A photograph of a large, historic building with a red brick facade and white columns. The building features a prominent portico with several tall, white columns. The windows are multi-paned and some have white railings. Green trees are visible in the foreground and to the right. A blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing the text.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Physician Assistant Program

Student Handbook 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME	2
ACCREDITATION	3
ACADEMIC PLAN OF STUDY AND DEGREE CONFERRED	3
SPONSORSHIP AND PHILOSOPHY	3
MISSION AND GOALS	3
FACULTY AND STAFF	6
COMPETENCIES	7
TECHNICAL STANDARDS	10
MATRICULATION	13
FINANCIAL AND ACADEMIC SERVICES	16
ACADEMICS: PROGRAM CURRICULUM	20
ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	25
ATTIRE	30
CLINICAL PHASE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	31
ATTENDANCE	33
STUDENT EXPOSURE AND INCIDENT REPORTING	33
STUDENT PROGRESSION	36
APPENDIX A. POLICIES	46
APPENDIX B. STUDENT RESOURCES AND SERVICES	48

This student handbook serves as the policy manual for the Division of Physician Assistant Studies. It contains policies and procedures specific to the Division and is distributed initially to students they begin their educational experience at the UNC Physician Assistant Program. Footnotes in this document correlate with ARC-PA accreditation standards.

WELCOME

Welcome to the University of North Carolina Physician Assistant Program! We are excited that you are including us in your journey to become a PA. We are dedicated to improving access to healthcare for North Carolinians and beyond. Our primary mission is to meet this pressing need by educating our graduates to be highly trained and autonomous healthcare providers. This mission drives everything we do; from the curriculum we've designed to the clinical experiences we provide. By training compassionate, skilled and innovative physician assistants, we aim to address healthcare disparities and ensure all receive the quality healthcare they deserve.

In this handbook, you will find information regarding the program, including policies and procedures, as well as requirements for admission, matriculation, progression through the program and graduation. Please also see our website, [UNC Physician Assistant Studies](#), for more information.

As you navigate your time in the program, remember that you are part of a supportive community of educators, clinicians and peers who are dedicated to your success. Thank you for choosing UNC for your PA education. Together, we will advance healthcare and serve the people of North Carolina with excellence and compassion.

Katie Hanlon, MMS, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
UNC School of Medicine, Department of Health Sciences
Division & Program Director – Physician Assistant Studies

ACCREDITATION

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation – Continued status to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Physician Assistant Program sponsored by the University of North Carolina. 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 in March 2030. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.

ACADEMIC PLAN OF STUDY AND DEGREE CONFERRED

The UNC Physician Assistant Studies program is a 24-month cohort-based curriculum. The program consists of two twelve-month phases: the Preclinical Phase and the Clinical Phase. Each cohort begins in January. Graduates of the program will be conferred a Master of Health Sciences in Physician Assistant Studies degree and will be eligible to apply for the certification examination after graduation sponsored by the National Commission of Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

SPONSORSHIP AND PHILOSOPHY

The UNC Physician Assistant program is the product of an exceptional public, private and military partnership. We are grateful to our partners, including Blue Cross Blue Shield, the Kenan Trust and the US military, for their vision and support. The program embodies the mission of service of UNC-Chapel Hill and is honored to be part of the University's leadership in solving our state's most pressing problems. The spirit of collaboration and commitment to excellence are hallmarks to the educational process that will ultimately improve the health and well-being of the citizens of North Carolina.

MISSION AND GOALS

The UNC Physician Assistant Studies program is housed within the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine and the Department of Health Sciences.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of North Carolinians and others whom we serve. We accomplish this by providing leadership and excellence in the interrelated areas of patient care, education and research. We strive to promote faculty, staff and learner development in a diverse, respectful environment where our colleagues demonstrate professionalism, enhance learning and create personal and professional sustainability. We optimize our partnership with the UNC Health Care System through close collaboration and a commitment to service.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The UNC Physician Assistant Program is honored to serve the mission of the UNC School of Medicine. We are dedicated to promoting high-quality, accessible, patient-centered health care for the people of North Carolina and the nation through excellence in education, scholarship and clinical service. The UNC PA Program is committed to the healthcare and workforce needs of North Carolinians and will use an interprofessional approach to prepare skilled and compassionate health care practitioners across the continuum of life.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The UNC Division of Physician Assistant Studies has identified programmatic goals which allow further support of the mission of the program, School of Medicine and University:

- 1) Recruit and enroll non-traditional students with special attention to veterans and North Carolina residents.
 - The UNC-CH PA Program classifies non-traditional status to applicants with two or more years of an alternative career trajectory prior to preparation for PA school greater than 26 years of age.
 - UNC specifically recruits veterans who served in a medical capacity.
- 2) Provide an interprofessional learning environment that prepares students to work collaboratively in interprofessional teams.
- 3) Graduate medical learners who possess the knowledge and skills required to practice as physician assistants.
- 4) Prepare students for practice in medically under resourced communities.

PANCE PERFORMANCE

A graduate from an accredited physician assistant program must pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) to become a certified physician assistant (PA-C). The PANCE is provided by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and is the only certifying organization for PAs in the United States.

FIVE-YEAR FIRST-TIME PANCE PASS RATES

CLASS OF	UNC PASS RATE	NATIONAL PASS RATE
2021	100%	93%
2022	100%	92%
2023	100%	92%
2024	100%	92%
2025	***	***

UNC Master of Health Sciences in Physician Assistant Studies Program Five-Year First-Time PANCE Pass Rate. View [Detailed Report](#).

ATTRITION RATES

	GRADUATED CLASSES		
	CLASS OF 2023	CLASS OF 2024	CLASS OF 2025
Maximum entering class size (as approved by ARC-PA)	20	20	20
Entering class size	20	20	20
Graduates	17	19	19
Attrition rate*	15%	5%	5%
Graduation rate**	85%	95%	95%

UNC MHSPAS Program Attrition Rate: *Attrition rate calculation: Number of students who attritted from cohort divided by the entering class size. Per ARC-PA , student attrition is defined as the permanent loss of a matriculated student from a cohort in the PA program. **Graduation rate calculation: Number of cohort graduates divided by the entering class size.

FACULTY AND STAFF

DIVISION AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Katie Hanlon MMS, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
katie_hanlon@med.unc.edu

MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Timothy Daaleman DO, MPH
Professor of Medicine
tim_daaleman@med.unc.edu

DIRECTOR FOR PRECLINICAL EDUCATION

Nick Wiley
Clinical Assistant Professor
nicholas_wiley@med.unc.edu

DIRECTOR FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION

Allison Phillips, MPAP, MHPE, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
allison_phillips@med.unc.edu

CHAIR OF ADMISSIONS

Nicole Mihailovich, MPAS, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
nicole_mihailovich@med.unc.edu

Adam Ballance, MS, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
adam_ballance@med.unc.edu

Amy Hird, MMS, MHPE, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
amy_hird@med.unc.edu

Ben Thompson, MHS, PA-C
Clinical Assistant Professor
amy_hird@med.unc.edu

ADJUNCT FACULTY

Kunal Jakharia, MD
Assistant Professor
kunal_jakharia@med.unc.edu

James Fiordalisi, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of
Pharmacology
james_fiordalisi@med.unc.edu

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Morella Bruzual, BA
Clinical Coordinator
morella_bruzual@med.unc.edu

Krislyn Nesmith, BA, MS
Administrative Support Specialist, Student Services
krislyn_nesmith@med.unc.edu

Jane Kerwin, JD
Administrative Staff
Jane.kerwin@unchealth.unc.edu

COMPETENCIES

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSION

Physician Assistants are state-licensed clinicians who practice medicine in every specialty and setting. PAs diagnose illnesses, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications and often serve as a patient's principal healthcare providers in collaboration with physicians. With thousands of hours of medical training, PAs are versatile and collaborative.

AAPA.ORG

Competencies for the PA profession have been published by the American Academy of Physician Assistants and are designed to capture the breadth and complexity of modern PA practice. These domains are:

- Knowledge for practice
- Interpersonal and communication skills
- Person-centered care
- Interprofessional collaboration
- Professionalism and ethics
- Practice-based learning and quality improvement
- Society and population health

UNC PA PROGRAM-DEFINED COMPETENCIES

Given that PAs develop greater competency with time and experience, the UNC PA Program has utilized the profession's competencies, the new graduate competencies published by the Physician Assistant Educational Association (PAEA) and mission and goals of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to develop program-specific competencies for the UNC PA graduate.

To successfully complete the course of study for the degree of Master of Health Sciences in Physician Assistant Studies at the UNC PA Program, candidates for graduation must possess the knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgement to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and render a wide spectrum of patient care. Candidates must also demonstrate the capacity to develop academic and emotional maturity, as well as leadership skills to function in a medical team. These competencies are:

MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

Student learning experiences include basic science skills such as normal anatomy and physiology, pathophysiology and mechanisms of disease. Through a variety of learning modalities, including lectures, case-based learning and experiential activities, learners will utilize critical thinking and reasoning to evaluate patients, develop a sound differential diagnosis and provide competent patient

management. Health promotion, maintenance and disease prevention are prioritized to improve health outcomes.

MK1: Demonstrate comprehension of basic sciences as it pertains to the human body and overall health, from inception to death, including anatomy, physiology and genetics.

MK2: Apply understanding of human physiology and the pathophysiology of commonly presenting disorders to identify signs and symptoms of these disease states across the lifespan.

MK3: Apply clinical reasoning and critical thinking to develop both a differential diagnosis and most likely diagnosis by discerning between normal and abnormal features of commonly presenting disorders.

MK4: Formulate and recommend an appropriate, efficient and cost-conscious diagnostic workup.

MK5: Formulate and recommend an appropriate pharmacologic and/or non-pharmacologic management strategy in caring for healthy and ill patients across the lifespan.

MK6: Formulate and recommend appropriate health maintenance, care and screening strategies for patients across the lifespan.

PATIENT CARE

Students will be exposed to patients representative of the cultures and diversity of North Carolina. Students will learn to care for patients of all ages. Students will be exposed to age-appropriate patient assessment, evaluation and management, as well as acquire skills for caring for patients in a variety of settings (e.g. age spectrum, operative spectrum, ambulatory vs. acute). This training includes clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities. Patient and provider safety is emphasized through training.

PC1: Apply comprehension of human anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology to obtain complete and focused medical histories and perform comprehensive and focused physical examinations.

PC2: Employ clinical knowledge in patient care settings to develop differential and most likely diagnoses and appropriately utilize clinical findings and/or diagnostics to promote medical decision-making.

PC3: Formulate and recommend patient-centered plans with consideration of each individual patient and their circumstances.

PC4: Provide effective patient education and counseling emphasizing the promotion of personal and public health in accordance with the patient's circumstances and values.

PC5: Demonstrate competency in performing the technical and procedural skills required for clinical practice safely and effectively.

PROFESSIONALISM AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND HUMILITY

Professional and ethical behavior in the classroom and clinic is demonstrated through role modeling of the faculty and staff, in lectures and workshops and during clinical clerkships. Learners will acquire skills which support collaboration with patients, their families and other healthcare professionals, emphasizing the team approach to patient-centered care.

PCH1: Consistently exhibit respect in interactions with peers, faculty, staff, patients, families and members of the healthcare team.

PCH2: Foster collaboration with team members to enhance learning and optimize patient care.

PCH3: Display personal accountability and engage in self-reflection, recognizing limitations and embracing constructive feedback.

PCH4: Consistently practice cultural humility with peers, faculty, staff, patients, families and healthcare team members.

PCH5: Apply ethical principles and adhere to state and federal laws in both educational and clinical settings, adhering to professional standards in the physician assistant profession.

INTERPERSONAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Learners will be presented with opportunities to develop their communication skills, encompassing verbal, nonverbal and written exchanges of information in a culturally and ethnically sensitive manner and among diverse communities of patients.

ICS1: Effectively communicate information and ideas with peers, faculty, staff, patients, families and healthcare team members.

ICS2: Deliver concise and accurate patient information in the form of an oral presentation.

ICS3: Compose concise and accurate medical documentation that demonstrates clear clinical reasoning and promotes comprehension by peers.

SYSTEMS-BASED PRACTICE

Students will be exposed to the current trends in healthcare delivery, including methods of coding and reimbursement, North Carolina healthcare systems, North Carolina laws and regulations surrounding the PA profession and both national and local PA organizations.

SBP1: Appreciate and navigate the influences that affect patients' access to and utilization of healthcare, including payor systems, health literacy and cultural, societal, environmental, socioeconomic and legal factors.

SBP 2: Effectively collaborate with healthcare team members within various practice environments to deliver high quality, patient-centered care.

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Learners will be exposed to and demonstrate skills in the elements of using peer-reviewed evidence to evaluate the best practices of health care. Students will learn to search, interpret and evaluate medical literature and to apply this knowledge to individualized patient care.

SAPD1: Engage in practice-based and self-directed learning using peer-reviewed and evidence-based resources.

SAPD2: Demonstrate a systematic approach to develop clinical questions, interpret novel medical literature and promote evidence-based clinical practice in both academic and healthcare settings.

Please see [UNC PA Program-Specific Competencies](#) for more information.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Technical standards are defined as personal attributes and capabilities essential for admission, promotion and graduation of a UNC Physician Assistant student. All UNC PA students must have the knowledge, skills and competency required to master the didactic and clinical requirements of the curriculum.

The following technical standards describe the non-academic qualifications required which, in addition to the program-defined competencies, the UNC PA Program considers essential for successful completion of its curriculum.

ATTITUDINAL, BEHAVIORAL, INTERPERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL ATTRIBUTES

The student should have the capacity to learn and understand the ethical principles and state and federal laws that govern medical practice and to perform within these guidelines. The candidate should be able to relate to colleagues, staff and patients with honesty, integrity, non-discrimination, self-sacrifice and dedication.

The student should be able to understand and use the power, special privileges and trust inherent to the PA-patient relationship for the patient's benefit, and to know and avoid the behaviors that constitute misuse of this power. UNC PA students should possess the interpersonal skills necessary to interact respectfully and appropriately with all persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, belief systems and socioeconomic status.

The student must be of sufficient emotional health to fully utilize their intellectual ability, to exercise good judgment, complete patient care responsibilities promptly and to relate to patients, families and colleagues with courtesy, compassion, maturity and respect for their dignity.

The ability to participate collaboratively and with flexibility as a professional team member is essential. The student must display this emotional health in the face of stressful work, changing environments and clinical uncertainties. The student must be able to modify behavior in response to constructive criticism, as well as be open to examining personal attitudes, perceptions and biases, including those which may negatively affect patient care and professional relationships.

STAMINA

The study and ongoing practice of medicine often involves taxing workloads and stressful situations. A candidate must have the physical and emotional stamina to maintain a high level of function in the face of these working conditions.

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

The student must possess a range of intellectual skills which allow them to master the broad and complex body of knowledge that comprises the PA curriculum. The student's learning style must be effective and efficient with the ultimate goal of solving difficult problems and making diagnostic and therapeutic decisions. The student must be able to memorize, perform scientific measurement and calculation and understand and cognitively manipulate three-dimensional models.

Reasoning abilities must be sophisticated enough to analyze and synthesize information from a wide variety of sources. It is expected that the candidate is able to learn effectively through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, classroom instruction, small group discussion, individual study of materials, preparation and presentation of written and oral reports and use of computer-based technology.

The student must be of sufficient emotional health to fully utilize their intellectual ability, to exercise good judgment, complete patient care responsibilities promptly and to relate to patients, families and colleagues with courtesy, compassion, maturity and respect for their dignity.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The student must be able to ask questions, receive answers perceptively, record information about patients and educate patients. They must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with patients, their families and other members of the healthcare team. This includes spoken and non-verbal communication. Mastery of both written and spoken English is required.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS

A candidate must possess sufficient visual, auditory, tactile and motor abilities to allow for gathering of data from written reference material, oral presentations, by observing demonstrations and experiments, by studying various types of medical illustrations, by observing a patient and their environment, by observing clinical procedures performed by others, by reading digital or analog representations of physiologic phenomena, and by performing a basic physical examination of a patient.

Participation in hands-on laboratory activities is an essential component of PA education. The candidate must participate in physical examination and skills lab activities in both the roles of “PA” and “patient.”

This may necessitate the exposure of and physical contact with various parts of their body and the bodies of other students in order to learn and demonstrate curricular-related knowledge. This touch should always be professional in nature and should follow the same principles of respect and culturally-sensitive practice applicable to patient care. This includes any explaining any intended physical contact and obtaining consent prior to proceeding with any examination.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is committed to the education of all qualified individuals, including persons with disabilities who, with or without reasonable accommodations, can perform the essential functions of the educational program in which they are enrolled and the profession they pursue.

It is the policy of UNC to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws, no otherwise qualified and competent individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs and activities based solely on the disability.

In accordance with federal regulations established by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the above technical standards are described to assist each candidate and student in evaluating their prospect for academic and clinical success. General standards for the UNC PA Program are followed by standards which apply to the professional discipline. When a student’s ability to perform is compromised, the student must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to perform the essential functions described.

It is important that prospective and current students read each technical standard carefully. Each applicant is provided the opportunity to read and acknowledge their understanding of the technical standards prior to matriculation, as addressed in their offer of admission and acceptance of admission to the program by indicating their intent to enroll and payment of the admissions deposit.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The UNC PA Program is committed to equality of educational opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of disability. We adhere to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s policies and

applicable federal and state law regarding disability accommodations ([Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance](#)). The UNC PA Program collaborates with the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance (EOC) to provide reasonable accommodations for PA students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, temporarily disability or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. Students who seek reasonable accommodations for a disability must contact EOC. EOC is the only body that approves requested accommodations.

MATRICULATION

MATRICULATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants accepted into the UNC PA Program will receive communication from the program detailing all information matriculating students will need to begin establishing their status as a student with the University and program.

Matriculating students will be required to review all materials and communication sent by the program and complete various tasks including:

- Account setups and activation
- Submission of University and program required immunizations.
- Computer requirement acknowledgement

Students are required to have a personal computing device for use on campus. Students may decide to purchase a laptop through the [Carolina Computing Initiative](#) or bring a device of their own. Students wishing to bring their own device should review the [computer requirements](#) for more information. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have a compatible computing device for use on campus.

- Required medical equipment and supplies:
 - Stethoscope
 - Reflex hammer
 - Tuning fork (frequency 256 or 512)
 - Diagnostic kit (otoscope, ophthalmoscope)
 - Sphygmomanometer (adult sized)
 - Tape measure
 - Handheld eye chart

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure proper quality of medical supplies from the list above for use during the curriculum.

- Instructions for establishment of Exxat account and on-boarding tasks. Please note, there are additional fees associated with these tasks.

- Waiver or enrollment in the University Student Health Insurance Plan.

All students enrolled in the UNC System Colleges and Universities, including the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are required to have health insurance coverage. The UNC System endorses a [Student Health Insurance Plan](#) to cover most health care expenses not covered by the [Campus Health Fee](#).

Students are automatically enrolled in and billed for the UNC System-Wide Student Health Insurance Plan unless the student completes a waiver to demonstrate an alternative health insurance plan. A completed, verified and accepted waiver is required each semester if the student does not wish to participate in the UNC System-Wide Student Health Insurance Plan. Please visit the Campus Health Services website for information on the [waiver process](#).

Students are also provided information regarding orientation, textbooks, financial aid and scholarships, residency status and additional resources regarding campus and the Chapel Hill/Carrboro area.

EXXAT COMPLIANCE

Exxat is a third-party vendor contracted by the UNC PA Program to provide matriculating and current students a centralized hub to submit and verify program and clinical site records for accuracy and compliance. Students are responsible for all costs associated with the creation and maintenance of their Exxat Approve accounts. Please refer to the tuition and fees section for current Exxat costs.

Students are required to complete all mandatory programmatic components, background check, and urine drug screen by December 1 prior to matriculation to the program as outlined in their prematriculation checklist. A student's acceptance to the PA Program is contingent upon successful completion of immunization requirements and submission of required documentation by the stated deadline. Students who are noncompliant by the stated deadline may forfeit their seat within the program. Students admitted after November 15 prior to matriculation to the program will be allowed an extended deadline, which will be communicated by the program.

It is essential that matriculating students begin working on their Exxat checklists as soon as possible. Particular attention should be paid to items that will require additional time for processing such as:

- Criminal background check
- Immunizations
- Drug test

Students will be required to repeat all annual trainings, criminal background checks, drug tests and immunizations requirements at intervals to retain UNC PA Program and clinical site compliance. Additional costs may be associated with this.

Exxat serves as a repository for uploading required clinical site credentialing documentation and instructions. Contracted clinical sites will be able to review required materials to credential students prior to their Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences and as needed for compliance reporting.

Prior to students entering the clinical phase of the program, the Director for Clinical Education will provide students with a schedule of their Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) assignments. Prior to the start of the SCPE, students will receive notification as soon as possible to complete all clinical site-specific compliance trainings, immunizations, background checks, drug screens and documentation. Students must review the clinical site-specific instructions and documentation to determine the clinical site-specific deadline for compliance prior to the start of the SCPE. Students must be fully credentialed by the clinical site prior to engaging in any instructional activities. Students not credentialed by a clinical site by the sites established deadline may have a delayed start to their SCPE, which may result in a delay of graduation.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Matriculating students are required to be current on all immunizations as outlined by the [NC Required Immunizations](#) requirement and those required of all [Health Sciences students](#) and the CDC. It is the responsibility of all matriculating students to provide appropriate documentation via their [ConnectCarolina Student Portal](#) and to the UNC PA Program through Exxat to demonstrate compliance prior to entering the program.

Applicants interested in applying to the UNC PA Program should review the immunization requirements and prepare well in advance to ensure they are compliant by the deadline.

COURSE REGISTRATION

The Administrative Support Specialist for the UNC PA Program will register matriculating students for their first semester. It will be the responsibility of the student to register for all courses in subsequent semesters. Registration deadlines are set by the University and will be communicated to students with ample time to complete registration. Please note that failure of the student to register for courses by the stated deadlines may result in disruption of financial aid and/or inability to progress through the program.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Students are strongly discouraged from maintaining employment while enrolled. No exceptions or alterations will be made to required course work, scheduling or rotation assignments to individual students due to employment.

Students must not work for the program, nor are students to serve as substitutes for clinical, instructional or administrative staff. For more information, please refer to the [Student Employment Policy](#).

FINANCIAL AND ACADEMIC SERVICES

Below is an estimate of the entire two-year program costs for the Class of 2027. Tuition and fees are subject to change and the most current information can be found online: [UNC PA Program Tuition](#).

TUITION AND FEES

	IN-STATE		OUT-OF-STATE	
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
TUITION	\$31,071	\$31,071	\$54,516.99	\$54,516.99
UNC FEES	\$3,108	\$3,108	\$3,108	\$3,108
PROGRAM FEES	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
HOUSING	\$13,788	\$13,788	\$13,788	\$13,788
FOOD	\$6,700	\$6,700	\$6,700	\$6,700
HEALTH INSURANCE	\$3,168	\$3,168	\$3,168	\$3,168
CLINICAL TRAVEL		\$2,000		\$2,000
EXXAT	\$36	\$36	\$36	\$36
BLS/ACLS		\$308		\$308
BACKGROUND CHECK/DRUG SCREENING	\$76	\$76	\$76	\$76
PANCE PREP REVIEW COURSE		\$380		\$380
LAPTOP	\$1500		\$1500	
MEDICAL TOOLS & TEXTBOOKS	\$1,000		\$1,000	
AAPA/NCAPA STUDENT DUES	\$95		\$95	
PERSONAL	\$3100	\$3100	\$3100	\$3100
TOTAL	\$64,142	\$64,235	\$87,587.99	\$84,572.00

Tuition and fees are costs directly charged to the student by the University Cashier and may be changed each year by the UNC Board of Governors. Students are billed at the beginning of each

semester upon enrollment. This reflects [tuition and fees](#) for the duration of the program, as of Spring 2026. Other costs, such as housing and food, are estimated by the University: [Graduate Costs](#).

- Clinical travel and housing occur in the second phase of the program. It is the responsibility of the student to have adequate housing and travel accommodations for each clinical rotation. More information regarding housing during the clinical phase can be found later in this document.
- Please refer to the [UNC PA Program textbook list](#) on the Health Sciences Library website for more information. Many selected texts are available online at no additional cost to students through the UNC Library System
- All eligible students enrolled in the UNC System Colleges and Universities, including UNC Chapel Hill, are required to have health insurance coverage. Please see [Costs - Office of Scholarships and Student Aid](#) for more information.

REFUNDS

The process for initiating a cancellation or Withdrawal from the University and UNC PA Program is handled through the registrar's office. Please see the University's [Tuition Refund Policy](#) for more information.

CANCELLATIONS

Cancellation occurs when all enrollment is ceased prior to the first official day of classes for the term. No tuition or fees are charged but other charges related to attending the University are the responsibility of the student.

DROPS

A drop is withdrawing from a course while remaining registered for other courses in the term. The UNC PA Program charges flat rates for tuition and fees each semester. Should a student choose to drop a course during their enrollment, no tuition or fee refunds will be issued. Students should note that, at this time, all courses offered by the UNC PA Program are required for academic progression through the curriculum. Dropping of a course will affect the student's ability to progress, may delay graduation or result in the dismissal of the student for failure to complete required components.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

All students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment in degree-seeking programs. There may be instances where a student requests a leave of absence. A leave of absence is not the same as the Official Withdrawals or Registration Cancellation and follows different policies and procedures within the program. A student in good academic standing may request a leave of absence from the program for a definite, stated period of time during which the student does not plan to make academic progress.

The Department of Health Sciences Student Services is available to assist students with this process.

Detailed information can be found in the [Leave of Absence Policy](#).

WITHDRAWALS

Students wishing to withdraw from the program may receive a refund. A withdrawal is dropping of all courses after the term has begun. If the withdrawal is effective during the withdrawal refund period, tuition and fees will be reduced according to the [withdrawal refund schedule](#).

Note: In the event that the withdrawing student has financial aid, some or all of the awards may have to be returned. Contact aidinfo@unc.edu for more information.

DISMISSAL

Students dismissed from the program for professional and/or academic reasons will forfeit all tuition and fees and will not receive a refund from the program or University.

FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES

DEPARTMENT AND PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCES

For information regarding departmental aid opportunities, visit the [Department of Health Sciences' Financial Resources](#) website.

DIVISION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

The program occasionally has funding available for scholarship opportunities. Admitted students will receive an invitation upon acceptance to apply for any scholarship opportunities available. All UNC-CH PA students are invited to apply for consideration.

Please see [UNC PA Program Scholarships](#) for more information regarding division-level opportunities.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAMS

The National Health Service Corps has three Loan Repayment Programs:

- The National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program
- The National Health Service Corps Substance Use Disorder Workforce
- The National Health Service Corps Rural Community Loan Repayment Program

Interested students should refer to [The National Health Service Loan Repayment Program](#) for more information.

NORTH CAROLINA FORGIVABLE EDUCATION LOAN FOR SERVICE

The North Carolina Forgivable Education Loans for Service program provides financial assistance to qualified students who are committed to working in critical employment shortage professions in North Carolina. Interested students should refer to [NC Forgivable Education Loans for Service](#) for more information.

US PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program forgives the remaining balance on your Federal Direct Loan after you've met their requirements in terms of payments and employment.

Interested students should refer to <https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service> for more information.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Indian Health Service Scholarship Program provides qualified American Indian and Alaska Native health professions students with funding for education. Interested students should refer to [Indian Health Service Scholarship Program](#) for more information.

VETERAN FINANCIAL AID

For more information regarding the GI Bill or other VA benefits, please visit the [Carolina Veterans Resource Center](#).

PA FOUNDATION

The PA Foundation offers scholarships to qualified PA students, based on availability of funds provided through contributions from AAPA members, other individuals and corporate partners. Interested students should refer to [PA Foundation Student Scholarships](#) for more information.

Additional scholarships and funding resources: [PAEA: Paying for PA School](#).

NORTH CAROLINA RESIDENCY FOR TUITION PURPOSES

Under North Carolina state law, a person who wants to be classified as an in-state resident for tuition purposes must have established and maintained legal residence in North Carolina for at least twelve months with the intent of making a permanent home in North Carolina. Applicants must show a preponderance of evidence demonstrating North Carolina as their domicile and sole legal residence.

RESIDENCY APPLICATION

[Residency status](#) is initially determined at the time of submission of the UNC supplemental application in Slate through the [Residency Determination Service \(RDS\)](#).

ACADEMICS: PROGRAM CURRICULUM

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

<u>PRECLINICAL PHASE</u>			<u>CLINICAL PHASE</u>		
COURSE NO.	COURSE NAME	CREDIT HOURS	COURSE NO.	COURSE NAME	CREDIT HOURS
PASC 701	HUMAN ANATOMY	4	PASC 800	SCPE: FAMILY MEDICINE	4
PASC 702	PHYSIOLOGY	2	PASC 801	SCPE: INTERNAL MEDICINE	4
PASC 703	FOUNDATIONS OF MEDICAL SCIENCE	2	PASC 802	SCPE: SURGERY	4
PASC 704	HISTORY & PHYSICAL EXAMINATION	4	PASC 803	SCPE: PEDIATRICS	4
PASC 705	PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & THE HEALTH SYSTEM I	1	PASC 804	SCPE: WOMEN'S HEALTH & PRENATAL CARE	4
PASC 710	CLINICAL MEDICINE I	4	PASC 805	SCPE: PSYCHIATRY & BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE	4
PASC 711	PHARMACOLOGY & THERAPEUTICS I	3	PASC 807	SCPE: EMERGENCY MEDICINE	4
PASC 713	DIAGNOSTIC METHODS I	2	PASC 808	SCPE: MEDICINE CORE ELECTIVE I	4
PASC 720	CLINICAL MEDICINE II	8	PASC 809	SCPE: MEDICINE CORE ELECTIVE II	4
PASC 721	PHARMACOLOGY & CLINICAL THERAPEUTICS II	2	PASC 810	SCPE: PRIMARY CARE & RURAL HEALTH	4
PASC 722	PATIENT ASSESSMENT I	3	PASC 820	CLINICAL SEMINAR I	1
PASC 723	DIAGNOSTIC METHODS II	1	PASC 821	CLINICAL SEMINAR II	1
PASC 727	BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE	2			
PASC 730	CLINICAL MEDICINE III	5	PASC 822	CLINICAL SEMINAR III	1
PASC 731	PHARMACOLOGY & THERAPEUTICS III	3			
PASC 732	PATIENT ASSESSMENT II	3			
PASC 733	DIAGNOSTIC METHODS III	2			
PASC 734	FUNDAMENTALS OF SURGERY	3			
PASC 735	PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM II	1			
PASC 736	EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE	2			

TOTAL HOURS: 100

PRECLINICAL PHASE

The preclinical phase of the UNC PA Program functions to lay the foundation for students in their achievement of all program-defined competencies. The competency domains of Medical Knowledge, Patient Care, Professionalism and Cultural Sensitivity and Humility, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Systems-Based Practice and Self-Assessment and Ongoing Professional Development are introduced and expanded upon throughout the preclinical phase with intentionality and the goal of preparing students for the clinical phase of the curriculum.

The UNC PA Program utilizes multiple teaching and educational modalities to deliver content associated with the competencies, cultivate critical thinking skills, and assist with the development of a student's professional identity. The diversity in pedagogical approaches allows for learners to be well-rounded and prepared for the clinical phase. Teaching methods may include, but are not limited to, traditional lectures, case-based learning, problem-based learning, simulations, asynchronous modules and readings, projects, and student-guided review of literature.

The preclinical phase begins with two six-week courses in foundational sciences, Physiology and Foundations of Medical Sciences, to ensure all students are prepared to begin the bulk of the preclinical curriculum. This begins after the first six weeks with the start of the Clinical Medicine course series. This course series covers disease processes and pathophysiology in an organ system-based approach and serves as the cornerstone for the curriculum in the preclinical phase. Courses designed to augment topics presented in the Clinical Medicine course series are the Pharmacology and Therapeutics course series, Diagnostic Methods course series, and Behavioral Medicine course.

Additionally, clinical skills are taught, including oral and written communication, physical exam assessment and medical decision-making and procedural skills, in a longitudinal design across all semesters in the preclinical phase. The courses which address these skills are History and Physical Examination, Fundamentals of Surgery, Evidence Based Medicine, and the Patient Assessment course series. Concepts are built upon previously covered content in an intentional curricular design.

To adequately prepare students for the clinical phase of the curriculum, the Professional Practice and Health System course series provides an introduction to the social, regulatory, ethical, and professional aspects of the PA profession.

The content is taught by qualified core faculty, adjunct faculty, clinical instructors, healthcare professionals at the University and in the community.

CLINICAL PHASE

The clinical phase of the curriculum builds upon the foundation from the preclinical phase and provides students with supervised clinical experiences for application of knowledge in various medical specialties. The curriculum is designed such that, at the completion of the clinical phase, students will be assessed in their achievement of the programmatic competencies.

The required clinical rotations for this phase of the curriculum are:

- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Women's Health and Prenatal Care
- Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine
- Emergency Medicine
- Primary Care and Rural Health

Students are afforded the opportunity to select two elective rotations. Every effort is made by the program to accommodate student requests with regards to specialty and, at times, location, for their electives. This is not guaranteed and is dependent on many factors, some of which are outside of the program's control, such as availability of the clinical site to precept students.

Additionally, as part of the clinical phase curriculum, there are three didactic courses: PASC 820-822 Clinical Seminar I-III, respectively. Embedded in these courses are various readiness for clinical practice sessions, as well as the program's Capstone project.

For course descriptions for all preclinical and clinical phase courses, please see: [UNC Course Catalog – Physician Assistant Studies](#).

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The program, in general, follows the [University academic calendar](#). Start and end dates, as well as holidays and semester breaks, vary year by year.

PRECLINICAL PHASE

This phase of the curriculum requires students to attend classes, lectures, simulated patient experiences and procedural and clinical skills labs Monday-Friday. These classes vary in times and dates and this information is published to students prior to the beginning of each semester in the online learning management system, Canvas, as well as in the syllabi of each course. Specific dates regarding holidays, wellbeing days and breaks (such as spring break, fall break, etc.) are also published in Canvas. It is the student's responsibility to maintain an active calendar. The program recognizes that changes to the academic calendar may be necessary, given instructor availability, illness, etc. and will make every attempt to make these changes greater than 48 hours in advance and to publish any alterations to the students.

- Orientation to program: First and/or second week of January
- Start of spring semester classes: First or second week of January
- End of foundational science courses: Mid-February
- Beginning of clinical medicine curriculum: Mid-February
- End of spring semester: End of April/beginning of May
- Spring semester final exams: First or second week of May
- Start of summer semester classes: Second or third week of May
- End of summer semester: Third or fourth week of July
- Summer final exams: End of July/beginning of August
- Start of fall semester classes: second week of August
- End of fall semester: Last week of November, first week of December
- Fall final exams: First/second week in December
- Preclinical Summative Assessment: First and/or second week in December
- PACKRAT formative assessment: First and/or second in December

CLINICAL PHASE

In the clinical phase of the curriculum, the program follows the traditional calendar for winter commencement purposes only. Clinical rotations require students to participate in activities and learning experiences as assigned by the program and/or the preceptors. This may include weekends, varying shifts, on-call hours, etc. Often, these obligations mirror those of the preceptors and are necessary to meet the requirements of the assigned rotation.

- Clinical phase orientation: This begins in the fall semester of the preclinical phase of the curriculum and concludes in the first week of January of the clinical year

- Start of Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs): Second or third week of January; to follow completion of clinical phase orientation
- PANCE board review workshop: November, following completion of SCPE 10
- Last day of Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs): First week in November
- End of Curriculum Examination: Third or fourth week in November
- Program Summative Examination OSCEs: Third or fourth week in November
- Capstone Project presentations: Third or fourth week in November
- PACKRAT formative assessment: Third or fourth week in November
- Exit interviews & program completion activities: First and/or second week in December
- Graduation: First or second week in December

More information regarding the summative evaluations and requirements to progress through the curriculum can be found in the Student Progression section of this document.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Each student is assigned an academic advisor within the Division of Physician Assistant Studies. This advisor functions to assist students in their academic and professional progress through the program. Students and advisors meet at a minimum of once a semester to establish and discuss progress towards academic goals and to discuss other concerns, as needed. Additionally, the advisor serves as a resource for students with regards to division, departmental and University policies and is the point of contact for students who require assistance with academic or professional concerns.

Academic advisors are expected to be reliable and provide appropriate advice. To that end, academic advisors are expected to do the following:

- Understand and provide factually accurate information regarding the program's curriculum requirements, academic policies and procedures.
- Monitor student academic progress and recommend, if necessary, strategies for improvement
- Assist students with development of academic and professional goals.
- Check in with students at appropriate intervals and as needed.
- Make appropriate referrals when necessary.
- Understand and adhere to the mandates of the [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

The student is ultimately responsible for learning and satisfying all degree requirements for the Division of Physician Assistant Studies and are expected to do the following:

- Accept full ownership for all academic decisions.
- Prepare for advising sessions.
- Consult with their advisor, in a timely manner, when in need of assistance

- Follow through in a professional manner on all actions identified during advising sessions or other communications.
- Adhere to all institutional policies, procedures, requirements and important dates.

Please note, faculty and academic advisors MAY NOT provide medical or psychological care for students in the program, except in emergencies. Please refer to the [UNC FERPA Guide](#) for more information.

For more information, see the [Faculty Advisement Policy](#).

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PROFESSIONALISM

Students enrolled in the UNC Physician Assistant Program are held to high professionalism standards, in accordance with the standards of the physician assistant profession. As such, the program has several policies focused on professional behaviors. Students should review these policies in their entirety to ensure understanding of the professional expectations of the program:

[Email Etiquette Policy](#)

[Attendance Policy - Preclinical Phase](#)

[Attendance Policy - Clinical Phase](#)

[Student-Faculty Professional Communication Policy](#)

[Classroom and Clinical Setting Attire Policy](#)

Students should also review the [Technical Standards](#) and [Competencies](#) of the program.

PROFESSIONALISM EDUCATION & ASSESSMENT

Faculty and staff are expected, at a minimum, to uphold the same professional standards expected of students and to continuously model these behaviors. Additionally, aspects of the professional standards expected of physician assistants are taught throughout the program in discrete courses.

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Students demonstrating professional difficulty, which is defined as the presence of behavior, including behaviors inconsistent with the Technical Standards, outside of reasonable accommodations, which interferes with the student's responsibilities and progress through the curriculum or that may have influenced a failing or incomplete grade.

Professionalism is also assessed frequently throughout the curriculum, through the lens of the Professionalism and Cultural Humility competency and related Technical Standards. Student professionalism performance is reviewed with them, at minimum, semesterly. In addition to formal

formative and summative assessment of professionalism, faculty also observe student behavior within the program and are dedicated to upholding the policies.

Students found to have deficiencies in professionalism, either through formal formative and summative assessments or through failure to adhere to the policies and technical standards of the program, will have a Professional Improvement Plan created based on areas of deficiency. Students are expected to complete any assignments associated with the Professionalism Improvement Plan. Failure to do so will indicate further unprofessional conduct.

Faculty may choose to refer a student to the Student Progress Committee for reasons including, but not limited to, professional difficulty. Please see the [Professionalism Monitoring and Support Policy](#) for more information.

GRADING – PRECLINICAL PHASE

Students in the preclinical phase are frequently evaluated with an objective intentionality towards the program learning outcomes and competencies. The overall focus of the preclinical phase is to adequately prepare students for progression and success in the clinical phase of the curriculum.

Frequent assessments, both formative and summative, are utilized with feedback from instructors and faculty to monitor student performance and facilitate remediation during the preclinical phase. Timing of assessments are detailed in each individual course and published to the students.

PERMANENT GRADES

H	High Pass – Clear Excellence: $\geq 90\%$
P	Pass – Entirely Satisfactory Graduate Work: 80%-89.99%
L	Low Pass – Inadequate Graduate Work: 70%-79.99%
F	Fail: $<70\%$

Coursework, examinations and/or final course grades will not be rounded.

For more information on the grading schema at UNC, including special permanent grades and temporary grades, please see [University Registrar - Explanation of Grading System](#).

GRADING – CLINICAL PHASE

Throughout the clinical phase of the program, students are evaluated and expected to meet the highest standards of achievement in the established learning outcomes and defined competencies. The UNC PA

Program adheres to a multi-method and longitudinal global assessment program during the clinical phase.

FINAL COURSE GRADES

Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences and the Clinical Seminar course series will result in final course grades representing either:

P Pass – Satisfactory Graduate Work

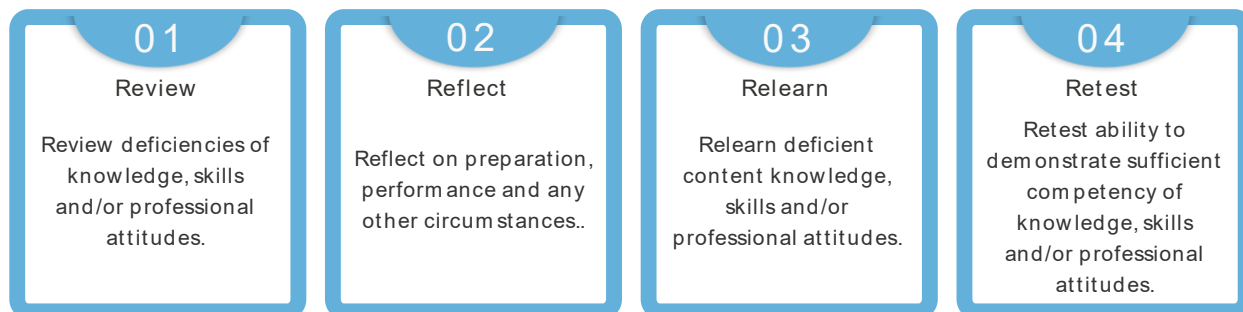
F Fail – Failure to Meet Graduate Level Expectations

Coursework, examinations and/or final course grades will not be rounded.

REMEDIATION AND THE INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLAN

The UNC PA Program faculty are committed to the ongoing success of all students in the program. On occasion, a student may require remediation when they are unable to demonstrate sufficient competency of course knowledge, skills and/or professional attitudes as defined by the program. When this occurs, an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) is developed by the course director or faculty liaison.

The Individualized Learning Plan is designed within the following framework:



ILPs may include additional examinations, assignments, advising and/or use of an elective SCPE in the clinical phase to address areas of needed improvement.

ILP triggers include:

- Assessment score $\leq 80\%$
- Standardized patient score $\leq 80\%$
- Preclinical Summative Written Assessment score $\leq 70\%$
- Preclinical Summative Observed Standardized Clinical Experience score $\leq 70\%$
- End of Rotation examination score below passing threshold

- End of Curriculum written examination score ≤ 1470
- End of Curriculum Objective Standardized Clinical Experience score $\leq 70\%$

Failure or performance of inadequate graduate work of any assigned remediation or ILP may result in referral of student to the Student Progress Committee.

Remediation may occur within a given course or SCPE or may utilize breaks or other opportunities where more time would be available. Remediation is tailored to every unique experience and, as such, it is at the discretion of the course director and faculty. Depending on the situation, the student may be referred to the Student Progress Committee.

Please see the [Personal Health, Academic Performance Monitoring and Support Policy](#) for more information.

GENERATIVE AI USAGE GUIDANCE

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Electronic Resources: Use of AI and electronic resources is an understood component of generating and participating in community ideas. Use of generative AI in student coursework is based on the following principals:

1. It should make you think, not think for you.
2. Engage with AI responsible and ethically.
3. You are 100% responsible for your final product.
4. The use of AI must be open and documented.
5. AI guidelines are in addition to, not to replace, general assignment guidelines unless otherwise stated.
6. Data that are confidential or personal should not be input into generative AI tools.

AI is a resource as any other, but it lacks peer-review and external validity in numerous circumstances, and it has not been validated as an appropriate tool for medical applications. AI should never be used in the following circumstances:

1. Creation of a patient or standardized patient note
2. A personal reflection paper
3. A research paper requiring peer-reviewed sources
4. Any assignment where external sources and/ or AI is expressly prohibited

Please see UNC's [Generative AI Usage Guidance](#) for more information.

EXAMINATIONS

Students are assessed, with both formative and summative evaluations, at frequent intervals to ensure satisfactory progression through the curriculum and the program-defined competencies. Every effort is

made by PA Program faculty to administer examinations that are fair, valid, and well-aligned with program competencies, instructional objectives, course goals, and national standards.

Attendance at examinations is mandatory. Students who will need to miss an examination should contact the Director for Preclinical Education or Director for Clinical Education (whichever is appropriate) prior to the examination. Failure to attend an examination due to an unexcused absence will result in a grade of zero. Students should review course syllabi for information on rescheduling an examination due to an excused absence. Students should refer to the attendance policies of both phases of the curriculum for the procedure on submission of an absence request: [Preclinical Phase Attendance Policy](#); [Clinical Phase Attendance Policy](#).

EXAMINATION REVIEW

Students may be afforded the opportunity to securely review examinations and assessments. This is at the discretion of the course director and the Director for Preclinical Education. Students can find more information regarding this in the course syllabi. Of note, examinations from third parties (such as the End of Rotation Examination, PACKRAT and End of Curricular Examinations) are not able to be reviewed by the student.

EXAMINATION QUESTION APPEAL

Students may appeal examination questions in the preclinical phase of the curriculum. This must be done, via email, to the course director, within two business days of the assessment. Included in the appeal must be justification of the appeal (e.g. incorrect answer labeled as “correct,” ambiguous question, multiple correct answers, etc.). This will be reviewed by the course director and, if applicable, by the instructor and/or Director for Preclinical Education and/or the Preclinical Academic Affairs Committee.

If, after appeal to the course director, a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the student may appeal the decision of the course director to the Director for Preclinical Education. The appeal must be in writing and must be submitted to the Director for Preclinical Education, copying the course director and academic advisor. The appeal must describe how the disputed grade resulted from one or more of the grounds provided above. Appeals must be submitted no later than twenty calendar days after the grade is officially posted.

In the event that the course director who assigned the grade is also the Director for Preclinical Education, the student should reach out to their academic advisor and the Division Director for guidance on the next steps.

COURSE GRADE APPEAL

GROUND FOR A COURSE GRADE APPEAL

Please see the [Department of Health Sciences Grade Appeals Policy](#) for more information.

PROFESSIONALISM APPEAL

Please see the [Department of Health Sciences Professional Behavior, Criminal Background Check and Drug Testing Policy](#) for more information.

ACADEMIC STANDING AND ELIGIBILITY

To remain in good academic standing, a student must meet the academic progression requirements of the UNC PA Program. If criteria for good standing are not met, the student will be considered to be “not in good standing” and will be referred to the Student Progress Committee. The student may be placed on probation or dismissed from the program. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor their academic status and progression standards.

Under certain circumstances, a student will not be allowed to continue in the UNC PA Program. A student may become academically ineligible to continue for the following reasons:

1. Final course grade resulting in failure to meet graduate level coursework, “Fail” or “F” as reported on a student’s transcript in didactic courses. Of note, students may have one final clinical rotation course grade of “Fail” or “F”.
2. Final course grade resulting in inadequate levels of graduate coursework, “Low Pass” or “L” as reported on a student’s transcript for 9 or more course credit hours accumulated in the preclinical phase of their enrollment in the UNC PA Program.
3. Failure to successfully complete all components of their Individualized Learning Plan.
4. Failure to successfully complete all components of their Professionalism Improvement Plan.
5. Failure of the Preclinical Summative Assessments and subsequent retest.
6. Failure of the End of Curriculum Assessments and subsequent retest.

Please see the [Student Progress Committee](#) for more information.

ATTIRE

PRECLINICAL PHASE

Student professional dress and conduct should, at all times, reflect the dignity and standards of the medical profession. It is important that physician assistant students dress in a manner that is respectful to their professors, classmates, patients, and other interprofessional and administrative colleagues.

All students must wear clothing that is neat, clean, and not ripped, torn, stained. Clothing may not contain inappropriate wording, design, graphics, or pictures. Each course syllabus may outline specific requirements and dress code exceptions/ expectations for that particular course.

Failure to comply with attire policy is in conflict with the professional standards of the PA program. Repeated offenses may result in disciplinary action due to concerns for professionalism.

For further information, please review the [UNC PA Program Attire Policy](#).

CLINICAL PHASE

Students in the Clinical Phase are expected to abide by the attire policy of their clinical course site and/ or the [Professional Business Attire](#) policy of the UNC Health. For all clinical settings and during all Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), the Clinical Phase student should abide by the following regulations:

1. Identification – all UNC PA students will be clearly identified to distinguish themselves from physicians, medical students, and other health professions students by wearing a program issued name tag in addition to the appropriate hospital or clinic issued badge for the SCPE.
2. White coats – all UNC PA students will wear the UNC PA Program embroidered short white coat with an issued name tag attached.
3. Scrubs – At the discretion of the clinical site/preceptor, UNC PA students may wear scrubs during SCPEs. Students are expected to follow policies regarding scrub attire at their clinical sites. Scrubs are expected to be clean when worn in a public area and should be covered with a white coat.

Failure to comply with attire policy is in conflict with the professional standards of the UNC PA program. Repeated offenses may result in disciplinary action.

For further information, please review the [UNC PA Program Attire Policy](#) and the [UNC Health Professional Business Attire Policy](#).

CLINICAL PHASE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CLINICAL SITE AFFILIATION AGREEMENTS

The UNC PA Program is committed to the continuous development of effective and high-quality clinical sites. Students should not engage with potential clinical rotation sites with the intention of developing the site. Failure to comply with this is a breach of professional behavior and may result in student referral to the Student Progress Committee for further review.

Please refer to the [Clinical Site and Clinical Instructional Faculty Recruitment and Monitoring Policy](#) for more information.

MEDICAL RECORDS AND PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Patient confidentiality is a cornerstone of medical practice and is essential for establishing and maintaining the patient-provider relationship, which is built on trust. PA students are privileged to learn information that patients share with only healthcare professionals and be present in very personal moments of patients' lives. Patients, in turn, trust the PA students will preserve their confidentiality; as a key component of medical professionalism, PA students must honor this trust.

Students are not to discuss a patient in any manner or situation that would disclose any information about that person to anyone not directly involved in the patient's healthcare. Students must refrain from discussing patients in public places (such as the cafeteria, elevators, etc.) where conversations may be overheard. Students should remind those who may be inappropriately discussing patient information about confidentiality.

Students will adhere to ethical principles and use practical reasoning at all times when dealing with patients. No student should medically treat other PA students, PA program faculty, friends or family members while a student is in the UNC PA Program.

All students will receive formal instruction on the Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and must follow the rules set forth by this act when participating in clinical activities. HIPAA compliance includes maintaining confidentiality of paper and electronic health records.

When violations of HIPAA by a student are identified by faculty, a hospital, clinic, healthcare office etc., the violation will be reviewed by the Student Progress Committee with guidance from the institution where the violation occurred. Disciplinary actions may include remediation and/or sanctions, including the possibility of dismissal from the program.

STUDENT DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR PATIENT RECORDS

Students must read and observe the rule set forth by the Committee for Medicare and Medicaid (CMM) as it pertains to student documentation. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines state that physicians, physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives and certified registered nurse anesthetists) can review and verify (sign and date) rather than re-documenting notes made in the medical record by other physicians, residents, medical, physician assistant and APRN students, nurses or other members of the healthcare team. Students should follow the policies and procedures of their assigned clinical site in regard to documentation.

PRESCRIPTION WRITING

Students may write or input electronic prescribing information for the clinical instructor, but the clinical instructor must sign and send all prescriptions. The student's name may not appear on the prescription. For SCPE sites which utilize electronic prescriptions, the clinical instructor MUST log into the system with their own password and personally sign and send all electronic prescriptions.

Students should practice handwriting prescriptions on SCPEs when the opportunity to input electronic prescriptions is not available.

In addition, students must notify the UNC PA Program clinical team immediately if they are asked by a clinical instructor or a member of their staff to write, sign or distribute medications without direct supervision by the qualified clinical instructor.

NORTH CAROLINA AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTERS (AHEC) HOUSING

AHEC housing may be available for some SCPEs on a first-come, first-served basis. It is the responsibility of each individual student to reserve housing. Students may reserve housing for SCPEs which are greater than 60 miles from the UNC School of Medicine within AHEC. The Department of Health Sciences will assume the costs for AHEC housing only.

An AHEC housing informational session will be conducted as part of the information covered in sessions designed to prepare students for the clinical phase. For more information, please visit [NC AHEC Student Housing](#).

ATTENDANCE

Please review the [Preclinical Attendance Policy](#) and [UNC PA Program Clinical Phase Attendance Policy](#) for detailed information regarding the program's policies on attendance and procedures for reporting absences. For religious accommodations, please refer to [University Compliance Office: Religious Accommodations](#) for more information.

STUDENT EXPOSURE AND INCIDENT REPORTING

STUDENT EXPOSURE

The practice of healthcare involves the care of individuals who may be ill or injured. Students enrolled in the Division of Physician Assistant Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will be expected to provide care to patients who may have known or unknown infections and/or communicable diseases.

PREVENTION OF EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICABLE PATHOGENS

Exposure to blood-borne pathogens is a risk assumed by all healthcare providers. Students will receive training to minimize their risk during the curriculum. Individual clinical sites may also provide additional orientation sessions regarding blood-borne pathogens. Observing universal precautions is one method to reduce risk. Each clinical site presents different potential hazards.

The principle of universal precautions recognizes that any patient may be infected with microorganisms that could be transmitted to other persons. Of particular concern are the primarily blood-borne pathogens HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and HBV (hepatitis B virus). However, body fluids other than blood, secretions and excretions are included in universal precautions. Since infected patients may be asymptomatic, it becomes necessary to use basic precautions with every patient. Observance of universal precautions will aid in reducing risk of transmission of pathogens for every staff member.

In an effort to reduce the risk of PA students to exposure to infectious and communicable diseases that may be encountered during the course of study, students are required to have immunizations as required by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, North Carolina law and UNC Health. This information is uploaded by the student to the program's specified electronic compliance tracking system each year the student is enrolled in the program. As a professional task, students must remain in compliant with the immunizations required.

In addition to required immunizations, PA students are also required to complete trainings in infection prevention, bloodborne pathogens, tuberculosis awareness, emergency preparedness, hazard communication and safety and fire safety prior to matriculation and the start of the clinical phase of the program.

PROCEDURE FOR MEDICAL CARE AND REPORTING FOLLOWING EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICABLE PATHOGENS

The components of care and treatment after exposure can be subdivided into three major areas:

1. Blood borne pathogen exposures,
2. Other communicable disease exposures, and
3. Conditions requiring special consideration like pregnancy and immunosuppressive conditions.

For detailed information about the protocols used for these exposures, please reference the [UNC PA Program Health & Safety Policies](#).

A blood borne pathogen exposure is defined as exposure to blood, infectious bodily fluid, serum or unfixed tissue by a sharp stick, cut or splash onto mucous membranes or non-intact skin. Students must immediately report any exposure to the clinical instructor, hospital or clinic, course director and the UNC MHSPAS Preclinical or Clinical team (whichever is appropriate for the situation). Students must also complete and submit a Student Incident Report (detailed below).

Exposure to other communicable diseases, including COVID-19, will require vigilant self-monitoring for development of associated symptoms. For student and patient safety, students who have been exposed to a contagious disease or are ill with symptoms of communicable or contagious diseases may need to

avoid contact with patients. The student may require clearance from a healthcare provider to return to the classroom or clinical practice setting. Students who require evaluation of symptoms following exposure may have an initial evaluation by UNC for emergency services, UNC Campus Health, or occupational health. Students may also be evaluated by their own healthcare provider if preferred. UNC PA program faculty may not medically evaluate or provide health clearance for students to return to the classroom or clinical environment.

Students in the Clinical Phase must notify the Director for Clinical Education within 24 hours (and as soon as possible) of the exposure event. Any exposure to a communicable disease resulting in an absence from Preclinical or Clinical Phase work requires student reporting to the UNC MHSPAS Preclinical or Clinical team (whichever is appropriate for the situation).

PROCEDURE FOR CLEARANCE TO RETURN TO CLINICAL ACTIVITIES

Initial and subsequent care and follow-up activities, including recommendations related to counseling, prophylactic or treatment regimens and continued or restricted activities following a student's exposure, illness or injury will be determined by the student's healthcare provider, in collaboration with the student and other appropriate healthcare professionals.

In the event the student requires reasonable accommodations as a result of the exposure, illness or injury, every effort will be made by the program to do so.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARE AND TREATMENT

The costs of the initial evaluation and management of a bloodborne pathogen exposure at UNC Health (UNCH) is covered by UNCH for the source patient and UNC PA Program for the student. For all evaluations of bloodborne pathogen exposure at UNC Campus Health Services (CHS), CHS providers will provide initial evaluation. However, UNC PA students' health insurance will be billed for all subsequent care, labs, and medications ordered on their behalf (see [Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan](#)).

STUDENT INCIDENT REPORTING

Students should report incidents that occur while engaging in UNC MHSPAS Program activities promptly and as soon as possible. Student safety is of the utmost priority, however, and students should not delay seeking appropriate treatment, as indicated by each unique situation, to fill out paperwork or make notifications. Students must comply with all accident and injury protocols in place at the site the incident occurred (UNC-CH campus, UNC Health, SCPE site, etc.).

Additionally, the student must notify either the Director for Preclinical Education or the Director for Clinical Education (whichever is appropriate for the situation) as promptly as possible. The Director for

Preclinical Education or the Director for Clinical Education will then advise the student on programmatic procedures, as appropriate.

The [Student Incident Report](#) can be found online.

STUDENT PROGRESSION

SEMESTER PROGRESSION

Successful progression from one semester to the next requires students to perform levels of satisfactory graduate coursework, defined by the program as “Pass” or “P” as reported on a student’s transcript.

Students with final course grades resulting in inadequate levels of graduate coursework, “Low Pass” or “L,” as reported on a student’s transcript, may be referred to the Student Progress Committee.

The UNC PA Program’s Student Progress Committee (SPC) will convene following each semester to review each student’s progress and performance both academically and professionally in each course to determine if the student is adequately prepared to proceed to the next semester of the program.

The SPC will review, at minimum, the following components:

- Academic performance in each semester of the preclinical phase
- Professional behavior during the preclinical phase
- Written Preclinical Summative Assessment performance
- Preclinical Summative Assessment OSCE performance
- End of preclinical PACKRAT
- Any prior academic or professional difficulty
- Any non-compliance with the Technical Standards

Based on the committee’s findings, one or more of the following actions may result:

1. Progression clearance to the next semester.
2. Students may be required to enter into a learning contract as part of their academic plan to allow progression to the next semester. Students who are unsuccessful in fulfilling the requirements as defined within their learning contract will be brought to the SPC for further review of standing in the program, which could include consideration of dismissal from the program.
3. Recommendation of deceleration.
4. Students may be placed on program academic and/or professional warning or probation.

Please see the [UNC PA Program Student Progress Committee Policy](#) for more information.

In addition to the requirements of the UNC PA Program, the UNC-CH registrar's office sets standards on the level of graduate coursework required for progression within the University. A student becomes academically ineligible to continue if they receive a course grade of F, F*, XF or nine or more credit hours of L.

The UNC PA Program adheres to the principles set forth by the UNC-CH registrar office and students are expected to perform entirely satisfactory coursework, "Pass" or "P" as reported on a student's transcript, for all coursework completed in the program. Accumulation of nine or more credit hours of inadequate graduate level work, "Low Pass" or "L" as reported on a student's transcript, will result in the dismissal of the student from the UNC PA Program.

Students with final didactic course grades resulting in failure to meet graduate level coursework, "Fail" or "F" as reported on a student's transcript will be dismissed from the program.

PROMOTION FROM PRECLINICAL TO CLINICAL PHASE

To successfully complete the preclinical phase of the curriculum, students must take the Written Preclinical Summative Assessment (PCSA) within the final week of the fall semester of the preclinical phase.

WRITTEN PCSA

This multiple-choice examination is designed to assess learners on various medical concepts covered in the preclinical phase of the curriculum. The examination is blueprinted in a similar fashion to nationally standardized exams, including End of Rotation Examinations and the PANCE, which all learners will encounter. Students are provided a blueprint and a topic list, again, similarly formatted to that of nationally standardized multiple-choice examinations. This examination is embedded in the PASC 730 Clinical Medicine III course as the final exam.

The passing threshold for this examination is a minimum score of 70%, which is in alignment with all other passing benchmarks in the preclinical phase of the curriculum.

In the event a student does not achieve a passing score, as defined above, the student will be considered for remediation. If remediation is offered, the course director, in conjunction with the Director for Preclinical Education, will develop an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) for the student. The student must meet all components of the ILP prior to retesting. Timing of retesting will be determined following completion of the ILP. The passing threshold of retesting is a minimum of 70%.

In the event the student does not satisfactorily remediate the retest to passing, this will prompt a referral to the Student Progress Committee for further discussion regarding the student's standing in the

program. The written PCSA must be passed with a score of $\geq 70\%$ prior to progression to the Clinical Phase.

Please refer to the [Preclinical Summative Assessment Policy](#) for more information.

OBJECTIVE STRUCTURED CLINICAL EXAMINATION (OSCE) PCSA

The OSCE PCSA consists of standardized patient encounters in which students are tasked with obtaining a patient history, performing an appropriate physical examination, formulating a differential diagnosis and providing an assessment and plan. The student must also communicate the information from the encounter through an oral patient presentation to a simulated preceptor and in written documentation of a patient note. This assessment evaluates preclinical students across all program competency domains, which include medical knowledge, patient care, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism, systems-based practice and self-assessment. This assessment is embedded in the PASC 732 Patient Assessment II course as the final examination. This is detailed in the syllabus for that course as well.

Students must achieve a minimum score of 70% on each standardized patient scenario for the OSCE as a whole, which includes the encounter, oral presentation and written documentation. The student's grade will be calculated using the score from each component of the encounter, with each item contributing as below:

- Standardized patient encounter: 60% of the OSCE grade
- Oral presentation: 20% of the OSCE grade
- Written documentation: 20% of the OSCE grade

Both OSCEs standardized patient encounters must be passed with a $\geq 70\%$ to successfully progress to the Clinical Phase.

In the event that a student does not achieve a passing score of a minimum of 70% for each standardized patient, as outlined above, the student will be considered for remediation. If remediation is offered, the course director for PASC 732, in conjunction with the Director for Preclinical Education, will develop an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) for the student. The student must meet all components of the ILP prior to retesting. Timing of retesting will be determined following completion of the ILP. The passing threshold of retesting is a minimum of 70%.

In the event the student does not satisfactorily remediate the retest to passing, this will prompt a referral to the Student Progress Committee for further discussion regarding the student's standing in the program. The OSCE PCSA must be passed with a score of $\geq 70\%$ prior to progression to the Clinical Phase.

Please refer to the [Preclinical Summative Assessment Policy](#) and the [Student Progress Committee Policy](#) for further guidance.

END OF PRECLINICAL PHASE PACKRAT

In addition to the Preclinical Summative Assessments, preclinical students are required to take the Physician Assistant Education Association nationally recognized Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT), a four-hour multiple choice formative examination prior to progression to the clinical phase. This information is collected to assist in monitoring of student progression and with student advisement and is not used as a grade in any course in the program.

STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE AND STUDENT PROGRESSION

During the fall semester meeting of the Student Progress Committee, the committee will review all components of a student's progress as previously outlined during semester progression with the addition of the written PCSA, OSCE PCSA, end of preclinical phase PACKRAT and any summative examination remediation assignments, as applicable. Based on the committee's findings, one or more of the following actions will result:

1. Promotion clearance to the clinical phase of the curriculum.
2. Development of a learning contract as part of the student's academic plan to allow progression to the clinical phase of the program. Students who are unsuccessful in fulfilling the requirements as defined within their learning contract will be brought before the AEC for further review, which could result in academic probation or consideration of dismissal from the program.
3. Recommendation of deceleration.
4. Students may be placed on program academic and/or professional warning or probation.

Please see the [Student Progress Committee Policy](#) for more information.

CLINICAL ROTATION PROGRESSION

Given the cadence of the clinical phase of the curriculum, each rotation is four weeks long. In addition to the clinical duties inherent to each clinical rotation, as determined by the specialty, location, preceptor and patient population, each student will be required to complete various assignments and tasks within each rotation. These assignments are published to students in each rotation's syllabus and may include, but are not limited to, multiple choice questions, simulated patient case scenarios, reflections, written assignments, communication with preceptors and advisors, self-evaluation and logging of clinical hours daily. Failure to complete any assigned tasks could result in a failing grade for the rotation and referral to the Student Progress Committee (SPC). Additionally, the SPC may convene to address individual student progress and performance, both academically and professionally.

Each of the core rotations (Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Primary Care, Pediatrics, Women's Health, Surgery, Emergency Medicine and Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine) include an End of Rotation examination from the Physician Assistant Education Association on the final day of the rotation.

PAEA END OF ROTATION EXAMINATIONS

The Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) End of Rotation examinations are scored with a scale score (300-500), similar to the PANCE. This unified scale eliminates variances between form versions established by PAEA each year. Pass/fail threshold is specific to each SCPE and has been determined by calculating one standard deviation from the national mean as published by PAEA:

Core SCPE	UNC PA Program Passing Threshold
Family Medicine	≥384
Internal Medicine	≥389
Surgery	≥392
Pediatrics	≥391
Obstetrics/Gynecology	≥386
Behavioral Medicine	≥390
Emergency Medicine	≥390

End of Rotation examinations are a must-pass component of each required rotation. Students are required to achieve the minimum passing threshold for each EOR exam prior to receiving a final grade for that rotation. In the event a student does not achieve the minimum passing threshold for an EOR exam, the student will meet with the Director for Clinical Education and their academic advisor for consideration of remediation.

Please see the [Clinical Rotation Grading Policy](#) for more information regarding remediation of an End of Rotation examination.

Should remediation include delay in starting a SCPE, repeating a SCPE and/or delay of graduation, the student will incur a grade of Incomplete (IN) until remediation is successful. Additional costs may be incurred by the student should they need to extend their training beyond the standard 24-month program link. Please refer to [Tuition and Fees](#) for more information.

CLINICAL PHASE PROGRESSION

Successful progression through the clinical phase of the program from one semester to the next requires students to perform levels of satisfactory graduate level coursework, defined by the UNC PA Program as “Pass” or “P”, as reported on a student’s transcript. Students with a failing weighted grade for a rotation, failure of an End of Rotation remediation examination, failure of two End of Rotation Examinations and any other concerns for academic or professional difficulty are referred to the [Student Progress Committee](#) for further consideration. Of note, students are allowed one final rotation course grade of “Fail” or “F” during their time in the program.

Each semester, the UNC PA Program’s Student Progress Committee (SPC) will convene to review each student’s progress and performance, both academically and professionally in each SCPE and/or course to determine if the student is adequately prepared to proceed to the next semester of the program.

The SPC will review the following components:

- Course or SCPE grades from the current and previous semesters, as appropriate
- End of Rotation examinations
- Feedback assessments, including, but not limited to, the Clinical Instructor Assessment of the Student, Mid-Point Feedback
- Logs of patients, procedures and clinical hours
- SCPE-specific OSCE performance
- SCPE-specific written assignments
- Completion of assigned practice questions and virtual cases
- Attainment of procedural skills and clinical competency
- Advising reports, as applicable
- Professionalism performance

Based on the committee’s findings, one or more of the following actions will result:

1. Progression clearance to the next semester.
2. Students may be required to enter into a learning contract as part of their academic plan to allow progression to the next semester. Students who are unsuccessful in fulfilling the requirements as defined within their learning contract will be brought to the Academic Excellence Committee for further review, which could include consideration of dismissal from the program.
3. Recommendation of deceleration.
4. Students may be placed on program academic and/or professional warning or probation.

PROMOTION TO GRADUATE

Successful promotion to graduate from the UNC PA program requires students demonstrate competency of the program-defined competencies through successful completion of each course,

semester and curricular phase as defined above while maintaining good academic and professional status within the program and the University.

Additional demonstrations of competency will be determined within the final six weeks of the program through the following required components:

END OF CURRICULUM ASSESSMENTS

The End of Curriculum Assessments (EOC) are required of all students. Each student must meet the programmatic competencies required to enter clinical practice, including medical knowledge, patient care (to include clinical and technical skills and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities), interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and cultural humility, systems-based practice and self-assessment and ongoing professional development.

The CSA is comprised of two parts:

- End of Curriculum Written Examination
- End of Curriculum Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

END OF CURRICULUM EXAMINATION

The End of Curriculum Examination is a standardized multiple-choice examination created by the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and is nationally validated. Student comprehension in the core competencies and task areas, to include patient-centered practice knowledge, health literacy and communication and professional and legal aspects of healthcare.

The End of Curriculum Examination is embedded in the PASC 822 Clinical Seminar III course. The program's passing threshold is a minimum score of 1470, which is one standard deviation below the national mean.

In the event that a student does not achieve a passing score, as defined above, the student will be referred to the [UNC PA Program Student Progress Committee](#) for further consideration of remediation, along with consideration of any other actions, as outlined in the Student Progress Committee Policy.

If remediation is offered, an Individualized Learning Plan will be created by the Director for Clinical Education, in conjunction with the Student Progress Committee and Director for Remediation, intended for remediation of knowledge gaps. Following successful completion of the Individualized Learning Plan and any associated assignments or tasks, the student will be afforded the opportunity to retest.

Please see the [Clinical Summative Assessment Policy](#) for more information.

END OF CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE STRUCTURED CLINICAL EXAMINATION

The End of Curriculum OSCE is comprised of simulated patient encounters and an evidence-based medicine component. Components of the simulated patient encounter include a clinical encounter, oral

presentation to faculty and written documentation. Performance is measured through a competency-based framework, structured after the program-defined competencies, including medical knowledge, patient care (to include clinical and technical skills and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities), interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and cultural humility, systems-based practice and self-assessment and ongoing professional development.

The passing threshold for each OSCE simulated patient encounter scenario and the evidence-based medicine component is 70%. The weighted grading for each simulated encounter scenario is as follows:

- Simulated patient encounter (including performing technical skills): 60%
- Oral presentation: 20%
- Written note: 20%

In the event that a student does not achieve a passing score on any component of the CSA OSCE, as defined above, the student will be referred to the Student Progress Committee for further consideration of remediation, along with consideration of any other actions, as outlined in the [Student Progress Committee Policy](#).

Please refer to the [Clinical Summative Assessment Policy](#) for further guidance.

CAPSTONE PROJECT

All clinical phase students must complete a Capstone project, which is a body of scholarly work. Students may choose to do original research, a quality improvement project, participate in an existing research project or perform a literature review. Students are assigned a Capstone mentor at the start of the clinical phase and are expected to complete assignments throughout the clinical phase. These assignments are embedded in the PASC 820, 821 and 822 courses. Students may choose to participate in the UNC School of Medicine Research Day or present at the UNC PA Program Capstone Day. This is a must-pass component of the program to be considered for degree conferment.

END OF CLINICAL PHASE PACKRAT

In addition to the Cumulative Summative Assessments, clinical phase students are required to take the Physician Assistant Education Association nationally recognized Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT), a four-hour multiple choice formative examination prior to progression to the clinical phase. This information is collected to assist in monitoring of student progression and with student advisement and is not used as a grade in any course in the program.

RECOMMENDATION FOR DEGREE CONFERMENT

The Student Progress Committee will convene following the Cumulative Summative Assessment, presentation of Capstone projects and completion of the end of clinical phase PACKRAT to review each graduate candidate. The committee reviews the following components:

- Course grades

- Individual unit and course examinations
- End of Rotation examinations
- Clinical preceptor and instructor evaluations
- Advising reports, as applicable
- Professionalism reports
- Clinical and technical skills and patient experiences
- Capstone Project
- End of clinical phase PACKRAT
- Preclinical Summative Assessment performance (Written and OSCE Examinations)
- End of Curriculum Assessment performance (Written and OSCE Examination)

The overall purpose of this review by the committee is to comprehensively review each graduate candidate's academic and professional progress and performance in all courses and phases of the curriculum to determine if the student has adequately demonstrated the minimum competency threshold, as determined by the UNC PA Program, in the program-defined learning outcomes.

Based on the committee's findings, one or more of the following actions will result:

- 1) Committee recommendation for degree conferment and clearance for graduation
- 2) Students may be required to enter into a learning contract as part of their academic plan prior to recommendation for degree conferment and clearance for graduation. Students are expected to successfully fulfil the requirements defined within their learning contract. Those who fail to do so will be reviewed by the AEC for discussion of standing in the program, with the possibility of consideration of dismissal from the program.
- 3) Recommendation for deceleration.

Beyond the academic and professional requirements set forth by the UNC PA Program for degree conferment, students are also required to complete the following administrative components for clearance for graduation:

- Completion of PANCE board review course, arranged by the program.
- Completion of an exit interview with the Program Director and student services representative.
- Return of all borrowed or loaned program materials.

Beyond program requirements, UNC-CH requires all of the following University components be completed prior to clearance for graduation:

- Application submission for graduation within the first three weeks of the fall semester through the ConnectCarolina Student Portal.
- Successfully resolve all financial obligations and any pending "Holds" on their student accounts through the University within one week prior to graduation.

GRADUATION DISTINCTIONS

The UNC MHSPAS Program offers selective distinctions and awards to recognize outstanding student achievements during graduation ceremonies.

PI ALPHA NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDENTS

Pi Alpha is the national PA honor society and is sponsored by PAEA. It recognizes students, alumni and faculty of significant academic achievement, leadership, research, community/professional service and related activities, and the encouragement of a high standard of conduct and character among both PA students and graduates.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 1) Physician assistant students who have excelled academically in research, publishing, community/professional service and leadership are eligible for nomination for membership.
- 2) Academic excellence is defined as having a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 on 4.0 scale at the time of nomination. Please note, the UNC PA Program establishes “academic excellence” as those meeting scholastic achievement of honors with distinction as detailed below.
- 3) The GPA is a minimal requirement and is to be based on the GPA earned during the professional phase of the program only.
- 4) Demonstrated excellence in research, publishing, community/professional service or leadership activities is to be weighed in addition to the GPA. GPA alone is not an indication for induction.
- 5) The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Chapter 1118 will nominate the election of new members. Each student will be approved by the Society.
- 6) The total number of nominees elected shall not exceed fifteen percent of the total number in the class expected to graduate.
- 7) Inductees receive a letter from the Pi Alpha National Honor Society for Physician Assistants, a certificate of recognition, cord and pin, which is presented at graduation.

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The scholastic achievement award is given to the student with the highest course average in the preclinical year and highest average on end of rotation exams through the clinical year.

HONORS DISTINCTION

This distinction is awarded to students who have earned the distinction of graduating with honors by maintaining an average of 90% or above during the preclinical year and an average of 425 or higher on all end of rotation exams throughout the clinical year.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE AWARD

The Making a Difference Award recognizes an outstanding student who has demonstrated exemplary commitment to health, education and community engagement.

Commitment to serving our community is paramount to the mission of the UNC PA program. The Making a Difference award recognizes an outstanding student who has demonstrated exemplary commitment to health, education and community engagement.

EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE AWARD

The Evidence-Based Medicine Award recognizes a student who has demonstrated outstanding scholarly work for their Capstone project.

APPENDIX A. POLICIES

Program policies apply to all students, program faculty and the program director, regardless of location except in circumstances where discrepancies exist at SCPE locations. SCPE policies may supersede those of the program.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

[University Policy on Non-Discrimination](#)

[University Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Misconduct](#)

[Procedure for Accommodations Observances](#)

[Family Education Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

[Tuition](#)

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES POLICIES

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

[Jurisdiction of Program Policies](#)

[Student Mistreatment and Learning Environment Concern Policy and Process](#)

[Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#)

[PA Student Shadowing Policy](#)

ASSESSMENTS & GRADE POLICIES

[Preclinical Summative Assessment Remediation Policy](#)

[Clinical Rotation Grading Policy](#)

[Cumulative Summative Assessment Policy](#)

[Clinical and Technical Skills Requirement Policy](#)

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE

[Student Progress Committee Policy](#)

[Personal Health, Academic Performance Monitoring and Support Policy](#)

[Professionalism Monitoring and Support Policy](#)

[Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)

[UNC-Chapel Hill Care Team Referral](#)

[UNC Honor System and Student Conduct](#)

[Classroom and Clinical Setting Dress Policy](#)

[Student Leave of Absence Policy](#)

- [Student Leave of Absence Request Form](#)

[Email Etiquette Policy](#)

[Attire Policy](#)

[Preclinical Phase Attendance Policy](#)

[Clinical Phase Attendance Policy](#)

[Student-Faculty Professional Communication Policy](#)

CLINICAL PHASE POLICIES

[Student Duty Hour Guidelines](#)

[Student Identification in the Clinical Learning Environment](#)

[Student Role in Classroom and SCPEs](#)

[Clinical Site Recruitment Policy](#)

[Student Employment Policy](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

[Student Exposures](#)

[UNC Campus Health: Blood Borne Exposure & Needlestick](#)

[Student Incident Report](#)

[Controlled Substance Abuse Policy](#)

[Student Urine Drug Screen Policy](#)

[Student Criminal Background Check Policy](#)

[Personal Security Policy](#)

[Incidental Findings Policy](#)

[Faculty Provision of Medical Care for Students Policy](#)

ADVERSE EVENTS

[Adverse Event Policy](#)

[Hostile Intruder Policy and Procedures for UNC Chapel Hill Campus and Clinical Sites](#)

APPENDIX B. STUDENT RESOURCES AND SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCES

STUDENT SERVICES

[Office of Student Services](#)

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

[UNC ONE Card](#)

[School of Medicine Identification Badges](#)

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

[School of Medicine Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

[UNC Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance](#)

COUNSELING SERVICES

[UNC Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

[Writing Center](#)

[Learning Center](#)

[UNC Accessibility Resources and Service](#)

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

[UNC Health Sciences Library Physician Assistant Resources: Textbooks](#)

LIBRARY SERVICES

[UNC Libraries](#)

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICES

[UNC School of Medicine Information Technology](#)

EMERGENCY SERVICES/CLOSING OF THE UNIVERSITY

[UNC Campus Safety](#)

[Alert Carolina](#)

[Carolina Ready](#)

DINING SERVICES

[Carolina Dining Services](#)

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

[UNC Transportation and Parking](#)