

# Master in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook



Florida International University  
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine  
Master in Physician Assistant Studies Program  
Student Handbook

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## Section I: Overview

### Welcome

State universities in Florida have been charged with the responsibility of providing students an educational experience that prepares them to participate in a rapidly changing world and to do so with a commitment to the highest moral and ethical standards. The Florida International University Student Conduct and Honor Code (FIU-2501) addresses honesty, respect for the law, and respect for people. We encourage you to read these statements and integrate them into your daily life.

As a student at FIU, you should take responsibility to serve as a leader in promoting compassion for others and challenging prejudice against all individuals and groups, whether due to age, color, creed, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Being part of the university community provides many opportunities to exercise individual rights, but also requires the assumption of responsibilities. Enjoy your university and medical school experience and maintain a level of personal integrity and caring that will reflect well upon you and the university you have elected to attend.

We wish you the very best of success.

The Faculty and Staff of Florida International University

**View the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code** <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/student-conduct-and-honor-code/index.php>

### Preamble

This Master in Physician Assistant Studies Student 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 HWCOM 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 program policies only as agreed upon in a written affiliation agreement or memorandum of understanding. This handbook should serve as a guide throughout student academic, clinical, and extracurricular life. Whenever participating in FIU and/or MPAS-sponsored program events on and off campus, MPAS students must abide by the policies and guidelines in this Master in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook and the policies of the FIU Student Handbook published annually by FIU Student Affairs.

The basic premise for these student guidelines is the understanding that individual rights are accompanied by responsibilities. By enrolling as an MPAS student at FIU HWCOM, students become members of the larger FIU community and, thus, acquire rights and responsibilities to the entire university community.

All policies and procedures described in this Master in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook and the FIU Student Handbook are subject to revision at any time and without notice. Such revisions are applicable to

all MPAS students. The policies and information contained herein take effect August 2020. Students are informed of significant changes and updates via their FIU email accounts at the time that such revisions are made and posted online. Once notified, students are subject to any changes in policy.

Questions regarding the content of this handbook should be directed to the MPAS program office, 305-348-6567.



## Message from the Dean and Senior Vice President for Health Affairs

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) at Florida International University (FIU). I hold the privilege of being the second dean of this young and incredibly vibrant medical school, and here I share with you some key information about our curriculum, accomplishments, and mission.

This is an exciting time for the HWCOC. Our medical students consistently match in their first-choice medical specialty and are well-prepared for internship, with pass rates and mean scores exceeding national averages on the USMLE Step 1 and 2 exams. Our physician assistant (PA) school contributes to the increasing demand for health care practitioners. Our Ph.D. Program in Biomedical Sciences trains top-notch researchers for the future. We also offer integrated degrees, and this year we will graduate the first students to pursue a combined MD and Professional MBA Degree in Healthcare Management.

HWCOC students and graduates distinguish themselves by their deep understanding of both the social determinants of disease and the biologic determinants of disease. Through our innovative Neighborhood Health Education Learning Program (NeighborhoodHELP), medical and PA students perform longitudinal household visits to patients within medically underserved areas of Miami-Dade County. These visits of interprofessional teams, that include FIU nursing and social work students (and education and law students as household needs are identified), teach our students how to evaluate and implement comprehensive and compassionate, personalized, patient care. Our students learn, first-hand, how social factors critically impact health and disease, and how empathy and medical knowledge must seamlessly intermesh for the proper care of every patient.

Within this proud legacy of providing exceptional medical education grounded in social consciousness, our curriculum equally emphasizes the roles of both clinical and basic science research in fueling the needed insights to improve patient outcomes. Our faculty is comprised of many preeminent scholars in a variety of medical science disciplines including genetics, immunology, biochemistry, pharmacology, and cell biology, and we have world-leading research centers in nanotechnology and in glycobiology. Our programs provide students with a wealth of opportunities to fully develop skills at the laboratory bench and the bedside, allowing each student to explore and establish their own path within the practice of the healing profession.

HWCOC was founded on the premise of preparing socially accountable physicians, scientists, and health professionals, and on the promise to provide service to our community. In our first ten years, we have met this premise and this promise, and have become a national leader in the integration of community-based medical education and clinical care. In the next ten years, we will build on this remarkable foundation and will also enhance our efforts in scholarship and innovation. We will sustain and further develop our inclusive environment that fosters humanitarianism in the practice of medicine and in the development of breakthrough medical science concepts, thereby promoting interdisciplinary research cooperation and collaboration to yield transformative medical knowledge that will improve the health of all people, everywhere. I encourage you to explore our website and welcome further inquiries into our groundbreaking programs that place the HWCOC at the forefront of developing next-generation medical education and healthcare physician assistants.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Sackstein, MD, PhD  
Dean and Senior Vice President for Health Affairs  
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine  
Florida International University

## Message from the Associate Dean and Program Director

Along with faculty and staff, I am proud to welcome you to the MPAS program at FIU HWCOM. This is the first step in the journey that will lead you to an exciting and rewarding career as a physician assistant.

This is a rigorous, graduate-level program. Although the curriculum is challenging, we are here to ensure your success. The MPAS program administration, faculty, and staff are committed to providing students with an excellent education. In an environment of respect, we will provide you with the knowledge, resources, experience, and support that will prepare you for a successful future as a Physician Assistant.

Please read this handbook carefully. Should you have any questions regarding the policies and procedures herein, feel free to contact the MPAS program office for clarification. Students are expected to abide by all the policies and procedures herein and are responsible for seeking clarification in the event that it is needed.

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

Eneida O. Roldan, MD, MPH, MBA  
Associate Dean, MPAS Program  
Associate Dean, International Affairs  
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine  
Florida International University  
Chief Executive Officer, FIU Health Care Network

Raisa Miller, DMSc, MPH, PA-C  
Program Director, MPAS Program  
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine  
Florida International University

## MPAS Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values

### Vision

The vision of Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Master in Physician Assistant Studies is to be the leader in South Florida's education and training of physician assistants to improve health care in South Florida.

### 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 coordinated and comprehensive physician assistant curriculum to ensure the graduate will possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate to provide competent and compassionate patient care necessary to enter the healthcare profession.
- Recruit, mentor, and support a diverse student body.
- To facilitate and foster the development of the necessary professional, moral, intellectual, and ethical attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs essential to the role of a physician assistant.
- Provide a creative and supportive environment for student learning that supports community outreach, social accountability and interprofessional care in the underserved population.
- Prepare students for lifelong learning in medicine with a level of didactic and clinical competence that provides successful entrance into the profession.

### Values

Our conduct, ideals, and ethics are:

- Integrity
- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Competence
- Compassion
- Scholarship
- Service

## History and Accreditation Statement

In 2011, the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida granted a request by HWCOP to implement a graduate degree program in physician assistant studies. Under the dual umbrella of HWCOP and the FIU University Graduate School, the MPAS program satisfies the local, state, and national needs to provide qualified and competent midlevel health care providers.

In 2014, the MPAS program applied for Accreditation-Provisional status by the national physician assistant education accrediting body, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant

(ARC-PA). Provisional accreditation, granted when the plans and resource allocation of a program demonstrate and meet ARC-PA standards, was granted in 2015 and allowed enrollment of the inaugural MPAS class.

In 2019, the MPAS program received Full - Accreditation status through 2029 by the national physician assistant education accrediting body, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

FIU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees, including the Master in Physician Assistant Studies degree.

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/>.

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**What does this mean for our program and our students?** The FIU Master in Physician Assistant Studies program is still accredited. This change in accreditation status will not adversely affect our students' academic progress. Furthermore, this status will have no bearing on our students' ability to graduate, take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) through the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, and obtain licensure.

We remain confident that we will meet ARC-PA accreditation standards. We are fully committed to providing you with a high-quality education, so you are prepared to enter the profession with the required

competencies, clinical knowledge, and skills to thrive as a collaborative, compassionate, evidence-based practitioner dedicated to delivering exceptional patient-centered care.

Please direct any questions to:

Dr. Raisa Miller, DMSc, MPH, PA-C

Program Director

Master in Physician Assistant Studies Program

[raimille@fiu.edu](mailto:raimille@fiu.edu)

## Section II: Student Affairs

### MPAS Program Office Information

The MPAS program office provides services for all MPAS students from the time of recruitment to the time of commencement and beyond. Activities of the MPAS program office include recruitment of students, facilitation of the admissions process, mentorship of students, and academic counseling.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday except on university holidays.

### Professional Staff

**Program Director.** Serves as the chief administrative officer of the MPAS program. Oversees development and implementation of the MPAS program vision and strategic plan, organizational and fiscal management and review, and MPAS accreditation.

**Medical Director.** Supports the program director in ensuring full and effective implementation of current practice standards in academic and clinical instruction and curriculum, fulfilling the MPAS program mission, and evaluating student performance.

**Academic Director.** Serves as interim director in absence of the program director. Oversees academic curriculum development and implementation.

**Clinical Director.** Oversees development and implementation of clinical curriculum. Monitor clinical site development.

**Clinical Liaison.** Oversees clinical sites, including hospitals, clinics, and private physician practices. Develops affiliation agreements to ensure adequate availability of clinical sites and preceptors.

**Assistant Director of Admissions.** Oversees a comprehensive admissions process and recruitment strategies for the MPAS program. Manages academic and student records ensuring data integrity and efficient processes.

**Manager of Administrative Services.** Oversees the day-to-day administrative functions for the MPAS program. Provides oversight for financial operations, programmatic documentation, and human resource actions.

### Financial Counseling and Financial Aid

MPAS students may seek financial counseling and aid through the HWCOR Office of Financial Assistance Website (<https://medicine.fiu.edu/academics/degrees-and-programs/doctor-of-medicine/financial-assistance/index.html>). Financial aid is offered in the form of grants, loans, and scholarships, which may come from a variety of sources.

Additionally, MPAS students are encouraged to apply for other grants and scholarships offered by sources

outside the university, such as the Physician Assistant Foundation, the National Health Service Corps Program, and the Physician Assistants in Orthopedic Surgery. More information is available on funding sources through the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) at <https://pa-foundation.org/scholarships-fellowships/pa-student-scholarships/>.

### Career and Academic Counseling

Upon entrance to the MPAS program, each MPAS student is assigned a faculty advisor who provides academic and career advising. Faculty advisors monitor student academic progress and success and provide guidance in navigating course work, clinical rotations, and career opportunities. Students are expected to regularly meet with their assigned advisor. Students experiencing academic difficulty are required to meet with their advisor to create a plan for tutoring and/or other academic assistance.



## Section III: MPAS Program Overview

### Graduate Outcomes

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

1. Identify the major principles of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, and microbiology.
2. Apply the principles of anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology to determine etiology, pathophysiology, prevention, and treatment of human disorders.
3. Communicate effectively with patients, families, and health service providers; counsel patients, their families, and their caregivers regarding disease treatment and care.
4. Conduct and accurately document complete medical histories and physical examinations.
5. Identify and propose initial therapy for acute, life-threatening situations and management plans for chronic disease.
6. Identify the need for and ability to order and understand appropriate diagnostic tests.
7. Correctly perform basic procedural skills with attention to patient comfort.
8. Obtain and manage patient information from the medical record.
9. Use evidence-based medicine to provide quality health care to individuals and populations.
10. Apply quality scientific research methods.
11. Discuss the role of the integrated patient care model from the perspective of a physician assistant.
12. Identify and abide by the systems-level processes that support continuous quality improvement and patient safety and use standard precautions in the health care setting.
13. Apply professional behavior attitudes for the care of patients, self, and others in accordance with American Academy of Physician Assistants' Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession.
14. Provide appropriate, patient-centered counseling techniques to improve rational utilization of health care resources, prevention, and patient satisfaction.
15. Interact effectively as part of interprofessional teams to address health care needs of patients.

### Physician Assistant Competencies

The MPAS program has adopted and integrated into its curriculum the National Commission on Certification for Physician Assistants (NCCPA) 2012 revised guidelines defining physician assistant competencies. In addition to these six competencies, the MPAS program has added and adopted a seventh competency, Social Responsibility. These competencies encompass the skills, knowledge, education, and attitudes that PAs should acquire through training and in their future professional lives. The following listing and description of competencies (excepting the seventh competency) is taken verbatim from the NCCPA "Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession," which can be found at <https://prodcmsstoragesa.blob.core.windows.net/uploads/files/PACompetencies.pdf>.

#### Medical Knowledge

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnoses, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Physician assistants must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical science and the

application of this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In addition, physician assistants are expected to demonstrate an investigative and analytic thought process to clinical situations. Physician assistants are expected to understand, evaluate, and apply the following to clinical scenarios:

- evidence-based medicine
- scientific principles related to patient care
- etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology medical conditions
- signs and symptoms of medical and surgical conditions
- appropriate diagnostic studies
- management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and other treatment modalities
- interventions for prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance
- screening methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual
- history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses

### **Interpersonal & Communication Skills**

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass the verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic exchange of information. Physician assistants must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patient's families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system. Physician assistants are expected to:

- create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information
- adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction
- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
- demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
- accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes

### **Patient Care**

Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable. Physician assistants are expected to:

- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care
- demonstrate compassionate and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
- obtain essential and accurate information about their patients
- make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and informed clinical judgment
- develop and implement patient management plans
- counsel and educate patients and their families
- perform medical and surgical procedures essential to their area of practice
- provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance

- use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education

### **Professionalism**

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. Physician assistants must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PAs practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency or mental illness. Physician assistants must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Physician assistants are expected to demonstrate:

- understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
- professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
- respect, compassion, and integrity
- accountability to patients, society, and the profession
- commitment to excellence and on-going professional development
- commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
- sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' culture, age, gender, and abilities
- self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative
- healthy behaviors and life balance
- commitment to the education of students and other health care professionals

### **Practice-based Learning & Improvement**

Practice-based learning and improvement includes the processes through which physician assistants engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self- and practice-improvement. Physician assistants must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices. Physician assistants are expected to:

- analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team
- locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health
- apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
- utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education
- recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others

### **Systems-based Practice**

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which health care is delivered. Physician assistants must 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. PAs should work to improve the health care system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:

- effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems
- understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care and use the systems effectively
- practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care
- advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
- partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of health care and patient outcomes
- accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care
- apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide effective, efficient patient care
- recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to health care disparities
- apply the concepts of population health to patient care information resources for the purposes of self- and practice-improvement.

### **Social Responsibility**

Social responsibility is a seventh competency developed specifically by HWCOCM and adopted by the MPAS program. It encompasses the need for students to recognize and adapt best practices to accommodate the specific health care needs of their patients, families, and community. Physician assistants are expected to:

- apply altruistic and compassionate behaviors and attitudes in the practice of medicine
- provide quality care to all patients, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation
- demonstrate an awareness of socioeconomic, cultural, and community factors affecting patient populations
- advocate for improved health outcomes at the community level
- manage ethical challenges by anticipating and evaluating ethical issues regarding patient care.

### **MPAS Program Curriculum**

The HWCOCM MPAS program is a 27-month curriculum. The first 15 months are dedicated to didactic education; the final 12 months of the program are dedicated to supervised clinical rotations. Clinical rotations are a minimum of 4 weeks in length and are located at health care sites across South Florida.

The didactic phase of the program is based on a broad curriculum. Students take courses on the Modesto Maidique Campus and Flagler Corporate Center facility. Courses include physiology, pharmacology, anatomy, clinical medicine, clinical skills, and others. Students should focus on their academic/didactic work during this phase and should not begin formal discussion regarding clinical rotations before the final semester of the didactic year.

The clinical phase of the program allows students to integrate knowledge gained during the didactic phase into health care practice. Students may not begin clinical rotations until successful completion of all didactic year course work; approval through background checks; documentation of immunization and titers; and successful completion of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Basic Life Support (BSL), and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) trainings. Students may be required to submit to additional background checks and training required by individual rotation sites.

Failure to complete the above requirements may delay the start of clinical rotations and may ultimately delay a student's graduation.

Core clinical rotations are in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology, surgery, and emergency medicine. Rotation sites may vary in schedule, expectations, and assignments. During the last semester of the didactic year, students receive the MPAS Student Clinical Rotation Guide, which delineates policies and procedures required of students in the clinical year.

### Program Schedule

During the didactic and clinical phase of the program, the course schedule/calendar may differ from that of the general FIU schedule. Holiday and vacation times may differ, and students may only have vacation days in between rotations as per the MPAS and clinical site schedules.

### Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP™

Throughout the 27-month MPAS curriculum, MPAS students participate in the Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP (Health Education Learning Program), HWCOC's signature, longitudinal service-learning program, incorporating the social determinants of health. This program provides MPAS students the opportunity to work in interprofessional teams that include medical, nursing, and social work students. 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.

## Section IV: Policies and Regulations

### Matriculation Policies

#### *Immunization*

HWCOC and the MPAS program are committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students, faculty, staff, patients, and the public. 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, PPD or chest x-ray, immunizations, drug screening, and Level II background checks. Students are given deadlines to submit the health requirement checklist prior to the commencement of classes in order to comply with matriculation standards. 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, and a hold is placed on their registration until compliant. Students are not allowed to have program faculty members or administrators as their health care providers (ARC-PA Standard A3.09). Therefore, no forms will be accepted if signed by a program faculty member.

All students are required to have proof of existing health insurance coverage, which can be purchased from FIU Student Health. FIU Student Health provides services such as drug screening, vaccines, titers, TB screening, and/or physical examinations prior to commencement of classes for a nominal fee.

In addition, all students are required to register with American Databank, a professional online screening service that enables newly admitted students to download health forms and submit scanned documents to comply with pre-matriculation requirements pertaining to immunizations, medical history, examination forms, health insurance documentation, and drug testing.

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 Florida State Board of Governors that apply to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students attending any public university in the state of Florida.

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 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 hepatitis B vaccine and a positive hepatitis B serum surface antibody titer (IgG).
- Proof of receipt of at least the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine is required prior to the first day of classes.
- A positive hepatitis B surface antibody titer is required (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 their private physician's office or at an ambulatory care clinic.
- 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 needle stick 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.

Purified Protein Derivative (PPD) Screening for Tuberculosis (TB). Students are required to receive an appropriate TB skin test (TST) within 2 months prior to orientation; this can be part of their 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 (conversion)." 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 1 to 3 weeks apart within the previous 12 months) or history of a positive PPD at the time of matriculation, he or she is 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 prior to orientation and annually thereafter.
- TB skin testing guidelines include the following:
  - o 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.
  - o A chest radiograph is mandatory for new and previous positive reactors; if positive, the student must document proof of receiving appropriate treatment.
  - o 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 on active 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 if exposure to an infectious patient or pathogen occurs.

Monitoring for Immunization Compliance. All students are required to register for a personal and confidential website from American DataBank. Students scan or upload their health history, physical examination, and immunization forms directly to their personal American DataBank website. The MPAS admissions coordinator works with FIU Student Health to discuss specific requirements for vaccines, titers, PPDs, health insurance, health, and safety agreements, and indicates student compliance or itemizes any deficiencies prior to the beginning of the semester. Students are notified via email by the MPAS admissions coordinator 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. 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). 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. In the event that a student is unable to complete an immunization, series of immunizations, or screenings as required for any medical or nonmedical reason, the student is required to sign a formal declination acknowledging the risks and provide a physician's note documenting the



medical exemption. 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*

MPAS students are required to possess 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 current insurance broker for all student insurance policies at FIU is Gallagher Student Health & Special Risk. They provide a preferred provider organization (PPO) policy that meets the minimum benefits requirements for FIU students. This policy covers most services offered by standard medical insurance policies, including prescription drugs, emergency room expenses, laboratory testing, and dental care with a deductible and copay. The policy also covers preexisting conditions and provides coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of accidental exposure to bloodborne pathogens (e.g., needlestick injury).

The cost of medical insurance is borne by the student; fees vary according to the plan selected. Students may elect additional coverage for spouses and dependent children, as applicable. Information pertaining to the insurance plan may be obtained at <https://www.gallagherstudent.com/students/user-login.php?idField=1275>. Students may enroll and pay premiums online annually or in two equal installments. Annual coverage for all students begins on the first day of orientation and ends 365 days later.

Alternatively, students may satisfy the medical insurance requirement with documentation of a valid medical insurance plan already in effect that meets the basic minimal 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 and 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. Policy must not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent in the student's program of study, such as coverage for needle stick injuries and charges related to the postexposure diagnosis and treatment of bloodborne pathogens. Policy also must cover outpatient and inpatient mental health care, prescription drugs, and ambulance services.

### *Disability Insurance*

All MPAS 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 from Gallagher Student & Special Risk prior to matriculating into program and prior to beginning second year of program. Students are required to present proof of disability insurance prior to the start of the program 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 prior to beginning 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 the student's admission and ability to participate in clinical experiences and complete the program. During the student's tenure at MPAS, if a student is arrested, charged, or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, he or she 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 recommended equipment:

- Ophthalmoscope
- Otoscope with disposable otoscope speculums
- Stethoscope
- Sphygmomanometer with adult cuff (blood pressure cuff)
- Tuning forks 128 and 512 HZ
- Reflex hammer
- Hand-held Snellen chart (i.e., pocket eye chart)
- Pen light
- Ruler
- Tape measure
- Tongue depressors
- Paper clips
- Cotton balls
- Maxwell Quick Medical Reference Guide
- Equipment bag (optional)
- Black physician assistant scrubs
- White lab coat with HWCOP MPAS logo (to be worn in all clinical settings)
- FIU Panther ID and HWCOP ID
- Laptop computer. Minimum requirements as follows:
  - 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
  - Webcam (internal or attached)
  - Intel Core i5 or i7 processor
  - 4GB RAM (upgradeable to 6GB or more)
  - 250 GB hard disk or larger (7200 RPM)
  - Windows 10 home, PRO, or Enterprise, or Mac Catalina

- Microsoft office 2013 or newer
- Surge protector
- Flash drive

Students are required to purchase textbooks as specified in class syllabi. Students may access some online textbooks through the FIU Medical Library, in which case the purchase of a hard text is optional.

## Academic Policies

### *Grades*

Students must earn a grade of “C” or above to pass a course. Any grade below a “C” is considered failing. Students who fail to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 or “Pass” in a Pass/Fail course are referred to the Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC), described below. Students who do not return to good standing in the subsequent semester may be dismissed from the program.

### *Scale*

Courses are graded using the following scale:

A	93-100%
A-	91-92%
B+	89-90%
B	85-88%
B-	83-84%
C+	81-82%
C	75-80%
F/FO	≤74%

### *Incomplete Grades*

Didactic year. All required course assignments must be completed by the end of the semester or the student will receive an “Incomplete” (I) for the course. All course work must be successfully completed within 6 weeks of the end of a semester. Failure to complete the required course work during the time limit may result in a failing grade for the course.

Clinical Year. A grade of Incomplete may be assigned for any missing evaluation, assignment, or examination. Failure to complete course requirements within 6 weeks of the end of a semester may result in referral to the SEPC.

### *Advanced Placement*

The MPAS program does not give advanced placement for students.

### *Experiential Learning*

The MPAS program does not give credit for prior student experience working in the field.

### *Transfer Credit*

The MPAS program does not accept transfer credit from other institutions.

### *Attendance*

Attendance is mandatory and MPAS students are expected to be present, prepared, and actively engaged in all classes, labs, and clinical rotations. Prompt and regular attendance is part of the professional behavior that students are expected to demonstrate. Students more than 5 minutes late to classes, labs, or rotations (without a valid, [approved excuse](#)) will be marked absent. Students are not allowed to miss more than 10 percent of each class, lab, or rotation time. Missing more than 10 percent of a class, lab, or rotation will impact your grade and may result in failure of the course. Students are responsible for scheduling personal appointments around class and rotation schedules. Should an event or appointment require an exception to the absence policy during the didactic or clinical year, the student should inform the MPAS program specialist in advance by filling out the online CanvasMed Absence Excusal form demonstrated in [Appendix A](#). This form must be submitted at least 14 days in advance of the anticipated absence. During clinical rotations students must inform the clinical liaison or clinical director regarding any absence.

Students are responsible for contacting the curriculum coordinator or academic director in advance of missing a scheduled examination. Students who do not receive permission for the absence from the academic director, arrange for a make-up exam, or have a valid emergency excusal will earn a grade of zero for those exams. Students may be referred to the Student Evaluation and Progress Committee (SEPC) for review with subsequent remedial versus disciplinary action as per the recommendation of the faculty advisor. All disciplinary actions will be referred to FIU's Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/>). Students who miss examinations as a result of excused absences may expect to make up the exam immediately upon their return to campus. The make-up examination may differ from the missed examination.

Program activities are not rescheduled to accommodate student absences, including course sessions, labs, evaluations, and assessments. Should excused absences occur, students are responsible for meeting with the instructor and completing all missed assignments.

Students may be required to attend weekend and/or evening events outside of regularly scheduled courses or rotations. Students will be notified, via email and CanvasMed, of any changes in course times, lectures, or exams.

### *Leave of Absence*

A leave of absence may be requested and granted for academic, medical, or other personal reasons. Leaves of absence are granted for a period not exceeding 1 year. Leaves of absence can be initiated upon student request or can be recommended by the SEPC. Students who want to request a leave of absence must discuss their request with their advisor. Upon advisor approval, the student then completes a written request for the leave of absence. The student's written request is submitted to the program director, who gives a final decision. This process may take up to 30 calendar days.

### *Remediation*

Remediation is a formal process designed to address and correct deficiencies in a student's knowledge, skills, and/or professional behavior. Remediation plans contain measurable objectives to be completed within a fixed period of time and are created by the faculty and/or advisor. Should the student fail to meet the terms of the agreed-upon remediation plan, the student will be referred to SEPC. A student who does not comply with the remediation requirements and is referred to SEPC, will undergo the process as described in the guidelines on page 33.

### *Deceleration*

Deceleration occurs when students remain active in the MPAS program, but do not progress 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. Students taking a deceleration plan must meet all terms defined in the plan within the specified timelines. Students who do not meet these terms or do not do so within the specified timelines are referred to the SEPC and may be dismissed from the program.

### *Dismissal*

The MPAS program, after due consideration and process, reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time before graduation for any reason, whether it is legal, moral, behavioral, ethical, or academic. Recommendations for dismissal are made by the SEPC to the program director pursuant to the SEPC process described below and followed by referral to the Office of Academic Integrity.

### *Withdrawal*

Official withdrawal from the program requires approval from the program director. The student must provide a written document requesting the withdrawal. Also, a student that does not enroll for 3 consecutive semesters will be automatically withdrawn from the program.

### *Failure of Exams and/or Courses*

A student who fails an exam will be emailed a Letter of Concern from the MPAS academic director. A failure is considered to be a grade below 75 percent. Copies of this letter are sent to the student's faculty advisor and kept on file. The student is required to meet with his or her advisor within 1 week of receipt of the letter to discuss the exam failure. An action plan is developed to assist the student in addressing any issues causing academic distress.

A student who fails a second exam receives a second emailed Letter of Concern from the MPAS academic director. The same action plan is enforced with additional advisement for referral to the SEPC upon failure of a third exam. Weekly meetings with the faculty advisor will also be mandated.

A student who fails a third exam is automatically referred to the SEPC for the review process.

If a student fails a course (didactic) or a clinical rotation, he or she is referred to the SEPC for review, and a self-directed study or remediation plan may be created to enable the student to pass the course. If the student is required to repeat the course or rotation, it may impact the date of graduation. Students who fail the final

course exam are allowed to take a second remediation exam within 2 weeks of the exam failure. A student who fails the remediation exam either in the didactic or clinical phase of the program must retake the course. A student who fails a total of two courses (during either the didactic or clinical phase) will be referred to the SEPC for further recommendations and may result in dismissal from the program.

### *MPAS Program Progression and Graduation Requirements*

Student records are reviewed by faculty advisors prior to progression from the didactic to the clinical year. Students must pass all didactic courses before progressing to the clinical phase of the MPAS program. FIU and the MPAS program review all student records prior to graduation. All FIU and MPAS program requirements must be met and any outstanding financial balances paid prior to awarding of a diploma. Students who do not graduate are ineligible to take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). To be awarded a Master in Physician Assistant Studies degree, each student must:

1. Pass each required course/rotation with a grade of 'C' (75%) or higher and maintain an overall GPA of 3.0.
2. Pass summative written and practical examinations.
3. Submit and obtain faculty endorsement of signature paper/capstone project.
4. Complete the Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Test (PACKRAT) for self-assessment
5. Comply with program standards of conduct and guidelines for ethical conduct.
6. Complete the program's Physician Assistant Board Review Course.

Students who enter the program and complete the required curricular components at the typical pace will complete the program in 27-months from initial matriculation. In the event of a granted leave of absence or academic deceleration, students must complete the program no later than 4-years from initial date of matriculation.

### *Patient Confidentiality*

MPAS 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 HWCOP policies, the policies of affiliated clinical hospitals and facilities, and state and federal law. As a member of the patient care team, MPAS students have access to health information that is protected from disclosure under state and federal law ("protected health information") including patient medical and/or demographic information. The MPAS program and each MPAS-affiliated hospital and clinic is subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and 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. In general, protected health information may not be discussed or disclosed to anyone—either verbally, in writing, or electronically—unless this disclosure is necessary to perform the student's duties and responsibilities. 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. MPAS students are required to complete an on-line HIPAA and cybersecurity awareness trainings course via CanvasMed on an annual basis. A confidentiality statement must be completed and submitted during the orientation process. Students should note that the 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 considered fundamental requirements for MPAS students at all times:

- 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, he or she is responsible for appropriate disposition: (a) distribute to authorized persons only, (b) file securely, or (c) discard in the approved manner

### *Student Employment*

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*

MPAS students are not required to work on behalf of the MPAS program in any clerical, administrative, or instructional capacity. While students may be asked to volunteer for a particular task or activity, students are not obligated to do so. Students who choose to volunteer do not receive remuneration for the task completed.

### *Student Responsibilities in Clinical Rotations*

During the clinical year of the program, MPAS students rotate at various clinical sites. While rotating, students are not allowed to substitute for or function as clinical or administrative staff. Any student found performing administrative or clinical activities that are the responsibility of the preceptor are recommended for disciplinary action, which can lead to dismissal from the program.

### *MPAS Student Assessment Process*

Student performance is assessed based upon academic performance and demonstrated professionalism, including behavior in the classroom and clinical settings. The evaluation criteria are described in this MPAS Student Handbook in the Physician Assistant Competencies section listed on page 16. Any student that is not compliant or fails to meet the established criteria will be referred to SEPC and will follow the process that is outlined on page 33.

## Professionalism Policies

MPAS students are required to abide by the guidelines established by the FIU Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity; the applicable policies and procedures of FIU, HWCOC, the MPAS program; and the policies and procedures of institutions with which MPAS has affiliation agreements. In addition to abiding by the policies and procedures of FIU and specifically of the MPAS program, MPAS students are expected to abide by the American Academy of Physician Assistants' Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession, which can be found at: <https://www.aapa.org/download/56983/>. Violations by an MPAS student of any of the above policies or procedures are reviewed and processed by the program director and/or the SEPC as provided in this MPAS Student Handbook. Violations of the FIU Student Code of Conduct also may be referred to the FIU Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in accordance with the procedures outlined in the FIU Student Handbook upon referral.

### Academic Misconduct and Unprofessional Behavior: FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code

By accepting membership in the FIU and HWCOC community, MPAS students acquire certain rights and responsibilities related to conduct and academic integrity. Students are expected to abide by the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code as outlined in FIU Regulation 2501 found at <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-conflict-resolution/>. All incidents of academic misconduct and behavior misconduct set forth in the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code will be handled by the FIU Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Students are strongly encouraged to report suspected violations of the Student Conduct and Honor Code by visiting <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/student-conduct-and-honor-code/index.php>, emailing [conduct@fiu.edu](mailto:conduct@fiu.edu), or calling (305) 348-3939.

The MPAS program may impose adverse actions against students engaged in unprofessional behavior as set forth by FIU. Examples of unprofessional behavior include, but are not limited to, the following: **Failure to comply with administrative requirements**. Administrative requirements include but are not limited to the provisions of this MPAS *Student Handbook*.

**Other Unprofessional Conduct.** Examples include but are not limited to behaviors that fail to meet the professionalism expectations of HWCOC as outlined in the section on "Professionalism Standards."

**Violation of the Student Code of Conduct and Honor Code.** If a student is found responsible for violating FIU Regulation 2501 Student Conduct and Honor Code, the MPAS will refer the student to the FIU Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

### *Classroom and Clinical Site Professional Behavior*

MPAS students, staff, faculty, administrators, and preceptors all are responsible for ensuring appropriate student conduct. Professional conduct is required of MPAS students within and outside the classroom and clinical rotation sites. Students should interact with peers and patients with respect and courtesy and should refrain from behavior that interferes with another's ability to learn or to teach.

Students should arrive on time for class. Should tardiness be unavoidable, students should enter the classroom



quietly and sit in the back of the room. Students should not leave the classroom during a lecture. Students should not use electronic devices for anything other than note taking. Students should refrain from participating in disruptive behavior during class. Students should not bring animals to class, with the exception of certified companion animals.

Failure to practice appropriate professional conduct may result in students being asked to leave the classroom or any other learning or clinical environment. Students are immediately referred for review to the SEPC should any allegation be made regarding unethical or unprofessional conduct.

### *Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct*

#### *Academic Misconduct*

Students at FIU are expected to adhere to the highest standards of integrity in every aspect of their lives. Honesty in academic matters is part of this obligation. Academic integrity is the adherence to those special values regarding life and work in an academic community. Any act or omission by a student which violates this concept of academic integrity and undermines the academic mission of the university is defined as academic misconduct and is subject to the procedures and penalties as stated in the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/student-conduct-and-honor-code/index.php>).

#### *Academic and Clinical Progress*

Satisfactory academic and clinical progress is expected of all MPAS students. This includes ongoing acquisition of knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors and attitudes. Student academic and clinical progress throughout the MPAS program is monitored and measured by graded assignments and performance, comprehensive student reviews, and the SEPC reviews as follows.

**Graded Assignments.** Student progress is monitored with detail and frequency through graded classroom and clinical assignments. Failure of examinations, courses, or rotations are noted and tracked throughout the MPAS program.

Should concerns arise regarding performance, instructors address these concerns as they emerge and do not wait until mid- or end-of-term reviews or grades to communicate them to students. Faculty advisors and/or the SEPC may become involved in addressing concerns about student progress.

**Comprehensive Student Reviews.** At predetermined times during the course of the program, but no later than the mid-point of each semester, program faculty conduct comprehensive student reviews to assess student performance and progress. Faculty note student standings as follows:

1. Good academic standing: Students who meet the minimum MPAS program requirements and standards and may progress toward graduation are said to be in good academic standing.
2. Concern(s) identified: Should concerns with academic or clinical progress or performance be identified in the comprehensive student review, students may be referred to faculty advisors. Any content of a meeting between the faculty member and an advisor (at which the student is not present) and any action steps proposed therein are documented and shared with the student within 2 business days.

Should concerns with student progress not be addressed or resolved with advising, the student and the concerns are referred to the SEPC for formal review as described on page 33. Students may be referred to the SEPC for failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA or for failure to pass a course. Should concerns with student

progress or performance be identified, the SEPC review process should be initiated as soon as possible but no later than 2 weeks before the end of the semester in which the concerns are first identified.

### *Student Evaluation and Progress Committee Review*

The SEPC is the committee tasked with evaluating all aspects of student performance. The SEPC may evaluate a student's performance regardless of when events triggering review occur and shall include the student's overall performance in the evaluation, including prior disciplinary actions and/or remediation. A student may be referred to the SEPC by an advisor, another faculty member, or the program director. Through the review process, the SEPC is responsible for examining the concerns cited, evaluating their merits, determining student status, and recommending a course of action. Additionally, at the end of the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum, faculty evaluate each MPAS student's grades and professionalism and may refer students to the SEPC for further evaluation before making a recommendation regarding advancement to the clinical phase or graduation, as applicable. The SEPC is responsible for evaluating each student's academic performance and professionalism; all facets of a student's performance are considered when a student is evaluated by the SEPC. Students may not have lawyers accompany them in any meetings with faculty or staff.

The following describes the SEPC processes employed to evaluate MPAS student academic performance and professionalism.

### *SEPC Statement of Purpose*

The purpose of the SEPC is:

- To ensure that each student who graduates from Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Master of Physician Assistant Studies program possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to assume the responsibilities of a physician assistant;
- To evaluate academic performance in the required curriculum, to assess advancement, and to recommend appropriate intervention in the event of unacceptable academic performance; and
- To evaluate personal qualities which bear on a student's professionalism and fitness to become a physician assistant, and to recommend appropriate intervention. The SEPC relies upon the cooperation, advice, and judgment of faculty, students, and administrators to perform these duties.

### *Composition and Selection of SEPC Members*

The SEPC comprises FIU HWCOP MPAS faculty members. The SEPC shall have five voting members, comprised of the following: the program's medical director (who serves as Chair), academic director, clinical director, didactic faculty member, and clinical faculty member. A quorum for the meeting is 3. Faculty members are appointed by the SEPC chair or program director. Faculty members on the SEPC shall not serve as voting members on any other committee when considering a matter that will be presented to the SEPC. When this occurs, an alternate member will be selected from either the didactic or clinical faculty to temporarily serve as a voting member.

### *Hearing Process of the SEPC*

a. Notice of Hearing. All hearing notices are made in accordance with the notification provision set forth in this MPAS Student Handbook. Students are provided a written notice a minimum of 5 business days prior to the SEPC meeting with the student to consider a matter within its jurisdiction. The notice will state:

- A description of the matter under consideration
- The time, date and place of the hearing;
- That the student has the opportunity to review the documents that the SEPC is relying upon;
- A list of witnesses, if any, including students, faculty, and staff.

b. Hearing Procedure

i. *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 chair of SEPC may convene meetings for any purpose including assisting with preparation for the SEPC hearing.

ii. *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 5 business days of the conclusion of the hearing. The program director will review the SEPC's recommendation and evaluate whether the findings should be forwarded for an official disciplinary hearing with the university.

c. *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 the SEPC.

d. *Record of Hearing.* Written decisions serve as the official records of a hearing and are recorded in the meeting minutes

e. *MPAS Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee Recommendations.* The SEPC makes one or more of the following recommendations to the program director and university 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;
- Allow the student to continue on a modified academic schedule;
- Refer the student for counseling or psychological evaluation;
- Place the student on probation with such conditions as deemed appropriate;
- Suspend the student or place the student on leave of absence for a specified time or until specific

- conditions are met;
- Suspend the student for a period of time;
- Expel the student.

The SEPC may recommend to the program director removal of a student's probationary status once the student has fulfilled the conditions of probation.

#### Responsibilities of the Program Director

The SEPC's recommended action steps are reviewed by the program director for, among other things, logistical viability (faculty workload, support services, etc.).

The SEPC findings and recommendations with modifications, if any, are sent to the Program Director. The program director either accepts, amends, or rejects the plan.

Upon the program director's receipt of the SEPC's written report, the SEPC has 3 business days to notify the affected student with a copy of the written report outlining the proposed findings and recommendations.

A student may schedule an appointment with the program director to discuss the proposed findings and recommendations prior to the program director concluding his/her evaluation. The appointment must be requested in writing and received by the program director no more than 3 business days after the student receives written notification of the proposed findings and recommendations by the SEPC. If a meeting is requested, it will take place promptly. If there is no meeting between the program director and the affected student requested within 6 days of notice to the student, the program director finalizes his/her evaluation of the written findings and recommendations. The student is provided a copy of the final recommendation and the information is forwarded to the University Graduate School (UGS) for review. UGS will review the findings and recommendations and affirms or amends the findings and recommendations. Once the university has affirmed or amended the program director's findings and recommendations, the student is notified by the university.

#### Student Appeals

Students can appeal the decision for the following reasons: (i) There has been a violation of the student's due process rights as outlined in the hearing procedures above; (ii) The severity of the sanction is not justified by the nature of the misconduct; or (iii) New, relevant information not available during the earlier proceedings is made available, and the new information could have substantially affected the outcome of the hearing. The appeal must be in writing, specify in detail the alleged procedural impropriety, and must be filed with the Associate Dean of the MPAS Program within 14 calendar days of the date of receipt. The Associate Dean, or a designee, shall review the appeal and the record of the formal hearing and issue a decision. If further review of the appeal is required, the Dean of the College of Medicine will review the request and provide recommendations. The University Provost will serve as the final agency action.

#### FIU Ombudsperson

MPAS students may access the FIU ombudsperson, 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 university ombudsperson, Sofia Trelles, at 305.348.2797 or may visit the ombudsperson at Graham Center 219.

## Due Process Policies

### *Grievances*

Occasionally, a student may have a grievance regarding an issue other than academics. A student grievance with a faculty member should be addressed first directly with the faculty member. If a student is not satisfied following this step, the student may initiate a grievance (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/academic-grievances/>) in accordance with FIU Graduate School Grievance Procedure found on the FIU website at <https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/739>.

Often grievances grow out of misunderstandings or misperceptions about expectations. Faculty and advisers have an obligation to ensure that MPAS students are aware of professional and academic expectations. MPAS students have a concomitant obligation to diligently pursue and satisfy these standards; they are bound to observe and respect the policies, rules, and regulations of the university, of their respective departments and of their professors. Many of these grievances should be settled through open communications.

When all means of informal resolution have been exhausted, the parties must have a forum in which to seek review and resolution of an academic grievance.

### *Purpose of the Grievance Policy and Procedure*

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide a means for MPAS students to seek investigation and possible resolution of academic grievances, as described on the FIU website (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/academic-grievances/>).

### *Informal Grievance Procedure*

MPAS students must attempt to informally resolve a grievance as soon as possible; however, a student must initiate informal resolution by contacting the professor (or administrator as instructor of record) no later than 10 university days after classes begin in the semester following that in which the complaint arose or the grievance is deemed untimely. The student must first attempt to resolve the academic grievance through an informal meeting with the professor.

If the matter cannot be resolved, or if the professor cannot be reached, the student must meet next with the program director and failing resolution, with the MPAS Associate Dean. If the student's grievance is against a committee, the students must meet with the committee chairperson and the program director to attempt informal resolution. A mutually agreeable resolution shall be formalized through a notation in the student's file/record that is initialed by the student and the professor.

If an informal resolution cannot be reached within 30 university days after the initial contact with the professor, then the student has the right to seek a formal resolution of the grievance.

### *Formal Grievance Procedure*

The academic grievance procedure within the University Graduate School is initiated by filing a written complaint with the Faculty Fellow for Academic Integrity. The complaint must be filed within fifteen (15) business days\* of the date the informal resolution process ends, or within twenty (20) business days\* after classes begin in the semester following that in which the complaint arose, whichever is later. After receipt, the Faculty Fellow for Academic Integrity, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Graduate Student Academic Grievance Committee, will review the complaint to determine whether it falls within the scope of this policy and whether a formal hearing is warranted. When there are disputed issues of material fact, which must be determined, a formal hearing is warranted. If the complaint does not fall within the scope of this policy, then the student shall be so notified in writing.

### *Graduate Student Academic Grievance Committee*

Where a complaint falls within the scope of this policy and there are disputed issues of material fact to be determined, the dean of University Graduate School refers the matter to the Graduate Student Academic Grievance Committee. The grievance committee is composed of five members, two of whom should be graduate students selected by the dean of University Graduate School from a list of names supplied by the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and/or the academic deans. The other members of the committee shall be three full-time faculty who have experience with graduate programs. They are selected from lists supplied by the academic deans and/or the Faculty Senate. The members of the committee include two faculty from academic units outside of the school/college where the student is enrolled and where the grievance has been filed. The chairperson of the committee is jointly selected by the dean of University Graduate School and the chairperson of the Faculty Senate.

### *Procedures*

A hearing shall be scheduled as soon as possible but no later than 45 business days\* after receipt of the grievance. The grieving party and the professor shall be notified by the Faculty Fellow for Academic Integrity in writing, of the date and time in which to appear for the formal hearing. The hearing shall be conducted with such formality as is necessary to ensure the proceeding is fair and in a manner that allows both sides of the dispute to be presented. The hearing shall be recorded. At the conclusion of the hearing, the members of the Committee shall have the opportunity to deliberate outside the presence of the parties. A written report including findings of facts, conclusions and recommendations shall be prepared and forwarded to the Faculty Fellow for Academic Integrity. 3 The Faculty Fellow for Academic Integrity shall issue a written decision within fifteen (15) business days\* of receipt of the Committee's report. The student and the professor will be sent copies of the Fellow's determination by mail.

### *Appeals*

Any decision of the Faculty Fellow for Academic Integrity may be appealed by either the grieving student or the professor where there is evidence that a significant impropriety occurred in the review process. The appeal must be in writing, specify in detail the alleged procedural impropriety, and must be filed in the Office of the Provost within ten (10) business days\*, of the date of receipt of the Fellow's decision. The Provost or a designee shall review the appeal and the record of the formal hearing and issue a decision within twenty (20) business days\*. The decision of the Office of the Provost is final.

\*“Business Day” is defined as day when university administrative offices are open.

## Student Record Policies

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

### *Educational Records and Personally Identifiable Information*

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (U.S. Public Law 93-579; FERPA) defines educational records and governs students’ rights of privacy and access to their educational records. Any school record, either paper or electronic, that contains personally identifiable information directly related to the student is an educational record under FERPA. Such records may include:

- Directory information
- Clinical rotation schedules
- Evaluations of academic performance
- Letters of commendation and/or notifications of honors
- Information about leaves of absence
- Combined degree program enrollment information
- Scholarship award letters
- Special registrations
- Records of disciplinary actions
- Documentation of change in enrollment status
- Computer media
- Microfilm
- Video and audio recordings
- Photographs
- Course and clerkship grades
- All exams and assessments

Personal and identifiable information contained in student education records shall be released, or open for inspection, only to the student, or parents of dependent students as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. “Personal identifiable” means that the data or information includes the name of a student, the student’s parent, or other family members, the address of the student, a personal identifier, such as the student’s Social Security number or a student number, a list of personal characteristics that would make the student’s identity easily traceable, or other information that would make the student’s identity easily traceable. The following are not considered educational records under FERPA:

- Private notes of individual staff or faculty that are in their sole possession
- Campus police records
- Medical records
- Statistical data compilations that contain no mention of personally identifiable information about any specific student.
- Records not maintained by FIU

FIU does not release or permit access to education records and personally identifiable information kept on a student except as otherwise permitted by law and this regulation. Responsibility for custody of all student educational records belongs to the university officials in charge of the area in which the records are maintained. Each designated custodian shall ensure that the procedures required by federal and Florida law and this regulation are in place to control access to and disclosure of student education records and personally identifiable information contained therein.

### *Directory Information*

FERPA allows for the designation of certain academic record information as “directory.” In order to prevent access to or release of directory information, a student must so notify the designated custodian of record in writing within the time provided in the annual FIU Notice of Rights. After such notice, access to or release of directory information is withheld until further written instruction is received from the student. “Directory Information” includes:

- Student’s name,
- Student classification and major and minor fields of study;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- Dates of attendance, degrees, and awards received;
- The most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student; and
- Photographic image

### *Waiver of Right of Access*

Students and parents of dependent students have the right to waive their right of access to confidential letters of recommendation and other documents that evaluate student academic performance. Such waivers shall be in writing and made a part of the official academic record. A waiver of right to access shall be effective only when the student is notified, upon request, of the names of all persons who are submitting confidential recommendations or evaluations and when the confidential letters of recommendation and other evaluative documents are used solely for the purpose intended.

The university may not condition admission to the university, grants of financial aid, or receipt of any other service or benefit offered by the university, by another public educational institution in the State of Florida or by any other public agency upon being provided a waiver of the right to access by the student.

### *FERPA Notice to Students*

The university shall provide notification annually to students of their rights relating to education records, including the right to file complaints, the procedures to be followed in order to exercise such rights, the types of information entered in the education records maintained by the university, and the university’s policy to support the law. Notifications are published in the university catalog, the University Compliance & Integrity website ([https://compliance.fiu.edu/student\\_education.html](https://compliance.fiu.edu/student_education.html)), and the *MPAS Student Handbook*. The MPAS program complies with the following rights of privacy and access to student education records:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 30 days after the day the MPAS program receives a request for access.



A student should submit to the registrar, associate dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The custodian of the records shall require the student, or parents of the student when applicable, requesting access to or release of the records to present proper identification such as a valid driver's license or passport. The request must be in writing and signed by the person seeking access or release. A copy of the request for access or release shall be retained in the student's file. Requests are usually honored within 2 business days unless the custodian or designee is not available. The student may review his or her file under supervision. Supervision is by a member of the staff to ensure that the record is not altered during the review process. FIU policy states that the custodian shall have up to 30 days in which to comply with a request. When the record includes information on more than one student, the custodian shall release, or permit access to only that part of the record that relates to the student who is the subject of the request. Students requesting the release to others of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records must provide the custodian of such records with a signed, written request specifying the information to be released, the purpose(s) for such release, and the person or organization to whom such information shall be released. A copy of all requests for access and release shall be retained by the custodian of the records and shall be available for inspection and review by the student or a parent. The university reserves the right to deny a request for copies of education records made by a student or a parent when there is a financial obligation to the university that has not been satisfied or when there is an unresolved disciplinary action pending against the student.

- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

A student who wishes to ask the school to amend a record should write the school official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed and specify why it should be changed. Students who challenge the accuracy of an education record shall file a written request for amendment with the custodian of the records. The student also shall present to the custodian of the records copies of all available evidence relating to the data or material being challenged. The custodian of the records shall consider the request and shall notify the student in writing within 15 school days whether the request is granted or denied. During that time, any challenge may be settled informally between the student and the custodian of the records, in consultation with other appropriate MPAS officials. If an agreement is reached, it shall be in writing and signed by all parties involved. Such agreement shall be maintained in the student's records. If an agreement is not reached informally, or if the request for amendment is denied, the student shall be informed in writing of the denial and the right to a hearing on the matter. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures is provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to provide written consent before the university discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

The school discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to university officials with legitimate educational interests. The following persons and organizations are considered "university officials" and may have access to personally identifiable information

without the student's prior consent:

- A. Faculty, administrators, staff and consultants employed by the university, the Florida International University Board of Trustees, or the Florida Board of Governors whose work involves:
    - o Performance of administrative tasks which relate to students;
    - o Performance of supervisory or instructional tasks which relate to students; or
    - o Performance of services that benefit students.
  - B. Other persons who are authorized by federal and state law and regulations to have access to or receive copies of such information. Upon request, FIU also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. FIU makes a reasonable attempt to notify each student of these disclosures.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by FIU to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202

## Dress Code

As representatives of the medical profession, all MPAS students are expected to convey a professional demeanor in behavior, dress, and appearance. A professional image conveys credibility, trust, respect, and confidence to one's colleagues and patients. In all educational settings—classroom, laboratory, and clinical environments—students are expected to be clean, well groomed, and appropriately dressed.

The dress code applies at all times when the student is on campus and to any situation in which patient-care activities occur or the occurrence of direct patient or health care professional contact can be reasonably assumed. These instances include, but are not limited to, all clinical experiences. In the absence of a stated policy for an individual course or setting, the following dress code applies:

### General Personal Care

- Good personal hygiene should be maintained.
- Hair should be neat and clean. Hair longer than shoulder length should be secured if close contact with patients is anticipated. Beards and mustaches must be clean and well groomed.
- Perfume or cologne should not be used.
- Fingernails should be clean, neatly trimmed, and short to medium length.
- Tattoos should be covered with clothing.
- Jewelry is only permitted in pierced ears. Jewelry is not permitted to be worn in pierced noses, lips, tongues, or any other exposed body part.
- Attire for the Nonclinical (i.e., Classroom) Setting
  - Short, clean, and pressed white coats with the HWCOM MPAS program logo with business-casual clothing or designated program scrubs should be worn at all times
  - Close-toed shoes should be worn.
  - Shirts should be tucked in.
  - Undergarments should not be visible.

- Belts should be worn when necessary.
- Attire for the laboratory setting
  - Clean surgical scrubs should be worn.
  - Faculty may discuss additional requirements for student attire for the laboratory setting.
- Attire for the clinical setting
  - Short, clean, and pressed white coats with the HWCOP MPAS program logo should be worn.
  - Closed-toed shoes (with socks/stockings) should be worn.
  - Men should wear collared dress shirts with appropriately knotted ties.
  - Name badges should be worn.

#### Inappropriate attire for classroom, laboratory, or clinical settings

- Hats, caps, bandanas, hoods, or head scarves (except if considered as part of religious or cultural dress) are not permitted.
- Jeans, sweatpants, sweatshirts, pajamas, scrubs (unless otherwise specified), and exercise attire are not permitted.
- Tank, mesh, halter, or tube tops are not permitted. Low-cut, spaghetti strap, and belly shirts are not permitted.
- Shorts and short skirts are not permitted.
- Shoes must be worn. Sandals and open-toed shoes are not permitted.
- Shirts with inappropriate or vulgar lettering or messages are not permitted.

## Health Policies

### *Alcohol*

FIU is committed to the responsible use of alcohol by all members of the FIU community. Irresponsible, high-risk use of alcohol threatens the lives, health, safety, and performance of our students and employees. When one drinks irresponsibly, he or she is more likely to become injured, to make unwise choices regarding sex and relationships, to miss class, to perform poorly on tests and in clinical environments, possibly endangering patients. Excessive drinking also impacts others; these second-hand consequences of drinking include interrupted sleep, inability to concentrate and study, fights, property damage, assault, rape, and death.

High-risk drinking undermines the academic mission of HWCOP and jeopardizes an MPAS student's professional aspirations. This policy is created to respond to the very serious public health problem by acting proactively in a comprehensive effort to ensure the safety and well-being of the FIU community. The FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/student-conduct-and-honor-code/index.php>) contains the FIU policy regarding alcohol.

### *Tobacco and Smoke-Free Campus*

FIU is a tobacco-free, smoke-free university. According to the National Toxicology Program, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, second-hand smoke contains at least 250 chemicals known to be deleterious to the health of nonsmokers who inhale it. FIU-policy is available for download at <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/drug-free-campus-notification/index.php>.

### *Drug-Free School and Workplace Policy*

As a condition of receiving funds or any other financial assistance under any federal program, institutions of higher education shall certify that they have developed and implemented an Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace and Campus Policy. FIU policies regarding drugs are available online at <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/drug-free-campus-notification/index.php>.

### *Communicable Diseases Policy*

MPAS' communicable disease policy follows guidelines established by the Centers 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 FIU 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;
- Draining or infected skin lesions (e.g., methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*(MRSA);

A student who has a communicable disease or is unsure whether he or she should participate in patient care should seek medical care by a private physician or a physician on staff at the 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 Services to determine his or her ability to participate in academic activities or perform the duties required of the clinical rotation. Based on the recommendations of FIU Student Health Services, it is the responsibility of each MPAS student to notify the MPAS program office if unable to perform clinical work; appropriate documentation is required. All such notifications are kept strictly confidential.

### *Biosafety, Bloodborne Pathogen, and Needlestick Injury Policies*

The FIU Department of Environmental Health and Safety manages cases of occupational exposure for students and staff. The FIU policies and procedures pertaining to exposure to biohazardous materials (e.g., a needlestick injury) in both laboratory and clinical care settings are available online at <https://ehs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/biological/biosafety-manual.pdf#page=31>.

The MPAS program follows the institutional policies of FIU regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards while on campus and the institutional policies of its clinical affiliates regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards while at clinical sites. The FIU Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Policy (available online in the Florida International University Safety Compliance Guide <https://ehs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/biological/biosafety-manual.pdf#page=31> offers guidelines to protect students from the risk of occupational infection with HIV, hepatitis B, or other bloodborne pathogens, and to implement the United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Standard 29 CFR Section 1910.1030 Bloodborne Pathogens.

HWCOP and the MPAS program have addressed methods of prevention, procedures for care and treatment after exposure (including definition of financial responsibility), and effect on student learning activities as follows:

1. All exposure incidents are regarded as serious and must be reported and documented immediately to the 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 supervising the student shall be informed immediately. If no faculty member is immediately present, the student will contact the faculty member on call.
4. The supervisor must attempt to obtain witness reports of the incident.
5. The supervisor shall attempt to determine the nature of the exposure(s) and any associated biohazardous risks, including documentation of routes of exposure(s).
6. If possible, source material of the exposure should be retained and secured in a safe manner.
7. If the supervisor determines that the incident constitutes an occupational exposure to biohazardous materials, then he or she immediately will begin documentation of the incident using the Student Exposure Report Form found in Appendix B herein.
8. All information related to student exposure shall be regarded as confidential.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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).
12. The student assumes responsibility for all charges associated with diagnosis and treatment of exposure injuries not covered by his or her health insurance plan. A student may request the college's assistance by discussing the situation with a representative from the director's office.
13. Students should follow up with FIU Student Health or with their primary care physician.

Students who become exposed to biohazardous materials must follow the MPAS program's established procedures to receive timely diagnostic and therapeutic care. Students who experience needlestick and other types of injuries at any location (i.e., on campus, hospitals, ambulatory clinics, or neighborhood households) must immediately notify their supervisor and should receive immediate first aid and initial care at the site where the injury occurred. Continued monitoring and enforcement of the FIU Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure policy is critical for maintaining the safety of MPAS students, faculty, staff, and patients in all learning environments. Immediately after all known exposures, MPAS students must first contact their instructor or attending physician and report the name of the source patient and diagnosis. This information is necessary to assist in determining the potential severity of the exposure. In addition, all exposures also must be reported to the MPAS program office and the FIU Department of Environmental Health and Safety. Policies and procedures, including specific reporting forms and surveillance information, are located on the FIU Environmental Health

and Safety website (<http://ehs.fiu.edu/Pages/default.aspx>).

All injured students must complete required incident report forms if the injury occurred at a clinical sites, and all injured students must complete and submit the FIU "Exposure Incident Investigation Form" within 24 hours of the injury. This form is located at <https://cnhs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/resources/nwcnhs-bloodborne-exposure.pdf>.

Students who become exposed to biohazardous materials while at an MPAS-affiliated clinical site (or other institution) must follow established protocols at that site for immediate care and treatment after exposure. All affiliation agreements with clinical care sites contain provisions for the care of students who sustain needlestick injuries. MPAS students may receive follow up care and treatment for injury or exposure at the affiliate site where the injury occurred, FIU Student Health, or at their private physician's office.

Students are responsible for the payment of fees associated with the diagnostic and therapeutic services associated with needlestick and other types of injuries, including filing health insurance claims. The student assumes responsibility for all charges that are not covered by his or her health insurance plan. A student may request the assistance of the MPAS program by discussing the situation with the program director.

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 in order 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.

In some cases, students may be unable to participate fully in school life or meet MPAS technical standards because of their illness. In these cases, students may seek assistance from the FIU Disability Resource Center to discuss the existence and nature of the disability and whether reasonable accommodations are available.

## Technology Policies

MPAS students are expected to abide by the FIU policies on the use of information technology. Those policies are published online as outlined below:

- Overall policies: <https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/96>
- Data Stewardship policy: <https://policies.fiu.edu/procedure/560>
- Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act: Safeguards to Protect Confidential Financial Information: <http://policies.fiu.edu/files/129.pdf>
- Information Technology Security: <https://policies.fiu.edu/policy/96>
- IT Security Office policy in the FIU Student Handbook: <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student->

[handbook/](#)

- IT Security Procedure: Sharing Access to IT Resources; Password Management: <http://policies.fiu.edu/files/559.pdf>
- IT Security Procedure: System and Application Management: <https://policies.fiu.edu/procedure/562>
- Access Sharing policy: <https://policies.fiu.edu/procedure/559>
- Digital Millennium Copyright Act policy: <http://policies.fiu.edu/files/545.pdf>

### *Email Policy*

The MPAS program uses FIU email as the primary means of communication with students. Students should check their FIU email accounts frequently for important information and notifications from the MPAS program. The MPAS program cannot be held responsible for missed notifications resulting from unread emails.

Only MPAS faculty, staff, students, and other persons who have received permission from FIU are authorized users of the FIU email systems and resources. Use of email is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the university's academic goals and facilitates communication between faculty and students. However, if a student uses email in an unacceptable manner, he or she is subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, having his or her campus email account deactivated.

Unacceptable Use of Email. Unacceptable uses of email include but are not limited to:

- Distributing, disseminating or storing images, text or materials that might be considered discriminatory, offensive, or abusive, in that the context is a personal attack, sexist or racist, or might be considered harassment.
- Using email systems for any purpose restricted or prohibited by laws or regulations.
- "Spoofing," i.e., constructing an email communication so it appears to be from someone else.
- "Snooping," i.e., obtaining access to the files or email of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial academic purpose.
- Attempting unauthorized access to email or attempting to breach any security measures on any email system or attempting to intercept any email transmissions without proper authorization.
- Sending chain mail that misuses or disrupts resources: Email sent repeatedly from user to user, with requests to send to others.
- Introducing any form of computer virus or malware into the network.
- Sending copies of documents in violation of copyright laws.
- Including the work of others into email communications in violation of copyright laws.

### *Social Media Policy*

Social media refers to a variety of internet-based programs that allow users the ability to create and publish online content (text and photos) about themselves or others. Subject to applicable FIU policies and state and federal laws regarding the use of such technologies for transmitting protected information, the MPAS program welcomes the respectful and responsible use of social media technologies to support and engage learning and for effective outreach to the global community.

## *General Policy Statements*

The term “social media” includes the following:

- Communication via email, text messaging, or transfer of photographs of file documents using computers, smart phones, portable communication devices, and other technologies;
- The use of web-based applications such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, MySpace, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, blogs, wikis, Snapchat, and other outlets where comments are posted in network-based public settings; and
- Future technologies that permit internet-based information sharing.

This policy applies to all types of social media participation at any time by HWCUM students.

Students must abide by the laws, rules, regulations, and policies governing the protection of sensitive information (e.g., HIPAA, which governs the dissemination of health information, and FERPA, which governs the dissemination of education records). Failure to do so can result in serious consequences both academically and legally. Confidential information must be protected at all times and must never be shared on any social media site including, but not limited, to the following:

- Health information about anyone other than the student posting the information.
- Personal information about FIU, students, employees, or alumni (e.g., private email addresses, grades, health information, demographic information, information about interactions with patients, and photographs of patients or the care environment, some of which may be HIPAA- and FERPA-protected).
- Defamation of FIU and its affiliates, faculty, staff, and other students.

Prohibited activities - These may represent violations of the law and/or program policy and may result in academic discipline and/or legal sanctions:

- Communicating with patients using social media, including “friending” a patient to discuss medical information.
- Posting patient information, including protected health information or photos, on any social networking sites, blogs, instant messaging services, or text messaging services.
- Taking photos of patients and procedures. Photos of patients may only be taken when instructed by clinical faculty and proper protocols are followed and permissions obtained.
- Using cell phones, fax machines, or email to transmit confidential information.
- Posting personal information of others (e.g., home address, phone, password clues, social security number)
- Posting profane or disparaging information about students, faculty, courses, rotations, hospitals, the MPAS program, HWCUM, or FIU. Acts of harassment and violence will not be tolerated. Any act of intimidation, threat of violence, or act of violence committed against other members of the University when committed within the jurisdiction of the Code is prohibited. (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/student-conduct-and-honor-code/index.php>).
- Presenting yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for FIU, HWCUM, or the MPAS program on social media.
- Using FIU and HWCUM MPAS logos or personal identification numbers in any social media postings.
- Creating personal social media sites using FIU email addresses or computer equipment.



- Using smart phones, portable communication, and/or other social media devices for personal or nonemergent reasons during encounters involving patients or patients' families and friends, to include but not limited to, the following areas:
  - Hospital patient rooms, exam and treatment areas, operating room, emergency room
  - Outpatient clinics
  - Physician or patient lounges, nurses' stations, hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, etc.
  - During patient care rounds or didactic presentations that discuss specific patients
  - Family home visits (i.e., Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP visits)

### *Violations of Policy*

Students who violate this policy will be referred to the SEPC. This policy does not replace other MPAS and FIU policies governing disclosure of confidential information, including protected health information and education records.

### *Medical Library Policies*

The FIU Medical Library is located on the third floor of the Green Library (GL 380) on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. The medical library follows the policies of the university. The medical library offers ample study space, computer workstations, wireless connection, and a wide variety of library services. The latter includes copying, printing, interlibrary loans, reference service, and individual assistance in using databases and other virtual resources. The Medical Library is a member of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

### *Hours*

The Medical Library is normally open 24 hours a day on Sunday-Thursday, 8am-10pm on Friday, and 10am-10pm on Saturday. Because it is housed within the Green Library, students should check the medical library website for up-to-date hours of operation and instructions on access: <https://libguides.medlib.fiu.edu/friendly.php?s=COMlibrary/aboutus>.

### *Resources*

There are 13,000 online journals and a large collection of print and online books in biomedicine provided by the Medical and Main FIU libraries. Access to more than 700 broad variety of medical related databases supplies up-to-date knowledge on medical topics, and offers tools for drug reference, laboratory values, medical images, differential diagnoses, and more.

### *Study Spaces*

In addition to study carrels and tables, there are two small rooms at the back of the library. The lounge room is equipped with a Keurig coffee maker (K-cups not provided), hot/cold water dispenser, a refrigerator (cleaned and maintained by students). The recharge room is equipped with comfortable sofas and chairs to allow rest during studying in the library. A selection of chairs and reading tables complete the medical library as a location for quiet study, collaborative learning, and relaxation.

### *Access to the Medical Library*

Use of the medical library as a study center is limited to students and faculty of HWCOM. FIU OneCard must be

swiped on the door's automated access system to enter the library. Visitors may use the medical library upon request to the Help Desk staff.

### *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 to it. Materials checked out from the Green Library must be returned only to the Green Library circulation desk on the second floor of the library. An FIU OneCard is needed to check out materials. Reserve materials, books, and other materials that are kept in the course reserve cabinets in the library may be checked out for a 2-hour period upon request at the Help Desk in the medical library.

### *Computer and Internet Access*

Wireless access is available throughout the FIU campus. Several computer workstations are available for use in the medical library. Students needing workstations for educational purposes have priority. Library computers are rebooted at the end of the night, so documents should not be saved to the desktop or hard drive. Documents may be saved to flash drives. A projector and laptops may be checked out for use outside of the library. The medical library follows the University Libraries' policy regarding internet use, which can be found at [policies.fiu.edu/files/216.pdf](http://policies.fiu.edu/files/216.pdf).

### *Printing and Scanning*

A copier/printer/scanner is available in the medical library. Others are located throughout the Green Library and in Academic Health Center 2. Using it requires paying with FIU OneCard, Debit Card, or Credit Card and incurs a per-page charge. See a Help Desk staff member in the medical library for more information.

### *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 trouble-shooting library computer and printer problems. They are prepared to assist students on request.

### *Reference/Research Assistance and Tutorials*

Dedicated and experienced medical librarians are available weekdays to assist students who have reference questions or need help with research. Librarians also provide hands-on database instructions to individuals and small groups. Supplemental tutorials are available through the medical library website at <https://libguides.medlib.fiu.edu/?b=g&d=a>. Librarians may be reached in the Medical Library administrative offices on the third floor of the Green Library (GL 323), via [medlib@fiu.edu](mailto:medlib@fiu.edu) or by request at the Help Desk in the Medical Library (GL 380).

### *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.

### *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.

### *Behavior*

Professional and respectful behavior and compliance with policies is always expected in the Medical Library. Violators are asked to leave. MPAS students who abuse library policies are reported to the MPAS program office.

### *Problems, Issues, Concerns, and Compliments*

The Medical Library is an academic unit of HWCOC 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 or medical librarians in GL 323.

### *Food and Drinks*

Most snack food and drinks are permitted in the building, including chips, nuts, cookies, and canned and bottled drinks. Pizza, fries, hamburgers, sub sandwiches, and foods with strong odors are not permitted. Food deliveries from vendors (pizzas, etc.) are prohibited and are turned away at the entrance to the libraries. Patrons are requested to: (1) use containers that prevent spills; (2) deposit containers in waste receptacles; and (3) avoid bringing food with strong odors into the building.

### *Disruptions*

Disruption to study and research is prohibited. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Excessive noise
- Harassment of others
- Odor constituting a nuisance or health and safety concern
- Behavior that disturbs users or staff and interferes with use of the facility

### *MP3 Electronic Equipment Players, I-Pods, CD Players, Cell Phones, Cameras, or Other Devices*

The use of any equipment that disrupts patrons is prohibited. Beepers and cellular phones should be placed on vibrating mode or turned off. The use of video cameras requires the permission of the library administration.

### *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. Disruption of patrons by children or minors is prohibited.

### *Group Tours/Instruction*

Any persons wishing to bring groups of people into the library need to obtain prior permission from the appropriate department. Persons who are unwilling to abide by this policy are asked to leave the facility. Refusal to do so may result in forced removal. Students could be liable for disciplinary action as established by FIU.

### *Presence in Library When Library is Not Open*

Library users may not remain in the library when it is closed.

## FIU Emergency Policies

When faced with any type of emergency or inclement weather, the health and safety of students are paramount concerns of the MPAS Program. As emergencies occur unexpectedly, the MPAS program, in conjunction with the FIU Department of Emergency Management (DEM), ensures that all MPAS students receive immediate notification of all emergency alerts provided to FIU students. By definition, an emergency at FIU can include all 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 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 in close proximity to 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
- 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 these 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 FIU homepage, [www.fiu.edu](http://www.fiu.edu), for a link and instructions on how to sign up for Panther Alert.
- DEM website (<http://dem.fiu.edu>): The DEM website provides immediate status updates throughout emergency situations.
- FIU websites ([www.fiu.edu](http://www.fiu.edu) and <http://news.fiu.edu>) and social media (Facebook and 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 DEM website for information on preparing for the following types of emergencies:

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

### *FIU Classes and Clerkships*

All classes in the basic and clinical sciences scheduled on any FIU campus follow the university's temporary closure policy in the event of an emergency. Students assigned to off-campus clinical clerkships during a local or geographically widespread emergency should contact the clinical director(s) for specific instructions pertaining to students' instructional responsibilities. As a general rule, clinical care responsibilities are expected to be fulfilled, and students should follow the policies of the affiliate clinical site where they are currently rotating. Students on clinical rotations are generally expected to report to their clinical assignments 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 the 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 clerkship designees.

### *General Safety Guidelines*

Students must be aware of the need for personal safety and act accordingly to minimize risks. The safety and security of students are the first priority of the MPAS program. Safety and security 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 patient
- Emergency procedures involving medical care (e.g., CPR), natural disasters, terrorism, assault, illegal activities, and others.

While working in community settings, including hospitals, clinics, home visits, and other off-campus venues, MPAS students should take precautions and use common sense including, but not limited to, the following:

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Don't stand out (e.g., by wearing flashy or expensive jewelry)

- Don't carry excessive amounts of money
- Don't leave valuables in plain sight
- Travel in pairs whenever possible
- Keep car doors locked and windows closed

While working or studying on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus, it is important to note that FIU Police Department has jurisdiction over the entire university, including HWCOP MPAS. Emergency phones have been installed at strategic locations around FIU, which connect directly to the FIU Police Department. The Flagler Corporate Center also uses emergency phones. The FCC front desk security phone number is (786) 762-3450. Students are urged to take notice of and become familiar with their locations. As members of the FIU community, students can enhance their personal safety and help keep the campus safe by taking precautions, including but not limited to, the following:

- Use prudent precautions for personal safety including walking in pairs in isolated places or during the evening. Students should not hesitate to call the FIU Police Department to request a student escort or other security service at night.
- Keep close watch on your personal property. Do not leave personal property such as books, audio or video players, cell phones, PDAs, laptops, purses, wallets, jewelry, cameras, or other valuable objects unattended or out of your sight or in classrooms, the library, restrooms, clinic, campus dining areas, the bookstore, your vehicle, or in any public place.
- Report all on-campus thefts or suspicious persons or activities to the FIU Police Department. Contact information is listed below.

While fulfilling MPAS educational objectives, students also must be aware of the need for personal safety and act accordingly to minimize risks. The key message for students is to be cautious and use common sense. Always listen to your "gut" and follow your instincts. If an environment or situation feels unsafe, stay calm and leave immediately. Discuss with a faculty supervisor and/or call law enforcement.

Emergency contact information:

- 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) or 305-919-5911 (for the Biscayne Bay Campus)
- For non-urgent safety concerns or questions, contact:
  - 305-348-2626 for the Modesto A. Maidique Campus
  - 305-919-5559 for the Biscayne Bay Campus
  - 786-879-9429 for the Flagler Corporate Center Security Office

## Technical Standards

The technical standards set forth by the MPAS program establish the essential qualities considered necessary for students to be admitted to and successfully complete the program. These standards ensure graduates possess the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. MPAS students must meet all technical standards upon matriculation and throughout enrollment in the MPAS program. In the event a

student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with reasonable accommodation, the student is subject to dismissal. MPAS 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 his or her health care proxy.
3. Motor. 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. Intellectual. 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/social. 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.

Meeting the technical standards is required but does not guarantee a student's eligibility for the PANCE. Students also must meet the expectations of the program's accrediting agency (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. [ARC-PA]).

## Students with Disabilities

The MPAS program abides by FIU policies and procedures regarding students with disabilities. MPAS students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations based on a disability must register with the FIU Disability Resource Center. An individual with a disability is one who—with or without reasonable modifications to the rules, policies, or practices; the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers; or the provision of auxiliary aids and services—meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the university. Disabilities may be categorized as physical, psychological, and/or learning incapacities. Students with specific questions regarding FIU policies governing students with disabilities may contact the Disability Resource Center. The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. The Disability Resource Center provides FIU students with disabilities the support necessary to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. Students who have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize specific academic accommodations should contact the Disability Resource Center.

## FIU Regulation on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct (Title IX)

Florida International University (FIU or 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 based on race, color, religion, age, disability, sex (including sexual misconduct), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, veteran status, and/or any other legally protected status (collectively referred to as Protected Status<sup>1</sup>). The University recognizes its obligation to work towards a community in which diversity is valued and opportunity is equalized. The Title IX policy is detailed on the university website (<https://dei.fiu.edu/toolbox/title-ix/>).

This Regulation prohibits all forms of Discrimination and Harassment based on Protected Status. It expressly, therefore, prohibits Sexual Violence and Sexual Exploitation, which by definition involves conduct of a sexual nature and is prohibited form of Sexual or Gender-Based Harassment. This Regulation further prohibits Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and/or Stalking, which does not need to be based on an individual's Protected Status to be prohibited under this Regulation. Finally, this Regulation prohibits Complicity for knowingly assisting in an act that violates this Regulation and Retaliation against an individual because of his or her good-faith participation in the reporting, investigation, or adjudication of violations of this Regulation. University students and employees who violate this Regulation may face discipline up to and including expulsion or termination.



## Section V: Student Activities and FIU Services

### Professional Organizations

Students are encouraged to join one or more of the following professional organizations:

- American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA) is the student chapter of AAPA. Membership in this 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 a number of specialty organizations.

### Student Services

The following services are offered to all FIU students. The MPAS program encourages students to utilize these services.

### Student Health Fee

MPAS program students pay the total annual FIU Student Health Fee. Payment of the Student Health Fee entitles MPAS students access to the following through FIU Student Health: office visits with a doctor, nurse practitioner, or registered nurse; various clinical services; health education consultations; and health promotion programs. All MPAS students are required to purchase and maintain adequate health insurance coverage throughout their school experience to pay for services that may be needed on campus.

Modesto A. Maidique Campus, where all academic year MPAS courses are taught, houses the Student Health Center, a 20,000-square-foot facility with a general medical clinic, women's health services, Wellness Center, pharmacy, immunization and laboratory services, Counseling and Psychological Services Center, and Victim Advocacy Center. Hours of operation are available online at <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/student-health/>. Ultrasound diagnostic exams are available by appointment. Students who require diagnostic radiology services (x-ray, CT, MRI, nuclear medicine testing) are referred to community diagnostic centers that accept applicable insurance benefits plans.

Biscayne Bay Campus, located approximately 28 miles from Modesto A. Maidique campus, also houses its own Student Health Services in a 2,200-square-foot facility with clinic and lab services available Monday through Friday.

### Clinical Care Services

Services are offered to registered, health-fee-paying students through FIU Student Health, as described on the FIU website at <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/student-health/>. Appointments are not required, but are recommended. Fees are charged to insurance for primary and ancillary services such as vaccines, lab tests, medications, and office procedures. MPAS students are given access to office visits with the doctor, nurse practitioner, or registered nurse; various clinical services; health education consultations; and health promotion programs.

## Counseling Services

The Counseling and Psychological Services center at FIU provides a variety of services that address the psychological and emotional health of the graduate and undergraduate student population. Services include individual and group counseling, workshops, and victim empowerment and stress management programs. The MPAS Program encourages students to take full advantage of these services. Information about counseling services and instructions on how to make appointments are available online at <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/counseling-and-psychological-services/index.php>.

## Student Health Services

Services at the Student Health Services Wellness Center include one-on-one consultations, computerized fitness assessments, and anonymous human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing and counseling. Alternative therapies include massage therapy, aromatherapy, acupuncture, and chiropractic services. Appointments are required to access Wellness Center services and for personal consultations. For more information go to the FIU website <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/index.php>.

## FIU Pharmacy

The FIU pharmacy is a complete outpatient pharmacy staffed by a licensed pharmacist. The pharmacy fills prescriptions from FIU medical staff and outside physicians. Over-the-counter medications are available on site.

## Other FIU Student Services

- University Police Department, <http://police.fiu.edu>
- Department of Emergency Management, <http://dem.fiu.edu/>
- Campus Life, <http://campuslife.fiu.edu>
- Student Health Services, <http://studenthealth.fiu.edu>
- Victim Empowerment Program, <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/victim-empowerment-program/>
- FIU Dean of Students, <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/dean-of-students/index.php>
- Ombudsperson, <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/ombudsman/index.php>
- Graham Center, <http://guc.fiu.edu/default.aspx>
- FIU Athletics, <http://fiusports.com>
- Recreation Services, <http://www.recreation.fiu.edu>
- Housing and Residential Life, <http://www.fiu.edu/life-at-fiu/housing/index.html>
- Parking and Transportation, <https://parking.fiu.edu/>
- Patricia and Philip Frost Art Museum, <http://thefrost.fiu.edu>
- Wolfsonian-FIU, <http://wolfsonian.fiu.edu>
- Biscayne Bay Campus Resources, <http://bbcclo.fiu.edu/resources.html>

## Appendix A—Absence Excusal 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 academic or clinical director (respectively) 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 clinical director within 24 of their absence. Failure to do so may result in referral to the SEPC.

Student Name (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date(s) off: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Absence(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

### Program Use Only

Request Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Not Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic/Clinical Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

## Appendix B—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 fax [305.348.6251] 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Exposure: \_\_\_\_\_

Rotation #: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

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 Incident, including how the exposure occurred and location (body part).

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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 C—Student Accident Report Form



Immediately notify either the academic director or the clinical director of the event and submit this report to the program (Fax: 305 348-6251) within 24 hours an accident/injury occurring while at a clinical rotation site. (This form is not for needlestick or body fluids exposures.)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ was injured at  
\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. (print name of location) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (time).

Please describe in full detail how the accident occurred.

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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 rotations will exceed 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

Appendix D—Student Acknowledgement of Receipt of MPAS Student Handbook Form



I, \_\_\_\_\_(print name), have read and understand the policies and procedures found in this MPAS Student Handbook. I also have reviewed the FIU Student Handbook. I am familiar with the contents of these documents and the policies and procedures governing grades, probation, promotion, dismissal and mechanisms for appeal. I agree to abide by these policies.

This form must be signed and returned to academic director on the first day of class.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date