been met. In the case of decelerated students, students are considered part of the cohort with which they initially matriculated and are considered graduated once all requirements have been satisfied.

4. Maintain a five-year average first time PANCE pass rate within 5% of the national average.

The UNM PA Program's first time PANCE pass rate, averaged over the past 5 years, is 92% (cohorts 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023). This is within 5% of the national average, which is currently 92%.

Administration

The PA Program is located on the North Campus of the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center within the School of Medicine. The program is a division of the Department of Family & Community Medicine. The Physician Assistant Program administrative offices are located in the Domenici Center for Health Sciences Education West Wing, 1001 Stanford Drive NE, Suite 3010.

The Physician Assistant Program is responsible for the administrative coordination of orientation, registration, maintenance of program-level student records, and course scheduling.

PA Program Committees

The following PA Program committees are involved in student progress, promotion, and evaluation and are referenced later in this Handbook:

PA Curriculum Committee

A committee that consists of PA faculty, PA staff, and the PA Program Director. The committee regularly monitors PA students' academic and professional progress and makes PA Program policy decisions. This committee helps ensure student success and tracks student progress closely. The committee works to help students maintain the high level of professional and academic success that is expected of them. Students may be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee for reasons outlined in the PA Program Adverse Actions section of the PA Student Handbook.

PA-CSPE (PA Committee for Student Promotion and Evaluation)

(A3.15c)

An ad hoc voting committee that meets at the request of the PA Curriculum Committee or for reasons outlined in the PA Program Adverse Actions section of the PA Student Handbook. The committee makes recommendations including, but not limited to: an adverse action, mandatory leave of absence, dismissal from the program, and implementation of a remediation plan. The committee consists of: PA Program Director, two PA principal faculty (one of whom is the student's advisor), one PA from the community, and one SOM faculty member. A representative from HSC Legal Counsel will be present as a non-voting committee member.

IPASS (Integrated Professional and Academic Student Support) Program

(A2.05e-f, A3.15c)

If a student is not meeting academic or professional standards, the Integrated Professional and Academic Student Support (IPASS) Program will create an individualized IPASS Team that consists of the student's faculty advisor, a PA Program faculty member and the IPASS Team Leader to provide support services to students with the intention of maximizing their potential and meeting the academic and professional standards of PA students. The IPASS Team will develop an individualized student learning plan that includes a method of reassessment. The student must successfully complete the learning plan as detailed by the IPASS team. See the "Remediation and IPASS" section of this handbook for more information on IPASS.

STUDENT MATRICULATION AND ENROLLMENT LOGISTICS

Permission Forms

Blank permission and release forms will be emailed to incoming students following acceptance to the UNM PA Program. The forms must be signed and returned to the program by the deadlines specified.

Release of Information

(A3.18)

The University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center (HSC) strives to protect student information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Therefore, students must authorize the release of personal information by offices within the HSC.

Upon admission to the UNM PA Program, incoming students are required to complete a release of information form. Students may elect to authorize or deny the release of their name, previous and current degree program, and photograph. If so authorized by the student, information may be used in the form of a press/web/social media release and/or event program. Events and corresponding programs include, but are not limited to: New Student Orientation, White Coat Ceremony, School of Medicine and PA events, Alumni events, Award Ceremonies, Scholarship Awards, Honor Society Inductions, Convocation, and the class photo composite of students.

Students should be aware that they may be photographed at any event and that the photographs and other information may be released if the student has so authorized. Please note that participation at events such as the White Coat Ceremony and Convocation are not graduation requirements, but all students are encouraged to attend.

Sharing of student information is mandatory in some circumstances. These include the photo identification badge that all PA students are required to wear on campus and in every clinic and the sharing of information with clinical sites to facilitate the onboarding and placement of students into required clinical rotations. Clinics may post/be required to post student names and photos in the settings where students are present.

Federal and state laws permit the University of New Mexico to release some public "directory" information without the student's prior authorization. Students who wish to prohibit the release of directory information to the public may submit a written request to the HSC Registrar and Student Services Officer. Additional details regarding directory information may be obtained through the UNM Registrar's website at <https://registrar.unm.edu/privacy-rights/confidentiality.html>.

Student Academic Records

(A3.17a, A3.17c, A3.17d, A3.17e, A3.17f, A3.18)

Each student has an academic record that is housed securely in the program office and/or in a secure electronic format. This record contains student grades, narrative evaluations, remediation, agreements,

and correspondence involving all aspects of performance and evaluation during the student's tenure at the UNM PA Program. This file is available for student review by appointment. The [Student Records Policy](#) of the University of New Mexico governs student files. PA students and other unauthorized persons do not have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty.

The official student record and associated transcripts are housed at the UNM Registrar's Office. (A3.18)

Transcripts

(A3.18, A3.17c)

PA students' official transcripts are housed by the [Office of the Registrar](#). PA students' grades are recorded on the transcript for each individual didactic and clinical course.

The Office of the Registrar determines availability of and cost associated with unofficial and official transcripts of record. Requests for transcripts by students and alumni should be directed to the Office of the Registrar.

Per UNM policy, no student's transcript or other record at the University will be released to the student or to any other person or institution until all the student's outstanding obligations to the University have been paid or until satisfactory arrangements have been made. These obligations include, but are not limited to loans, library fines, tuition and fees, parking fines, and other charges. Transcripts may also be held for non-financial reasons, such as incomplete admission status.

Course Registration and Verification of Enrollment

Questions concerning course registration and verification of enrollment should be directed to the PA Senior Operations Manager.

PA Student Computing/Technology Information and Guidelines

HSC Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

UNM Health and Health Sciences (including the PA Program) requires personal computer devices to be enrolled in the HSC Mobile Device Management (MDM) system for accessing institutional resources such as the on-campus secure Wi-Fi network and HSC Microsoft 365 services. MDM compliance is required for accessing school emails, connecting to the Health Sciences Center (HSC) private network, taking exams/assessments and using curricular and clinical apps and data. Note that HSC BYOD guidelines are subject to change. Current BYOD guidelines are available at the [HSC IT BYOD web page](#).

PC

- Laptops must have a password for unlocking that is at least 6 characters long.
- Laptops must utilize full-disk encryption software, such as Microsoft BitLocker, which is included with Windows Pro and Education Editions. If your laptop runs Windows Home Edition, you will need to upgrade or use alternative encryption software.
- Antivirus and antispyware software must be installed, enabled, and kept up to date on the device. Microsoft Defender included with all versions of Windows, fulfills this requirement.

Mac

- The laptop must be password-protected for unlocking.

- The laptop must be encrypted using FileVault, Apple's full-disk encryption software.

Android

- Android OS version 11 or higher.
- The device must have a password for unlocking that is at least 6 characters long and not considered a low complexity password (e.g., 123456).
- A password must be set to unlock the device after it has been locked or idle for 5 minutes or more.
- Data storage on the device must be encrypted.

iPhone/iPad

- The device must have a password for unlocking that is at least 6 characters long and not considered a simple password (e.g., 123456).
- A password must be set to unlock the device after it has been locked or idle for 5 minutes or more.

Laptop Requirements

The PA Program has a "Bring Your Own Device" computer policy that allows students to use their personally owned devices for school-related activities.

Those activities include accessing school emails, connecting to the Health Sciences Center (HSC) private network, taking exams/assessments and using curricular and clinical apps and data.

All physician assistant students are **required to have a laptop that meets these minimum system requirements** (MRNs) throughout the program. These specifications are updated every year and depending on the age and condition of your laptop, you may need to obtain a new laptop or update your software to remain in compliance with revised MRNs. They are based on cybersecurity requirements, the MRNs of the applications that are used in the curriculum, and issues that students encounter during the year.

Students who are found to be out of compliance with these guidelines will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee.

Minimum System Requirements for Laptops

PC

- PC model released in 2018 or later (2021 or later recommended)
- Windows 10 (64-bit) or Windows 11, version 22H2 or higher (Windows 11 Pro or Education Edition recommended)
- Alternate versions of Windows 10 and Windows 11, such as Windows RT and Windows 10 and 11 S, are not supported.
- 8 GB of RAM (16 GB recommended)
- 128 GB hard drive (256 GB recommended)
- Minimum of 20GB of available storage, either on internal or external drives.
- 13-inch screen with 1280 X 800 resolution or higher
- Wi-Fi enabled
- Integrated or external webcam and microphone
- Decent battery life (3 hours or more recommended)

- Extended warranty (recommended)

Mac

- Mac model released in 2018 (2021 or later recommended)
- macOS 13 Ventura or higher
- Only genuine versions of macOS are supported
- 8 GB of RAM (16 GB recommended)
- 128 GB hard drive (256 GB recommended)
- Minimum of 20GB of available storage, either on internal or external drives.
- 13-inch screen with 1280 X 800 resolution or higher
- Wi-Fi enabled
- Integrated or external webcam and microphone
- Decent battery life (3 hours or more recommended)
- AppleCare Protection Plan (recommended)

High-speed Internet Access

A high-speed home internet connection is highly recommended (12 Mbps minimum). Make sure that your wireless network is secured with a strong password.

Keep in mind that some courses and/or parts of courses may be taught online as necessary so reliable access is needed. Visit Computing@UNM for resources available through the university.

Tablet Recommendations

If you are planning on using a tablet for class activities, please ensure that it meets these MSRs: (Note: per UNM PA Program testing policy, tablets may only be used for testing purposes as a backup device to the required laptop for exams and assessments.)

iPad

- iPad 5+, iPad Air 3+, iPad Mini 4+, or iPad Pro.
- iPadOS 15 or higher
- Only genuine versions of iPadOS are supported.
- iPad must not be Jailbroken.

Surface Pro

- Surface Pro 6 or newer.
- Windows 10 or 11 on version 22H2 or higher (64-bit). (Windows 11 Pro or Education Edition recommended)
- Windows 10 S and 11 S (S Mode) are not supported.

Computer Support for Students

Academic Multimedia Services (AMS) may provide basic technical support for your personal devices. The level of support available depends on the type of incident. Please contact us for assistance (505-272-0666, HSC-AMS@salud.unm.edu).

Exams and Assessments

PA Students must use their laptops for many PA exams and assessments. Tablets can only be used as a backup device for exams and assessments. It is the student's responsibility to make sure their laptop and backup device is fully functional for taking exams and assessments. The PA Program may only provide very limited assistance for any technical issues or problems stemming from your personal devices. The level of support depends on multiple factors, including the type of issue.

Email and Calendars

The PA Program and the Health Sciences Center use MS Outlook as the official email and calendaring program. You will be assigned an HSC Net ID and HSCNetID@salud.unm.edu email address. You can check your salud email anywhere with a web browser by visiting [Microsoft Office](#) and signing in using your HSC email address and password. The salud email address is considered the official method of communication with students and is the primary method used by the program to contact students. Students are required to read and respond to email promptly. Plan to check your email daily and respond within 48 hours, with the exception of weekends/holidays. To protect data security, student information may not be sent to a non-salud email address. Please remember that MS Outlook is not secure or encrypted but you may add encryption by adding *"*Secure*"* to the subject line (e.g., discussion of your grade). *Patient information must NOT be communicated over this system.*

Textbooks

Medical equipment and books represent a considerable expenditure in the first year. Most texts and equipment can be purchased at the [UNM Medical/Legal Bookstore](#) at competitive prices. Many texts can also be purchased through local suppliers and online services. An increasing number of our core texts are available online through the [UNM Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center](#). Please refer to the booklist for your class, which is made available prior to the start of school, and to the required and recommended materials listed through the Bookstore's website for future semesters.

Medical Instruments

Students are required to have the following medical instruments by fall semester of their first year:

- Stethoscope
- Tuning fork (128Hz or 256 Hz frequency)
- Reflex hammer
- Blood pressure cuff: manual set (regular adult)
- Medical penlight
- Regular watch to measure pulse rate and utilize during clinical skills testing (not a smart watch)

Please note this list is subject to change.

Photo Identification Badges

(A3.06)

All students are required to wear the HSC issued identification badge at all times while present at all HSC facilities. Additionally, all students are required to wear photo identification badges while in University patient-service institutions and during all clinical experiences assigned by the Program. The purpose of

this photo identification badge is to appropriately identify students in patient-service facilities and to distinguish them from other health profession students and practitioners.

There is no fee for the issuance of the initial ID badge. If a badge is lost, report it immediately to the UNM Hospital Security Department at (505) 272-1757. The lost badge must also be reported to the PA Senior Operations Manager, who will obtain approval for a new badge. There will be a replacement fee assessed by UNMH Hospital Security. Students who terminate or graduate from the School of Medicine must return their ID badge to the UNMH badge office. Failure to do so may result in withholding the student's transcript and/or diploma and in fees being assessed.

Parking Permits

All University parking lots require a UNM parking permit during posted hours. Enforcement hours are defined by [Parking and Transportation Services \(PATS\)](#). PA students are given the opportunity to purchase parking permits each year. Additional information may be obtained from PATS, 2401 Redondo Dr. NE. Telephone number is (505) 277-1938. Early purchase is strongly recommended, as these permits are limited. Illegal parking results in fines and/or boots on vehicles.

Tuition, Fees and Other Expenses

(A3.12f)

Tuition and fees for the current academic year can be found by visiting the PA Program Costs and Financial Aid webpage and/or the [UNM Bursar's website](#). Please note that each regular fall and spring semester, PA students will also be charged curriculum fees. Curriculum fees are assessed to cover costs of specialized labs, testing instruments, use and training of simulated patients, and other non-tuition covered services. Curriculum fees are non-refundable. The PA curriculum fee will only be waived in the final semester of enrollment, determined based on the student's anticipated graduation date, and only when the student is completing 16 or fewer credit hours of Clinical Phase coursework, consisting of PA Supervised Clinical Practical Experiences/Clerkships and PA Program to Practice.

Students must be prepared to cover all transportation and living expenses while enrolled in both didactic courses and clinical clerkships.

All students are required to pay tuition, or make arrangements, satisfactory to the University, for such payment prior to the beginning of the fall, spring and summer semesters. The UNM Bursar's Office is the primary billing entity for the University. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Bursar's website and promptly responding to email invoices that are generated by the Bursar's Office.

Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) Costs

Students are responsible for additional costs related to the clinical experience. These costs include all of the following, but are not limited to:

- Tuition and curricular fees must be paid on time
- All housing and travel costs while on SCPEs (clinical clerkships), including those in rural locations
- Background checks
- Fingerprinting
- Drug screening
- Immunizations

Financial Aid

(A1.04)

Every effort will be made to assist those students who have demonstrated financial need in obtaining financial support for their PA education. Questions about financial aid should be directed to the [HSC Office of Financial Aid](#).

Tuition Refunds

(A1.02k)

All tuition and special course fee refunds are based on the date of official drop, withdrawal, or disenrollment as per UNM policy. Curriculum fees are non-refundable. Open Learning Courses, or courses not falling in the traditional schedules (including many PA Program courses), are fully refundable if dropped before 20% of the course has been completed. (Do not include partial days when calculating 20% of completion. For example, 20% of an eight-day course equals 1.6 days. Therefore, the refund is calculated only if the course is dropped on or before the first day.) Courses that are five days or less in duration must be dropped on or before the first day of the course to receive a full refund.

To receive consideration for a refund of paid tuition and fees, students must meet the deadlines outlined by the UNM Bursar's Office and:

1. Notify the Program Director in writing;
2. Complete drop procedures at the [UNM Office of the Registrar](#); and
3. Complete a refund request in the [UNM Bursar's Office](#).

Change of Address, Telephone Number or Email

Current students must process a change of address or phone number for their academic records by using the [MyUNM](#) portal any time there is a change.

Students are also required to keep the PA Program informed of their current home address, email address, and telephone number. In addition to submitting changes through MyUNM, any change of address or other contact information should also be reported to the PA Senior Operations Manager immediately. Students must also update personal information in Exxat during the clinical year.

Name Change

To process a name change for academic records, in addition to notifying the PA Program in writing, students must submit appropriate documentation, including the [Demographic Change Form](#) and required supporting documentation, to the PA Senior Operations Manager. No types of documentation other than those listed are accepted. The change will be processed by the Health Sciences Registrar.

UNM/HSC Training Requirements

(A1.02g, A3.08, A3.15f, B2.16)

All PA students will be required to complete and stay current on specified training requirements. These annual courses include, but are not limited to, the following.

Courses to be completed annually in the university's Learning Central training system are as follows. You may need to search for the following courses and add them to your learning plan if they have not already been added:

- Basic Annual Safety Training
- HIPAA Security Training
- HIPAA and HITECH Training
- UNMH/HSC Compliance Training
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Gateway
- Active Shooter on Campus: Run, Hide, Fight
- Blood Borne Pathogen Training for HSC
- HSC Codes of Professionalism and Conduct
- PPE Donning and Doffing Videos
- UME User Agreement for Web Applications

Additional trainings to be completed include:

- The Grey Area sexual misconduct prevention training through the LoboRespect Office
- Basic Life Support (BLS)/Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS)
- Others as needed/required by the Program or University

Please reference the list of mandatory trainings provided on the Academic Multimedia Services IT Connect guide for current listings of all trainings and their Learning Central course number for the most up-to-date information.

Clinical sites where Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs) take place may require site-specific training. The Clinical Team will inform students of these additional site requirements as SCPE assignments are completed. Students must complete these trainings by the deadlines provided.

Students are responsible for completing all mandatory trainings and monitoring compliance. Failure to complete required trainings may result in a professionalism warning, referral to the PA Curriculum Committee or PA-CSPE, and/or adverse actions.

Student Initiated Withdrawal from the PA Program

(A3.15d)

A student considering withdrawal from the program should meet with the PA Program Director prior to formally documenting intent to withdraw.

After meeting with the PA Program Director, the student is required to notify the Program Director, in writing, of the intent to withdraw from the PA Program. Notifying general faculty or staff affiliated with the program either verbally or in writing is **insufficient**. Once written notification is received by the Program Director, the student will be asked to complete an exit survey. Once the exit survey is complete, the withdrawal is considered final and is not subject to reversal. The PA Program Director will document receipt of the notice by written correspondence with the student. A copy of the student's and Program Director's correspondence will be kept in the student file.

In addition, students must comply with University policies and procedures for withdrawal from courses and/or the University. Students remain responsible for meeting all deadlines with regard to financial aid and/or tuition refunds. If the student is receiving financial aid, the student must notify the Senior Operations Manager and the Health Sciences Center Financial Aid Office within two days of the Program Director's receipt of notice of withdrawal.

Students withdrawing due to military obligations must follow the requirements set forth by the Dean of Students Office.

More information on withdrawal from courses is available from the Dean of Students Office.

Student Records Management and Destruction

(A3.17a-f, A3.18, A3.19)

Student records are primarily electronic and are kept and maintained in either locked or access controlled files. Once a student has graduated from the PA Program and depending on the record type, student records are either: kept and updated (ex. demographic: email, address, etc.), kept and archived for the appropriate period of time (ex. academic records: grades, advisements), or destroyed and no longer maintained (ex. medical, immunizations, etc.) in accordance with State of New Mexico Records Retention Guidelines; UNM Policy 6020: Records Management, Retention, and Disposal; and guidelines of the ARC-PA.

CURRICULUM

The UNM PA Program Curriculum

(A3.12d, A3.12e, B1.02, B2.08, B3.03)

The UNM PA Program is a 27-month-long program, which is divided into two phases consisting of clinical preparatory (didactic) courses and supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs). The curriculum includes applied medical, behavioral and social sciences; patient assessment and clinical medicine; supervised clinical practice; and health policy and professional practice.

The clinical preparatory (didactic) portion of the program is integrated with the School of Medicine curriculum for first- and second-year MD students. The clinical preparatory courses focus on the basic sciences, physiology, pathophysiology, mechanisms of disease, and clinical correlation organized by organ systems. The PA Program delivers concurrent PA-specific courses that are more heavily focused on clinical application of knowledge and skills for preparation to be a primary care provider in alignment with our mission.

The SCPE portion of the program consists of hands-on clinical training to cover preventive, emergent, acute, and chronic patient encounters. These hands-on experiences will prepare the student to care for patients across the life span. SCPEs will occur in the following settings: emergency department, inpatient, outpatient, and operating room. The majority of SCPEs will occur with qualified practicing PAs and MDs but may occasionally occur with other members of the healthcare team. (B3.04, B3.05, B3.06)

The two phases to the PA Program curriculum are:

PHASE I: Clinical preparatory (didactic) instruction

PHASE II: Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs)

Program Course Credits:

Clinical Preparatory (didactic) credit hours: 58 credit hours

Supervised Clinical Practice Experience credit hours: 28 credit hours

Total credit hours: 86 semester credit hours

Detailed curricular information may be found at <http://catalog.unm.edu/> and on the PA Program Curriculum web page.

NCCPA Blueprint

(B2.02, B2.03)

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is the national certifying body for Physician Assistants. The NCCPA administers the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). To become nationally certified, students are responsible for learning specific conditions and being able to perform certain tasks as designated by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). It is highly recommended that students begin looking at the NCCPA website upon matriculation to become familiar with knowledge content areas: [NCCPA Content Blueprint](#).

Program Course Information and Requirements

(A3.12e)

Detailed information for all PA Program courses and Requirements can be found in the [UNM Catalog](#) and on the PA Program Curriculum web page.

Degree plans for current cohorts are listed below. Courses, semesters, and credit hours are subject to change through university catalog/scheduling processes.

PA Class of 2024 Degree Plan

Course	Credit hrs
Summer 2022	3
PAST 535 PA Clinical Seminar	3
Fall 2022	13
PAST 510 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine I	1
PAST 512 PA Human Anatomy	4
PAST 515 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine I	1
PAST 517 PA Microbiology and Immunology	2
PAST 520 PA Pharmacology I	1
PAST 530 PA Clinical Skills I	1
PAST 570 PA Foundations of Medical Science	3
Spring 2023	15
PAST 513 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine II	1
PAST 516 PA Hematology	2
PAST 518 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine II	1
PAST 521 PA Emergency Medicine I	1
PAST 523 PA Pharmacology II	1
PAST 531 PA Clinical Skills II	1
PAST 540 PA Dermatology	2
PAST 541 PA Orthopedics	2
PAST 547 PA CV-Pulmonary-Renal	4
Summer 2023	9
PAST 502 PA Foundations of Research Methodology	1
PAST 522 PA Emergency Medicine II	1

PAST 532 PA Clinical Skills III	1
PAST 548 PA Infectious Disease	3
PAST 552 PA Sexuality, Reproduction and Endocrine	3
Fall 2023	18
PAST 514 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine III	1
PAST 519 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine III	1
PAST 524 PA Pharmacology III	1
PAST 526 PA Emergency Medicine III	1
PAST 527 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine IV	2
PAST 529 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine IV	2
PAST 533 PA Pharmacology IV	2
PAST 534 PA Clinical Skills IV	1
PAST 545 PA Neurosciences	4
PAST 550 PA GI, Nutrition, Metabolism (GINM)	3
Spring 2024	15
PAST 560 PA Clerkship Family Medicine	3
PAST 561 PA Clerkship Women's Health & Prenatal Care	3
PAST 562 PA Clerkship Pediatrics	3
PAST 563 PA Clerkship Behavioral Medicine - Psychiatry	3
PAST 564 PA Clerkship Emergency Medicine	3
Summer 2024	6
PAST 565 PA Clerkship General Internal Medicine	3
PAST 566 PA Clerkship Elective	3
Fall 2024	7
PAST 568 PA Clerkship Surgery	3
PAST 575 PA Clerkship Primary Care	3
PAST 600 PA Program to Practice	1
TOTAL	86

PA Class of 2025, 2026, 2027 Degree Plan

Course	Credit hrs
Summer 2023	3
PAST 535 PA Clinical Seminar	3
Fall 2023	12
PAST 512 PA Human Anatomy	4
PAST 517 PA Microbiology and Immunology	2
PAST 530 PA Clinical Skills I	1
PAST 541 PA Orthopedics	2
PAST 570 PA Foundations of Medical Science	3
Spring 2024	16
PAST 510 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine I	1
PAST 513 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine II	1
PAST 515 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine I	1
PAST 516 PA Hematology	2
PAST 518 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine II	1
PAST 520 PA Pharmacology I	1
PAST 521 PA Emergency Medicine I	1
PAST 523 PA Pharmacology II	1
PAST 531 PA Clinical Skills II	1
PAST 540 PA Dermatology	2
PAST 547 PA CV-Pulmonary-Renal	4
Summer 2024	9
PAST 502 PA Foundations of Research Methodology	1
PAST 522 PA Emergency Medicine II	1
PAST 532 PA Clinical Skills III	1
PAST 548 PA Infectious Disease	3
PAST 552 PA Sexuality, Reproduction and Endocrine	3
Fall 2024	18
PAST 514 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine III	1

PAST 519 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine III	1
PAST 524 PA Pharmacology III	1
PAST 526 PA Emergency Medicine III	1
PAST 527 PA Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine IV	2
PAST 529 PA Adult and Geriatric Medicine IV	2
PAST 533 PA Pharmacology IV	2
PAST 534 PA Clinical Skills IV	1
PAST 545 PA Neurosciences	4
PAST 550 PA GI, Nutrition, Metabolism (GINM)	3
Spring 2025	15
PAST 560 PA Clerkship Family Medicine	3
PAST 561 PA Clerkship Women's Health & Prenatal Care	3
PAST 562 PA Clerkship Pediatrics	3
PAST 563 PA Clerkship Behavioral Medicine - Psychiatry	3
PAST 564 PA Clerkship Emergency Medicine	3
Summer 2025	6
PAST 565 PA Clerkship General Internal Medicine	3
PAST 566 PA Clerkship Elective	3
Fall 2025	7
PAST 568 PA Clerkship Surgery	3
PAST 575 PA Clerkship Primary Care	3
PAST 600 PA Program to Practice	1
TOTAL	86

Course Descriptions

(A3.12d)

PA-specific Courses

These courses are specifically designed and delivered to only UNM PA students. Topics include: Population Health, Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, Adult and Geriatric Medicine, Pharmacology, Foundations of Research Methodology, Orthopedics, Dermatology, Emergency Medicine, Infectious Disease, Human Sexuality Reproduction and Endocrine, and Program to Practice. (B2.03, B2.08, B2.09, B2.13, B2.14, B2.15a, B2.15b, B2.15d)

Clinical Skills Series Courses

A series of courses provided to prepare the student for future practice. Some of these courses are shared in small groups, interdisciplinary settings with UNM SOM MD students, and UNM Pharmacy students. Each course has a SOM Block Chair and a PA Instructor of Record (IOR) who serves as the point of contact for the PA Program. The content is designed to introduce the PA student to interprofessional communication and collaboration, communication tools and deductive reasoning to perform appropriate history and physical examinations, and tools to provide medical care to diverse patient populations (B2.04, B2.05, B2.06, B2.07, B2.09, B2.10, B2.11, B2.12, B2.16, B2.17f, B2.18, B2.19, B2.20).

Introduction to Clinical Medicine Courses

Courses that provide foundational medical knowledge based on organ systems. These didactic courses are shared in an interdisciplinary setting with UNM SOM MD students. Each course has a SOM Block Chair and a PA Instructor of Record (IOR) who serves as the point of contact for the PA Program. Course topics include but may not be limited to: Anatomy, Hematology, Microbiology and Immunology, Neurosciences, CV-Pulmonary-Renal, GI-Nutrition-Metabolism, Foundations of Medical Science (B2.02, B2.03, B2.06, B2.07, B2.08, B2.09, B2.11, B2.12)

Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs)

The clinical hands-on training courses assigned by the PA Program's Clinical team. Topics for SCPEs include: Family Medicine, Women's Health & Prenatal Care, Pediatrics, Behavioral Medicine-Psychiatry, General Internal Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Surgery, Primary Care, and Elective. (B2.10, B3.03, B3.04, B3.07)

Course descriptions are available in the UNM [Catalog](#) under the Courses menu.

Course Syllabi

(B1.03)

Course syllabi will be provided for each pre-clinical (didactic) and clinical course.

The course syllabi will describe all course requirements and include information such as individual course name, course description, faculty instructor of record, course goal, learning outcomes and instructional objectives, methods of evaluation, and plan for grading. Individual instructor teaching methodologies will vary with the subject taught. The incorporation of papers, problem sets, number/types of quizzes etc., is left to the Instructor of Record's (IOR) discretion and best judgment regarding the most effective manner in which to teach and assess the course material.

Clinical Preparatory Curriculum (also called Didactics) Overview

Clinical preparatory courses are an essential component of the educational curriculum of the UNM Physician Assistant Program. These didactic courses are designed to provide an educational infrastructure for the breadth and depth of primary care. (B2.04, B2.05, B2.06, B2.07, B2.10, B2.11, B2.12, B2.16, B2.17f, B2.18)

The didactic component of the curriculum will support the physician assistant student in:

- Acquiring knowledge about established and evolving biomedical, clinical and cognate (e.g., epidemiological and social/behavioral) sciences related to primary and specialty care and,
- Developing skills in the application of this knowledge to patient care

Courses include lectures, case-based learning tutorials, assigned readings, activities and workshops to support curriculum objectives. PA students must refer to and comply with the detailed course requirements outlined in the PA-specific syllabi for successful completion of the program.

The PA Program shares interdisciplinary lectures with the SOM MD program. Their lectures are grouped into Organ System “Blocks.” Faculty members from the many professions of the Health Sciences Center (HSC) campus give lectures based on their area of expertise. The role of the PA IOR is to determine the appropriate learning outcomes and instructional objectives for the PA student, review content, develop assessment methods and provide additional lectures and activities to supplement the SOM lectures.

The PA Program also requires courses that are specific to the PA student. These courses are primarily taught by PA faculty members and designed to meet the needs of graduate PA education. These PA-specific courses run concurrently with the SOM blocks.

For individual course descriptions, please refer to the relevant syllabus and the [UNM Catalog](#).

Clinical Curriculum Overview

(B3.03, B3.04, B3.07)

Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs) are assigned to each PA student to learn hands on patient care skills in various clinical settings. The Clinical Team determines and assigns students to each clinical setting. In addition, the Clinical Team organizes and assesses the clinical education for the program.

In support of the mission of the UNM PA Program, the PA student will have 9 full-time SCPEs based on ARC-PA standards. When scheduling SCPEs, the Clinical Team will take into consideration preceptor availability, preceptor field of practice, suitability for the student and student requests. Please note that the program may assign multiple rural rotations outside of the Metro/Bernalillo county area. Students should expect to travel up to several hours outside the Albuquerque area multiple times throughout the clinical curriculum. Students will need to drive to assigned locations; reliable personal transportation is required.

Preceptor Recruitment

(A2.16, A3.03, B3.05, B3.06)

Clinical preceptors graciously volunteer their time toward the PA student’s education. Preceptors are primarily Physician Assistants (PA-Cs), medical doctors (MDs or DOs), and occasionally other licensed health care providers qualified in their area of instruction. The UNM PA Program has a policy and process in place to vet preceptors to ensure that SCPEs occur with physicians who are specialty board certified, PAs who are NCCPA certified, or preceptors who are otherwise qualified in their area of instruction. On occasion, the student may spend time at their assigned SCPE with other healthcare professionals with prior approval of the PA Clinical Coordinator. The student may also spend time with an interprofessional team that includes residents and a supervising physician.

It is extremely important to note that students are not to recruit clinical preceptors. If a student knows of a potential preceptor or clinical site, the student shall give the contact information to the Clinical Coordinator. The Clinical Team will then assess the site and preceptor to determine suitability for

requirements of PA education. A student's violation of this policy will result in referral to the PA Curriculum Committee and/or referral to PA-CSPE for adverse action.

Site Visits

(C2.01)

PA faculty members will assess each clinical site. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure each site continues to be an appropriate setting for student learning, patient populations, appropriate supervision, and to take inventory of resources at the site. The faculty who assesses the site may speak with other clinical team members and may observe the student with patients to directly evaluate the student's patient care skills.

SCPE Course Logistics

Detailed information about student responsibilities during the SCPEs is outlined in the relevant SCPE syllabi. In-service training on Exxat and UNMH PowerChart will be provided by the clinical team. Facility-specific electronic medical records for clinical sites outside of the UNMH system will be provided by clinical sites and preceptors.

For individual course descriptions, please refer to the relevant syllabus and the UNM Catalog.

Out-of-State and International Supervised Clinical Practical Experiences

(B3.02)

Students may request to do one out-of-state or international SCPE. The out-of-state or international SCPE must be the student's elective. For purposes of this policy, out-of-state SCPEs are defined as SCPEs occurring outside New Mexico, with the exception of Indian Health Service (IHS) clinics that are located on the Navajo Nation, which do not count as out-of-state in this circumstance. International SCPEs are defined as SCPEs occurring outside of the United States. Furthermore, United States territories are considered international.

The request must be made in writing to the Clinical Coordinator by November 1 of the year preceding the SCPE portion of the curriculum. It is the student's responsibility to identify potential out-of-state/international preceptors and provide contact information for the preceptor's clinical site, to allow the Clinical Team to explore a formal affiliation agreement with the clinical site. Students may provide up to two potential out-of-state/international clinical site possibilities to be explored for the one out-of-state or international rotation that is permitted. Students are cautioned that many out-of-state/international SCPEs are not feasible due to various reasons, including but not limited to the inability to establish an affiliation agreement. The feasibility may not be known until an attempt is made to establish the agreement. If an agreement is not fully finalized and executed a minimum of four months prior to the proposed start date of the rotation, it will be considered to be not feasible and will not be explored further.

Students must have a minimum grade point average of 3.30 in PA Program coursework to be eligible to complete an out-of-state or international SCPE.

Additional details specific to international SCPEs follow in the section below.

International Clinical Supervised Clinical Practical Experiences Policy

(B3.02)

All SCPE academic requirements and policies apply to international SCPEs and are described in the SCPE syllabi. (B3.02) All information described in the Out-of-State and International SCPE section above is also applicable, in addition to the policies in this section.

Students who are interested in taking an international clinical SCPE must provide a written proposal to the Clinical Coordinator via email by November 1 of the year preceding the SCPE portion of the curriculum. The proposal must include:

1. The name of the country and location within the country where the student will take the SCPE;
2. The name of the preceptor(s) – the preceptor(s) must include a physician who is licensed to practice medicine within that country and is credentialed to work in the facilities in which the student will be located;
3. The name of all clinics and hospitals where the student intends to be located; and,
4. A description of the expected area of clinical study with a description of clinical activities and learning objectives.

It must be made clear to the preceptor(s) that the student is there in an educational capacity and not to serve as a worker. (A3.05b)

It is the student's responsibility to ascertain his or her legal status as a PA student in that country with regard to patient care issues. The Clinical Coordinator will review the proposal and will either approve it, require further information, or will bring it to the PA Curriculum Committee and/or full faculty for review and approval or disapproval.

The UNM PA Program will not approve international clinical SCPEs in any location where the U.S. State Department has issued a traveler's warning advisory. In approving a foreign clinical SCPE, the UNM PA Program makes no warranty as to local conditions or potential risks to the student. (A3.07b)

If the proposal is approved, the following applies:

- The SCPE must be taken as the Elective SCPE. It can only be taken during a regular SCPE rotation and after the fifth clinical SCPE. The Clinical Coordinator must approve the final dates of the SCPE.
- All UNM PA Program requirements and policies apply in all cases of international SCPEs.
 - The preceptor is responsible for completing a written evaluation of the student.
 - In addition to the required written clinical log assignments, upon return, the student may be required to give a mini "grand rounds" presentation on their experiences to their classmates and Clinical Coordinator.
- All travel, housing, food, and incidental expenses related to foreign SCPEs are the responsibility of the student.
- The student is responsible for obtaining a passport, arranging visas, and obtaining required and recommended immunizations. The student must procure and maintain health insurance that provides international coverage while abroad.

- If, for any reason, the UNM liability insurance is not available or refuses to cover the student, the SCPE cannot take place.

ATTENDANCE, OUTREACH, SHADOWING, AND EMPLOYMENT

Program Attendance

(A3.15b)

Attendance at all scheduled PA Program specific activities that are not integrated with the SOM (such as lectures and workshops) are mandatory. Students are required to attend classes and take exams at scheduled times. Attendance at SOM activities is not required unless noted by PA Faculty, IOR, or the syllabus for a course (examples of this include participation in Doctoring/Clinical Skills courses and Clinical Reasoning). Failure to attend either classes, clinics, or exams is considered a breach of program policy and may result in referral to the PA Curriculum Committee for concerns of professionalism that could result in delayed program progress, delayed graduation, and/or dismissal from the program. For online/hybrid learning activities, it is expected that students will attend all sessions and engage in small group discussions. If students are not able to watch sessions live, they must watch the recording and email the IOR once reviewed.

Scheduling of session dates and times may be fluid to accommodate for guest lecturer schedules, faculty clinical responsibilities, or other factors. On all dates that are not specifically designated as a break or vacation, students should be prepared to attend in-person didactic sessions Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 A.M. and 5 P.M. An open space on the calendar in the future does not necessarily mean that the time is free; a session may still be scheduled for this time slot. Do not make plans outside of the program more than one week in advance based on an unscheduled time on the calendar.

Absences and Late Arrivals

(A3.15b)

Absence Requests and Notifications:

- Due to the nature of PA education, students are encouraged to prioritize attending all scheduled sessions, and to be proactive about managing schedules and obligations around the program schedule, as absences can significantly impact academic performance and success.
- If a student anticipates an absence or is absent from any course or activity during the didactic (non SCPE) curriculum, they must fill out the [PA Didactic Absence Form](#). Students are responsible for all course work and material regardless of attendance. The student must contact the IOR and arrange to make up all missed work. Recording of lectures or online conferencing during didactic sessions will not be permitted. Didactic absences are granted at the discretion of the Academic Coordinator.
- If a student anticipates an absence or is absent from any clinical experience during the clinical (SCPE) curriculum, they must request an absence through [Exxat](#). For an unanticipated absence (see definitions below), students are responsible for emailing the preceptor and the Clinical Coordinator, and must submit a Time Off Request in Exxat within 24 hours. Students will be required to provide documentation to support an absence in Exxat. Clinical absences are granted at the discretion of the Clinical Coordinator.

The Program recognizes the following types of absences:

- **Anticipated Absence:** A planned absence. Non-emergency surgery, attendance at a wedding or graduation, and job interviews are examples of anticipated absences. Students are responsible for notifying the program using the appropriate option above and submitting support documentation in the 30- to-90-day window prior to the absence. New incoming students may submit requests for anticipated absences after the conclusion of the PA Program orientation. If the student is in the clinical year and does not have clinical placement during the anticipated absence, they must email the absence request to the Clinical Coordinator and then submit the request in Exxat once the rotation publication becomes available.
 - Absence requests that are made less than 30 days prior to an absence may not be granted.
 - Absence requests made more than 90 days prior to the absence will be denied and the student may resubmit the request within the 30-90 day window.
- **Unanticipated Absence:** An absence that was not planned in advance. Examples of an unanticipated absence include but are not limited to: acute illness, bereavement, or car trouble. **Documentation for all unanticipated absences is required. Students are responsible for notifying the program using the appropriate option above and submitting support documentation within 48 hours after an unanticipated absence in the didactic curriculum and within 24 hours in the clinical curriculum.**
- **Late Arrival:** Late arrivals exceeding 5 minutes to any class/activity during the didactic portion of the curriculum without notifying the IOR will be considered an absence. Late arrivals to clinics or SCPEs exceeding 15 minutes without notifying the program and preceptor will be considered an absence.
- **Professional Absence:** An absence for professional development such as attendance at a PA conference. A job interview is not considered professional absence; it is considered an anticipated absence. Professional leave is granted at the discretion of the academic coordinator during the didactic phase of the program or by the clinical coordinator during the clinical phase.

Pregnancy:

Students are strongly encouraged to report any pregnancy to the PA Program Director upon medical confirmation. The PA Program will work with the student to ensure maximum safety for the student and baby and continuation of the PA Program curriculum. Actions may include a delay in the program curriculum and graduation.

Testing/Assessment Absences:

- Anticipated and professional absences that cause a student to miss a test or assessment will **not** be approved.
- Unanticipated absences that cause a student to miss a test or assessment will be reviewed on an individual basis by the IOR and the Academic Coordinator or Clinical Coordinator. In these cases, outcomes may include but are not limited to:
 - Scheduling a make-up test/assessment on a different date/time.
 - Permissions to take a make-up test/assessment remotely with a proctor.

- A zero or failing grade with no option to make-up the test/assessment or replace the grade.
- Documentation for missing exams is always required.

Excessive Absences: A student will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee for determination of possible adverse action for the following reasons:

- **Didactic Absences:**
 - If a student exceeds a total of ten missed hours of PA courses in a semester or three absences in a course.
 - An Instructor of Record (IOR) or faculty member is concerned about absences or late arrivals to class.
- **Clinical (SCPE) Absences:**
 - Student-initiated absences: If a student misses more than 1 day of a SCPE for any student absence reason (i.e., not a reason of the preceptor, clinic closure, or weather), or the student fails to notify the Clinical Coordinator of an absence following the requirements detailed above.
 - Externally-initiated absences: If the student is unable to be in clinic due to severe weather/hazardous driving conditions, clinic closure, or preceptor being unavailable to precept the student (including preceptor being out on leave and no other licensed providers available to precept) and the student does not let the Clinical Coordinator know as soon as the student becomes aware of the situation.
 - These policies apply regardless of how many hours the student has completed in that SCPE.
- Refer to the “Adverse Actions” section for details on adverse actions.

Long-Term Leave of Absence

(A3.15b, A3.15c)

The operational definition of a Long-Term Leave of Absence is one in which the amount of class time missed by the student is equal to, or more than, one full course of study (i.e., one course or one supervised clinical practice experience).

Long-term leave is given only under special circumstances of extended illness (and, as such, requires a written statement from the student’s personal health care provider); extreme family hardship or other extenuating circumstances. A long-term leave of absence must be formally requested as a written letter to the PA Program Director requesting a leave of absence. The leave of absence request will be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and the PA Program Director, and a decision will be made to approve or deny the long-term leave of absence. In no case will long-term leave of absence be granted without the permission and formal approval of the PA Program Director and the Curriculum Committee.

If the student requests an extension of the leave of absence, a new letter will need to be submitted explaining why the extension is needed. It will be reviewed by the PA Curriculum Committee and PA Program Director and a decision will be made to approve or deny the request. If approved, a new return date will be documented. A statement of fulfillment of any requirements that may have been made as a condition for return must be provided by the student to the PA Curriculum Committee and accepted by the committee before the student may return to the program.

After a Long-Term Leave of Absence, the returning student will be required to make up any missed didactic and/or clinical training either by taking the missed courses in their normal sequence and/or by an extension of time prior to their graduation.

Students should be aware that a Long-term Leave of Absence will result in:

- A delay in the University of New Mexico graduation
- Additional tuition costs
- A delay in taking the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE)

Any student who takes a long-term leave of absence without proper approval will be given a failing grade for any missed course(s) and will be referred by the PA Curriculum Committee to the PA-CSPE for possible dismissal.

The PA Program reserves the right to seek the consultation and advice of the Dean of the School of Medicine, University Counsel, any university faculty and/or UNM Dean of Students Office prior to the student's re-entry into the PA Program.

Student Outreach and Community Service Activities

UNM PA Program students are encouraged to perform service-related activities during their time in the program unless such participation is negatively affecting academic performance. These activities may be either clinical or non-clinical. Non-clinical community service activity examples include outreach, mentoring, fundraising, or participating in PA events including admissions, convocation, and white coat ceremonies, among others. Clinical community service activity examples include delivery of health-related information and or performance of a clinical skill (e.g., blood draw, vital sign analysis, physical examination or any activity that involves direct participant contact). *A simplified differentiation: If students will be physically touching event participants or giving medical advice, the event is **clinical**.* Note that Albuquerque Opportunity Center (AOC), One Hope, and other recurring UNM student-run clinics are considered an adjunct to your instruction, rather than outreach/community service.

Students participating in all community service activities must complete and adhere to the following:

- Each student or one student on behalf of a group of students, involved in the community service activity, who are representing themselves as a UNM PA student, must submit a [PA Service/Outreach/Shadowing Request](#) as early as possible prior to an event and no later than one week prior. The Outreach Coordinator will review this form and update the student on approval status within 2 business days.
- At each event, students must utilize a visible notification such as a program tablecloth or a program banner identifying their affiliation with the UNM PA Program. The student will need to contact the Outreach Coordinator to reserve these items.
- Each student must wear their student ID to be identified as a UNM PA Program student.
- One member of the group must complete a post-event summary and email it to the Outreach Coordinator within 5 business days of the event. This event summary should include participating PA student names, budget details, approximate number of event attendees, the student's assessment of the success of the event (should PA students participate in this event in the future?) and pictures.

Students participating in **clinical** community service activities must adhere to the above **plus**:

- At all clinical events, a UNM PA Program faculty member must be on site and directly supervising the activity.
- Student participants must attend pre-event briefings scheduled by the Outreach Coordinator and conducted by an approved PA Program faculty member or representative. This briefing will give participants a better understanding of goals, expectations, procedures, and outcomes and may uncover additional needs.
- HIPAA protection of patient privacy must be ensured.
- Informed consent of the patient must be obtained.
- A contact method (i.e., name, e-mail address and/or phone number) for every event participant must be obtained.
- It must be made clear to an observer that the activity is being performed by physician assistant students.

In cases where bodily fluids may be involved, appropriate precautions must be taken to ensure patient safety and student protection (A3.08).

- Students must have completed appropriate coursework and adhere to OSHA’s Bloodborne Pathogens Standards and the principles of Universal Precautions in the presence of blood and or bodily fluids.
- Students must be trained, evaluated, and supervised by faculty in the use of any equipment to obtain or test bodily fluids.
- Students must adhere to procedures outlined in the “Accidents or Blood & Body Fluid Exposure” section of this handbook should any needlestick or other injury involving body fluids occur.

Students should be aware that from the time they enter the UNM Physician Assistant Program, until they officially graduate from the program, they are regarded as PA students 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **It is understood that the items listed in this section are not recommendations, they are requirements. Students will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee for violation of any part of this policy as a breach of professionalism and may result in dismissal from the Program.**

Shadowing & Clinical Experience for PA Student Professional Development

Shadowing is defined as teaming up with licensed professionals to have a greater understanding of their scope of practice. The shadowing student is not allowed to directly participate in the care and treatment of patients. Students are there to observe ONLY. Students may not take part in any clinical experiences, including shadowing or observing, without prior written approval of the Clinical Coordinator.

If a student wishes to shadow, the student must do the following:

- Submit a request to the Clinical Coordinator via the [PA Service/Outreach/Shadowing Request](#) at least 30 days prior to the desired day.
- The request must include the name, email address of the provider, name of the healthcare facility and the department, requested shadow day(s), and number of hours.
- Students must be in good academic standing to participate in shadowing.

Further considerations that the Clinical Coordinator may discuss with the Curriculum Committee include:

- Number of prior requests made.
- The capacity and consideration of the provider/department that is being requested to shadow.
- Maximum of 16 hours over the program's duration.

You must receive written notification of the decision from the Curriculum Committee before your shadowing date.

Shadowing Requests will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Shadowing is not allowed during Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences.
- Shadowing may not occur during the required PA/MD didactic curriculum hours. This includes scheduled PA/MD didactic curriculum that is offered online via Zoom or other online platforms.
- Student-led clinics such as Albuquerque Opportunity Center (AOC), One Hope, and UNM Vaccine clinics are not considered shadowing experiences, as these are excellent opportunities to engage with patients from a variety of populations and work inter-professionally. However, where applicable, the student will make that request via the [PA Service/Outreach/Shadowing Request](#) with designation of Community Outreach Service.

Students should be aware that from the time they enter the UNM Physician Assistant Program, until they officially graduate from the program, they are regarded as PA students 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **The items listed above are requirements and not recommendations. Students will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee for violation of any part of this policy as a breach of professionalism and may result in dismissal from the Program.**

Student Employment

(A3.04, A3.05a, A3.05b, A3.15e)

The following policies apply to all UNM PA students:

- PA students must not be required to work for the program (A3.04).
- PA students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty (A3.05a).
- PA students must not substitute for clinical or administrative staff (A3.05b).

Students may not accept payment, fees, or other remuneration for their service. Payment, fees or other remuneration is not to be interpreted to mean housing, meals, or transportation when provided by the clinical site.

There is no policy expressly prohibiting students from outside employment while they are actively enrolled students in the UNM PA Program. However, working while enrolled in this demanding program is strongly discouraged. If a student continues to work (EMT, paramedic, nurse, tech, etc.), the student must work within the scope of that license and assigned job duties. The student is not covered under the PA Program's malpractice coverage during such employment. (A3.15e)

No allowance will be made for absence from classes or for missing class requirements due to outside work or licensing/training/certification maintenance required for work. The program strongly encourages students to make financial arrangements to enable the devotion of their time to their physician assistant studies.

STUDENT PROGRESS, EVALUATION, REMEDIATION, DECELERATION AND DISMISSAL

Program Competencies

(A3.12g, B1.01b)

At every stage of the program, all students will be expected to conduct themselves with a high level of professionalism, courtesy, and respect for their fellow students, and the faculty, staff, and community members with whom they come in contact. In order to accomplish our mission, the UNM PA Program provides a supportive educational environment that assures each student/graduate the opportunity to acquire and demonstrate competency in the following functions and tasks:

1. Demonstrate professionalism and professional values through: (B2.19)
 - a. Management of interpersonal interactions with patients, fellow students, members of the healthcare team. (B2.04, B2.10)
 - b. Compassion, integrity, and respect for patients, fellow students, members of the healthcare team, faculty, and staff.
 - c. Maintenance of academic honesty, integrity, professional behavior, and communication.
 - d. Personal responsibility and professional insight with patients, fellow students, and members of the healthcare team.
 - e. Performing in the best interest of the patient and others, including self.
2. Development of medical knowledge and clinical reasoning, through: (B2.05)
 - a. Application of an investigatory and analytic approach to develop core knowledge
3. Integration of interpersonal team skills by: (B2.04, B2.10)
 - a. Demonstrate appropriate communication with colleagues within one's professional or specialty, other health professionals, and health-related agencies.
4. Build clinical skills through: (B2.07)
 - a. Gathering essential and accurate information about patients and their conditions through history taking, and physical examination.
 - b. Maintenance of comprehensive and timely documentation and communication.
 - c. Appropriate selection and interpretation of laboratory data, imagining, studies, and other tests.
 - d. Applying an investigatory and analytic approach to clinical situations.

Promotion Schedule

(A3.15b, A3.15c, B4.01b)

The promotion of a student through the PA Program is evaluated on an ongoing basis and determined by the PA Curriculum Committee. At PA Curriculum Committee meetings, students' academic and professional progress is reviewed, and referrals to IPASS are made when needed (see "Remediation and IPASS"). Progression through the PA Program is dependent upon receiving a satisfactory grade in every course and successfully completing the components of an IPASS referral if an IPASS referral is placed. If

a student fails any course, they will not be allowed to continue with the PA curriculum and will be referred to PA-CSPE for recommendations that may include Adverse Actions (see “Adverse Actions”).

Completion of the program requires a passing grade in every course in the PA curriculum, meeting grade and GPA requirements for graduation, and satisfying all other requirements detailed in this handbook and course syllabi.

Please see the PA Program Committees section of this handbook for details on PA Program committees that are involved in student progress and promotion.

Graduation & the Awarding of the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS)

(A1.02e, A3.15a, A3.15b, A3.17f)

It is the responsibility of the faculty of the Physician Assistant Program to ensure that each student recommended for graduation has met the program competencies, acquired the overall cognitive and non-cognitive professional skills, and possesses the knowledge and professional decorum necessary to be a competent physician assistant. Final grades, narrative evaluations, behavioral evaluations and the recommendation of the PA Curriculum Committee and the PA Program faculty will be considered in making graduation decisions.

The final steps to graduation are:

- Completion of all courses in the Introduction of Clinical Courses phase and Supervised Clinical Practical Experience phase of the UNM PA Program; (A3.15b)
- Successfully passing the Final Summative Evaluation (FSE); (B4.03)
- Successfully completing all requirements of the PA Student Clinical Passport; (B2.09, B3.03a-e)
- Completion of the requirements leading to certification as a physician assistant per the NCCPA;
- Recommendation of the student for graduation to the Dean and faculty of the UNM School of Medicine

The University of New Mexico Registrar’s Office confers degrees following the end of each regular semester. PA students who complete all steps and requirements for graduation will have the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree conferred following the end of the term in which all requirements are successfully satisfied. The UNM PA Program will provide each student with a letter of completion upon completion of all requirements. This letter may be used for purposes of licensing and employment until the official university academic record is updated to reflect graduation from the program.

Time to Degree

(A3.15b)

Students must complete all requirements for the UNM Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program within 54 months (4 years and 6 months) of the earliest course taken in the program. An exception to this limit may be considered only if a catastrophic event occurs in the final semester.

Academic Standards and Grading

(A3.15a, A3.15b, A3.15c)

For specific methods of assessment and grading standards, please refer to the specific course syllabus (B1.03). If students fall below acceptable standards, they should refer to the relevant PA Program policies and the policies on Probation and Suspension outlined in The Graduate Program section of the UNM Catalog.

Minimum Grade Standards

The minimum standard for a final course grade for any course in the UNM Physician Assistant Program is 75.0%. If you receive a grade below 75.0% in a course or a “No Credit” in a course that is Credit/No Credit, you will fail that course. PA students must receive a passing grade in all of their Physician Assistant Program courses in order to move forward in the PA curriculum and to take subsequent PA courses. PA students who receive a final grade of <75% in any of their PA courses will not be permitted to move forward in the curriculum and will be referred to the PA-CSPE. This will delay your graduation and may incur additional expenses, and is irrespective of probation status.

Grades

93 - 100: A
90 - 92.9: A-
87 - 89.9: B+
83 - 86.9: B
80 - 82.9: B-
77 - 79.9: C+
75 - 76.9: C

Below standard

< 75: F
Any final grade score below 75 is an F and a student will not receive credit for the course.

Credit/No Credit

Credit: CR
No Credit: NC and a student will not receive credit for the course

Incomplete

According to the UNM Incomplete (I) Grade Policy in the University Catalog, the grade of “I” is given only when circumstances beyond the student’s control prevent completion of the course work within the official dates of a semester or summer session.

Probation

(A3.15a, A3.15b, A3.15c)

The student’s grade point average is checked at the end of every semester and summer session for as long as the student is in graduate status. All students whose academic standing is deficient after receiving grades for 12 attempted credit hours or two semesters, whichever comes first, are placed on probation or suspended, according to the University Catalog or UNM PA Program Policy.

Students who do not maintain good academic standing are placed on academic probation and will be referred to IPASS for development of a learning plan. Probation is defined in two ways: by the UNM University Catalog and the UNM PA Program:

UNM University [Catalog](#) Academic Probation

Type 1: Grade Point Average

A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 for grades earned in graduate level courses taken while in graduate status are placed on Type 1 academic probation. The student is suspended from graduate status if the cumulative grade point average does not reach 3.0 after completion of an additional 12 credit hours of graduate coursework or four regular semesters in probationary status, whichever comes first. Students on Type 1 probation are not eligible to hold assistantships, nor are they allowed to take master's examinations, doctoral comprehensive examinations, defend theses or dissertations, or graduate.

Type 2: NC-F-IF-INC Grades

Students who earn any combination of two grades of NC, F, INC, and/or IF in graduate courses taken in graduate status, even if their cumulative grade point average remains above 3.0, are placed on Type 2 academic probation. The student is suspended from graduate status if a third NC, F, INC, or IF grade is earned. Students on Type 2 probation are not eligible to hold assistantships, nor are they allowed to take master's examinations, doctoral comprehensive examinations, defend theses, dissertations or graduate. When students on Type 2 probation are ready to take final exams or defend theses or dissertations in order to complete graduation requirements, they must petition the PA Program Director to end their probationary status so that they may complete their requirements and graduate. Students on Type 2 probation who maintain a GPA of 3.5 for two consecutive semesters have the sanctions (ability to hold an assistantship, take culminating exams and graduate) waived and written notification thereof from the UNM PA Program.

UNM PA Program Student Probation

The UNM PA Program defines student probation as either academic or professional.

UNM PA Program Student Academic Probation is defined as:

A student receiving 6 credits for coursework completed in which the student receives a course grade of C+ or less. A student can receive a maximum of 6 credits of coursework with a grade of C+ or less during the entire PA program curriculum. Once a student has 6 credits of coursework with a grade of C+ or less on their transcript, no course credit will be given for subsequent coursework with a grade of C+ or less. It is strongly recommended that the student participates in IPASS when they receive 2 or more credit hours of a C or C+. See the Remediation and Integrated Professional and Academic Student Support section of the PA Student Handbook for further details on IPASS.

UNM PA Program Student Professional Probation is defined as:

Decision from PA-CSPE or PA Program Curriculum Committee for violations of PA Program Professional Standards as defined by the PA Program handbook.

Students placed on UNM PA Program Student Probation will be referred to PA-CSPE for possible adverse action. Students may also be referred to IPASS for creation of a learning plan as defined in the UNM PA Program handbook.

Grade Requirements for Graduation

To graduate, students must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in graduate-level courses taken in graduate status at the time of degree completion as well as a grade point average of at least 3.0 for required courses.

Students may not graduate with Incompletes or unrecorded grades (NR) pending in any graduate course, nor may they graduate while on probation. If a student receives a course grade of F, no credit is awarded for that course.

No more than 6 credit hours of coursework in which a grade of "C" (2.0), "C+" (2.33) or "CR" (grading option selected by student) was earned may be credited toward a graduate degree. Courses offered only on a CR/NC basis and required by the graduate program are excluded from this limitation. No credit will be given for subsequent coursework with a grade of "C" or "C+" when a student already has 6 credit hours of "C" coursework.

Grade Replacement Policy

The Graduate Grade Replacement option is effective as of Summer 2007 term and can only be applied to UNM course work taken in Summer 2007 forward. The policy is not retroactive. This means that the first attempt in a course cannot have been prior to Summer 2007.

The Graduate Grade Replacement Policy applies exclusively to required/core courses, which have a program established minimum grade requirement that has not been met. PA students are eligible to replace PAST course grades of "C+" or lower.

This policy limits graduate students to a maximum of 9 credit hours of replacement grades during the course of a student's graduate education and requires approval of the course instructor, the student's advisor, the Program Director, and the Health Sciences Center Registrar.

Although the student may have been in non-degree graduate status when the course was first taken, ONLY students who are in graduate status (admitted to a graduate program) are eligible to use this policy.

A repeated course must result in an improved grade in order to replace the original grade. The higher grade will replace the lower grade from the GPA and earned credit hours. Grades of CR, NC, PR, WP, W/NC, and W are not replaceable grades since they do not affect the grade point average.

The process is NOT automatic. Students must initiate the process by completing a Graduate Grade Replacement form and obtaining the required signatures. The course numbers must be identical, except where equivalencies or a change in course number has been noted in the UNM catalog. No substitute courses are acceptable. If it is a topics course in question, the titles must be identical as well. Forms are accepted after the second attempted grade has been posted to the student's academic record.

A core course may only be repeated once (two instances). The grade from the first instance may be replaced with the repeated grade (second instance) if the student follows the grade replacement processes.

Once a grade replacement has been approved, the process cannot be reversed or changed.

No grade may be replaced after a graduate degree has been awarded.

There are no other deadlines for requesting a grade replacement.

The original grade will remain on the student's transcript, however, the higher grade will be used in the calculation of a student's grade point average and earned credit hours. An "N" will appear next to the course that is to be taken out of the GPA

NOTE: This policy is honored at the University of New Mexico. The University of New Mexico does not guarantee the recognition or acceptance of an improved grade point average resulting from this policy by other institutions or organizations.

Student Assessment

To ensure academic proficiency, failure to pass all components of each course will result in referral to the PA Curriculum Committee or PA-CSPE.

Student Assessment Overview

(B1.03g, B1.03h, B4.01)

Refers to any didactic exam, end of supervised clinical practical experience (SCPE) exam, graded competency exam (CE), any portion of the Final Summative Evaluation (FSE), or other graded assessment/assignment as determined by the PA Program. The Instructor of Record retains the right to determine the grading criteria for their course and the weight of each assessment/assignment in the overall course grade. The course syllabus includes grading information. It is very important that each student carefully read the syllabus at the beginning of the course, and if there are any points of confusion, the student must ask the instructor for clarification.

The majority of PA clinical preparatory and clinical courses will have closed book proctored assessments. It is the policy of the UNM PA Program that any form of academic dishonesty by a PA student shall be dealt with by referral to the PA Curriculum Committee and/or PA-CSPE for possible dismissal. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Copying test answers or other assigned non-group work from classmates;
- Plagiarism of another's work;
- Recording or transmitting test questions or test materials;
- Accessing previous program exams and collaborating on graded assignments unless expressly permitted to do so; and
- Discussing content of exams with others without the instructor's permission.

Test-Taking Academic Honesty

(B2.19)

The student is responsible for academic honesty and for upholding the integrity of exams by not copying and/or saving exam questions or discussing them with others at any time. Each student must take the exam alone and with no references available unless approved by the instructor. Violation of this policy will result in referral of the student to PA-CSPE.

Refer to the PA Student Code of Conduct for more detail.

Student Testing Procedure

Students must follow the UNM PA Program handbook policy on PA Student Computing/Technology Information and Guidelines. You must have your own device for testing. Students who are found to be out of compliance with these guidelines will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee.

PA Students must use their laptops for many PA exams and assessments. Tablets can only be used as a backup device for exams and assessments. It is the student's responsibility to make sure their required laptop and optional backup device is/are fully functional for taking exams and assessments. The PA Program may only provide very limited assistance for any technical issues or problems stemming from your personal devices. The level of support depends on multiple factors, including the type of issue.

1. Students will be expected to download exams one business day in advance (at the time of the exam on the business day before). For example, if an exam is on Monday at 8am, you would download the exam at 8am on Friday.
2. If there is difficulty with downloading the exam, the student must:
 - a. Restart your laptop; if that does not correct the problem then,
 - b. Update Examsoft; if that does not correct the problem then,
 - c. Contact Examsoft support at 866-429-8889, ext. 1 or go to <https://examsoft.com/contact/> to get technical assistance from Examsoft; if that does not correct the problem then,
 - d. You will be allowed to use your backup device. Please download the exam onto your back up device.
 - e. If you are unable to download the test to your back-up device, contact the IOR via email immediately to determine next steps. The PA Program will have a limited number of laptops to use as a backup.
3. At the time of the test, please show up to the testing room 15 minutes prior to the exam start time.
4. At the start of the exam, the proctor will provide you with the start code for your exam.
5. Please open the device that you downloaded the exam prior to the start of the exam and start the exam when directed.
6. If an issue exists with uploading the exam at the end of the exam, you will be asked to restart your computer and reattempt upload of the exam.
7. If you are still not able to upload the exam, you will be asked to e-mail the IOR for that exam.
8. You will be asked to leave the exam room and attempt to upload the exam using a different internet connection (i.e., at home or off campus location).
9. All uploads must be completed by 11:59 PM the day of the exam. If you are not able to upload an exam by the upload deadline, please contact the IOR and notify them that you are not able to upload the exam.
10. After the exam, IOR will confirm that all students have uploaded an exam.
11. If a student does not have an upload associated with the exam, the IOR will contact the student to determine the next steps.

Proctoring Procedures for Assessments

PA exams are typically administered on computers and are proctored. Students must adhere to the following procedures and any other directions provided by the exam proctor:

1. During the exam, students are not allowed to have any personal belongings near them or on their persons. Students must leave all personal belongings at the test room door or in another appropriate place that is out of sight as determined by the proctor. Personal belongings include: all papers, preparation materials, and personal effects (including, but not limited to: notes, textbooks, electronic devices, phones, personal calculators, water bottles, purses, hats, and beanies). All personal electronics must be powered down and stowed away as described in this section, and are not allowed to be used for any purpose during the exam. Students regularly take exams on their personal computers as directed by the Program and must follow the guidelines in #3 below.
 - a. If a student discovers any personal belongings on the student's person during testing, the student must let the proctor know immediately upon recognition of any personal items.
2. Students must maintain proper seating distance from other students.
3. When the student is using a personal computer, all other computer programs, applications, and web browsers must be closed before and during the entire duration of the exam. Students are responsible for ensuring their personal devices are available, in appropriate working condition, and up-to-date with software requirements outlined by the Program and School of Medicine. See the PA Student Computing/Technology Information and Guidelines under Student Logistics in this manual.
4. Students who arrive after the download time set for the exam or are otherwise unable to complete or submit the exam will need to email the instructor.
5. Students will be given one blank sheet of paper to use to take notes during the test, a pen and/or pencil, and a basic function calculator. Any other materials indicated by the instructor will also be provided. Students will put their names on the sheet of paper and then return the paper and all other testing materials to the proctor at the conclusion of the test.
6. Students may not ask the proctor any information about the exam items. Students may request assistance with technical problems, and proctors will assist as best they can but will not answer other questions.
7. Once an exam has begun, students are not to leave the exam room until they have completed and submitted the exam. Exceptions to this rule may be made by the IOR or Program Director if the exam time is longer than 2 hours.
8. Once a student finishes the exam, the student will submit the exam and raise a hand for the proctor to confirm the submission on their computer screen.
9. Students will hand in all notes taken during the exam to the proctor, even if no notes were taken during the exam.
10. Students are not permitted to talk about the exam, either during or after completion of the examination. Sharing any information about the examination is considered a breach of professionalism and will be handled accordingly by the PA-Curriculum Committee. Proctors who witness sharing of information will report it to the IOR.
11. Any improper behavior, suspected cheating, late arrival, or disruptive behavior in any form prior to, during, or after the exam will be reported to the instructor.

12. Students with accommodations for written tests and electronic exams will be accommodated as determined by the UNM Accessibility Resource Center. Standard UNM PA testing protocol is as follows:

1 st Year PA Cohort
90 seconds per question
2 nd Fall Semester
75 seconds per question
January – September Clerkships
60 seconds per question

13. All students must take the exam in the same assigned area. Exceptions include:
- Students who have current documented need for accommodations through the UNM Accessibility Resource Center.
 - Students who must miss an exam for illness or who have a prior-approved alternate make-up time.

Students with Accommodations

(A1.04)

Students with ADA accommodations for written and electronic exams will be accommodated as determined by the UNM Health Sciences Center liaison to the [UNM Accessibility Resource Center](#) (ARC).

Types of Assessment

In addition to the outlined assessments below, there are other forms of student assessment including (but not limited to): graded quizzes, clinical skills exams with simulated patients, and homework assignments. Not all assessments count toward a course grade. Each course syllabus will describe the specifics of the student assessment and grade.

Formative Assessment (B4.01)

Formative assessments may be given as practice for the summative exams. Students who are not doing well with the formative assessments should seek academic advisement.

Summative Assessment (B4.03)

Summative assessment evaluates student learning during a unit of study. Grades from the summative examinations, as well as other described assessment methods in the course syllabus, such as quizzes or homework assignments and modules, will determine the student’s final grade in the course.

Remotely Administered Assessments

Certain circumstances may require assessments to be administered remotely. Remote assessments will be proctored. Student requirements for proctoring will be provided to students before each assessment

and may include (but are not limited to): setting up an additional device with camera to allow a view of the student's screen and surroundings and logging into a Zoom session.

PACKRAT Exam (B4.01)

The student will be required to take an initial Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) for physician assistant students in the second year of the program, and again during the clinical year before graduation. The student and the program can use the initial exam to gauge the students' progress and acquisition of knowledge. The second exam will show students' knowledge progression through the clinical experiences and serve as a comparison with the initial data. This exam does not count toward any course grade.

PAEA End of Rotation Exams (B4.01)

Exams developed by PA educators and national exam experts that have been validated for statistical accuracy and consistency with the goal of being used as a standard evaluation by PA programs to serve as one measurement of medical knowledge that students gain during specific supervised clinical practice experiences.

Final Summative Evaluation (FSE) Leading to Graduation

(B4.03, A3.15a, A3.15b, A3.15c, A3.17d)

The FSE uses evaluation instruments that correlate with the didactic and clinical components of the program's curriculum and measure if the learner has the knowledge, interpersonal skills, patient care skills and professionalism required to enter clinical practice.

- The FSE occurs within the final four months of the program and is administered by the PA Curriculum Committee to verify that each student is prepared to enter clinical practice. The evaluation component includes written questions, at least one clinical encounter with a simulated patient, and a written note and/or oral presentation of the patient encounter(s). Other content may be included in the FSE as determined by the PA Curriculum Committee.
- Once the PA faculty members have graded the FSE components, they will determine, as the PA Curriculum Committee, whether the student's overall FSE result is: PASS, CONDITIONAL PASS, or FAIL.
 - A grade of PASS is given if the total FSE score is 75% or greater
 - A grade of CONDITIONAL PASS is given if the score is between 70-74.9%
 - A grade of FAIL is given if the score is <70%
- If a student receives a grade of "Pass" for the FSE, no further FSE work is needed.
- If a student receives a grade of "Conditional Pass", the student will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee. The committee will identify components of the FSE that need to be repeated and a learning plan will be developed and implemented.
 - If the student successfully completes the required components of the FSE as outlined by the PA Curriculum Committee, the student will receive a grade of "PASS."
 - If the student does not successfully complete the required components of the FSE as outlined by the PA Curriculum Committee, the student will receive a grade of "FAIL" and will be referred to the PA-CSPE and the student will be required to take a second entire equivalent FSE. This may result in a delay of graduation with additional tuition costs and fees.

- If a student receives a grade of “Fail” on the first FSE, the student will be referred to the PA-CSPE and IPASS. A learning plan will be developed and will include taking a second equivalent FSE.
 - A grade of “FAIL” on the FSE may result in delay of graduation with additional tuition costs and fees.
- Second Equivalent FSE will be offered to students who:
 - Fail the first FSE.
 - Receive a grade of “CONDITIONAL PASS” on the first FSE and do not successfully complete required components of the FSE outlined by the PA Curriculum Committee.
 - The second equivalent FSE will be graded as PASS or FAIL.
 - If the student receives a grade of “PASS” on the second equivalent FSE, no further intervention is required.
 - If the student receives a grade of “FAIL” on the second equivalent FSE, they will be dismissed from the PA program.

Student Progress Toward Program Competencies

(A2.05a)

Students will participate in formal advisement sessions with their program assigned faculty advisor as detailed in the Student Advisement section of the PA Student Handbook. Prior to each advisement, the student will complete a self-reflection on their perceived progress utilizing the Entrustable Professional Activity (EPA) rubric. The faculty advisor will discuss each student’s individual progress toward meeting the program competencies at each advisement. If a student is found to not be progressing toward completion of program defined competencies, the faculty advisor will refer the student to the PA Curriculum Committee for further assessment of the student’s progress.

Assessment - Course Failure

(A3.15a, A31.5b, A3.15c)

Course failure – didactic and clinical

Defined as receiving a final course grade <75%. Course grades are determined by the IOR and are defined in each course syllabus.

If a student fails any course (didactic or clinical), the student will receive a course grade of F on their transcript and will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee and the PA-Committee for Student Promotion and Evaluation (PA-CSPE). Courses with a grade of F do not earn academic credit. Students may not graduate without successfully earning credit for all courses in the curriculum. Possible outcomes of a course failure are made at the discretion of the PA-CSPE and may include (but are not limited to) repetition of the failed course, development of a learning plan, repetition of additional courses, restarting the program, dismissal from the program, and additional tuition/fee costs.

Assessment failure

Defined as receiving an assessment score of <75%.

Didactic Course Policies

Didactic Course Failure: Didactic course failure will result in a student no longer progressing through the PA curriculum and referral to PA-CSPE. A student who fails a didactic course will not be permitted to attend subsequent courses, and next steps will be determined by PA-CSPE.

Didactic Assessment Failure: If a student scores below 75% on any didactic course assessment (exam, quiz, practical, clinical skills exam, assignment, etc.), the student is required to contact the PA Instructor of Record (IOR) within 72 hours of receiving the grade. If a student does not reach out to the IOR within 72 hours after receiving a score below 75% on any didactic course assessment, the student will be referred to the Curriculum Committee. The student is highly encouraged to complete an error analysis form and set up an appointment to review the assessment with the IOR in person within two weeks of completing the assessment.

Didactic Assessment Reviews: For students scoring 75% or above on any didactic course assessment, individual assessment reviews will not be offered. The IOR may choose to hold a group test review. The timing (normally within two weeks) and format of the review is at the discretion of the IOR.

Clinical/Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) Course Policies (A3.15a, A3.15b, A3.15c, B4.01)
Clinical/SCPE course failure will result from a course grade of less than 75%, and may be the result of failure to meet knowledge, skills, behavioral, professional, or clinical performance standards. If a student fails a clinical/SCPE course for any reason, they will receive an F on their transcript, and the student will be referred to PA-CSPE. If a student fails a clinical/SCPE course, the PA Curriculum Committee will determine if the student may continue to move forward in the clinical curriculum until PA-CSPE determines the next steps.

See the SCPE syllabi for details on scores for the End of Rotation (EOR) exam and other components of SCPE course grades.

Dismissal from SCPE(s) (A3.15d)

The Clinical Coordinator may remove or suspend a student from a SCPE (temporarily or permanently) for behavioral, professional, or clinical performance reasons. If a student is dismissed from a SCPE, the Clinical Coordinator will refer the student to the PA Curriculum Committee for review and further action. Examples of when a student might be removed or suspended from a SCPE are the following:

- A student takes unapproved time off from a SCPE and fails to notify the preceptor and Clinical Coordinator.
- A student's behavior is reported as unprofessional by the preceptor.
- The Clinical Coordinator deems a SCPE site unsafe or a poor learning environment.

Remediation & Integrated Professional and Academic Student Support (IPASS)

(A3.15c, A2.05f, B4.01b)

If a student is not meeting program competencies, academic, or professional standards, the student will be referred to Integrated Professional and Academic Student Support (IPASS) for remediation. IPASS will create and implement an individualized learning plan that includes a method of re-assessment. If the student does not successfully complete a learning plan created, they will be referred to the PA-CSPE.

Participation in IPASS may be optional or mandatory, as determined by the following:

- Mandatory Student Participation is defined as:
 - 2 Professionalism concerns from 2 different PA faculty members
 - Referral from Curriculum Committee
 - Referral from PA-CSPE
 - Failure of a SCPE course

- 1 or more SCPE assessments (EOR exams or preceptor evaluations) <75%
- 2 or more SCPE assessments (EOR exams or preceptor evaluations) ≤80%
- Optional Student Participation is defined as:
 - 2 or more didactic assessments within a semester of ≤80%
 - Cumulative GPA of ≤3.15
 - 2 credit hours of a C or C+
 - One SCPE assessment (EOR exam or preceptor evaluation) of 75-80%

The PA Curriculum Committee may refer a student to IPASS for circumstances and concerns including (but not limited to):

- Failure of a single didactic course
- FSE grade of Conditional Pass or Fail
- More than 1 absence in a SCPE
- Failure to meet professionalism requirements described in the “Professionalism” section of the student handbook
- Concerns about medical knowledge, professionalism, or other competencies as brought to the attention of the PA faculty
- Knowledge, behavioral or professional concerns raised by PA faculty, SOM faculty, Staff, or SCPE Preceptor
- Cumulative graduate school grade point average (GPA) of 3.0. A GPA of less than 3.0 results in academic probation, per the UNM Graduate Student Policy

The IPASS learning plan may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Completion of Error Analysis Form
- Completing assignments in addition to concurrent coursework
- Demonstrating mastery of course content by giving a lecture to the IOR on course material
- Additional preceptor evaluations during the clinical year
- Retaking a specified course
- Writing a reflection essay
- Meeting with a professionalism expert
- Regular meetings with a member of the IPASS team

Adverse Actions

(A3.15c, A3.15d, A3.17e)

Adverse actions are defined as actions imposed by the PA-CSPE that either separate the student from the Physician Assistant Program or delay a student’s completion of the program. Adverse actions include but are not limited to: dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program, suspension from the Physician Assistant Program, temporary enforced leave of absence, or repetition of all or part of the curriculum that will result in student deceleration in the program (i.e., a delayed program completion date).

The student will be referred to the PA-CSPE for the consideration of imposition of an adverse action for the following criteria:

- Referral from the PA Curriculum Committee

- More than 6 credits of coursework completed in which the student receives a course grade of “C” (including “C+”). No credit will be given for subsequent coursework with a grade of “C” when a student already has 6 credit hours of “C” coursework (including “C+”).
- Failure of one or more courses.
- Failure to successfully complete a learning plan created by the PA Curriculum Committee or IPASS.
- Failure of a SCPE.

The PA Program may also impose the following:

Emergency Suspension: The Program Director (or designee) may immediately suspend a student on an emergency basis if, based on information received about the student's conduct, the Program Director (or designee) finds that the student's behavior may endanger the student or others, or threatens disruption of the learning environment. The Program Director (or designee) will continue the suspension for as long as the emergency situation persists. Otherwise, the suspension must be lifted or appropriately modified, as determined by the Program Director (or designee) and the Curriculum Committee. The Program Director (or designee) will inform the student of the decision within five working days after the meeting with Curriculum Committee. A decision to continue an emergency suspension is not subject to appeal or review under this Due Process Policy and Procedure. If the emergency suspension is continued for longer than 50% of a course, the matter shall be referred to the PA-CSPE for full investigation, review, and if necessary, consideration of further action consistent with this Due Process Policy and Procedure. PA-CSPE will meet as soon as possible to consider the referral.

If the Program Director (or designee) and Curriculum Committee lifts the emergency suspension, the student will be permitted to return to the curriculum immediately. The matter may also be referred to the PA-CSPE for further review.

Temporary Enforced Leave of Absence. A student may be required by PA-CSPE or the Program Director (or designee) to take a temporary enforced leave of absence from further educational activities pending a final determination regarding the student's status. Examples of events that might lead to a temporary enforced leave of absence include, but are not limited to: unexcused absence from educational activities, substance abuse, unprofessional behavior or behavior that disrupts the learning environment for other students, situations in which the student may be a danger to themselves, other students, faculty, staff, or patients, and violation of a previously agreed upon contract. In the event that the PA-CSPE or the Program Director (or designee) issues a temporary enforced leave of absence, the student shall receive written notice that the student may not participate in any further classes or clinical experiences until a final determination is made. A temporary enforced leave of absence may last no longer than 45 calendar days. Within this period, the PA-CSPE must decide regarding further action. A student can request review of a temporary enforced leave of absence by the Associate Dean of Health Professions Programs.

Academic Progress Tracking

Each student is responsible for tracking their academic progress as a degree-seeking UNM student. Students should use the LoboWeb student portal to view transcripts, grades, and grade point averages. The LoboWeb system is available to current students at any time. Students should track progress

following the end of each course and semester in the PA Program and contact their PA faculty advisor with any questions or concerns.

Grade Petition Procedure

(A3.15g)

Student grade petition procedures are set forth by the UNM Office of the Registrar. Information may be found [here](#).

Health Professional Programs (HPP) Due Process

(A3.15g)

The PA Program must abide by the Health Professional Programs (HPP) Due Process, Physician Assistant Program Handbook and UNM student policies respectively. It is the student's responsibility to read and be able to explain the Physician Assistant Program policy on Academic Probation and Consequences and the UNM SOM HPP Student Policy on Due Process. The [HPP Due Process can be found here](#).

Dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program

(A3.15d)

Failure to meet academic, ethical, or professional standards, as set forth in this handbook, constitute grounds for dismissal or the imposition of an adverse action from the PA-CSPE.

Within 15 calendar days of the PA-CSPE meeting at which the PA-CSPE votes to take an adverse action, the student will be notified of the action in writing from the Chair of the PA-CSPE with specific concerns noted. Students will be required to sign the written notification acknowledging receipt of the documentation.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Student Advisement

(A2.05a, A2.05e)

Each UNM Physician Assistant student is assigned a faculty advisor and will attend a minimum of four formal advisement meetings that are scheduled at pre-determined points throughout the curriculum. Additional meetings may be scheduled on an as needed basis at the request of the physician assistant student or the faculty advisor.

Scheduled advisement will assess the student's progress toward meeting the program defined competencies. In addition, meetings may cover the following topics:

- Academic progress
- Professional goals
- Personal wellbeing and whether a referral is needed
- Other ad hoc topics

If a student is having difficulty, the student will be provided information on campus and/or community resources.

Student Wellness

(B2.20a, B2.20b)

Student wellness is a priority at the PA Program. The curriculum includes instruction about provider personal wellness including the prevention of impairment and burnout. Students are encouraged to talk with their advisors and/or seek help if experiencing any difficulties by using the information on the program's student resources tab.

Students may also access UNM SOM [Office of Professional Well-Being](#) resources.

Access & Referral for Personal Issues

(A3.10)

This section describes the process for providing access and referral for UNM PA students who are experiencing personal issues that might impact their performance in the program.

Each PA student is assigned a PA Faculty Advisor at the onset of the program. If, during any portion of the program, a student has personal issue(s) that are negatively impacting their academic performance, the student is encouraged to contact their PA Faculty Advisor or another PA Program faculty member to inform them of the issue. The Advisor may assist the student by providing a referral to the appropriate HSC, UNM or community resource(s). These discussions and the referral will be documented in the student file. This form will not contain any personal health information (PHI).

Together, the student and the faculty member will determine the most effective next step(s), whether it be continuing to meet to resolve the issue or make appropriate referrals to available services.

During the formal advisement sessions that take place during the phases of the program, the PA Faculty Advisor will ask the student (advisee) about their personal well-being. If an issue is identified during the advisement session, the process outlined herein will be followed.

Additional PA Student Resources

(A1.04, A1.09)

Each of the following offices directly deals with certain aspects of PA education. It is useful to be familiar with their services:

- The [Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center](#) (HSLIC) is the medical library and provides online databases, ebooks, computer support, and librarian services.
- The Office of [Undergraduate Medical Education](#). The first 18 months of the MD Program and PA Program are closely linked.
- The [HSC Wellness Program](#) fosters a culture of wellness on campus by promoting healthy living and bringing wellness activities and opportunities to all Health Sciences faculty, staff and students.
- The HSC [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) is responsible for a number of diversity activities and programs (B1.06).
- The [Graduate Resource Center](#) provides writing “boot camps” to help students get started with writing and/or to assist students in devising a writing schedule.
- The [Center for Academic Program Support \(CAPS\)](#) offers writing workshops and other resources that students might find helpful.
- The [HSC Office of Professionalism](#) is dedicated to promoting humane medical care, effective teaching environments, and a respectful work environment.
- The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) offers several types of funding for students and organizations.
- The [Veteran and Military Resource Center](#) is dedicated to providing the highest quality and comprehensive support to student veterans. It provides education, administrative services, and job advisement to student veterans, their families and active-duty students.
- The [UNM Student Resource Centers](#) provide support and access to resources like advisement, scholarships, and social groups.
- UNM [Office of Career Services](#) provides assistance to students in developing, evaluating, and/or implementing career, education, and employment decisions.

STUDENT HEALTH & INSURANCE

UNM Student Health Insurance Plan

Medical insurance is mandatory for all PA students. All students are automatically enrolled in and charged for the [UNM Student Health Insurance Plan](#) unless a waiver is submitted and approved prior to the waiver deadline. Students holding comparable coverage may be eligible to waive enrollment in the UNM Student Health Insurance Plan. Twice annually, in approximately January and July, students will have the opportunity to waive the health insurance coverage by submitting a waiver request and proof of coverage under another plan. For information regarding plan coverage and student eligibility, please call Academic Health Plans (AHP) Customer Service at (855) 865-0352.

The UNM Student Health Plan is administered by BlueCross and BlueShield of New Mexico (BCBSNM). Academic Health Plans, Inc. (AHP) is a separate company that provides program management and administrative services for the student health plans of BlueCross and BlueShield of New Mexico.

Student Healthcare Resources

(A1.04)

UNM Student Health and Counseling (SHAC)

In order to receive the highest level of benefits under the UNM Student Health Plan, enrolled students are encouraged to utilize UNM Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) for all outpatient primary health care services. SHAC is located on main campus, north of Johnson Center. Services include, but are not limited to, primary care and specialist visits, physical therapy, pharmacy, and counseling services. For a complete list of health services available at SHAC call (505) 277-3136 or visit the [SHAC website](#).

UNM Health Network

If services are not available at SHAC, enrolled students and eligible dependents should seek treatment from facilities, doctors, and other health care providers in the UNM Health Network. A list of preferred providers is available by calling (844) 866-2224 or visiting the [UNM Health website](#).

BCBSNM PPO Network

If services outside of SHAC or the UNM Health Network are needed, enrolled students and eligible dependents should seek treatment from facilities, doctors, and other health care providers in the BCBSNM PPO Network. Contact UNM Health at (844) 866-2224 for assistance in receiving services from the BCBSNM PPO Network.

Wellness on the HSC Campus

The UNM PA program is committed to providing a robust well-rounded education that incorporates wellness for both mind and body. In collaboration with the UNM [HSC Wellness Program](#), the PA Program encourages students to visit the website to find out about the 24/7 Fitness Center on HSC campus as well as participate in classes that explore mindfulness, nutrition, yoga. Links to additional resources such as counseling, recreational services, student massage clinic and useful Apps for personal resiliency may also be found here.

Rape Crisis Center of Central New Mexico

The [Rape Crisis Center of Central New Mexico](#) offers 24-hour emergency advocacy services, community education and professional training, counseling services for victims and their families, and a resource library. The center is located at 9741 Candelaria NE; the telephone number is 266-7711.

Faculty as Health Provider

(A3.09)

Under no circumstances, other than a true emergency, may a PA faculty member serve as the health care provider for a PA student for the duration of their course of study. PA faculty members include all full and part-time faculty (including principal faculty and the program director), the medical director, clinical preceptors, or other teaching providers and adjunct clinical faculty. Students are required to have health insurance coverage and a healthcare provider throughout the program and should seek medical care from that provider.

Immunizations and Vaccinations

(A3.07a, A3.08, A3.17b)

PA students will encounter an increased risk of contracting various infectious diseases for which immunization, vaccination and/or early detection are either preventive or allow early therapeutic intervention. To protect everyone against these pathogens, the School of Medicine has formulated the following policy on immunizations and vaccinations.

Consistent with the recommendations of the [Centers for Disease Control](#), all PA students are required to present proof of immunization or immunity to measles, rubella, mumps, varicella, and hepatitis B. In accordance with CDC guidelines, students should also have boosters for tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap), as well as annual influenza. All these immunizations and/or titers are available at the [UNM Student Health & Counseling](#) (SHAC) Immunization Clinic. Some clinical sites may have additional requirements. Students participating in international rotations are required to obtain the appropriate immunizations as endorsed by current Centers for Disease Control recommendations for health professionals from a certified travel clinic (available at the Student Health Center).

Also note UNM HSC/SOM requires all students to be fully vaccinated against infectious diseases (including coronavirus), subject to limited exemptions. This requirement also includes vaccinations requiring a booster. The UNM PA Program cannot guarantee provision of alternate clinical sites for students who have not been vaccinated for infectious diseases. Clinical sites may not accept students with an exemption for vaccinations. Inability to place a student in rotations due to lack of vaccinations can potentially cause a significant delay in graduation or the student may be unable to complete their clinical year and thus may not graduate.

Each student is responsible for reading and understanding the informational handout “Immunization Requirements for UNM Students in Healthcare Programs.” Bring all immunization records and labs to the SHAC Immunization Clinic so they may be updated. The SHAC nurses will verify immunization requirements compliance.

Students are required to have an annual Influenza vaccination. Students entering the program will be supplied with a list of required/recommended vaccinations prior to entering the program. If student(s) waive the flu vaccination, students(s) must provide documentation and upload to EXXAT when directed.

In addition to the above requirements, all students are required to have a baseline 2 step Tuberculosis skin test or an IGRA blood test. Additional or annual screening may be required by affiliated clinical sites. If a student has tested positive for Tuberculosis (TB), documentation of a recent chest x-ray and treatment will be required. An annual symptom screen will be required for individuals who have not completed treatment for Latent TB Infection. Consultation is completed by the SHAC Allergy and Immunization nurse. Immunization and TB records are stored securely in electronic form and compliant with FERPA and HIPAA regulations. No other medical/health records are kept. Students give written permission to keep and share the immunization and TB records for participation in the SCPEs (A3.19).

Student Immunization & Tuberculosis Screening Records

(A3.19)

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 screening results.

Updating Immunization Records

Immunization files are reviewed on an annual basis to record renewal or update requirements. Students will be responsible for uploading immunizations into EXXAT. The EXXAT Approval team of medical providers will notify students within 30 days of expiration dates. The student will be required to maintain compliance with all immunizations, including annual Influenza vaccination, and TB screening, after a known exposure, collect the updated information, and upload all documents in a timely manner.

Blood & Body Fluid Exposure/Needlestick Insurance

Needlestick Exposure Insurance coverage for body fluid and blood-borne pathogen exposure is mandatory for all health science students. This insurance automatically covers all students enrolled in a medical instructional program at the UNM Health Sciences Center.

Accidents or Blood & Body Fluid Exposures

(A3.08b-c)

Should an exposure to blood and/or other body fluid or a needlestick injury occur, the procedure for obtaining medical care is outlined here: [SHAC Info](#).

It is very important that medical evaluation takes place immediately after a blood and body fluid exposure/needlestick. Therefore, the student must make their supervising provider and facility aware so that appropriate facility policies can be followed. Depending on the affiliation agreement with that facility, this may result in the student being responsible for additional fees.

Students should contact the Student Health & Counseling (SHAC) at (505) 277-3136 for questions regarding exposure and needlestick, including appropriate claim forms in the event of an incident.

Malpractice/Liability Insurance

The University of New Mexico School of Medicine provides professional liability insurance for all students. This insurance applies only while students are in the United States and are acting within their duties as PA students under the supervision of the PA and SOM faculty or of physicians and PAs and other program-approved preceptors approved by the school.

Students must adhere to course enrollment deadlines as provided by the program. Failure to do so can result in loss of malpractice coverage.

PA students are only covered by the University's malpractice insurance while enrolled as PA students and only while involved with clinical activities as assigned and approved by the PA Program Clinical Coordinator. As such, students may not set up independent clinical training situations – whether this is direct patient contact or “shadowing” – without the written prior approval of the Clinical Coordinator.

Students are also cautioned against rendering medical services, except in an emergency, under any circumstances not covered by the above.

Disability Insurance

All students are enrolled in student long term disability insurance. This coverage is purchased by the PA Program at no direct cost to the student.

PROFESSIONALISM

Professional Standards

(B2.17c, B2.19, B4.03)

The PA student is expected to adhere to the most current [AAPA Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession](#). Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program must also adhere to the highest standards of ethical and professional performance at all times. Any violation of these standards is subject to corrective and/or adverse action. Examples of appropriate behavior are, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Courtesy, responsibility, reliability and respect for classmates, peers, preceptors, faculty and patients. (B2.19c)
 - a) Read and understand program and university handbooks
 - b) Adhere to program requirements
 - c) Be ready for learning activity to begin on time for all lectures, classes, and/or clinics
 - d) Abide by the PA program attendance policy
 - e) Actively participate in the group learning process
 - f) Prepare for each class
 - g) Use electronic devices such as computers, cell phones, tablets, etc. appropriately
Ask your instructor/preceptor about use of electronic devices if it is unclear if you should use them in a given setting
 - h) Keep the safety, comfort, confidentiality and dignity of patients as the primary focus at all times
- 2) Personal and professional honesty and integrity. (B2.19a, B2.19b, B2.19c)
 - a) Adhere to the UNM PA Student Code of Professional Conduct
 - b) Demonstrate academic and personal honesty
 - c) Accept responsibility for one's behavior or actions
 - d) Maintain confidentiality in the classroom and in the clinical setting
 - e) We expect that students will regard testing with a high level of academic honesty
The need for academic honesty continues after the testing time has ended, and this includes:
 - i. No discussions about an exam with classmates
 - ii. No discussions about an exam with non-PA Program Faculty
 - iii. No discussions about an exam in public areas
 - f) Professionalism also includes not speaking negatively about patients, faculty, staff or peers. This respectful behavior carries over into professional practice.
- 3) Professional appearance in the classroom and in the clinical setting. (B2.19c)
- 4) Professional behavior in the classroom, virtual settings (such as Zoom), and in the clinical setting. (B2.10, B2.19c)
 - a) Use appropriate language, both verbal and non-verbal, in the classroom, virtual settings, and clinical settings.

- b) In virtual settings, keep your video on unless there is a technical issue that does not allow video.
 - c) Be considerate of diversity and cultural beliefs of others.
 - d) Allow others to offer differing opinions in a safe setting.
 - e) Demonstrate appropriate role modeling for group learning that demonstrates an ability and desire to develop the facilitation of learning between and amongst peers.
- 5) Specific rules for SCPEs include (B2.10c):
- a) Keep the safety, comfort, confidentiality, and dignity of your patients as your primary focus at all times.
 - b) May not write, sign, order or call-in prescriptions for medications without direct supervision of your preceptor.
 - c) Be punctual to clinic and abide by UNM PA Program rules regarding unanticipated or anticipated absences.
 - d) Must see and discuss each patient with your preceptors and may not treat or release a patient without the preceptor having seen the patient first.
 - e) May not administer medications without the expressed approval and supervision of the responsible preceptors.
 - f) Must discuss patient clinical findings, assessment, and treatment plans with your preceptors before discussing them with the patients.
 - g) Abide by the rules and regulations established by the participating preceptor and institution including, but not limited to clinical schedule, clinic attire, immunizations, drug screening policies, and COVID-19 return to work clearance.
 - h) Abide by the affiliation agreement (AA) (also referred to as training agreements) in place between UNM and the participating institution or site.
 - i) Follow the dress code of the participating institution or site.
 - j) Always introduce yourselves as physician assistant students and wear identifying nametags and badges around the neck or on the left chest pocket such that the patient and others can clearly see the student identification.
 - k) Maintain respect and privacy for the patient, including adherence to HIPAA law.

PA Student Code of Conduct

(B2.19)

PA students are expected to abide by the PA Student Code of Professional Conduct. Each student will be required to read and sign the code of conduct form at the end of the handbook.

Guidelines for Professional Appearance

(B2.19c)

Student professional dress and conduct should, at all times, reflect the decorum and standards of the medical profession. It is important that physician assistant students dress in a manner that is respectful to their instructors, classmates, patients, and staff.

Good personal hygiene is required, including bathing and grooming. Highly fragranced lotion, perfume, cologne and/or smoke odor must be avoided. Mustaches and beards must be well groomed. Facial hair cannot interfere with seals on masks. Tattoos may be visible below the neck; however, inappropriate

tattoos that are profane, hateful, gang- or drug-related, or otherwise vulgar or obscene must be covered.

The PA Program observes a casual/business casual dress code, with the stipulation that students must comply with dress codes at assigned clinical sites throughout the didactic curriculum and for each SCPE.

University Hospital (UNMH) has expectations of professional dress any time the student is in the clinical setting, regardless of patient care duties. Students must comply with UNMH's policy. Students are expected to use good judgement and wear clothing that is appropriate for a professional setting. The UNM PA Program has the authority to set dress code requirements for students admitted to the program.

Social Media

(B2.19c)

UNM encourages all faculty, staff and students to be thoughtful and professional in decisions to "friend," "like," "link," "follow," or accept a request from another person. PA faculty and students are encouraged to connect professionally on the UNM PA Program [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) sites. Students, faculty and staff must comply with the [UNM](#), [HSC](#), and [UNM School of Medicine](#) social media policies.

Plagiarism

(B2.19a, B2.19b)

Per UNM Plagiarism Guidelines: Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas, words, phrases, sentences, facts, graphics, charts, tables, graphs, audio-visuals, or other intellectual products without appropriately citing and crediting the original source(s). Plagiarism in any form constitutes academic misconduct. Allegations of plagiarism are considered serious and are investigated under UNM Faculty Handbook Policy E:40. Appropriately citing sources brings deserved credit to the work of other writers, indicates the level and quality of research conducted, provides a scientific foundation for scholarship, builds solidarity in the academic community, and facilitates the reader's ability to validate claims and pursue independent learning.

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or who otherwise fails to meet the expected standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in course work may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Examples of Plagiarism

Examples of plagiarism are detailed in UNM's [Academic Dishonesty policy](#) but are not inclusive. It is within the discretion of the PA Program to determine if other actions not listed there also constitute plagiarism.

Consequences of Plagiarism

The UNM PA Program considers plagiarism as academic dishonesty that violates the PA Student Code of Professional Conduct. The following procedure will be followed when a student is suspected of plagiarism.

1. The instructor will notify the student verbally, and in writing, that there is a concern regarding plagiarism.

2. If it is determined that plagiarism occurred, immediate consequences may include a lowered grade, failure of the assignment, or failure of the course. The instructor may require the student to resubmit the assignment.
3. The instructor will send a notification of the nature of the plagiarism and the action to the PA Curriculum Committee. The PA Curriculum Committee will determine if further action is warranted, such as corrective action or referral to the PA-CSPE.
4. Any student who commits a second act of plagiarism will automatically be brought before PA-CSPE for consideration of dismissal from the program.

Arrest Policy

If a student is arrested or charged with any violation of the law, to include municipal, state, and federal laws, other than a minor traffic violation (e.g., speeding or parking ticket), the student must report the arrest or charge in writing to the PA Program Director or director's designee within two business days of the arrest or charge. At the discretion of the PA Program Director, a student who is unable to report a violation within two business days due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., hospitalization or serious injury) may be exempted from the two business days reporting requirement.

Charges and/or arrests may preclude a student from participating in various curricular components, including but not limited to clinical rotations and other experiential learning, and may adversely impact academic progression, academic standing, future licensing, and/or professional certification.

Any student who is arrested, charged, or convicted for violation of any law will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee and/or PA-CSPE. The student may be subject to corrective action(s) and/or discipline by the University, the PA Program, and any licensing board overseeing a student's licensure. A student who fails to report an arrest/charge as described will be referred to the PA Curriculum Committee and/or PA-CSPE for possible adverse action.

CAMPUS & PROGRAM POLICIES & GUIDELINES

Throughout this section, many University Administrative Policies are referred to. For details on each policy, please visit the [University Administrative Policies website](#).

Technical Standards

(A3.13e)

Technical standards are the nonacademic requirements for participation in an educational program or activity. They include physical, cognitive and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and for entry into the profession.

The technical standards set forth by the Physician Assistant Program establish the requisite abilities considered essential for students admitted to this program to achieve the levels of competency stipulated for graduation by faculty, the professional program accrediting agency [Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA)] and the state of New Mexico. All students admitted to this program are expected to have demonstrated the attributes and have met the expectations listed below with or without accommodations. Candidates for admission to the Physician Assistant Program:

- must have the mental capacity to assimilate and learn large volumes of complex, technically detailed information, to perform clinical problem-solving, and synthesize and apply concepts and information from different disciplines to formulate diagnostic and therapeutic judgments;
- must have the ability to maintain composure and emotional stability during periods of high stress;
- must possess adequate sensory function to fulfill the minimum competency objectives for observation, palpation, auscultation and percussion in order to perform a competent physical examination;
- must possess sufficient postural control, neuromuscular control, and eye-to-hand coordination to utilize standard medical instruments and possess sufficient control of the upper extremities to meet the physical requirements for training and perform competent, complete physical examinations;
- must have the ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients from different cultural and social backgrounds, and develop an effective professional rapport with patients;
- must have the ability to record examination and diagnostic results clearly, accurately and effectively, and then communicate effectively to the patient and colleagues;
- are expected to learn and perform common diagnostic procedures (e.g. laboratory, cardiographic, radiologic) and interpret the results with respect to recognizing deviations from the norm and identifying pathophysiologic processes; and
- are expected to have the high degree of coordination of motor skills necessary to respond to emergency situations quickly and appropriately.

Technical standards must be met by applicants at the time of admission, upon matriculation, throughout the student's enrollment in all aspects of the curriculum, and for entry level practice.

The PA Program is cognizant of its responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Accordingly, if any applicant with a disability has any questions or needs with respect to the above standards they should contact the Director of the PA Program at HSC-PAProgram@salud.unm.edu.

Drug Free Campus

The University of New Mexico is committed to providing an environment for the pursuit of its educational mission. As a condition of enrollment, all students must abide by the Regents' Policy Manual-Section 2.6 Drug Free Environment: <https://policy.unm.edu/regents-policies/section-2/2-6.html>. On March 31, 2022, a UNM Newsroom release specifically notes the prohibition of marijuana or its derivatives: <https://news.unm.edu/news/unm-remains-a-drug-free-campus>.

Rationale: Drug and alcohol abuse at the University pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of faculty, staff, and students; impair performance; jeopardize the safety and well-being of other members of the University community and of the general public; and conflict with the responsibility of the University to foster a healthy atmosphere for the pursuit of education, research, and public service.

PA Program Drug Screening Policy: All PA students are required to submit to a drug screen prior to matriculation and may need to again prior to beginning or during supervised clinical practical experiences (SCPEs) in their second year of the program. The student is responsible for paying for drug screens.

Method of Testing: The UNM PA Program contracts with a specialized company providing urine drug screening services and integrates the management and reporting of results with the program clinical tracking software. An established chain of custody is maintained for each sample, including MRO review of samples, should it be required. Samples are tested using generally accepted laboratory methods.

Students who refuse to submit to any required drug screen will be dismissed from the Program. Any PA student may be required at any time to submit to immediate drug screening for cause by the Program or by a clinical site where the student is assigned.

Clinical sites may require additional drug screening as a condition of doing SCPEs at their site. The UNM affiliation agreements require that students abide by policies set forth at the clinical sites. These drug screens may be done at the beginning of the SCPE, randomly, or for cause. Frequency and method of testing may differ from the PA Program routine screenings.

Positive Drug Screening Results: Students who do not pass a required drug screen may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Program. Any concern about abuse of substances or alcohol will be brought to the PA-Curriculum Committee for discussion with possible referral to PA-CSPE. Decisions will be made by the PA-CSPE on a case-by-case basis. Students may be referred to the New Mexico Health Professional Wellness Program (NMHPWP) as a condition to remain in the program.

Students should also be aware that the University of New Mexico is a tobacco-free campus. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on campus.

Bicycle, Rollerblade & Skateboard Regulations

University regulations state that bicycles must be parked in the bicycle racks provided and not locked to trees, signposts or other property. Bicycles are not allowed in buildings. Students are encouraged to

register bicycles with Campus Police. Destructive, dangerous or inappropriate use of skates and skateboards on University structures is prohibited at any time.

Requesting Accommodations

The UNM Physician Assistant Program will make every effort to accommodate the requirements of a student with disabilities, provided the student is then able to meet the Technical Standards as a result of these accommodations. When students who are Veterans of the United States Armed Forces have appointments at the VA or other service-related obligations, we will make every effort to accommodate them.

For more information about requesting accommodations, please review the UNM Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 2310: Reasonable Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.

Additional Resources:

- [UNM Accessibility Resource Center](#)
- [HSC Office of Professional Well Being](#)
- [UNM Veteran & Military Resource Center](#)

Learning Environment: Student Grievances and Misconduct

(A1.02f, A1.02g, A1.02j, A3.15f, A3.15g)

Our classrooms and our university should always be spaces of mutual respect, kindness, and support, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence. Should you ever need assistance or have concerns about incidents that violate this principle, please access the resources available to you on campus, especially the [HSC Learning Environment Office](#) or [LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center](#). Please note that, because UNM faculty, TAs, and GAs are considered "responsible employees" by the Department of Education, any disclosure of gender discrimination (including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence) made to a faculty member, TA, or GA must be reported by that faculty member, TA, or GA to the university's Title IX Coordinator. All matters of allegations involving UNM Administrative Policies 2720 ([Discrimination](#)) and [2740 \(Sexual Harassment\)](#) will follow the LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center. The Dean or designee of the School of Medicine will issue a sanction for the responsible student as both a student at the University of New Mexico and the UNM School of Medicine. For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, please see the UNM Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 2740: Sexual Harassment Including Sexual Assault.

The PA Program is dedicated to promoting a respectful campus. [UNM Policy 2240: Respectful Campus](#) details values and guidelines for appropriate behavior. Students are required to comply with the Respectful Campus Policy and to demonstrate behaviors that contribute to a respectful campus.

If a student at any time feels that another person (instructors, preceptors, staff, peers) on or off campus is treating the student inappropriately (e.g. intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, quid pro quo), the student shall promptly report the concern to the Academic Coordinator during the pre-clinical course phase or to the Clinical Coordinator during the clinical course phase. If the student is not comfortable going to the Coordinator, the student may go to the assigned faculty advisor or directly to the UNM PA Program Director.

If a student at any time feels that there is a risk of harm to themselves or to someone else, the student should notify a faculty member or the program director so that a threat assessment can be made.

Students may file grievances for a variety of reasons as described in the grievance policy. Please reference the [Graduate and Professional Student Conduct and Grievance Procedures](#) for more information.

STUDENT SAFETY, EMERGENCIES, AND SECURITY

Emergency Information for HSC Students

(A1.02g)

Ensuring the safety and security of students at the HSC is one of our primary concerns and obligations. Therefore, we strive to create a safe learning and work environment and ensure that HSC students and employees feel confident to handle a wide variety of emergency situations.

We encourage you to become fully knowledgeable about the following critical elements of our safety and disaster-management program and the online UNM student handbook, [The Pathfinder](#). Additional resources will keep you informed specifically about individual [emergency preparedness](#) and [campus safety](#).

[LoboAlerts](#) is an opt-out system and all faculty, staff, students, affiliates of UNM, and all UNMH employees have been automatically enrolled. All users should review their contact information and correct it as necessary. The PA Program strongly encourages students to use this system to stay informed.

Receiving text communications from LoboAlerts is voluntary. Students will not receive unsolicited advertising via this system; it will only be used to provide students with safety and weather alerts, or notification of any event, which may pose a threat to the University's ability to conduct regular activities.

Students are also encouraged to download the mobile safety app, [LoboGuardian](#), which increases user safety by creating a virtual safety network that allows the user to set a safety timer and status, directly call UNM Police Department, and report an anonymous tip.

The UNM Care (Campus Assessment Response Education) Team is also available to help students who are in distress. Concerns may be reported through the [CARE website](#) so students can receive or stay connected to the academic support and student wellness services they need. Please submit the online form if you are concerned about a student who is exhibiting any disturbing behaviors.

At a minimum, students are asked to please do the following:

- Remain registered with LoboAlerts to receive announcements via phone texts and/or email. Your family and friends can register, too. If you are aware of any campus alerts, be sure you inform other students and faculty. LoboAlerts are also posted on digital signs in HSC buildings.
- Because you attend classes in many buildings, know how to find the following in each location you visit:
 - The nearest AED (Automated External Defibrillator) station for cardiac events
 - Building emergency exits
 - Fire alarm pull stations, extinguishers, and designated gathering places
 - The best "shelter in place" location
- The nearest blue emergency phones, if outdoors

- Download the UNM [LoboMobile](#) app to your mobile devices (from the Apple Apps or Google Play Store) which includes an icon for “Emergency Info” with emergency numbers and a mobile version of the UNM Emergency Preparedness handout.
- Understand that in case of an emergency, your first action should be to ensure your own safety.

Please contact the UNM [Campus Police](#) at (505) 277-2241 to report any suspicious behavior on the UNM campus. If there is an emergency situation, call 911.

PA students are required to take the online Active Shooter Training found on “Learning Central.”

While on SCPEs (clinical clerkships), please discuss the facility’s emergency plan with your preceptor regarding exits, muster areas, lockdowns, security escort, emergency contacts, and blood and body fluid exposure protocols.

Inclement Weather and Emergent Situations

(A1.02g)

During inclement weather that may place the student in danger, the student will receive warning to remain at home or seek safety through the media, LoboAlerts or the SNOW hotline. If uncertain, call (505) 277-SNOW (7669) for updates on snow delays and/or cancellations.

All PA students scheduled to attend activities on north campus will follow the same rules as main campus students regarding inclement weather.

PA students on SCPEs are considered essential and are expected, using good judgment, to be at the clinical site during regular working hours. If the student feels it is unsafe to travel, then the student must contact the Preceptor and Clinical Coordinator by phone. For more information, please see Policy 3435: Inclement Weather.

Building Security

(A1.02g)

Some of the facilities at the UNM School of Medicine are available to students 24 hours a day. It is important, however, not to extend this privilege to other individuals who are not authorized to have facility access after normal business hours. Do not leave keys or badges lying around.

Equipment, books, and materials that are in open view in the laboratories have been stolen in the past because students have propped open the doors after normal hours or because they let someone in who “forgot their key.” Please close doors when entering the building and be certain they are locked upon departure. Personal safety (A1.02g) and protection of the facilities are very important concerns to the University.

Please contact the [Campus Police](#) at (505) 277-2241 to report any losses or suspicious behavior.

The PA Program Office requires access to be granted by authorized faculty or staff. Doors may not be propped open or left ajar.

Security Escort Services

(A1.02g)

Escort service on campus is provided 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Students wanting an escort to their car from north campus can call UNM Campus Police at (505) 277-2241. Students are encouraged to utilize this service for their safety and protection.

The University of New Mexico Hospital will also provide an escort service for PA and MD students who leave the hospital after dark. For this service, call UNMH Security at (505) 272-2160.

Student Safety at Clinical Sites

(A1.02g)

Preceptors are asked to orient students to building access and safety and clinical policies at orientation for each rotation.

Should an accident occur that compromises student, staff/faculty, or patient safety, the student must notify Risk Management (505) 277-2753 as soon as possible.

PA students undergo N-95 FIT training, provided by trained PA Program staff or UNM Safety and Risk Services, prior to beginning clinical rotations. The Clinical Team provides PA students with information regarding needlestick protocols. Additional information regarding needlestick protocols and blood and body fluid exposures is available in the Accidents or Blood & Body Fluid Exposure section of this handbook.

Affiliation Agreements for all current practice locations contain policies regarding student access to facilities and student responsibilities at the clinical site if a student has an exposure to blood or body fluids or other injury while completing Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs).

FACILITIES

Buildings

(A1.08)

The Health Sciences Center includes the [College of Nursing](#); [College of Pharmacy](#); [College of Population Health](#); [School of Medicine](#), including the [Health Professions Programs](#); the [Health Science Center Library](#); and the [UNM Hospital and clinics](#).

The Health Sciences and Services Building (HSSB) houses administration for the Health Sciences Center. The office of the Executive Vice President for Health Sciences is located in this building.

Domenici Center for Health Science Education - These facilities house select HSC classes and activities.

- Domenici West: PA Program Offices, HSC Wellness Center, Medical/Legal Bookstore, Happy Heart Bistro café/coffee shop, lactation station
- Domenici North: Classrooms, computer lab
- Domenici East: Lecture hall/auditorium, student lounge
- Interprofessional Healthcare Simulation Center (IHSC): Gross anatomy lab, clinical skills practicum facilities, and classrooms

Reginald Heber Fitz Hall - Classrooms and administrative offices for the School of Medicine, including OARS, PEAR, Assessment & Learning

Nursing and Pharmacy Building - Lecture hall and classrooms

Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center

(A1.09)

The [Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center \(HSLIC\)](#) offers a myriad of services including, but not limited to:

- Electronic books & journals
- PubMed
- Up-To-Date
- Interlibrary loan
- Classroom space
- Reservations for study rooms
- Various other services

All of these resources are available 24 hours a day from the HSLIC web page. To access subscription materials off campus, students must use their HSC NetID or UNM Net ID.

The library staff is ready to assist students with any information needed. On-site services include literature searches, public access computers, network connections and wireless access for laptops (HSC IT: (505) 272-1694), course related print reserve materials, and group study rooms.

Physician Assistant Reserve Library & Lounge Area

(A1.08, A1.09)

The UNM PA Program maintains a small reserve library composed of required and suggested texts for PA courses. The use of these books is restricted to UNM PA students. These texts may not be removed from the lounge area or be checked out.

The Reserve Library books are located in the bookcase in the student lounge. The student lounge was designed for PA students to relax and study. From time to time, the PA faculty and staff will also use this room.

Students have a small kitchenette with a microwave, sink, and refrigerator. It is the students' responsibility to keep this area clean.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)

The [American Academy of Physician Assistants](#) (AAPA), founded in 1968, is the national professional society of PAs. Major activities of the organization are public education, research and data collection, professional development, and government relations. Members of the AAPA are physician assistants who are graduates of accredited PA educational programs and/or those who are certified.

The Academy has a federated structure of chartered constituent chapters representing the interests of PAs in 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam. There are also chapters in the military services and the U.S. Public Health Service.

The AAPA has created a Physician Assistant Foundation (PAF) to advance education and research, as well as offering student scholarships. A Political Action Committee exists to increase the political effectiveness of the profession.

Additionally, there are a large number of constituent/specialty organizations for PA's in various specialties. All have student memberships available. Student membership is valid until graduation, although some organizations extend student membership beyond graduation.

American Academy of Physician Assistants Student Academy

Students attending accredited PA Programs are eligible for membership. Students have representation in the PA student organization [AAPA SA](#). UNM PA students have their own student society. Each class determines meetings, dues and class projects. Class officers are elected each year (typically within the first 2-3 months of the program), and officers usually serve for two years. Students are generally more active in student society functions during their didactic time. Representatives to the NMAPA Board of Directors and to AAPA SA (AOR – Assembly of Representatives) serve as representatives in their first year and as mentors in their second year. In order to serve as a class officer, students must not be on probation of any kind.

New Mexico Academy of Physician Assistants (NMAPA)

The [New Mexico Academy of Physician Assistants](#) (NMAPA) is a constituent chapter of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and as such represents the voice of its New Mexico PA members. PA students are welcomed and encouraged to become members of the academy. Student dues are nominal.

The NMAPA Board of Directors meets quarterly and welcomes all members, both students and fellows, to attend their meetings. The student representative to the NMAPA holds one voting seat on the Board of Directors.

The NMAPA also holds an annual continuing medical education conference in the fall and welcomes students at a reduced rate. The address is: NMAPA, PO Box 40331, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87196. The telephone number is 1-888-862-0325.

Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)

All graduate students are members of the [UNM Graduate and Professional Student Association \(GPSA\)](#), which provides representation, advocacy, and direct services. Students from all graduate programs meet once a month at GPSA council meetings. GPSA appoints students to the university committees and lobbies the NM legislature; GPSA also funds individual group projects. The GPSA offices, computer workroom, and lounge are located in the Student Union Building (SUB) on UNM's main campus.

Student Research Allocations Committee

All graduate and professional students are eligible to apply for small grants to assist with travel and research expenses related to their field of study from the GPSA Student Research Grant Committee. Awards are determined by peer review on a competitive basis. See the [website](#) for deadlines and other information.

Other Student Organizations

Student organizations that welcome PA students and may be of interest are listed below:

- [UNM Association for the Advancement of Minorities in Medicine](#)
- [Association of Native American Medical Students](#)

Other organizations exist that are primarily of interest to MD students or those in the other graduate health professions. For more information, contact the [Office of Medical Student Affairs](#).

CONVOCATION CEREMONY & STUDENT AWARDS

Convocation Ceremony

The convocation ceremony celebrates the successful completion of PA education. Students who completed or are on track to complete all program requirements in a given calendar year are eligible to participate in that year's convocation ceremony. The PA staff work with students to coordinate components of the ceremony.

Student Awards

The following awards are typically given at convocation to students who excelled in a specified area during their tenure as students in the UNM PA Program. The recipients are chosen by PA faculty.

Pi Alpha Award

Pi Alpha is the National Honor Society for PAs. This award is given to the two PA students meeting the Pi Alpha criteria of "Scholarship, Service, Leadership". The award recognizes academic excellence, research, and a high standard of character and conduct.

Student Award for Excellence

This award is given by the PA faculty in recognition of PA students who have excelled in the following three areas: academics, professional activities and community service. The award may be given annually and is not contingent upon participation in any particular academic, scholarly or community program. The Student Award for Excellence may be given to two PA students from the graduating class.

Student Award for Professionalism

This award is given to a PA student for demonstration of exemplary integrity, honesty, respect and upholding of the PA profession's highest standards.

Student Award for Commitment to Success

This award is given, at the discretion of PA Program leadership, to the PA student for outstanding, consistent demonstration of perseverance, strength and compassion.

Student Award for Community Service

This award is given to a PA student who demonstrates exceptional service to others. This student embodies going "above and beyond" the basic program requirements for community service and, as such, serves as an advocate for the PA profession.

New Mexico Academy of Physician Assistants (NMAPA) Scholarship Award

The NMAPA Scholarship Award will be awarded to senior PA student(s) who best meet the criteria outlined in the application, including but not limited to: financial need, academic standing, involvement that supports the program's mission, PA association involvement, and service work. The recipient(s) of the NMAPA award will be recognized at convocation.

EVALUATIONS AND SURVEYS

Program Evaluation

(C1.01a, b, c, d, f, g, C1.02, C2.01)

The UNM PA Program Director and faculty are committed to continuous improvement and seek student feedback throughout the students' course of study. Students are encouraged to participate in all evaluation opportunities, whether mandatory or optional, and can expect the following:

Student Course Evaluations

At the conclusion of each PA course, students are required to complete a mandatory course evaluation. Student feedback is extremely valuable as the PA Program strives to improve programming and curriculum development.

Student evaluations are confidential. When reporting, the program staff will aggregate the data and de-identify all comments.

Typically, time is set aside at the end of each course for course evaluations when possible. The evaluation must be completed during the time set aside or by the deadline designated if time is not set aside for course evaluations to be completed in class. The assigned Faculty Advisor will be notified, and a professionalism violation will be logged, if the student fails to complete a course evaluation during the set aside time/by the deadline.

Students evaluate their preceptors and SCPEs at the end of each SCPE through Exxat. The Clinical Team can view these and sends them anonymously back to the preceptor twice throughout the SCPE year.

Graduating Student Survey

Shortly prior to convocation, students participate in a survey evaluating the faculty, program director and all components of the program. Student feedback is anonymous and is used to improve the curriculum and shape future programming.



Post-Graduate Alumni Survey(s)

The PA Program collects employment status information and clinical skills utilization post-graduation. Additional surveys may also be sent at future times. Graduate responses are confidential, and data is de-identified.



PA STUDENT HANDBOOK APPENDIX: REFERENCES, FORMS

Evidence of Coverage

	<p align="center">NEW MEXICO GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION</p>	<p align="center">EVIDENCE OF COVERAGE</p>
<p align="center">MEMORANDUM NUMBER: RMD-EOC-FY25</p>		
<p>This Evidence of Coverage is used as information only and confers no rights upon the Certificate Holder. This Evidence of Coverage does not amend, extend, or alter the coverage afforded by the Tort Claims Act or the applicable Certificates of Coverage or policies for the type(s) of coverage listed below.</p>		
<p align="center">NAMED INSURED</p>		
<p align="center">STATE OF NEW MEXICO and UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO (U6900) LOSS PAYEE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN</p>		
<p align="center">Coverage Period: 12:00 AM 07/01/2024 to 11:59 PM 06/30/2025</p>		
<p>This is to certify that the Named Insured has the coverages listed below for the period indicated. Notwithstanding any requirement, term, or condition of any contract or other document with respect to which this Evidence of Coverage may be used or may pertain, the coverages indicated in this Evidence of Coverage are subject to all terms, exclusions, and conditions of the Certificates of Coverage and other insurance policy(s) to which this Evidence of Coverage pertains.</p>		
<p align="center">Type of Coverage</p>	<p align="center">Limit of Liability/Coverage</p>	
<p>A) Liability i. General Liability ii. Automobile Liability iii. Law Enforcement</p>	<p>Statutory Limit NMSA § 41-4-19 Statutory Limit NMSA § 41-4-28 (Foreign)</p>	
<p>B) Civil Rights</p>	<p>Statutory Limit NMSA § 41-4A-3</p>	
<p>C) Workers' Compensation</p>	<p>Statutory Limit NMSA § 52-1-1 et seq.</p>	
<p>D) Property i. Real and Business Personal Property ii. Auto Physical Damage iii. Mobile Equipment/UAV/Watercraft/Mobile Homes</p>	<p>Replacement Cost Value (RCV) Actual Cash Value (ACV) Actual Cash Value (ACV)</p>	
<p>E) Medical Malpractice</p>	<p>Statutory Limit NMSA § 41-4-19</p>	
<p>F) Fine Arts</p>	<p>\$300,000,000</p>	
<p>G) Boiler & Machinery</p>	<p>\$150,000,000</p>	
<p>Per 66-5-207, NMSA 1978 - A motor vehicle owned by the United States Government, any state, or political subdivision of the state, is exempt from the Mandatory Financial Responsibility Act.</p>		
<p>Per 66-6-15(E), NMSA 1978 - A vehicle or trailer owned by and used in the service of the State of New Mexico, or any county or municipality thereof need not be registered but must continually display plates furnished by the Transportation Services Division of the General Services Department.</p>		
<p>Should any of the above coverages for the Covered Party be changed or withdrawn prior to the expiration date issued above, the State of New Mexico will notify the Certificate Holder. The failure of such notification shall impose no obligation or liability of any kind upon the State of New Mexico, its agents, or representatives.</p>		
<p>Authorized Representative: Jeannette Chavez, Director, Risk Management Division, GSD Date Issued: 07/01/2024</p>		
<p>For questions, please contact the Property and Casualty Bureau/Underwriting at (505) 827-2566/1764 or GSD-RMDunderwriting@gsd.nm.gov.</p>		
		

N. M. S. A. 1978, § 41-4-19

§ 41-4-19. Maximum liability

A. Unless limited by Subsection B of this section, in any action for damages against a governmental entity or a public employee while acting within the scope of the employee's duties as provided in the Tort Claims Act, the liability shall not exceed:

(1) the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for each legally described real property for damage to or destruction of that legally described real property arising out of a single occurrence;

(2) the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) for all past and future medical and medically related expenses arising out of a single occurrence; and

(3) the sum of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) to any person for any number of claims arising out of a single occurrence for all damages other than real property damage and medical and medically related expenses as permitted under the Tort Claims Act.

B. The total liability for all claims pursuant to Paragraphs (1) and (3) of Subsection A of this section that arise out of a single occurrence shall not exceed seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000).

UNM Physician Assistant Student Code of Professional Conduct Acknowledgement

Honor and integrity are predicated on a concept of human dignity, which is basic to the philosophy of the School of Medicine. Application to the UNM Physician Assistant Program commits the student to the essential nature of abiding by the Code of Professional Conduct. UNM Physician Assistant students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. This honor code rests on the integrity of each student acting with the greatest responsibility and respect for the rights, feelings, privacy and dignity of others.

Students will not engage in academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

Affirmation for PA Students

- Abide by University and PA Program policies and HIPAA;
- Follow UNM PA Program attendance policy;
- Relate to my peers, my teachers, and other caregivers in a spirit of collaboration and mutual respect;
- Come prepared for class by completing assigned reading and other assignments prior to class;
- Do/report only my own work on all individual assignments, assessments/exams and clinical activities;
- Refrain from the use of texting, emailing, etc., during scheduled activities;
- Try my best to master the body of medical knowledge and skills necessary to become an excellent Physician Assistant;
- Relate to all patients and their families with compassion, truthfulness, and respect;
- Recognize and honor privileged information from patients, colleagues and faculty; and,
- Develop habits that are effective in life-long learning in order to be competent and current throughout my career.

I agree to abide by this Honor Code.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Printed Name: _____



UNM Physician Assistant Program Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I have received, read, and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations for participation in the University of New Mexico Physician Assistant Program, as contained in the PA Program Student Handbook.

I have access to the PA Program Student Handbook.

I agree to abide by the policies and requirements contained in the Handbook. I understand that my failure to do so may result in adverse action, including my dismissal from the PA Program.

I understand that if I have questions about PA Program policies or requirements, at any time, I will consult with the Program Director or other PA faculty or staff member, as appropriate.

My signature certifies that I have carefully read and understand the content of the Handbook and agree to abide by all policies.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Printed Name: _____