All information in this handbook is accurate at the time of publication (August 2022). The Master in Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program reserves the right to make changes as deemed appropriate and necessary. Students will be notified of changes.
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Preamble (A3.01, A3.02)

This Handbook is maintained by the Florida International University (FIU) Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOM) Master in Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program office and its faculty, with collaborative input from program faculty, administrators, and staff. The policies and procedures herein apply to all MPAS program members, which include students, didactic and clinical faculty, and administrative staff. Policies of affiliated clinical sites may supersede MPAS policies and procedures only as agreed upon in a written affiliation agreement or memorandum of understanding. Whenever participating in FIU-sponsored program events regardless of location, MPAS students must abide by the policies, procedures, and guidelines in this Handbook and the FIU Student Handbook (available for download at https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/student-handbook/). The Master in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook is published annually online (https://medicine.fiu.edu/resources/current-students/mpas-resources/index.html). The basic premise for these policies, procedures, and guidelines is the understanding that individual rights are accompanied by responsibilities. The policies, procedures, guidelines, and information contained herein take effect August 2022.

All policies, procedures, and guidelines described in this Master in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook are subject to revision at any time during the student’s tenure during the program. Students are informed of significant changes via their FIU email accounts and/or CanvasMed at the time that such revisions are made. Students are to abide by any changes in published policies, procedures, and guidelines.

Please read this handbook carefully. Should you have any questions regarding the policies, procedures, and guidelines herein, feel free to contact the MPAS program office for clarification, at 305-348-4162.

Once again, welcome, and best wishes for success in this endeavor.

--MPAS Program Faculty and Staff
MPAS Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values (A2.05a)

Vision
The vision of the Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Master in Physician Assistant Studies program is to be a leader in the education and training of physician assistants by providing an innovative and equitable academic environment to inspire graduates to achieve our mission, improve health care, and advance the profession.

Mission
The Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Master in Physician Assistant Studies program prepares a diverse, dynamic workforce of competent and compassionate graduate-level health care professionals who are qualified to practice collaboratively in primary care and specialty interprofessional teams, serve their communities, and advance the physician assistant profession.

Goals
- Provide a comprehensive physician assistant curriculum to ensure that graduates will possess the clinical knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors appropriate to provide competent and ethical patient care necessary to enter the workforce in the healthcare profession.
- Recruit and support diverse students, faculty, and staff.
- Provide a culturally responsive environment for student learning that supports community outreach and promotes interprofessional patient-centered care teams in the underserved population.

Values
Our conduct, ideals, and ethics are:
- Integrity
- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Compassion
- Excellence
- Service
History and Accreditation Statement (A3.12a)

FIU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees.

At its 2021 March meeting, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) placed the Florida International University Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Florida International University on Accreditation-Probation status until its next review in 2023 March.

Probation accreditation is a temporary accreditation status initially of not less than two years. However, that period may be extended by the ARC-PA for up to an additional two years if the ARC-PA finds that the program is making substantial progress toward meeting all applicable standards but requires additional time to come into full compliance. Probation accreditation status is granted, at the sole discretion of the ARC-PA, when a program holding an accreditation status of Accreditation-Provisional or Accreditation-Continued does not, in the judgment of the ARC-PA, meet the Standards or when the capability of the program to provide an acceptable educational experience for its students is threatened.

Once placed on probation, a program that fails to comply with accreditation requirements in a timely manner, as specified by the ARC-PA, may be scheduled for a focused site visit and is subject to having its accreditation withdrawn.

Specific questions regarding the Program and its plans should be directed to the Program Director and/or the appropriate institutional official(s).

The program’s accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-florida-international-university/.
Learning Outcomes (LOs)

Upon completion of the program the FIU MPAS student will be able to:

**LO1**  Apply core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care.

**LO2**  Accurately obtain and document complete and focused medical history.

**LO3**  Appropriately perform a comprehensive and focused physical exam.

**LO4**  Appropriately select, perform, and interpret laboratory and diagnostic procedures common to general practice.

**LO5**  Accurately determine a differential and final diagnosis through investigative and analytic thinking.

**LO6**  Formulate appropriate pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment plans for common conditions in general practice.

**LO7**  Determine appropriate counseling, as well as patient and family education, related to preventable diseases, communicable diseases, immunization schedules, and healthy lifestyles.

**LO8**  Demonstrate a commitment to ethical behaviors.

**LO9**  Critically appraise the medical literature in order to use current practice guidelines and apply the principles of evidence-based medicine when caring for the patient.

**LO10**  Demonstrate respect, compassion, empathy and sensitivity to the patient’s gender, age, culture, disabilities, ethnicity, and sexual identity via professional communication and deportment.

**LO11**  Demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost.

**LO12**  Use the full scope of knowledge, skills, and abilities of an interprofessional team to provide care that is safe, timely, efficient, effective, and equitable.

**LO13**  Perform skills, procedures, and documentation with entry level competence that ensures patient safety preventing of adverse incidents and medical errors.

**LO14**  Conduct self-assessments, identifying and correcting gaps in knowledge, tasks, or attitudes.
Physician Assistant Competencies (A2.05a, A3.12g)

Upon completion of the FIU MPAS program, graduates will demonstrate entry-level proficiency as Physicians Assistants in the following areas:

Knowledge for Practice
The core competencies of Knowledge for Practice seek to ensure that the Physician Assistant student continually investigates, questions, and pursues new knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Abilities Domains</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>KP1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care.</td>
<td>KNWG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KP2</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations.</td>
<td>KNWG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KP3</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Correlate, integrate and apply the following to common emergent and non-emergent medical, surgical, and behavioral scenarios across the lifespan:  
  - History and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses.  
  - Management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment modalities.  
  - Interventions for surveillance geared to prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance.  
  - Appropriate selection and interpretation of laboratory and diagnostic studies. | KNWG CRPS |

Interpersonal and Communication Skills
The Interpersonal and Communication Skills core competencies enable the Physician Assistant student to successfully receive and share information, establishing and maintaining a foundation of trust with all parties so that the environment is open and encouraging for honest dialogue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Abilities Domains</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICS1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate interpersonal and communication (verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic) skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients’ families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system.</td>
<td>IS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICS2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.</td>
<td>IS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Patient-Centered Care
The core competencies of Patient Care seek to ensure that the Physician Assistant student develops the ability to actively listen and attain medical histories, diagnose, properly inform and educate, and prescribe and perform necessary procedures in a way that maximizes patient comfort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Abilities Domains</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PCC1</td>
<td>CTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain an accurate history and perform a focused and comprehensive physical exam.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCC2</td>
<td>CRPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurately diagnose and formulate appropriate pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment plans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCC3</td>
<td>CTS CRPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriately select and perform medical and surgical procedures common to primary care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCC4</td>
<td>CTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance.</td>
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Interprofessional Collaboration
Demonstrate the ability to engage with a variety of other healthcare professionals in a manner that optimizes safe, effective, patient- and population-centered care.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Abilities Domains</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IC1</td>
<td>PB ICS PCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate effectively with other health professionals to provide collaborative, patient-centered care while maintaining a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, ethical integrity, and trust.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC2</td>
<td>CRPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize when to refer patients to other disciplines to ensure that patients receive optimal care at the right time and appropriate level.</td>
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Professionalism and Ethics
The Professionalism core competencies enable the Physician Assistant student to treat all people with respect, compassion, and dignity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Abilities Domains</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSM1</td>
<td>PB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSM2</td>
<td>PB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate sensitivity to a diverse patient population by identifying the sociocultural, familial, psychological, economic, environmental, and spiritual factors impacting health care and health care delivery; and responding to these factors by planning and advocating the appropriate course of action at both the individual and the community level.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**
The core competencies in Practice-Based Learning and Improvement seek to ensure that the Physician Assistant student becomes a life-long learner, develops the skills necessary to evaluate medical research and its appropriate application to the practice of medicine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Abilities Domains</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBLI1</td>
<td>Critically appraise the medical literature to use current practice guidelines and apply the principles of evidence-based medicine to patient care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBLI1</td>
<td>Provide advocacy and support geared to assist patients in obtaining quality care as they navigate the complexities of health care delivery systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBLI</td>
<td>Demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient.</td>
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</table>

**Society and Population Health**
Recognize and understand the influences of the ecosystem of person, family, population, environment, and policy on the health of patients and integrate knowledge of these determinants of health into patient care decisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Abilities Domains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPH</td>
<td>Apply principles of social-behavioral sciences by assessing the impact of psychosocial and cultural influences on health, disease, care seeking, and compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPH</td>
<td>Demonstrate accountability, responsibility, and leadership for removing barriers to health.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY:**

**Competencies**
Knowledge for Practice  
Interpersonal and Communication Skills  
Patient Care  
Professionalism  
Practice-based Learning and Improvement  
Society and Population Health

**Outcomes Domains**
Knowledge  
Interpersonal skills  
Clinical and technical skills  
Professional behaviors  
Clinical reasoning and problem-solving
Technical Standards (A3.13e)

The technical standards set forth by the MPAS program establish the essential competencies considered necessary for students to successfully complete the program. These standards ensure graduates possess the intellectual, physical, and social competencies, including the ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data, that cumulatively represents the essential functions of professional practice within health-related careers. Because the MPAS degree signifies that the holder is prepared for entry into the practice of medicine within a graduate training program, the recipient must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations, and to render a wide spectrum of patient care as required by the curriculum. Therefore, every physician assistant student must master a common body of basic science knowledge and master the principles, knowledge, and procedures of the clinical rotations. Clinical rotations are full immersion learning experiences in practice-based facilities where students have one-on-one patient interactions to apply their clinical skills under the supervision of preceptors. Clinical rotations occur in the following Clerkship Courses (Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, and Psychiatry) and two Electives.

Students must have sufficient capacities and abilities in: Communication, Observation, Motor/Tactile Function, Cognitive/Intellectual Function, and Behavioral and Social Attributes. Completion of this program requires that each student independently demonstrate these capabilities continuously throughout enrollment. Students must be fully able to perform the essential functions in each of the following categories:

1. **Observation.** Acquire, assimilate, interpret, integrate, and apply information from direct observation, oral and written communication of radiographic and other imaging techniques, pathologic and laboratory testing, electrocardiograms, and other reports or studies.

2. **Communication.** Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, health professionals, teachers, staff, and peers, both orally and in writing and when the time available for communication is limited. Accurately obtain a medical history from the patient or their health care proxy.

3. **Motor/Tactile Function.** Perform procedures fundamental to medicine, including participating fully in curriculum requirements in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings. Perform diagnostic and emergency maneuvers and procedures, such as palpation, percussion, auscultation, airway management, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, suturing, and assisting in surgery.

4. **Cognitive/Intellectual Function.** Perform problem-solving tasks quickly and efficiently in an environment that may change rapidly, without warning, and/or in unpredictable ways. Comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships.

5. **Behavioral and Social Attributes.** Possess the emotional stability to exercise sound judgment; manage physical and emotional stress; exhibit sufficient interpersonal skills to interact with people at all levels in a culturally diverse society; and form compassionate relationships with patients while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
In the event a student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with reasonable accommodation on a case by case basis, the student may be subject to dismissal. For more information, please contact FIU’s Disability Resource Center at 305-348-3532.

**Attestation of Compliance with Technical Standards**
Applicants are required to attest at the time they apply to the MPAS program through the Centralized Application System for Physician Assistants (CASPA) that they meet the technical standards of the MPAS program. The student must notify the Program Director if there is any change in their ability to meet the technical standards.

**Students with Disabilities (A3.13e)**

The FIU Disability Resource Center (DRC) collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the support necessary to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to FIU students. For more information about DRC services, visit the website at [https://drc.fiu.edu](https://drc.fiu.edu).

Students with disabilities, including temporary disabilities and injuries, who wish to receive accommodations based on a disability must register with the Disability Resource Center. Students with questions regarding FIU policies governing students with disabilities, or students who have a disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, should contact the Disability Resource Center.

**Academic Accommodations (A3.13e)**

Students seeking academic accommodations must contact the FIU Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates academic accommodations, which are determined on a case-by-case basis. The provision of accommodations are not retroactive, students should work with the DRC regarding the possible implications. Accommodations may vary based on course design and learning objectives. The DRC will work with the student and faculty partners to ensure smooth coordination and implementation of accommodations. Proactive planning and early communication are often key to successful accommodation implementation. Each semester, students have the opportunity to request accommodations by contacting the DRC.

Students are encouraged to contact the DRC for further information:

- **Phone:** 305-348-3532
- **Email:** drc@fiu.edu
- **Information Request Form:** available online ([https://webforms.fiu.edu/view.php?id=722953](https://webforms.fiu.edu/view.php?id=722953))
MPAS Program Information

The professional faculty and staff of the MPAS program provides support services for students in an effort to help students reach their academic and career goals. The program provides academic advising and career counseling, fellowship opportunities, career announcements, community outreach volunteer activities, and alumni networking.

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor who provides academic and career counseling. Faculty advisors monitor students’ academic progress and success and provide guidance in navigating course work, clinical rotations, and career opportunities.

**Hours:** 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except on university holidays)
**Website:** [https://medicine.fiu.edu/academics/masters-in-physicians-assistants-studies-mpas/](https://medicine.fiu.edu/academics/masters-in-physicians-assistants-studies-mpas/)
**Telephone:** 305-348-4162
**Fax:** 305-348-6251
**Email:** paschool@fiu.edu
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<tr>
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<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<td>Mariana Viera-Navarro, MPH, PA-C, CCT</td>
<td>Principal Faculty</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mvierana@fiu.edu">mvierana@fiu.edu</a></td>
<td>(305)348-9039</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lynnette Alonso-Capote, MBA, CLSSGB</td>
<td>Manager of Administrative Services</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lyalonso@fiu.edu">lyalonso@fiu.edu</a></td>
<td>(305)348-7994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ricardo Canelon</td>
<td>Clinical IT Field Analyst II</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rcanelon@fiu.edu">rcanelon@fiu.edu</a></td>
<td>(305)348-4835</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verligia Daniell</td>
<td>Didactic Senior Program Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vdaniell@fiu.edu">vdaniell@fiu.edu</a></td>
<td>(305)348-6435</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ismael Mella Cardenas, MHA</td>
<td>Clinical Senior Program Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:imellaca@fiu.edu">imellaca@fiu.edu</a></td>
<td>(305)348-8279</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alina Ortiz</td>
<td>Clinical Liaison</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alderodr@fiu.edu">alderodr@fiu.edu</a></td>
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<td>Jose Seguias</td>
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<td>Jared Stein</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:jstein@fiu.edu">jstein@fiu.edu</a></td>
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<td>Catharine Vale, MEd</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cvale@fiu.edu">cvale@fiu.edu</a></td>
<td>(305)348-7920</td>
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Financial Counseling and Financial Aid

MPAS students may seek financial counseling and financial aid guidance through the HWCOM Office of Financial Assistance website (https://medicine.fiu.edu/academics/financial-assistance/). Financial aid is offered in the form of grants, loans, and scholarships, which may come from a variety of sources.

Students are encouraged to apply for other grants and scholarships offered by sources outside the university. Information on funding sources is available through the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) website (https://pa-foundation.org/scholarships-fellowships/pa-student-scholarships/).

Tuition and Fees (A3.12f)

Tuition and fees are charged at a flat yearly rate. Tuition is billed three times yearly: one-third the cost of tuition is billed each fall, spring, and summer semester. In the third year, students are only required to pay the mandatory University fees for their last Fall semester.

Class of 2022

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<th>MPAS Student Cost of Attendance Budget for 2022-2023</th>
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## Class of 2024

### MPAS Student Cost of Attendance Budget for 2022-2023

#### FALL/Spring = 9 Month Budget, Summer = 3 Month Budget

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Refund Policy (A1.02k)
If a student withdraws or separates from the FIU MPAS program for any reason once the semester has started, a credit for fees is given as delineated by FIU OneStop. The FIU OneStop Academic Calendar contains the following dates:

- **Early semester**: Last day to add/drop courses or withdraw from the university without incurring financial liability for tuition and fees.
- **Mid-semester**: Last day to withdraw from all courses with a 25% refund.
- **Mid to late semester**: Return of Title IV deadline for financial aid recipients.
- **Mid to late semester**: Last day to drop a course with a DR grade or withdraw from the university with a WI grade.
MPAS Program Curriculum Description (A3.12d, e)

The MPAS program is a cohort-based 27-month curriculum, awarding 92 credits. There are two segments to the program. The first 15 months are dedicated to didactic education (commonly referred to as “Year 1” or “the didactic phase”). During the last 12 months (commonly referred to as “Year 2” or “the clinical phase”), is comprised of the 9 clerkship courses, where students attend supervised clinical rotations. The clerkship courses are between four and five weeks at a minimum. The required clerkship courses include the following medical specialties: Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Surgery. Students also complete two elective clerkship courses. The clinical rotation sites used for each clerkship course may vary in schedule, expectations, and assignments. More information is provided in the Clinical Rotation Guide available online (https://medicine.fiu.edu/resources/current-students/mpas-resources/index.html).

The didactic phase (Year 1) of the program is based on a broad curriculum. The didactic phase includes coursework in anatomy, physiology, medical microbiology/infectious disease, clinical assessment, pathophysiology, pharmacology, clinical medicine series, clinical skills, integration into clinical concepts and more; the full curriculum is available online (https://medicine.fiu.edu/academics/masters-in-physicians-assistants-studies-mpas/curriculum/index.html). Courses are offered at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus.

The clinical phase (Year 2) of the program allows students to apply knowledge and skills gained during the didactic phase into health care practice. Prior to starting the clinical phase, students receive the Clinical Rotation Guide. This guide delineates requirements, policies, procedures, and guidelines relevant to the clinical phase of the program. Students are promoted to the clinical phase when they successfully complete all didactic coursework and summative exams; complete and pass a background check; submit documentation of required immunizations and titers; and complete Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Basic Life Support (BLS), and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) trainings. Students may be required to submit to additional background checks and training required by individual clinical rotation sites.

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<td>PAS 6022</td>
<td>Gross Anatomy</td>
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<td>PAS 6040</td>
<td>Clinical Assessment I</td>
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<td>PAS 6011</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine I</td>
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<td>PAS 6015</td>
<td>Physiology II</td>
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<td>PAS 6016</td>
<td>Integration into Clinical Concepts I</td>
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<td>PAS 6023</td>
<td>Pharmacology in Disease Pathology I</td>
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<td>PAS 6031</td>
<td>Clinical Skills I</td>
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<th>Course ID</th>
<th>Semesters Five – Seven [Spring – Fall]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6103</td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6125</td>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6200</td>
<td>Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6300</td>
<td>Pediatric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6400</td>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6500</td>
<td>Obstetrics/Gynecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6600</td>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS 6940</td>
<td>Elective (x2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Schedule
During the didactic and clinical phases of the program, the course schedule and academic calendar may differ from that of the general FIU academic calendar.

- Programmatic hours vary and may include activities that are held in the weekend and/or evenings, outside of regular business hours.
- Students will be notified, via CanvasMed, of any changes in course times, lectures, or exams. Students must be readily available to attend all program-mandated events, regardless of schedule changes.
- Program activities (e.g., course sessions, labs, evaluations) are not rescheduled to accommodate student absences unless accommodated by university policy.

Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP™
Throughout the MPAS program, students are required to participate in the Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP™ (Health Education Learning Program) program—the HWCOM’s signature longitudinal service-learning program incorporating the social determinants of health. This program provides students the opportunity to work in interprofessional teams that include students from other professional programs (e.g., nursing, social work). These interprofessional teams work directly with underserved households in South Florida, and MPAS students gain hands-on experience in providing population-based and culturally competent health care (additional information available at https://medicine.fiu.edu/about/community-engagement/green-family-foundation-neighborhoodhelp/).

Recruitment and Maintenance of Clinical Sites and Preceptors (A1.10a, A3.03, B3.01)
The MPAS program is responsible for recruiting clinical sites and preceptors, maintaining standards of excellence, and supervising student placement. The Clinical Director and the clinical team are responsible for identifying and evaluating clinical sites and preceptors that adhere to academic, professional, and safety standards of the program. Students may suggest or provide information regarding potential clinical sites or preceptors to the Clinical Director, but students are not to solicit clinical sites or preceptors. All students must accept the clerkship clinical rotation schedule assigned to them. The schedule may be subject to change.

The program is responsible for maintaining and monitoring clinical sites and preceptors to ensure that the clinical experience allows students to meet the program’s learning outcomes.

Attendance – Didactic Phase (A3.02)
Attendance at all classes is mandatory. On-time arrival and participation is expected for every student; this includes all classes, examinations, labs, small-group sessions, society meetings, and program activities. Students must be aware of the following expectations:

1. Classes and exams begin on time.
2. Students who need to miss a class must submit an Absence Excusal Form (AEF) [Appendix C] via the MPAS Student Affairs page on CanvasMed and notify the Course Director; an email notification alone is insufficient. Submission of the Absence Excusal Form does not constitute an automatic approval. Failure to submit the Absence Excusal Form will result in an Unexcused Absence. Final approval is granted by the Academic Director.
Planned Absence:
- Students are permitted one (1) planned absence per semester with advanced notification at the beginning of the semester. This excludes assessments.

Episodic/Unplanned Absence (e.g., doctor’s appointment, program health requirements):
- Student must follow the procedure for a planned excused absence.

NeighborhoodHELP or Programmatic Absence:
- Student must follow the procedure for a planned excused absence and upload the confirmation of the activity in the Absence Excusal Form as supporting documentation.

Military Leave of Absence:
- A military deployment is addressed according to Federal Law.

Emergencies:
- In the event of an emergency or an extraneous circumstance, absences may be approved. An emergency is defined as an acute event such as, but not limited to illness or injury that requires immediate care in an emergency department.
- Student absences for emergencies must be reported as soon as possible, within 24 hours to the Academic Director via email in addition to the submission of the Absence Excusal Form.

3. Students who are absent 5 days or more within a semester or do not comply with the absence reporting policies will be referred to the Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC) for unprofessional behavior.

4. Students are responsible for the content and assignments missed during their absence.

Make-up Work for Excused Absences
The program will determine the dates and times for any make-up work. Students will receive notification of the date and time for the make-up assignment or assessment via CanvasMed. Once scheduled, the date and time of the make-up will not be changed. Students who miss the make-up will receive a grade of zero (0). Please see policy and procedure above in the event of illness or injury at the time of the make-up.

Unexcused Absences
Unexcused absences are reported to the MPAS program and documented in the student’s academic file as a violation of professionalism. Students who are absent without prior excusal forfeit all points for that day’s activity. No opportunities for makeup work are given for unexcused absences.

Assessment Policies
- Students who arrive after an examination has begun will not be given extra time to complete the assessment. The assessment will finish at the originally scheduled time.
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Students should be respectful of each other and reduce distractions in the room as much as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>All students are expected to be seated, quiet, and ready to log in at the appointed exam start time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Students are not permitted to take exams outside of a proctored setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Students must put away all study materials before entering the room where the assessment is taking place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Students must not bring personal items, including all electronic devices (e.g., smart watches, smart phones, tablets, electronic earbuds/headsets). All electronic devices must be turned off and stored away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Students may bring one writing utensil such as a pencil or pen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Students must not wear hats/hoodies/obstructive headwear during the exam unless otherwise permitted to observe religious practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Students must not have food or drink available on the table or eaten during the exam; if needed for medical reasons it must be hidden away until needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Students must not leave the proctored environment until their individual exam is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Students must not leave the proctored environment unless there is an emergency. If an emergency occurs during the exam, they should notify the exam proctor immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Students must not leave the proctored setting to go ask faculty members questions about the exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Students are not permitted to photograph, record or copy exam questions for any purpose at any time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Scratch paper, if allowed, will be provided by the proctor and will be collected at the end of the exam prior to the student leaving the proctored setting. If students have questions for faculty about a test question during an exam, they may write them on this sheet and when the proctor collects it, it will be given to the faculty member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>If the student’s computer or exam software “freezes” during the upload/submission of answers, the student should notify the proctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Prior to leaving the exam room, each student is required to show the proctor evidence of exam upload/submission. Students should never leave a proctored testing setting with testing material still open on their computer or in any format that could be reviewed or retrieved later by the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Once finished with the exam, each student should quietly exit the exam room in a manner to prevent distractions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Students will refrain from gathering in areas near the testing room as the noise is distracting to those still taking the test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Students may return to the exam room once instructed to do so by the exam proctor or PA faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Students shall not discuss or share exam contents until they are certain all students have taken the exam and the exam scores have been released.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Students shall not discuss or share exam contents with students outside their cohort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Faculty must not discuss exam results until all students have taken the exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Discussing exam questions/answers with students or giving exam feedback (“exam review”) will be at the discretion of the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Online Testing Procedures

1. Students are required to have audio and video access via Zoom (or another product if defined by the program or course director) on their computer and/or phone during online exams. The computer and/or phone will be placed in such a fashion to allow monitoring of the student, screen, keyboard, general area around the computer, and any scratch paper that is allowed by the course director.
2. Audio and video monitoring by the exam proctor may be recorded.
3. Students are not permitted to communicate with others in any format while taking an exam.
4. Students are not permitted to photograph, record or copy exam questions for any purpose.
5. Students should not take exams remotely unless specifically instructed to do so in writing by the program.

### Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) Testing Procedures

1. Audio and video monitoring by the exam proctor may be recorded.
2. On the day of an examination, students are expected to be at the appointed station fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled start time for the examination.
3. Study materials and personal belongings are to be stored outside of the station where the examination is occurring (i.e., the student locker or other personal space).
4. Food or beverages will not be permitted at the stations.
5. Scratch paper, if allowed, will be provided by the proctor, and will be collected at the end of the session prior to the student leaving the proctored setting.
6. Prior to leaving the exam room, each student may be required to submit any OSCE materials to the exam proctor.
7. Once finished with the exam, each student should quietly collect their belongings and exit the exam room in a manner to prevent distractions.
8. Students will refrain from collecting in areas near the testing room as the noise is distracting to those still taking the test.
9. Students serving as pretend patients during a graded OSCE session should refrain from giving verbal or non-verbal prompts, hints, cues, or clues to students who are being graded.
10. Students shall not discuss or share exam contents until they are certain all students have taken the exam and the exam scores have been released.
11. Students shall not discuss or share exam contents with students outside their cohort.
12. Faculty will not discuss exam results until all students have taken the exam.
13. Discussing exam questions/answers with students or giving exam feedback (“exam review”) will be at the discretion of the proctor/instructor.
Religious Observances
All students, faculty, and staff at FIU have a right to expect that the University will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices and beliefs. The University, through its faculty, will make every attempt to schedule required classes and examinations in view of customarily observed religious holidays of those religious groups or communities comprising the University's constituency. No student shall be compelled to attend class or sit for an examination at a day or time prohibited by his or her religious belief. Students are expected to attend all sessions at assigned times unless granted an excused absence by the Academic Director. Students are expected to follow complete the Absence Excusal Form as described in the process above. Students must submit the request at the beginning of each semester. Students absent for religious reasons will be given reasonable opportunities to make up any work missed. Any student who believes that he or she has been treated unfairly with regard to the above should contact FIU's Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility (CRCA).

Leave of Absence
The MPAS program defines a Leave of Absence as a temporary break in a student's attendance of five (5) days or longer. Leave time must be requested prior to the beginning of the anticipated leave time and must be approved by the Program Director. Leave will generally be granted in cases involving personal hardship or family need. Academic standing is not considered a reason for granting a leave of absence. A leave of absence may be requested by the student or recommended by the program. Leaves of absence are granted for a period not exceeding one year. The MPAS program reserves the right to determine the conditions for re-entry after any leave of absence.
Academic Standards (A3.15a)

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy
Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) equal to or greater than 3.0. Students must earn a final grade of 75% (“C”) or higher in all courses and on all units (modules) within a course. A final course grade of lower than 75% is considered a failing grade.

During the mid-semester period and at the end of each semester, the program assesses the academic progress of students by examining cumulative GPAs, semester GPAs, final course grades, and unit (module) grades. If a student does not meet the satisfactory academic progress criteria, they may be placed on academic warning or academic probation, or may be dismissed from the program in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. A student may also be dismissed for failure to make satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion, or failure to complete all the requirements for the physician assistant studies degree within the time limits for degree completion (i.e., failure to complete all requirements within time limits denoted in a deceleration plan).

Grading System
The grading system used for all courses and units (modules) is presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>GPA (Points per Credit Hour)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100%</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94%</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-79%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>≤74%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Incomplete Grades
An incomplete grade (denoted as “IN”) is a temporary grade given at the discretion of the instructor for work not completed during the semester and not caused by the student’s own negligence. An IN grade may only be awarded to a student when a small portion of the student’s work is missing, not to exceed 50% of the coursework. An IN grade may also be given in matters of alleged academic misconduct per Regulation 2501 Student Conduct and Honor Code.

The instructor determines the timeline to complete the class, but it cannot exceed two consecutive terms after the initial course, or it will automatically default to an F grade. Student must not re-register for the course to make up the IN grade. A student with an IN grade must complete the class by the end of the fourth week in the term they plan to graduate; students cannot graduate with an IN grade. If an IN grade is changed to a failing grade, the student is referred to the Student Evaluation and Progress Committee.
Academic Standing and Progress (A3.15a, b, c, d)

Progression and continuance in the FIU MPAS program are not only based on scholastic achievement, but also professional performance and the ability to meet all requirements of the program. All students must meet all the following requirements as they progress through the program:

- Successfully complete all didactic examinations (written, practical, oral, simulation, and/or OSCEs) with a 75.0% or higher.
- Successfully complete each required course and unit (module) with a grade of 75% or higher.
- Maintain a semester GPA of 3.0 by the end of each semester.
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 by the end of each semester.
- Comply with program standards of conduct and guidelines for ethical conduct and professional behavior.
  - It is ultimately up to the discretion of the SEPC to determine what constitutes unprofessional behavior and what constitutes appropriate disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

A student who is not in good academic standing in the MPAS program will be referred to the SEPC and may be placed on academic warning or probation, required to complete a remediation plan, or may be decelerated or dismissed from the program.

Academic Warning

A student whose cumulative graduate GPA falls below a 3.0 will be placed on warning, indicating academic difficulty. The designation will be notated on the transcript.

Strategy for Success

- Referral to the Academic Advisor for the formulation of an individualized academic plan
  - Components of an individualized academic plan:
    - A written document that outlines what criteria the student meets for an Academic Assistance Plan, how the student could meet program requirements, and the timeline for which the student has to meet those requirements.
    - The plan should also explain what the consequences are if the student does not meet all of the requirements in the specified time frame, including the consequences of failing any assessment that is allowed to be remediated.
    - The plan should be signed and dated by the student acknowledging their understanding of the academic plan and potential consequences as outlined in that plan.
- Mandatory review of material using Rosh Review.
- Referral to the appropriate academic resources.
- Mandatory regular meetings with Academic Advisor and/or the Academic Director.
- Students who satisfactorily complete requirements for their individualized academic plan will be eligible to return to Good Academic Standing.
- Any student who fails to meet all of the requirements on their individualized academic plan will be evaluated by the SEPC to determine the student’s status with the program.
**AcademicProbation**

A student on warning whose cumulative graduate GPA remains below 3.0 in the following semester will be placed on probation, indicating serious academic difficulty. The designation will be notated on the transcript. The program will indicate the conditions which must be met in order to continue enrollment.

**Strategy for Success**

- Referral to the Academic Advisor for the formulation of an individualized academic plan.
- Components of an individualized academic plan:
  - A written document that outlines what criteria the student meets for an Academic Assistance Plan, how the student could meet program requirements, and the timeline for which the student has to meet those requirements.
  - The plan should also explain what the consequences are if the student does not meet all of the requirements in the specified time frame, including the consequences of failing any assessment that is allowed to be remediated.
  - The plan should be signed and dated by the student acknowledging their understanding of the academic plan and potential consequences as outlined in that plan.
- Email sent to Academic Director with the delineation of the academic plan.
- Students who satisfactorily complete requirements for their individualized academic plan will be eligible to return to Good Academic Standing unless the SEPC makes another recommendation as part of their review of the student’s individualized Academic Plan.
- Any student who fails to meet all of the requirements on their individualized academic plan will be evaluated by the SEPC to determine the student’s status with the program.

**Academic Dismissal**

A student on probation whose cumulative and semester GPA’s fall below a 3.0 will be automatically dismissed from the program and the University. The designation will be notated on the transcript. A student will not be dismissed prior to attempting a minimum of 12 hours of coursework as a graduate student. The student has ten working days to appeal the dismissal decision. This appeal must be made in writing to the Dean of the University Graduate School. To appeal, a Petition for Exception to Graduate Requirements must be completed. The petition is an online process which is initiated by the program in which you were pursuing your degree. Should you wish to initiate this appeal, you must contact the Academic Director. The dismissal from the University is for a minimum of one year and prohibits students from registering for any courses. After one year, the student may apply for readmission to the University in the same or a different program, or register as a non-degree-seeking student if applicable. Dismissed students who are readmitted or who register as non-degree-seeking students are placed on academic probation.

**University Readmission Policy**

In accordance with FIU Policy 380.044 Graduate Academic Standing, Academic Dismissal, and Readmission (available online at [https://policies.fiu.edu/files/758.pdf](https://policies.fiu.edu/files/758.pdf)), a student who has been dismissed from a graduate program for failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA may re-apply to the same program or apply to any other graduate program at FIU under the program requirements and policies in force at the time of re-application. In applications for readmission to the same program or admission to another program, admission criteria shall
include consideration of previous performance at the graduate level in addition to the normal admission requirements.

**Deceleration (A3.15c)**
Deceleration occurs when a student does not continue their academic progress in the MPAS program with their entering cohort. The decision of whether a student should be offered a deceleration plan is made by the SEPC; final adjudication is the responsibility of the Program Director. The MPAS program is cohort based, and courses are only offered once a year. Therefore, deceleration plans are only valid for one year. A student that is decelerated will be required to reapply to the MPAS program by submitting a new application. The student will only be able to join an incoming class with an available open seat: the maximum incoming class size is 45 students. Students who enter into a deceleration plan agreement with the MPAS program must meet all conditions and terms defined in the plan within the specified timelines. Students who do not comply with the deceleration plan will not be accepted to the program.

**Withdrawal (A3.15d)**
A student can withdraw from the university within the established deadlines as published in the university academic calendar. A Withdrawal Form must be completed and submitted to the OneStop office. Non-attendance or non-payment will not constitute a withdrawal. For specific information on the Withdrawal from the University policy, refer to the Graduate Catalog (catalog.fiu.edu).

Students may petition for a removal of grade and course or replacement of grade with a DR/W grade. Petitions for removal of grade and course must be submitted no later than six months after the end of the term in which the courses were taken. Drop requests received later than six months after the end of the term in which the courses were taken will only be considered for replacement of grade with a DR/W grade. For further information on the petition process, please refer to the Student Petitions website (https://onestop.fiu.edu/classes/student-petitions/).

**Academic Remediation (A3.15c)**
The following academic remediation policy applies to failed high stake exams, clinical skills exams, and OSCEs (not quizzes) regardless of the student’s overall grade. A score of <75% on any assessment is considered a failing grade for the assessment. As part of an Academic Plan, students will be given the opportunity to remediate up to one assessment per course and up to three assessments overall in the didactic phase of the program. Students cannot remediate more than one assessment per course OR more than three assessments total in the didactic phase of the program. Students must complete the remediation assessment in a way to demonstrates competency in the tested material. In all cases of remediation, the student will be given an assessment that is graded on a pass/fail basis. A student must score 75% or higher to pass. A score of less than 75% is considered a failure of the remediation assessment.

In only one instance, the remediation grade will replace a failing grade. If the remediation is passed, the remediation grade will be set at 75%. In all other instances, the remediation grade does not replace the original grade, except in the specific situation of a Clinical Medicine course block/module that only has one Exam grade for the entire block/module. In this situation, the remediation grade is averaged with the original
grade to form a new final grade for that assessment. Students who do not pass the remediation attempt fail the course and are subject to procedures outlined elsewhere for this specific situation. A student who passes the remediation attempt must still meet the other requirements previously listed in this handbook in order to progress in the program.

Clinical Medicine I, II, and III
Clinical Medicine I, II, and III are divided into modules, each module functions as its own “course” with specific instructional objectives, learning outcomes and expected competencies. Students must pass each module with a minimum score of 75%. Failure of a module after remediation is a failure of the course, regardless of the composite grade for the course. If a student fails a Clinical Medicine I, II, or III module, then the student, Course Director, and the Academic Director should all be notified in writing. An individualized remediation plan will be made by the Course Director and the Academic Director consisting of select review material and a content-specific assessment from Rosh Review to be completed within two weeks of the original assessment or no later than the last day of the semester. The student will be required to demonstrate competence (by achieving a score of 75% or higher) in the area(s) assessed by the Rosh Review assessment. Students are only allowed to be re-evaluated for grade improvement one time per Clinical Medicine I, II, or III blocks, per semester and no more than 3 times per academic year. If the student fails to achieve a score of 75% or higher on the re-assessment, the student has failed the module and therefore failed the course regardless of the composite grade for the course. Failure of Clinical Medicine I, II or III will result in an automatic referral to SEPC for consideration for Academic Dismissal.

Summary of the Remediation Policy

**STEP #1:** The Course Director (Module Director if the course is Clinical Medicine I, II, or III) reviews the psychometrics of the test & makes adjustments as needed.

**STEP #2:** After the adjustment of the grades based on the psychometrics the Course Director (Module Director if the course is Clinical Medicine I, II, and III) will notify the students who did not reach the established benchmark via email with 24 hours of the administration of the test. The email will include:
- The student’s grade
- The areas of deficiency
- Request for a meeting to review deficiencies (in-person or virtual) with the next 3 days.

**STEP #3:** The Course Director (Module Director if the course is Clinical Medicine I, II, and III) meets with each student on the scheduled appointment. The visit will include:
- Review of content where deficiencies were identified
- Resources that the student may find useful
- Referral to mandatory tutoring
- Schedule date, time, and location of re-assessment no later than 14 days from the meeting date. Request for early reassessment administration will not be permitted.

**STEP #4:** The Course Director (Module Director if the course is Clinical Medicine I, II, and III) sends the remediation form with the information above to the academic advisor, the course tutor, and the Academic
STEP #5: The Course Director (Module Director if the course is Clinical Medicine I, II, and III) creates the assessment for the students who have failed. Options include but are not limited to:

- Online Question Bank Platforms (Exam Master, or others) may be used as deemed appropriate by the course director
- For Clinical Medicine courses and Clinical Phase student remediation – Use Rosh Review
- Short answer questions with rationale for the correct answer
- Multiple choice question exam that includes the most missed content

Promotion from Didactic to Clinical Phase

Students must be in good academic standing to be promoted from the didactic to clinical phase of the program. A student not in good academic standing (e.g., academic probation) at the end of the didactic phase is considered to have unsatisfactory clinical knowledge and skills and may not progress to the clinical phase of the MPAS program. Students are required to meet the following criteria for promotion to the clinical phase:

- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- A grade of “C” (75%) or higher in all didactic courses.
- A grade of 75% or higher on the End-of-Didactic Summative Exam.
- A grade of 75% or higher on the End-of-Didactic Objective Structures Clinical Exam (OSCE).
- Completion of the Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Test (PACKRAT) formative assessment.
- Submission of required documentation (e.g., proof of required vaccinations, trainings).

The End-of-Didactic Summative Exam and End-of-Didactic OSCE are administered in the last 3 months of didactic phase, but no later than December 1st, to gauge student preparedness for the clinical phase. The End-of-Didactic Summative Exam comprises multiple-choice questions assessing students’ knowledge, skills, and abilities. The End-of-Didactic OSCE is a comprehensive, performance-based, multi-station, objective exam assessing students’ basic clinical skills. If a student does not obtain the required grade on these summative exams, they will have 1 opportunity to successfully complete a required 3-week remediation plan tailored to the deficiencies identified in the summative exam(s). The remediation process begins within one week following the results of the exam; the student’s assigned academic advisor will oversee and support them throughout the remediation process. All remediation assignments must be completed, and the student must take the remediation exam in December, Semester 4, and no later than the first week of January (prior to clinical rotation #1) and pass with a grade of 75% or higher. Remediation of identified deficiencies is required and may result in the delay of clinical rotations and graduation. Upon successful completion of the remediation plan, including all assignments and the remediation exam, the student will be permitted to enter into the clinical phase in January.

Students must submit the following required documentation prior to beginning the clinical phase of the
MPAS program:

- Completed Student Health Clearance form, including documentation of required immunizations, annual TB screening, and influenza vaccination;
- Documentation of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training;
- Documentation of drug screening and criminal background check clearance;
- Current certification, with certification expiration date, in Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advance Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS);
- Signed Attestation of Compliance with Technical Standards form;
- Evidence of continued enrollment in a health insurance program; and
- Any additional documents required by a clinical site or preceptor.

Note: A delay in meeting the requirements set forth by the MPAS program and/or a clinical site or preceptor may prevent student promotion into the clinical phase of the program. Clinical rotations begin the 1st week of January (Spring-2 Semester); any delay will likely result in a delay of timely progression and promotion to the clinical phase, which also may result in a delay of graduation.

Clinical Promotion and Remediation

The clinical phase of the program is comprised of 9 clinical clerkship courses, in which students complete supervised clinical rotations (refer to the MPAS Program Curriculum section of this handbook for details). A student with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher with a final grade of 75% ("C") or higher in all clinical clerkship courses is considered to be in good academic standing in the MPAS program; a student in good academic standing will be promoted to subsequent clinical clerkships. A student who is not in good academic standing in the MPAS program will be referred to the SEPC and may be placed on academic warning or academic probation, required to complete a remediation plan, or may be decelerated or dismissed from the program. Refer to the Academic Progress section of this handbook for academic progress criteria.

If a student successfully completes all remediation requirements but fails the remediation exam, they will have one opportunity to repeat the clinical clerkship course; a grade of “IN” is issued for the course. The Clinical Director will coordinate a clinical placement as soon as possible. The student may not progress in the clinical phase of the program until the clinical clerkship course is repeated with a passing grade; this may result in a delay in academic progress and graduation. If the student successfully completes the repeated clinical clerkship course, the “IN” grade will be changed to the grade earned; a grade of 75% or higher is required. If the student earns a grade that falls below 75%, the “IN” grade will be changed to a grade of “F.” A student who fails a repeated clinical clerkship course is referred to the SEPC and is subject to dismissal from the program.

Promotion to Graduation and Summative Evaluation (B4.03 a, b, c, d, e)

To be eligible for promotion to graduation, students must successfully complete all required formative and summative assignments and assessments, which include:

- End-of-Rotation Exams
- End-of-Clinical Summative Objective Structured Clinical Exam
- End-of-Curriculum Summative Exam
Completion of the PACKRAT (formative assessment)
Completion of the program’s Physician Assistant Board Review Course

The MPAS program conducts a summative evaluation of each student within the final four months of the program. The purpose of the summative evaluation is to verify and validate that each student has successfully achieved the Learning Outcomes and Competencies established by the program; and are necessary to enter clinical practice. The assessments composing the summative evaluation correlate with all the didactic and clinical curricular components of the program.

A student who fails to satisfy the requirements for promotion to graduation will be referred to the SEPC and may not be eligible for graduation. Students who do not graduate are NOT eligible to take the PANCE.

Remediation of the Summative Evaluation (A3.15c)
Students must score a minimum of 75% on each element of the summative evaluation. If a student fails to achieve the established benchmark for any of the elements of the summative evaluation:

- The student will meet with their academic advisor to review areas of weakness and deficiency within 24 hours of being notified of failure.
- An individualized remediation plan will be formulated.
- The student will be re-evaluated on Friday afternoon of the following End of Rotation Day (Call Back).

Application for Graduation
Students are required to apply for graduation through my.fiu.edu and to be enrolled in graduate-level courses in the graduating term.

Graduation Requirements
To be eligible for graduation and be awarded a Master in Physician Assistant Studies degree, each student must meet ALL of the following requirements:

1. Meet all University Graduate School requirements for graduation;
2. Be in good or restricted good standing with the university and good academic standing with the program;
3. Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher;
4. Pass each MPAS required didactic course and clinical clerkship course listed in the university catalog with a minimum grade of “C” (75%) or higher;
5. Pass summative written and practical examinations;
6. Complete a minimum of 92 credits; and
7. Pass the capstone research project.
Professionalism Standards

Medical Professionalism is defined as the daily expression of the desire to serve people and society as a whole by providing quality health care to those in need; this definition aligns with the principle of servant leadership. Servant leadership characterized by the highest ethical standards is a foundational principle for all faculty, staff and students of FIU MPAS program.

As future medical professionals, students are expected to possess and maintain the level of professionalism that is required of licensed medical professionals. The general public holds medical professionals to a higher ethical and professional standard than that of the lay public and trusts them with their medical care which is confidential and highly personal. It is important that students behave in a way that maintains that trust. Unprofessionalism not only has implications towards the general public’s perception of this PA program, but the PA profession in general as well. Ultimately, PA students should strive to be able to provide ethical and professional care to the patients they serve.

Expected Behaviors
All currently enrolled students of the FIU MPAS program are expected to demonstrate at all times behaviors consistent with the:

- Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant, published by the American Academy of Physician Assistants
- FIU Regulation 2501 Student Conduct and Honor Code

Unacceptable Behaviors
Examples of unprofessional behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Excessive absences or tardiness (unexcused or unexcused) as defined in this handbook. Students are expected to participate in all instructional activities.
- Lack of engagement and/or participation in the classroom or any academic/instructional activity. This includes, but is not limited to, ignoring or not responding to verbal or written instructions or notifications from the program.
- Disruptive behavior in the classroom, which includes, but is not limited to, failure to meaningfully contribute to group work in a way that is equivalent to the work other students are doing in that group
- Violation of principles related to academic integrity and/or plagiarism as outlined by FIU Regulation 2501.
- Use of inappropriate communication, either verbally or in writing, with anyone to include yelling/screaming, swearing/curse words, derogatory language, or language that could be interpreted as threatening, demeaning, or intimidating.
- Student intoxication with alcohol, prescription, or any illicit drug(s) or substance(s)
- Violation of dress code
- Destruction, misuse, or abuse of Program and/or University equipment and/or supplies, which includes but is not limited to using these materials in a way that is not their intended purpose and/or approved by faculty, in a way that may damage these materials or affect their ability to function
correctly or removing them from their facility for any use outside of University property unless otherwise designated by program faculty.

Students should understand this is not an exhaustive list and it is ultimately up to the discretion of the program to determine what constitutes unprofessional behavior and what constitutes appropriate disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

Communication
All students are assigned an FIU email account at the time of admission to the program. It is mandatory that students check their FIU e-mail account daily (including weekends). The FIU e-mail is considered the official University email and the only account that the MPAS Program uses to communicate with currently enrolled students. Likewise, students should only use their FIU e-mail account for email correspondence with the program as this prevents identification problems related to outside email. Faculty and staff will not respond to students who utilize outside email addresses. The MPAS program faculty and staff use e-mail as an important means for distributing information. The MPAS program is not responsible if a student has inaccurate or missing information due to failure to routinely check, read and clear their e-mail account. Students are responsible for promptly reaching out to the FIU MPAS IT department if they have technical difficulties with their FIU e-mail account.

Students are expected to adhere to professional communication with program faculty and staff both in-person and in writing, including email. Students should refrain from texting with program and faculty whenever possible and this form of communication should remain strictly professional and related directly to educational content/activities. Students should refrain from consorting with program faculty outside of the educational setting unless specifically for the purpose of attending a program-sponsored event.

Requirement to Report Criminal Incident
Students are required to inform their Academic Advisor and/or the Program Director of any interaction with the police resulting in an arrest or being brought before the criminal justice system within fifteen (15) days of the incident. This requirement is independent of whether or not there is a conviction involved. Failure to report any incident will result in a referral to the Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC) for unprofessional behavior. Disciplinary actions may include dismissal from the MPAS Program.

Criminal Background Checks/Drug Screening
If a felony conviction occurs between the date of submission of the CASPA application and matriculation into the MPAS Program, the specific details including: (1) date of charge(s), (2) type of offense, and (3) disposition of the case, must be reported to the Program Director’s office immediately. Any felony convictions that occur subsequent to matriculation or at any time during your enrollment in the program must also be reported immediately providing the aforementioned information. Failure to comply will be grounds for dismissal from the MPAS Program. By accepting admission to the program, a student agrees to submit to national criminal background checks, as well as drug screening: and pay any associated expenses.
Medical Records and Patient Confidentiality

Patient confidentiality is a cornerstone in Physician Assistant practice and essential for establishing and maintaining the patient-provider relationship built on trust.

MPAS students are privileged to learn information that patients share only with healthcare professionals and be present in very personal moments of patients’ lives. Patients, in turn, trust that MPAS students will preserve their confidentiality; as a key component of medical professionalism, MPAS students must honor this trust. Students are not to discuss a patient in any manner or situation that would reveal any information about that patient to any person not directly involved in the patient’s health care. Students must refrain from discussing patients in public places, (i.e. cafeterias, elevators, etc.) where conversations may be overheard. Students should remind those who may be inappropriately discussing patient information, about patient confidentiality.

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

All students will receive formal instruction on and must follow the Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) rules when participating in clinical activities at affiliated hospitals and clinics; HIPAA compliance includes maintaining the confidentiality of paper and electronic health records. When violations of HIPAA by a student are identified by a hospital, clinic, physician’s office, etc., the violation will be reviewed by the SEPC. Disciplinary actions may include remediation and/or sanctions, including the possibility of dismissal from the program.

Dress Code

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, interprofessional, and administrative colleagues. The MPAS program has the authority to determine dress code requirements for students admitted to the program. Students in violation of any of the above dress codes may be asked to change into appropriate attire. Violations may result in the referral of the student to the SEPC for disciplinary action.

The required attire is “business casual” unless otherwise specified by the faculty instructor for specific purposes such as lab or Physical Diagnosis courses. Short sleeves are permitted, but not t-shirts or tank tops. No clothing should be unprofessionally revealing regardless of student gender. The neckline of tops should not extend below the collar bones and should not reveal the abdomen when sitting or standing. Pants/skirts should not be shorter than knee length. Jeans are not permitted. Closed-toed shoes are required. Undergarments should not be visible, except for the unique circumstance of the Physical Diagnosis course where sports bras may be required by the course director. Students should display their FIU student badge at all times. Students should consult their Academic Advisor if they have questions about the dress code.
Students should avoid the use of fragrances, as patients, classmates and instructors may have allergies or sensitivities.

Student Identification Policy (A3.06)
FIU identification badges are issued to all students upon matriculation. These identification badges as well as a short white lab coat must be worn at all times while on campus and during clinical experiences. This is to clearly distinguish them from physicians, medical students and other health profession students and graduates.

Students may be required to wear an additional site specific security identification badge at clinical sites. The clinical site(s) will make arrangements for the student to attain an identification badge during orientation prior to beginning the clerkship. This badge is to be worn in addition to the FIU identification badge.

Physician Assistant students must always and only identify themselves as “physician assistant students” to faculty, patients, clinical site staff, and never present themselves as physicians, residents, medical students, or graduate physician assistants. While enrolled the FIU MPAS program, students may not use previously earned titles (i.e. RN, MD, DO, EMT, Ph.D., Dr. etc.) for identification purposes.

Social Media and the Medical Professional
The FIU MPAS program supports the American Medical Association’s (AMA) opinion titled “Professionalism in the Use of Social Media”. The opinion has been quoted below with modifications to align with physician assistant education and practice.

The Internet has created the ability for physician assistant (PA) students and PAs to easily communicate and share information with millions of people. Participating in social networking and other similar Internet opportunities can support a PAs personal expression, enable individual PAs to have a professional presence online, foster collegiality and camaraderie within the profession, and provide an opportunity to widely disseminate public health messages and other health communications. Social networks, blogs, and other forms of communication online also create new challenges to the patient provider relationship. PA students should weigh a number of considerations when maintaining a presence online:

- PA students must be cognizant of standards of patient privacy and confidentiality that must be maintained in all environments, including online, and must refrain from posting identifiable patient information online.
- Students must NOT text, email, post on social media, or discuss with anyone potentially identifiable patient information which includes but is not limited to, photographs of patients (even if the patient’s face is not visible).
- When using the Internet for social networking, PA students must use privacy settings to safeguard personal information and content to the extent possible but should realize that privacy settings are not absolute and that once on the Internet, content is likely there permanently. Thus, PA students must routinely monitor their own Internet presence to ensure that the personal and professional information on their own sites and, to the extent possible, content posted about them by others, is accurate and appropriate.
PA students must NOT interact with patients on the Internet. If a situation occurs where a student unknowingly interacts with a patient on the Internet while they are a student, they must report this to the program immediately for guidance.

To maintain appropriate professional boundaries PAs must separate personal and professional content online.

When PA students see content posted by colleagues that appears unprofessional, they have a responsibility to bring that content to the attention of the individual, so that they can remove it and/or take other appropriate actions. If the behavior significantly violates professional norms and the individual does not take appropriate action to resolve the situation, the PA student must report the matter to the appropriate authorities.

PA students must recognize that actions online and posted content may negatively affect their reputations among patients and colleagues, may have consequences for their medical careers (particularly for PA students) and can undermine public trust in the medical profession.

Program-Specific Social Media Expectations
FIU MPAS students and faculty should understand and adhere to the following guidelines and professional considerations when engaging in social media networking:

- FIU MPAS Faculty and Staff members are not permitted to extend or accept “friend requests” to/from students.
- Classroom time should be respected. Students must not engage in social networking during instructional activities.
- The integrity of the coursework of the FIU MPAS program, student, and classroom must be protected. Students must not share questions or answers to assessments, exams, or quizzes via social media.
- Patient privacy must be protected. HIPAA laws apply to all social networking sites. Students must NOT text, email, post on social media, or discuss anyone potentially identifiable patient information which includes but is not limited to, photographs of patients (even if the patient’s face is not visible).
- Students must ensure accuracy regarding statements made about the FIU MPAS program and its community members. Students must not provide false, intentionally inaccurate, or inflammatory comments.
- All laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material must be followed.
- Students must recognize that one’s professional reputation can be affected through social networking and therefore be judicious when posting content.

Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct (A1.02i, A1.02j)
The FIU Board of Trustees has a regulation that prohibits discrimination, harassment, and related misconduct. The FIU Board of Trustees Regulation FIU-106 Nondiscrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Title VII) is available online (http://regulations.fiu.edu/). The policy statement reads:

Florida International University (the University) affirms its commitment to ensure that each member of the University community shall be permitted to work or study in an environment free from any form of illegal discrimination, including race, color, sex, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, national
origin, marital status, and veteran status. The University recognizes its obligation to work towards a community in which diversity is valued and opportunity is equalized. This Regulation establishes procedures for an applicant or a member of the University community (faculty, staff, affiliated third parties, and/or student) to file a complaint of alleged discrimination or harassment. It shall be a violation of this Regulation for any member of the University community to discriminate against or harass any member of the University community or applicant. Discrimination and harassment are forms of conduct that shall result in disciplinary or other action as provided by the Regulations/policies of the University.

The University is also committed to creating a work or academic setting free from illegal discrimination based on sexual misconduct, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression which is addressed in FIU Regulation 105 Sexual Misconduct (Title IX).

**Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct (A1.02i, A1.02j)**

The FIU Board of Trustees has a regulation that addresses sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. The FIU Board of Trustees Regulation FIU-105 Sexual Harassment (Title IX) and Sexual Misconduct is available online ([http://regulations.fiu.edu/](http://regulations.fiu.edu/)). The policy statement reads:

Florida International University (the University) is committed to encouraging and sustaining a learning and living environment that is free from discrimination based on sex including gender, gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Discrimination based on sex encompasses Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment, Gender-Based Harassment, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and/or Stalking. The University has developed this regulation applicable to the entire University Community (i.e., students, student organizations, faculty, staff, affiliated third parties, and visitors) prohibiting discrimination based on sex consistent with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), relevant provisions of the Violence against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA), the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act), along with all applicable implementing regulations, and other applicable federal and state laws.

The University has identified two areas that are under the purview of this Regulation: Sexual Harassment as defined by Title IX and Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Harassment applies to alleged harassment, violence, and/or prohibited discrimination that occurs in a University education program or activity in the United States. This refers to locations, events, or circumstances over which the University had substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which such incidents occurred, and also includes buildings owned by or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the University. Sexual Misconduct applies to alleged harassment, violence, and/or prohibited discrimination that occurs in or outside a University education program or activity regardless of location. Nothing in this Regulation shall be construed as preventing the University President from taking any action which may be deemed necessary to meet the goals of this Regulation. The President may change the outcome and/or sanctions for any matter under the jurisdiction of this Regulation as outlined in Section XV.
All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others and is consistent with this regulation. The Regulation is not meant to inhibit or prohibit educational content or discussions protected by academic freedom or the First Amendment, the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments, or any other rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.

**Assessment of Professional Behaviors**
Employing a variety of strategies, assessment and monitoring of professional behaviors occurs on a continual basis during the student’s tenure with the program. Assessments may be required more frequently, and at any given time if areas of concern have been identified.

**Self-Assessment**
Self-assessment offers an opportunity for the student to evaluate their personal and professional qualities, identifying strengths and areas in need of improvement. Self-Assessment will take place at the end of semester 2 and 4 of the Didactic Phase and Clinical Rotation 6 of the Clinical Phase.

If there are areas of concern the student, with feedback from their academic advisor will formulate an individualized plan of action geared toward positive behavior modification. Plans of action may include but are not limited to referral to appropriate external resources. The student will meet with the academic advisor, the Academic and Clinical Directors, and the Program Director to review the plan of action and monitoring strategies. The will be notified that the student has entered into an individualized plan of action regarding professional behavior.

If behavior(s) persist or worsen the student will be referred for a formal review which may result in the student’s dismissal from the program.

**Academic Advisor Assessment**
At the end of semester 2 and 4 of the Didactic Phase and Clinical Rotation 6 of the Clinical Phase of the program, each student’s professional behavior will be evaluated by their assigned academic advisor. The advisor will take in consideration any concerns reported by instructors or course directors. The advisors will meet with each student and review the academic advisor professionalism review form.

If there are areas of concern the student, with feedback from their academic advisor will formulate an individualized plan of action geared toward positive behavior modification. Plans of action may include but are not limited to referral to appropriate external resources. The student will meet with the academic advisor, the Academic and Clinical Directors, and the Program Director to review the plan of action and monitoring strategies. The Student Evaluation and Progress Committee will be notified that the student has entered into an individualized plan of action regarding professional behavior.

If behavior(s) persist or worsen the student will be referred to the Student Evaluation and Progress
Committee for a formal review which may result in the student’s dismissal from the program.

Program Assessment of Professional Behaviors
The FIU MPAS program will evaluate each student’s professional behavior at the completion of the Didactic Phase of the program. If there are areas of concern the student will be placed on Professionalism Probation. With feedback from their academic advisor, the student will formulate an individualized plan of action geared toward positive behavior modification.

Plans of action may include but are not limited to referral to appropriate external resources. The student will meet with the academic advisor, the Academic and Clinical Directors, and the Program Director to review the plan of action and monitoring strategies. Professionalism Probation status will be removed once the student demonstrates the desired behavior modification.

If behavior(s) persist or worsen the will reconvene and review of all related documentation. This review may result in the student’s dismissal from the program.

Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC)

The FIU MPAS program has established a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of any physician assistant student who does not meet the established standards of academic and professional performance. The process is generally positive in approach and committed to supporting students in the successful completion of the course study required by the program. Elements essential to the effectiveness of the process include but are not limited to timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the physician assistant student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal if they feel their due process has been violated based on the guidelines included in this handbook.

The Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC) is charged with the responsibility of systematically reviewing the academic performance (didactic and clinical phases) and professional behaviors of each physician assistant student, in order to make appropriate recommendations to the Program Director regarding graduation, progression, remediation, academic probation, dismissal and readmission. The committee, in consultation with course directors, will also participate directly in the placement of students on probation and in the design remediation for deficiencies. Additionally, the SEPC serves to ensure that the policies outlined in all program policy manuals (including this document) are applied in a fair and equitable manner to all students. However, claims of discrimination, including retaliation, and sexual harassment should be submitted to FIU’s Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility (CRCA) by the student.

Composition
The SEPC will be comprised of the following:

Voting Members (by appointment)
Medical Director of the MPAS program
Two Principal Faculty of the MPAS program
One Instructional Faculty (didactic phase)

**Ex-officio (Non-voting) Members (by invitation)**
Institutional representatives that may provide support and insight as to the student’s performance and intentional or unintentional results of committee actions (i.e., course directors, registrar, financial aid, university legal counsel)

All members are appointed by the Program Director. The Medical Director will serve as chair of the committee at all times.

**Continuity**
The MPAS program has an appointed SEPC for each cohort of students. The committee is identified by the anticipated graduation year of the entering cohort (i.e., SEPC Class of 2022). This provides the committee greater insight into the abilities of the students as they progress through the prescribed course of study.

**Requirements for Quorum and Adoptive Action for the Committee**
- A quorum for any regular or called meeting of the committee shall be defined as more than half of the voting members.
- All actions of the committee require a simple majority vote of those voting members in attendance.
- In extenuating circumstances only, a voting member who is unable to attend an SEPC meeting or who must recuse themselves from voting may delegate a proxy from among the non-voting members. If the committee chair is unable to attend, he/she will designate an acting chair for that meeting only.

**Confidentiality**
All deliberations and proceedings of the SEPC are confidential. Except as specified in this policy, the meetings are closed to persons other than individuals specifically authorized by the Program Director. Faculty must be apprised of the confidential nature of the information.

**Evaluation**

**Ongoing Review**
- End of Semester
  - The SEPC will meet following the completion of each semester to review the academic progress of each student. The committee will verify and validate that students are achieving the learning outcomes and expected competencies and will move on to the next semester based on Student Progression Reports prepared by the Academic and Clinical Directors. The committee, in consultation with the Academic and Clinical Directors, will review recommended action plans for students whose academic or professional performance warrants intervention.
• Progression from Didactic to Clinical Phase
  o The SEPC will meet following the completion of the didactic phase to review the academic progress of each student and determine progression to the clinical phase. The committee will verify and validate that students have demonstrated the learning outcomes and expected competencies based on Student Progression Reports prepared by the Academic and Clinical Directors. The committee, in consultation with the Academic and Clinical Directors, will review recommended action plans for students whose academic or professional performance warrants intervention.

• Graduation
  o The SEPC will meet following the completion of the clinical phase and the summative evaluation to verify and validate successful completion of all components of the program and recommend a student for graduation. The committee will confirm that students have demonstrated the learning outcomes and expected competencies based on Student Progression Reports prepared by the Academic and Clinical Directors. The committee, in consultation with the Academic and Clinical Directors, will review recommended action plans for students whose academic or professional performance warrants intervention.

Episodic Review
• The program has developed a policy for progression and remediation to provide appropriate guidance and feedback to those students who struggle to meet established instructional objectives and expected competencies. This policy guides administrative decisions and procedures regarding student progress and remediation. All academic plans concerning student progress and remediation will be individualized and implemented when deficiencies are identified.
• The SEPC will utilize the Student Academic Progress Report with recommendations submitted by the Academic and Clinical Directors. Students who may have a potential impending committee action are to be notified in writing (e-mail) by the SEPC. Students will be given the opportunity to provide additional information either prior to the meeting or meet with the SEPC at the scheduled meeting. SEPC meetings are scheduled 5 to 15 business days following the notification to students facing action, in order to provide adequate time for the student to prepare for the meeting, while also ensuring that recommendations are made in a timely manner.

Evaluation Process
The SEPC will use the following process for evaluation:
• The SEPC shall review the academic performance (didactic and clinical phases) and professionalism of each physician assistant student facing potential committee action, recommendations made by the Academic and Clinical Directors, and any additional information provided by other parties (i.e., course directors, administrative support staff or students).
• The SEPC shall make recommendations regarding advancement, graduation, monitoring status, probation, dismissal, remediation, leaves of absence, and re-enrollment.
• Special meetings of the SEPC may be called when reports of unprofessional behavior or other serious concerns regarding a student's academic performance. After review, a student will receive written notification of the complaint/incident and that it has been referred to the SEPC. The SEPC may recommend an improvement plan, may develop more comprehensive longer-term remedial plans for
those students having difficulty, or implement appropriate disciplinary action, possibly including dismissal from the educational program.

- The committee chair will notify the Program Director of the committee’s recommendation regarding potential action plans for ratification.
- The committee chair will notify each student of the committee’s recommendation regarding potential actions and provide the student with an opportunity to appeal that recommendation if they desire.
- The HWCOM Dean, or MPAS Associate Dean, has final authority regarding an appropriate course of action for each student.

Hearings and Appeals

Hearing Procedure

Information Gathering
In the event that a matter is referred to the SEPC for evaluation and recommendation, the SEPC has the authority to gather information concerning the matter to assist with its deliberation and evaluation of the matter in the context of the student’s academic performance and overall professionalism. The SEPC may convene meetings for any purpose including assisting with preparation for the SEPC hearing.

Meeting with Student and Confidentiality
All student meetings are conducted in private. During the meeting with the student, the student is advised of the information that forms the basis of the inquiry or allegation; the student then has an opportunity to respond to the information presented. The student may have an individual present to provide support and advice; however, that individual may only advise the student and may not address the SEPC member(s) directly or examine or cross-examine witnesses. The student does not have the right to be represented by an attorney, and no attorney shall be permitted to attend the meeting on the student’s behalf or in any other capacity. The SEPC allows witnesses to the incident, if any, to present pertinent information at the meeting with the student. The chair has the authority to exclude witnesses who provide redundant or duplicative information. Character witnesses shall not be permitted to testify at hearings. If witnesses make presentations at any hearing, the student shall be entitled to pose relevant questions to such witnesses. The SEPC considers the information it has gathered and any additional information provided by the student and makes written findings of fact and recommendations based upon its assessment of the information presented. Such findings and recommendations shall be provided to the Program Director within 7 business days of the conclusion of the hearing.

Quorum and Voting
A quorum consists of at least three voting members of the SEPC. A recommendation is adopted when approved by a simple majority of the members present. A recommendation to expel a student from the MPAS program must be approved by three-fifths of the entire SEPC.
Record of Hearing
Written decisions serve as the official records of a hearing.

MPAS Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee Recommendations
The SEPC makes one or more of the following recommendations regarding the disposition of a matter of professional fitness considered by the Committee:

- Find that the matter does not warrant action;
- Issue a written reprimand or warning;
- Allow the student to repeat or otherwise remediate academic deficiencies;
- Refer the student for counseling or psychological evaluation;
- Place the student on probation with such conditions as deemed appropriate;
- Dismiss the student from the program.
- Other: as determined by the SEPC

The SEPC may recommend to the Program Director removal of a student’s probation once the student has fulfilled the conditions of probation.

Responsibilities of the Program Director
The Program Director reviews the SEPC’s recommendations and may accept the action plan as presented or make modifications. The Program Director submits the proposed recommendations to the HWCOM Dean and MPAS Associate Dean for review and approval. The student is then notified by the Program Director of the finalized written findings and decision.

Student Appeals
A decision of the Program Director may be appealed by the student to the University Graduate School (UGS) Dean or designee, if the student feels there has been a violation of the student’s due process based on the contents of this handbook. The appeal must be in writing, specify in detail the alleged procedural impropriety, and must be filed with the UGS Dean or designee, within 5 calendar days of the date of receipt of the Program Director’s decision. The UGS Dean or designee, shall review the appeal and the record of the formal hearing and issue a decision.

A decision of the UGS Dean may be appealed by the student to the Office of the Provost. The appeal must be filed with the Office of the Provost within 5 calendar days of the date of receipt of the UGS Dean’s decision. The provost, or a designee, shall review the appeal and the record of the formal hearing and issue a decision. The decision of the Office of the Provost is final agency action.

Students may not appeal a decision more than once. While students may be allowed to continue participating in program activities during the appeals process, but in some cases, including but not limited to, allegations of harassment, assault, drug or substance abuse, or other situations deemed by the SEPC as potentially harmful or other students, faculty, or patients, the student may not be allowed to physically participate until the appeals process has been completed. They may be required to
participate in other learning formats such as a virtual or asynchronous format. This may result in a delay in graduation and potential for incurring additional fees for additional academic coursework.

**General Matriculation Policies**

*Provision of Healthcare Services by Faculty (A3.09)*
Students are not allowed to have program faculty members or administrators as their health care providers. Therefore, no forms will be accepted if signed by a program faculty member.

*Immunization (A3.07)*
Once students have successfully been admitted to the MPAS program, they are provided with a checklist of the mandated health requirements that include physical examination, antibody titers, purified protein derivative (PPD) or chest radiograph, immunizations, drug screening, and Level II background checks. Students are given deadlines to submit the health requirement checklist. These mandated procedures/tests are required annually for continued enrollment in the program. Students who do not meet the mandated requirements are not allowed to register for classes: holds are placed on their registration until they are compliant.

In addition, all students are required to register with American Databank, a professional online screening service that enables students to download health forms and submit scanned documents to comply with pre-matriculation requirements (e.g., immunizations, medical history, examination forms, health insurance documentation, and drug testing). Drug screening must be completed through the American Databank vendor.

The MPAS program developed its policy and immunization guidelines based on the guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and regulations issued by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors. Exceptions to this policy may be granted in the event of valid medical contraindications, for religious reasons, or if the student is in the process of receiving the complete vaccine series (e.g., hepatitis B, varicella).

Immunization requirements are summarized below.

*Measles, Mumps, and Rubella.* State of Florida pre-matriculation immunization requirements include documentation of measles, mumps, and rubella immunity for all students prior to registration for classes. As a prerequisite to matriculation or registration, the State University System of Florida requires all students born after 1956 to present documented proof of immunity to measles and rubella. Consistent with Department of Health guidelines, acceptable proof of immunity constitutes:

- Documentation of immunization (month/day/year) with two doses of measles virus vaccine (the first dose must have been given after 1969 and on or after the student’s first birthday; the second dose must have been given at least 28 days after the first dose).
- Copies of measles, mumps, and/or rubella blood antibody titers verifying immunity. Students who cannot prove immunity must receive vaccinations prior to the start of the program.
**Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis Immunization.** Based on the guidelines published by the CDC, matriculating students who have not had a tetanus booster within the past 2 years should receive the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine, which protects against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough).

- A single dose of Tdap must be given for adults aged 19 through 64 years who have not received a dose of Tdap previously.
- Afterwards, adults should receive a tetanus/diphtheria (Td) booster every 10 years.

**Hepatitis B Immunization Series.** Students must show documented proof of vaccination or immunity to hepatitis B, as described below:

- A total of three doses of the hepatitis B vaccine and a positive hepatitis B serum surface antibody titer (IgG).
- Proof of receipt of at least the first dose of the hepatitis B vaccine is required prior to the first day of classes.
- A positive hepatitis B surface antibody titer is required (a copy of the lab report that indicates immunity is required).
- If the hepatitis B surface antibody titer is negative, a second series of hepatitis B vaccinations must be repeated.
- Immunizations can be received at FIU Student Health for a nominal fee.
- Students also may receive immunizations at private physicians’ offices or at ambulatory care clinics.
- Proof of completion of the hepatitis B immunization series is required prior to clearance for direct patient contact.
- Students who continue to have negative hepatitis B surface antibody titers receive individual counseling on how best to protect themselves and prevent hepatitis B infection and special procedures to follow after a needlestick injury.

**Chickenpox (varicella).** Proof of positive (immune) varicella antibody titer is required; if negative, two doses of the varicella vaccine 4 to 8 weeks apart is required. In the absence of proof of either immunization or immunity, students can be immunized at FIU Student Health for a nominal fee.

**Influenza.** Students are required to receive the seasonal flu vaccine annually.

**Polio.** Students are required to have 4 doses recorded from childhood, if applicable, or provide serologic documentation of titer.

**Meningitis (Meningococcal).** Students are required to receive one dose.

**PPD Screening for Tuberculosis (TB).** Students are required to receive an appropriate TB skin test (TST) within two months prior to orientation; this can be done as part of the required physical examination.

- The MPAS program follows CDC guidelines, which state: “for baseline testing, a two-step procedure for persons without a PPD test in the past 12 months can be used to minimize the likelihood of confusing reactivity from an old infection (boosting) with reactivity from a recent infection.
Therefore, unless a student has proof of having a current two-step PPD test (defined as at least two intracutaneous Mantoux tests, given a minimum of one to three weeks apart within the previous 12 months) or history of a positive PPD at the time of matriculation, they are required to have the two-step test completed prior to the first clinical experience. If the student has had at least one PPD in the past 12 months, one test prior to matriculation is sufficient to meet the two-step test requirement.

- TB skin testing is required annually.
- TB skin testing guidelines include the following:
  - Students with positive PPD reactors are required to be assessed annually by a health care provider, have a chest radiograph that reveals no acute cardiopulmonary process, and/or complete a symptom screening form annually thereafter.
  - A chest radiograph is mandatory for new and previous positive reactors; if positive, the student must document proof of having received appropriate treatment.
  - Students who received a Bacillus Calmette–Guérin (BCG) vaccine more than 18 months previously are required to have an Interferon Gamma Release Assay blood test within the last 6 months.

Decisions are made on an individual basis as to the ability of a student actively receiving TB treatment to pursue coursework and/or clinical rotations, based on recommendations and medical clearance. All immunization forms must carry the original signature of a physician or a licensed medical practitioner and the license number or office stamp with address.

MPAS students may be required to have additional vaccines, scheduled or random drug testing, and/or other medical tests prior to starting classes and/or clinical rotations, as required by the MPAS program and all affiliated clinical educational sites. Additional periodic evaluations or tests may be required as indicated, or in the event of exposure to an infectious patient or pathogen.

**COVID-19 Vaccine.** Neither FIU nor the MPAS program require or mandate the COVID-19 vaccine. However, the policies of clinical affiliate sites continually change, and sites may require students to have the COVID-19 vaccine to attend the clinical rotation. The MPAS program is required to adhere to all clinical site policies, rules, and regulations. Clinical sites and preceptors are subject to changing their policies, at their discretion. All students must respect the clinical site and preceptor changes to their policies.

The FIU COVID-19 Response Team serves as a resource for a variety of COVID-19-related inquiries and concerns ([https://repopulation.fiu.edu/covid-19-response-team/index.html](https://repopulation.fiu.edu/covid-19-response-team/index.html)).

**Monitoring for Immunization Compliance.** The MPAS Assistant Director of Admissions indicates student compliance or itemizes any deficiencies prior to the beginning of the semester. Students are notified via email by the MPAS Assistant Director of Admissions if they do not meet the minimum immunization and health compliance requirements.

Students who fail to comply with immunization requirements are not eligible to attend clinical rotations until
all requirements are met. Students who do not meet vaccination guidelines set by clinical sites or preceptors will not be permitted to complete course rotations at that clinical site. The clinical site may, at its discretion, cancel or postpone clinical student attendance at a location or facility. Religious or medical exemptions must be submitted by the student directly to the clinical site, which reserves the right to accept or deny the exemption. In the event of a local measles or varicella epidemic, the exempted students are excluded from university group activities, including classes and patient care, until such time as specified by the Miami-Dade County Public Health Director.

Inability to Complete an Immunization. If a student is unable to complete an immunization, series of immunizations, or screenings as required for any medical or nonmedical reason (religious or other), the student is required to sign a formal declination acknowledging the risks; the declination is available via American Databank. For medical exemptions, a physician’s note documenting the medical exemption is required. The signed formal declination also states that, should a local outbreak occur of the infectious disease to which a student is not immune, the student is not permitted to participate in any clinical care activity until the epidemic is cleared by the Miami-Dade Department of Health.

Health Insurance
Students are required to have current and adequate medical insurance to cover emergencies and common medical problems that might occur during their educational training period and that are outside of the scope of services provided on campus (e.g., specialty care, diagnostic testing, and hospitalization). Health insurance also is available through the group student health insurance plan brokered by FIU.

The cost of medical insurance is borne by the student; fees vary according to the plan selected. Information pertaining to the insurance plan may be obtained online (https://www.gallagherstudent.com/students/user-login.php?idField=1275).

Alternatively, students may satisfy the medical insurance requirement with documentation of a valid medical insurance plan already in effect that meets the basic minimum standards described below. The determination of whether alternative insurance policies meet the minimum standards is made by the MPAS Program Director in consultation with FIU Health.

Basic Minimum Benefits Requirements for Health Insurance. Coverage must include the entire academic year, including annual breaks, regardless of the student’s terms of enrollment. The policy must provide continuous coverage for the entire period the insured is enrolled as an MPAS student. The policy must be renewable. The policy must provide in-network and out-of-network coverage for physician, hospital, diagnostic, and therapeutic coverage in local facilities for both emergency and nonemergency outpatient and inpatient services in Florida. The policy must not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent in the student’s program of study, such as coverage for needlestick injuries and charges related to the postexposure diagnosis and treatment of bloodborne pathogens. The policy also must cover outpatient and inpatient mental health care, prescription drugs, and ambulance services.
**Disability Insurance**

Students are required to enroll in a disability insurance plan to cover injuries that might result in chronic disability during their educational training period. Students must purchase coverage prior to matriculating into the program and prior to beginning the second year of the program. Students must submit proof of coverage, and are required to maintain coverage throughout their time in the program.

**Criminal Background Checks**

Level II criminal background checks also are required through approved vendors in American Databank prior to beginning the MPAS program and the second year. Additional background checks may be performed prior to participation in clinical rotations and are performed by the state on application for licensure. Findings in background checks may affect a student’s admission and ability to participate in clinical experiences and complete the program. During the student’s tenure in the MPAS program, if a student is arrested, charged, or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, they must immediately disclose such an event to the Program Director. Failure to disclose this information may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the program.

**Medical Equipment, Supplies, and Books**

The following is a list of required equipment:

1. Ophthalmoscope
2. Otoscope with disposable otoscope speculums
3. Stethoscope
4. Sphygmomanometer with adult cuff (blood pressure cuff)
5. Tuning forks 128 and 512 HZ
6. Reflex hammer
7. Hand-held Snellen chart (i.e., pocket eye chart)
8. Pen light
9. Ruler
10. Tape measure
11. Tongue depressors
12. Paper clips
13. Cotton balls
14. Maxwell Quick Medical Reference Guide
15. Equipment bag (optional)
16. Black physician assistant scrubs
17. White lab coat with HWCOM MPAS logo (to be worn in all clinical settings)
18. FIU Panther ID
19. Laptop computer. Minimum requirements below:
   - Combo DVD and RW drive
   - Sound capability and speakers
   - Internet connection with private internet service provider (ISP) for universal access to the internet
   - Wireless and printer capability
Students are required to purchase textbooks as specified in class syllabi. Students may access some online textbooks through the Medical Library, in which case the purchase of a hard text is optional.

**Patient Confidentiality**
Students are expected to respect the rights of patients, including the rights to privacy and confidentiality, and shall maintain the privacy and security of all patient records and information in accordance with FIU and HWCOM policies, the policies of affiliated clinical hospitals and facilities, and state and federal law. As members of patient care teams, MPAS students have access to health information that is protected from disclosure under state and federal law (i.e., “protected health information”) including patient medical and/or demographic information. The MPAS program and each hospital or clinic with which the MPAS program is affiliated are subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA); each entity has developed HIPAA privacy and security policies to prevent unnecessary and inappropriate disclosures of health information (https://www.hhs.gov/programs/hipaa/index.html).

MPAS students are required to abide by HIPAA privacy and security policies and receive education and training to understand the requirements of policies and law. Student participation in HIPAA training is provided and monitored by the MPAS program. MPAS students may not review medical records or access electronically stored patient information unless such review is required in the performance of assigned duties. Students are responsible for maintaining the confidence of patients by sharing confidential information only with others who need to know and by handling any documentation of information in a manner that maintains its confidentiality. Annually, MPAS students are required to complete an online HIPAA and cybersecurity awareness training course via CanvasMed. A confidentiality statement must be completed and submitted during the orientation process. Students should note that HIPAA privacy and security policies apply to all student–patient interactions, in formal curricular, extracurricular, and/or volunteer contexts.

Inappropriate disclosure of protected health information is a serious matter that reflects adversely on an MPAS student’s professionalism and fitness to become a physician assistant. The following basic rules are always considered fundamental requirements for MPAS students:

- Under no circumstances should any protected health information be accessed (read or copied) in the absence of a requirement for performance of duties.
- Health information obtained while providing clinical care duties may not be discussed with others unless (a) such individuals are involved in the treatment of that patient or (b) it is necessary to fulfill educational objectives required of the student.
Once confidential information is on paper and in an MPAS student’s hands, they are responsible for appropriate disposition: (a) distribute to authorized persons only, (b) file securely, or (c) discard in the approved manner.

**Student Employment (A3.15e)**
The MPAS program discourages students from holding outside employment while enrolled in the didactic or clinical phases of the program. In the case that a student finds it necessary to hold outside employment while taking courses or rotating, the student should speak to the assigned faculty advisor.

**Student Work to Benefit the MPAS Program (A3.04, A3.05)**
MPAS students are not required to work on behalf of the MPAS program in any clerical, administrative, or instructional capacity.

**Due Process Policies (A3.15f, g)**
The university’s grievance policy and procedure ([https://policies.fiu.edu/files/739.pdf](https://policies.fiu.edu/files/739.pdf)) provides students with a means by which to seek investigation and possible resolution of academic grievances, as described on the [FIU Academic Grievances website](https://policies.fiu.edu/). 
- Informal Grievances
- Formal Grievances

**FIU Ombudsperson**
The FIU Ombudsperson is an impartial and confidential resource who can assist in conflicts between students and FIU faculty, staff, departments, or programs. The Ombudsperson can help resolve conflicts through investigation, mediation, or referrals to appropriate university departments. The Ombudsperson can be utilized in situations in which all areas of appeal have been exhausted or unsuccessful. MPAS students may contact the Ombudsperson, Dr. Sofia Trelles, at 305.348.2797 or may visit the ombudsperson in Graham Center 219.

**Student Record Policies**
FIU retains all student educational records in accordance with federal and state requirements and FIU Board of Trustees regulations.

**Educational Record and Personally Identifiable Information**
FIU maintains student education records in a confidential and secure manner in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) codified in 20 U.S.C. section 1232g, and sections 1002.225 and 1006.52 of the Florida Statutes. The university will not release or permit access to education records or personally identifiable information maintained on a student except as otherwise permitted by law and Regulation FIU-108 Access to Student Education Records, which is available online ([http://regulations.fiu.edu/docs=237](http://regulations.fiu.edu/docs=237)).

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974**, also known as the Buckley Amendment, is a federal law that protects the privacy of a student’s educational record. FERPA applies to all educational
institutions receiving funds from the United States Department of Education, from kindergarten through the university level.

At FIU, the privacy of student records is also protected by FIU-108 Access to Student Education Records. The U.S. Department of Education and Florida law summarize the rights afforded to students by FERPA as follow:

- The right to inspect and review educational records within a reasonable period and within 45 calendar days after the institution has received the request
- The right to request to amend inaccuracies in educational records
- The right to limit disclosure of some personally identifiable information
- The right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office if FERPA rights have been violated.

File A Complaint
Students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the university to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The contact information of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC  20202-5920
FERPA.Complaints@ed.gov

In addition, any violations of FERPA should be reported to the FIU University Registrar at ferpa@fiu.edu or confidentially reported to the Ethical Panther Line (compliance.fiu.edu/hotline)

For additional information about FERPA, please visit the FIU FERPA website.
Health and Safety Policies (A3.08)

Health Precautions and Safety Guidelines
Students must be aware of the need for personal safety and act accordingly to minimize risks. Health and safety practices are reviewed prior to community and clinical experiences. Examples of such educational training programs include:

- Universal precautions;
- Needlestick prevention;
- Response to needlestick or bodily fluid exposure;
- De-escalation techniques when dealing with angry patients; and
- Emergency procedures involving medical care (e.g., CPR), natural disasters, terrorism, assault, and illegal activities.

While fulfilling MPAS educational objectives, students also must be aware of the need for personal health and safety and act accordingly to minimize risks. Students are instructed to be cautious, to use common sense, and to follow their instincts. If an environment or situation feels unsafe, students should stay calm and leave immediately. Students should also discuss unsafe environments with faculty supervisors and/or call law enforcement.

Emergency Contact Information (A1.02g)
- For campus security and personal safety measures, please visit https://police.fiu.edu/
- For all off-campus emergencies, call 911.
- For all on-campus emergencies and urgent scenarios involving safety, call the FIU Police Department at 305-348-5911 (for the Modesto A. Maidique Campus).
- For non-urgent safety concerns or questions, contact:
  - 305-348-2626 for the Modesto A. Maidique Campus

Emergency phones have been installed at strategic locations around FIU, which connect directly to the FIU Police Department.

Communicable Diseases Policy
The MPAS program’s communicable disease policy follows guidelines established by the Center for Disease Control for health care personnel (https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/healthcare-personnel/index.html). Students with communicable diseases or conditions are not permitted to engage in patient contact until such conditions have been resolved, as documented by the student’s physician(s) or health care provider. This restriction is necessary to protect the health and safety of patients and staff. Persons with the following medical conditions are not allowed patient contact without prior medical clearance:

- Active chickenpox, measles, German measles, herpes zoster (shingles), acute hepatitis, and tuberculosis;
- Oral herpes with draining lesions;
- Group A streptococcal disease (i.e., strep throat) until 24 hours after treatment has been received; or
• Draining or infected skin lesions (e.g., methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* [MRSA]).

A student who has a communicable disease or is unsure whether to participate in patient care should seek medical care by a private physician or a physician on staff at FIU Student Health. All students with a communicable disease must receive written medical clearance from the student’s physician(s) or health care provider. A case-by-case evaluation of each student with a communicable disease shall be done by FIU Student Health or a healthcare provider selected by the student to determine their ability to participate in academic activities or perform the duties required of the clinical rotation. Based on the recommendations of the healthcare provider, it is the responsibility of each student to notify the MPAS program office if they are unable to perform clinical work; appropriate documentation is required. All such notifications are kept strictly confidential.

**Biosafety and Bloodborne Pathogen Policy**

The MPAS program abides by FIU policies and procedures set forth by Department of Environmental Health and Safety to manage cases related to biosafety and bloodborne pathogens. The FIU Biosafety Manual ([https://ehs.fiu.edu/safety-programs/biological/biosafety-manual/index.html](https://ehs.fiu.edu/safety-programs/biological/biosafety-manual/index.html)) serves to minimize employee and student exposure to biohazardous agents; the procedures set forth in the manual apply to all university laboratory facilities in which exposure to known or potentially biohazardous agents may occur. The FIU Bloodborne pathogen program ([https://ehs.fiu.edu/safety-programs/biological/bloodborne-pathogen/index.html](https://ehs.fiu.edu/safety-programs/biological/bloodborne-pathogen/index.html)) covers all areas in which exposure to bloodborne pathogens may occur; this includes proper guidelines and precautions to prevent self-exposure and contamination based on OSHA requirements and recommendations. The FIU Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan is available online ([https://ehs.fiu.edu/_assets/docs/biological/bloodborne-pathogen-exposure-control-plan.pdf](https://ehs.fiu.edu/_assets/docs/biological/bloodborne-pathogen-exposure-control-plan.pdf)).

The MPAS program follows the clinical affiliate policies and procedures while at an affiliated clinical site. The HWCOM and the MPAS program have addressed methods of prevention, procedures for care and treatment after exposure (including definition of fiscal responsibility), and the effect on student learning activities as follows:

1. All exposure incidents are regarded as serious and must be reported and documented immediately to the supervising physician/faculty member on call.
2. First aid shall be immediately administered for all types of injuries, including cuts and burns; exposed areas must be thoroughly washed with soap and water.
3. The physician/faculty member supervising the student shall be informed immediately. The supervising physician/faculty member must attempt to obtain witness reports of the incident.
4. The supervising physician/faculty member shall attempt to determine the nature of the exposure(s) and any associated biohazardous risks, including documentation of routes of exposure(s).
5. If possible, source material of the exposure should be retained and secured in a safe manner.
6. If the supervising physician/faculty member determines that the incident constitutes an occupational exposure to biohazardous materials, then they will immediately begin documentation of the incident using the Student Exposure Report Form found in Appendix D herein.
7. All information related to student exposure shall be regarded as confidential.
8. Documentation of the incident shall include the activity in which the student was engaged at the time.
of exposure, the extent to which appropriate work practices and protective equipment were used, and a description of the source of exposure.

9. On-campus injuries: The student is directed to FIU Student Health during normal business hours for appropriate follow up; if the incident occurs after working hours, or requires emergency care, then the student will be directed to the nearest emergency department for proper evaluation.

10. Off-campus injuries: The student is directed to seek care at the hospital’s emergency department or referred to the closest outpatient clinic (according to the clinical affiliation agreement).

11. The student assumes responsibility for all charges associated with diagnosis and treatment of exposure injuries not covered by their health insurance plan; a student may request the college’s assistance by discussing the situation with a representative from the Program Director’s office.

12. Students should follow up with FIU Student Health or with their primary care physician.

**Needlestick Policy**

If a student is exposed to a needle stick or bodily fluid, they must complete and submit the Student Exposure Report Form (Appendix D) via email or in person to the Academic or Clinical Director within 24 hours of the exposure. Immediately after all known exposures, the student must contact their supervising physician/faculty member and report the name of the source patient and diagnosis. This information is necessary to assist in determining the potential severity of the exposure. Students also must directly report the exposure incident to the Academic or Clinical Director within 2 hours of the exposure.

Students are responsible for the payment of fees associated with the diagnostic and therapeutic services associated with a needlestick; the student is also responsible for filing health insurance claims. The student assumes responsibility for all charges that are not covered by their health insurance plan.

Students infected with bloodborne, or other pathogens, shall not solely because of such infection be excluded from participation in any phase of school life, including educational opportunities, employment, and extracurricular activities, except as otherwise required by applicable federal, state, or local law, or unless their health condition presents a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. Students infected with airborne pathogens are excluded from participation in such activities during the infectious stage of their disease. Students who know, or who have reasonable bases for believing, that they are infected with bloodborne, or airborne pathogens are expected to seek medical care. Students are excused from clinical activities to seek medical care for bloodborne or airborne pathogen exposure.

If a student’s exposure results in the contraction of a disease or disability, the student can continue in the education program with as little disruption as safely possible, depending on the circumstances. The student’s specific medical circumstances are evaluated confidentially on a case-by-case basis. Students may seek assistance from the FIU Disability Resource Center to discuss the existence and nature of the disability and whether reasonable accommodation is available.

**Accident/Injury Policy**

If a student is injured while fulfilling the requirements of the MPAS program, they must complete and submit the Student Accident Report Form (Appendix E) via email or in person to the Academic or Clinical Director.
within 24 hours of the accident.

Students are responsible for the payment of fees associated with the diagnostic and therapeutic services associated with the accident and/or injury; the student is also responsible for filing health insurance claims. The student assumes responsibility for all charges that are not covered by his or her health insurance plan.
Technology Policies

Students are expected to abide by the FIU policies on the use of information technology:

- FIU Policy 1930.020 Information Technology Security: [https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/96](https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/96)
- Policy 1930.021 Data Stewardship: [https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/560](https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/560)
- FIU Policy 1930.022 IT Security: Sharing Access to IT Resources; Password Management; and Access Sharing Policy: [https://policies.fiu.edu/files/559.pdf](https://policies.fiu.edu/files/559.pdf)
- FIU 1930.023 IT Security: System and Application Management: [https://policies.fiu.edu/procedure/562](https://policies.fiu.edu/procedure/562)
- FIU Policy 1930.010 Digital Millennium Copyright Act: [https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/545](https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/545)

Violations
Students who violate these technology policies will be referred to FIU’s Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity for professional misconduct and the SEPC will be informed.
Medical Library Policies

Computer and Internet Access
Wireless access is available throughout the FIU campus. Several computer workstations are available for use in the Medical Library. A projector and laptops may be checked out for use outside of the library.

Printing and Scanning
A copier/printer/scanner is available, patrons must pay using an FIU OneCard, debit card, or credit card; use incurs a per-page charge.

Medical Library Help Desk
The Help Desk in the Medical Library is staffed by library assistants who are knowledgeable on how to access and use the library’s digital resources, and in troubleshooting library computer and printer problems.

Reference/Research Assistance and Tutorials
Dedicated and experienced medical librarians are available weekdays to assist students. Librarians also provide hands-on database instructions. Supplemental tutorials are available through the Medical Library website.

Book Check-Out
Books may be checked out for 14 days with one renewal. Collection materials checked out from the Medical Library must be returned.

Interlibrary Loan Service
Students may obtain books and articles from journals that are not available at FIU by requesting an Interlibrary Loan through the Medical Library website: https://medicine.fiu.edu/resources/medical-library/index.html.

Personal Belongings
Personal belongings should never be left unattended. The Medical Library is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Students should inquire at the Medical Library offices (GL 323) for lost items.

Concerns and Compliments
The Medical Library is an academic unit of the HWCOM and is not a unit of the University (Green) Library. Problems or issues regarding services in the Medical Library should be brought to the attention of the Medical Library Director for the MPAS program in GL 323.

Food and Drinks
Most snack food and drinks are permitted in the building; however, foods with strong odors are not permitted. Food deliveries from vendors are prohibited and are turned away at the entrance to the libraries. Patrons are requested to: (1) use containers that prevent spills; and (2) deposit containers in waste receptacles.
**Children and Minors**

Individuals under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Parents or caregivers who bring children into the facility are responsible for monitoring their activities and regulating their behavior.
FIU Emergency Policies

As emergencies occur unexpectedly, the MPAS program, in conjunction with the FIU Department of Emergency Management, ensures that all MPAS students receive immediate notification of all emergency alerts provided to FIU students. An emergency at FIU may include any of the following:

- Fatal or critical accidents, injuries, or illnesses occurring on university premises, involving employees, students, or visitors;
- University-related transportation accidents involving hazardous materials or major property damage;
- Reports of acute illnesses involving persons or animals, arising from chemical or biological emissions or exposures on university premises;
- Reports of acute illnesses or injuries arising from the consumption or use of any product purchased, sold, or distributed by the university or on university premises;
- Major spills or emission of hazardous materials inside buildings on university premises to the extent that the well-being of the university community, the local community, and/or the environment may be affected;
- Natural disasters, including storms, floods, hurricanes, or tornadoes;
- Fires, explosions, bomb threats, and terrorist threats on and off campus;
- Violence or rioting on or near university premises;
- Extended and/or widespread utility interruptions with particular emphasis on how they affect class schedules, research projects, university residential facilities, or the ability of the university to continue normal operations; or
- Unauthorized major work stoppages, boycotts, or threatened boycotts of university-sponsored events.

In addition to the above, any incident that has the potential for adverse publicity involving campus resources, and/or instruments of the university, may be considered of sufficient gravity to activate the university’s emergency plan.

FIU plans for all types of emergencies that may affect the university community. An important part of that plan is an intentionally redundant communication system. Depending on the situation, some or all of the following communication vehicles may be activated to alert the entire FIU community about impending emergency situations, as well as post emergency plans for continuity of operations:

- Informacast: Emergency messages will be broadcast to emergency VoIP phones located in most classrooms, offices, and buildings.
- Email alerts: Emergency messages will be sent to FIU email accounts.
- Outdoor speakers: Audio messages and sirens will be broadcast via outdoor speakers.
- Panther Alert: Students and staff can receive emergency text messages to their personal cell phones by signing up for Panther Alert, a system designed to alert FIU students, staff, and their friends and families of emergencies. All students are urged to visit the Department of Emergency Management website (https://dem.fiu.edu/fiu-alert/sign-up/student-sign-up/index.html) for instructions on how to sign up for Panther Alert.
- The Department of Emergency Management website (http://dem.fiu.edu): The Department of
Emergency Management’s website provides immediate status updates throughout emergency situations.

- FIU websites (Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.) and [http://news.fiu.edu](http://news.fiu.edu) and social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter).
- Local news media: Students may be alerted of emergencies through local television, radio, and/or newspapers.

**In Case of Emergency**
All students should visit the Department of Emergency Management website ([https://dem.fiu.edu/](https://dem.fiu.edu/)) for information on preparing for the following types of emergencies:

- Hurricanes
- Thunderstorms and lightning
- Tornadoes
- Floods
- Criminal threats
- Pandemics

**Classes and Rotations**
In the event of an emergency or the temporary closure of the university, the MPAS program follows FIU Policy 1710.285 Severe Weather/Emergency Closing ([https://policies.fiu.edu/files/325.pdf](https://policies.fiu.edu/files/325.pdf)). All classes in the basic and clinical sciences scheduled on any FIU instructional site follow the university’s procedures and guidance in the event of an emergency. Students assigned to off-campus clinical rotations during a local or geographically widespread emergency should contact the Clinical Director for specific instructions pertaining to students’ responsibilities. Typically, clinical care responsibilities are expected to be fulfilled, and students should follow the policies of the affiliate clinical site where they are currently assigned. Students on clinical rotations are expected to report to their clinical site unless severe weather conditions prohibit safe travel; each student should make a prudent judgment as to the possibility of safe travel. The Clinical Director will contact all clinical sites and advise preceptors of student attendance in case of an emergency.

During an emergency, students should tune in to local television and radio broadcasts to remain informed regarding FIU. This is especially true during hurricanes, tropical storms, and other natural disasters. In addition, students can contact the FIU HELP line at 305-348-HELP for the latest updates. As soon as possible after an emergency, students should establish contact with instructors and/or assigned preceptors.
Student Activities and Services

Professional Organizations
Students are encouraged to join one or more of the following professional organizations:
- American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA). The Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA) is the student chapter of AAPA. Membership in SAAAPA can keep students abreast of important and current issues affecting physician assistant education and practice.
- Florida Academy of Physician Assistants (FAPA), a state chapter of AAPA.
- AAPA specialty organizations. AAPA offers opportunities for membership in several specialty organizations.

Professional Activities
Absence from instructional activities during a PA educational conference (e.g., AAPA, NCAPA) for the purpose of conference attendance may be permitted with the advanced written permission of the Academic Director in consultation with the Program Director. The student is still responsible for ensuring that completion of instructional activities and requirements are not compromised by conference attendance.

Student Support Services
FIU aims to support the overall well-being of students. All students, including MPAS students, have access to academic and wellness student support services; a list of services is available online (https://dasa.fiu.edu/student-support/wellness/). Student support services are made available for students through the mandatory student health fee, which allows FIU to provide high-quality, affordable clinical preventive care and mental health services at convenient on-campus locations.

Student Health Clinics
FIU’s Student Health Clinics offer quality, free or low-cost, services to registered students at nationally accredited ambulatory care centers on the Modesto A. Maidique and Biscayne Bay campuses. The Student Health Clinics provide traditional primary care services and complementary medicine treatments, and offer educational opportunities encouraging preventive care and wellness. Hours of operation are available online (https://dasa.fiu.edu/student-support/wellness/hours-location/index.html).

Counseling and Psychological Services (A3.10)
The Counseling and Psychological Services center at FIU provides a variety of services that address the psychological and emotional health of the student population. Information about counseling services and instructions on how to make appointments are available online at (https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/counseling-and-psychological-services/index.html).

The FIU MPAS program considers the wellness of its students of utmost importance. Therefore, the program has developed the following policy in order to address students facing personal issues that may impact their progress in the program. An appropriate and timely referral to the Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC) as soon as the MPAS Program Director, Medical Director, Principal and/or Instructional Faculty have knowledge of a student facing personal issues that may impact their progress in the program.
The SEPC may recommend a student to receive professional care for a variety of problems (e.g. emotional, addictive or psychiatric disorders). The program has partnered with FIU’s Counseling and Psychological Services center. If a student is directed to seek these services, the student has a choice of choosing resources recommended by the university or other resources arranged by the student. Verification that the student has received these services may be required. In addition, the SEPC may require that the student have their counselor/physician submit information and/or recommendation to the committee chair relating to the student’s academic program. If a student is directed to arrange for such services, but does not do so, the SEPC may reevaluate the student for possible violation of professional standards.

Healthy Living Program
The Healthy Living Program offers a holistic and preventative approach to health by encouraging FIU students to engage in everyday healthy lifestyle practices. On-campus services and online education promote the 9 Dimensions of Wellness: physical, intellectual, occupational, emotional, social, spiritual, environmental, financial, and cultural. Services offered include stress management, massage therapy, aromatherapy, and nutrition counseling. Additional information is available online (https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/healthy-living-program/services/index.html).

Victim Empowerment Program
Through the Victim Empowerment Program, FIU provides free confidential assistance and support the healing process of FIU students, faculty, staff, and university visitors who have been victimized through threatened or actual violence. The center seeks to enhance safety and promote healthy relationships by sponsoring awareness activities, prevention education, peer education, and collaborating with university officials. Additional information is available online (https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/victim-empowerment-program/index.html).

Other FIU Student Services
- University Police Department, https://police.fiu.edu/
- Department of Emergency Management, http://dem.fiu.edu/
- Campus Life, http://campuslife.fiu.edu
- Dean of Students, https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/dean-of-students/index.php
- Graham Center, http://guc.fiu.edu/default.aspx
- Wellness and Recreation Services, http://www.recreation.fiu.edu
- Housing and Residential Life, http://housing.fiu.edu/
- Parking and Transportation, http://parking.fiu.edu/
- Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility, https://dei.fiu.edu/crca/overview/
- Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/
Appendix A—Acknowledgement of FIU Student Handbook and MPAS Student Handbook Form

Acknowledgement of Florida International University (FIU) Student Handbook and Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Student Handbook Form

I, ________________________________ (print name), acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements, policies, procedures, and guidelines set forth in the FIU Student Handbook and the MPAS Student Handbook.

By signing this form, I agree to abide by all requirements, policies, procedures, and guidelines contained in the FIU Student Handbook and the MPAS Student Handbook.

This form must be signed and returned to the Program Director by the established due date.

Print Name: ________________________________  Panther ID: ________________________________

Student Signature: ________________________________  Date: ________________________________

Program Director (or designee) Signature: ________________________________

Date Received: ________________________________
Appendix B—Authorization to Release Education and Health Information Form

Print Name: ______________________________________  Panther ID: ____________________________

Information to be released:
Information concerning my academic standing with Florida International University and my health information, including but not limited to, positive test results for a communicable disease and other reports and results from physical examinations, lab work, and other tests required by my assigned clinical site.

Purpose(s) for which the education records may be disclosed:
This information is needed to document compliance with classroom, lab, and clinical site requirements to mitigate any safety issues and occupational exposure risks.

The information may only be released to the following person(s) or organization(s):
Florida International University consultants and contractors, medical personnel, and clinical site representatives.

This authorization does not limit Florida International University's authority to release my education or health records as otherwise permitted by applicable law. I hereby grant authorization to Florida International University to release my above-referenced education and health records to the party or parties listed on this form. I understand that I am entitled to a copy of the records disclosed upon request.

Student Signature: ____________________________________________  Date: _________________________
Appendix C—Absence Excusal Form

Absence Excusal Form (Electronic Form)

Any student anticipating time away for an exceptional event during the didactic or clinical portions of the MPAS program should complete and submit this form to the Program Specialist at least one month in advance of the event.

Students absent from a clinical rotation as a result of an emergency must fill out and submit this form to the Program Specialist within 24 of their absence. Failure to do so may result in referral to the Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC).

Student Information

Student ID: ___________________________  Student Name: ___________________________  Class: ___________________________

Anticipated date(s) off: ____________

Reason for Absence(s):

Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine | 11200 SW 8th Street | AHC2 | Miami, FL 33199
Appendix D—Student Exposure Report Form

This form is to be completed when there has been a student needle stick or bodily fluid exposure and submitted via email or in person to the Academic or Clinical Director within 24 hours of the exposure. Students also must directly report the exposure incident to the Academic or Clinical Director within 2 hours of the exposure.

Name of Student: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
Panther ID: ___________________________ Date and Time of Exposure: _______________
Rotation #: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Rotation Type: ___________________________ Name of Site: ___________________________
Name of person notified at the site: ___________________________
Date and time of site notification: ___________________________
Name of witness(es) if any to the incident: ___________________________

Please provide a detailed description of the incident, including how the exposure occurred and location (body part).

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Did you receive medical evaluation and/or treatment? Yes No
Was the MPAS program (Academic or Clinical Director) notified? Yes No
Date and time MPAs program was notified: ___________________________
Name of person notified at the MPAS program: ___________________________

Student Signature: ___________________________

Academic/Clinical Director/Faculty Signature: ___________________________
Appendix E—Student Accident Report Form

Student Accident Report Form

Immediately notify either the Academic Director or the Clinical Director of the event and submit this report to the program Academic Director or Clinical Director, via email or in person, within 24 hours an accident/injury occurring in the didactic or clinical setting. (This form is not for needlestick or body fluids exposures.)

Print Name: ______________________________________  Panther ID: ______________________________________

Name and location incident/injury or accident occurred: ______________________________________

Date: _____________  Time: ________________  Contact Number: _________________________________

Witness Name and contact information (if applicable):
__________________________________________________________________________________

STUDENT STATEMENT: Please describe in full detail how the accident occurred.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Did you receive medical evaluation and/or treatment? Yes  No

Was the MPAS program (Academic/Clinical Director) notified? Yes  No

Date and time MPAS program was notified: _______________________________________________

Did you miss time from the clinical rotation? Yes  No

If yes, how many days? ______

NOTE: If your absence from a clinical rotation exceeds 2 days, you will need a medical note from the physician who saw and examined you in an office/clinic or hospital and the date you can resume clinical activities. You may not return to rotations until this note has been processed by the MPAS program.

_________________________________________  ________________
Student Signature  Date