

Rush University PA Program Student Handbook



Class of 2028

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
PA PROGRAM MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS STATEMENTS.....	5
PERFORMANCE ON GOALS.....	6
INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAM ACCREDITATION	9
RUSH PA PROGRAM ACCREDITATION STATUS.....	9
RUSH UNIVERSITY ACCREDITATION STATUS	9
PA NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION (PANCE)	10
GRADUATION AND ATTRITION RATE.....	11
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP	11
PA PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF	12
TUITION AND ESTIMATED PROGRAM COSTS.....	13
PA PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS	15
SCHOLARSHIP POLICIES.....	16
PROGRAM CURRICULUM	16
TERMINAL PROGRAM COMPETENCIES (TPCs).....	17
DIDACTIC AND CLINICAL COURSES	17
<i>Program Year 1 - Didactic Courses</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Program Year 2 - Core Clinical Rotations.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Program Year 3 - Advanced Practice Rotations.....</i>	<i>18</i>
COURSE SEQUENCING	19
REGISTRATION	19
COURSE ADMINISTRATION AND EVALUATION	19
COURSE SYLLABUS AND OTHER LEARNING MATERIALS.....	19
INSTRUCTOR AND COURSE EVALUATIONS	19
REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRESSION	20
GENERAL PROGRESSION POLICY	20
TECHNICAL STANDARDS.....	20
MANDATORY TRAINING MODULES	20
SATISFACTORY AND UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	20
PROGRESS AND PROMOTIONS (P&P) COMMITTEE	21
REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION	22
TERMINAL PROGRAM COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS	22
PROGRAM FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATIONS	22
FIRST YEAR FORMATIVE EVALUATION	22
<i>End of Year Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>PA Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT)</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>End of Year Professionalism Assessment.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Community Service</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Medical Terminology Exam</i>	<i>25</i>
PROGRESSION OUTCOMES	25
PROBATION AND PROGRESSION CONSIDERATIONS	25
SECOND YEAR FORMATIVE EVALUATION	26
SUMMATIVE EVALUATION.....	26
<i>End of Curriculum Written Examination.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Summative Case-Based OSCE</i>	<i>27</i>

	3
Technical Skills Station OSCE	27
Professionalism Assessment	28
PA PROGRAM POLICIES.....	29
ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND TERM BREAKS.....	29
CLASS HOURS	29
ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS	30
ABSENCES AND ILLNESSES	30
PERSONAL DAYS	31
RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY TIME OFF.....	31
DRESS CODE	32
<i>General Requirements:</i>	32
<i>Scrubs:</i>	32
<i>Business Casual:</i>	32
<i>Activity-Specific Requirements</i>	32
<i>Lab Coat Requirements:</i>	33
<i>Attire Transitions and Planning:</i>	33
PROFESSIONALISM AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR.....	33
<i>PA Program Professionalism Policies</i>	33
<i>Professionalism Policy Violations</i>	34
<i>Professionalism Progression Policy</i>	35
ACADEMIC HONESTY.....	36
USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)	36
COPYRIGHT AND USE OF MATERIALS	36
PATIENT INFORMATION CONFIDENTIALITY	36
CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS	37
<i>Use of Electronic Devices During In-Person Class</i>	37
<i>Etiquette for Synchronous Online Lectures and Activities</i>	37
<i>Lecture Recording</i>	37
ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES	38
<i>Late Arrival to Exams</i>	38
<i>Taking Exams</i>	39
<i>Academic Integrity: Cheating</i>	39
<i>Exam Scoring</i>	39
<i>Missed Exams</i>	39
<i>Late and Missed Quizzes and Assignments</i>	40
<i>Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)</i>	40
<i>Hands-on Laboratory and Skills Training</i>	41
<i>Reviewing Exams</i>	41
<i>Exam Validation Review and Rescoring</i>	41
<i>Exam Score Posting</i>	42
<i>Grading Scale</i>	42
<i>Course Grade Assignments</i>	42
REMEDATION	42
<i>Examination Remediation</i>	43
<i>Group Presentation Remediation</i>	44
<i>Failed Course and Global Remediation</i>	44
<i>OSCE Remediation</i>	45
<i>Professionalism Remediation</i>	45
ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDING	45
<i>Warning</i>	45
<i>Probation</i>	45
PROGRAM DISMISSAL	47
WITHDRAWAL	48
LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND DECELERATION	48
<i>Deceleration</i>	48
<i>Leave of Absence (LOA)</i>	49
PROGRAM COMPLETION DEADLINE.....	50

	4
SOCIAL MEDIA.....	50
NAME AND ADDRESS CHANGES.....	50
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT DURING THE PROGRAM.....	50
DISCRIMINATION AND/OR HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS.....	51
GRIEVANCES, COMPLAINTS, AND STUDENT APPEALS	51
STUDENT SUPPORT, RESOURCES AND REFERRAL SERVICES.....	52
<i>Access to Support Services</i>	52
<i>Referral Process</i>	52
<i>Timely Access</i>	52
<i>Consistency of Application</i>	52
<i>Advising</i>	52
<i>Center for Clinical Wellness</i>	53
<i>Accommodations</i>	54
STUDENT ACTIVITIES	54
<i>PA Student Society</i>	54
<i>Professional Organization Membership</i>	55
<i>Student Conference Attendance</i>	55
CLINICAL ROTATIONS	55
<i>Clinical Rotation Assignments</i>	55
GLOBAL HEALTH TRIPS	56
STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY	56
IMMUNIZATION, HEALTH SCREENING AND ONBOARDING REQUIREMENTS:	57
<i>Immunizations:</i>	57
<i>Health Screenings:</i>	58
HEALTH INSURANCE.....	58
DRUG FREE CAMPUS AND WORKPLACE	59
SAFETY INCIDENTS	59
HAZARDOUS EXPOSURE INCIDENTS	59
<i>Prevention Methods</i>	59
<i>Procedure at Rush University Medical Center</i>	59
<i>Procedure Off-Campus</i>	60
<i>Financial Responsibility</i>	60
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION.....	60
MEDICAL LIABILITY INSURANCE	60
UNIVERSITY STUDENT SERVICES	60
TRANSCRIPTS.....	61
IMPORTANT RUSH PHONE NUMBERS	61
PA PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	62
APPENDIX A - TERMINAL PROGRAM COMPETENCIES (TPCS)	63
APPENDIX B - COURSE DESCRIPTIONS	64
<i>Program Year I</i>	64
<i>Program Year II - Core Clinical Rotations</i>	68
<i>Program Year III – Advanced Clinical Rotations</i>	70
APPENDIX C - TECHNICAL STANDARDS	72
APPENDIX D - FIRST YEAR FORMATIVE EVALUATION.....	74
APPENDIX E - PROFESSIONALISM ASSESSMENT – FORMATIVE	76
APPENDIX F - PROFESSIONALISM ASSESSMENT - PROFESSIONALISM VIOLATION #2	80
APPENDIX G - SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY	85

Introduction

Welcome to the Rush University Physician Assistant (PA) Program! This handbook outlines the policies and procedures specific to the PA Program and applies to all students, faculty, and staff. It is intended to serve as a program-level guide and does not supersede or replace any policies established by Rush University and the College of Health Sciences.

Students are responsible for reviewing the current version of the University Catalog each academic year to ensure familiarity with the additional policies at the College and University levels that students must also abide to. The policies of Rush University can be found [here](#), and those of the College can be found [here](#).

Additional policies related to individual PA courses are provided in each course syllabi and must be reviewed at the start of each term. Students should also reference them throughout the term as needed.

Prior to the start of the second and third years, students will receive supplementary handbooks detailing additional policies and procedures for the clinical years of the program. The policies outlined in those handbooks are applicable to all students, faculty, and staff as well and should be followed in conjunction with Program, College, and University policies. Students are expected to read, understand, and comply with all policies, procedures, and expectations throughout their time in the program. The Program, College, and University reserve the right to update, modify, or revise the contents of the policies and procedures at any time, and students are responsible for abiding with such changes.

PA Program Mission, Vision, and Goals Statements

PA Program Mission

The Rush University PA Program mission is to prepare qualified PAs to practice patient-centered, evidence-based medicine with competence and professionalism driven by academic excellence and service to diverse communities.

PA Program Vision

The Rush PA program strives to be a national leader in educating exceptionally qualified PAs in clinical and professional practice.

PA Program Goals

1. Matriculate and retain cohorts with competitive academic and clinical admission qualifications.
2. Deliver a curriculum that produces cohorts with nationally distinguished board exam outcomes.
3. Prepare students to work collaboratively in interprofessional healthcare teams.
4. Demonstrate student engagement in service to the institution and community.

The PA Program is also dedicated to fulfilling the mission, vision, and values of the College, the University, and the Health System.

Performance on Goals Updated 2026

The Rush PA Program reviews its goals annually to ensure they align with the mission and vision of the Program, University, and College. The program revised its goals in 2026. As part of ongoing assessment of the program, the program assesses its performance on each goal using the outcomes and benchmarks listed below.

Goal #1: Matriculate and retain cohorts with competitive academic and clinical admission qualifications.

Outcome #1 - Competitive academic qualifications: Class Average, Total GPA

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** Total GPA ≥ 3.3
- **Strength:** Total GPA ≥ 3.5 , sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
3.52	3.50	3.51	3.57
Goal Met	Goal Met	Goal Met	Goal Met, Strength

Outcome #2 - Competitive academic qualifications: Class Average, Science GPA

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** Science GPA ≥ 3.3
- **Strength:** Total Science ≥ 3.5 , sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
3.36	3.38	3.41	3.50
Goal Met	Goal Met	Goal Met	Goal Met

Outcome #3 - Competitive clinical admission data: Class average, Health care experience hours (HCE)

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** $\geq 1,500$
- **Strength:** $\geq 2,500$ sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
4837	5043	5159	2761
Goal Met	Goal Met	Goal Met	Goal Met, Strength

Outcome #4- Competitive clinical admission data: Graduation Rate

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** Meet or exceed the national graduation rate (Most recently, 94%)
- **Strength:** Meet or exceed the national graduation rate by $\geq 2\%$ ($\geq 96\%$), sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
80% (24/30)	100% (29/29)	100% (32/32)	88% (28/32)
<i>Goal Not Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Not Met</i>

Goal #2: Deliver a curriculum that produces cohorts with nationally distinguished board exam outcomes.

Outcome #1 - Cohort first-time board pass rate at or above the national average.

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** Meet or exceed the national average
- **Strength:** Exceed the national average by $\geq 2\%$, sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
National avg: 92% Class avg: 92%	National avg: 92% Class avg: 100%	National avg: 92% Class avg: 94%	National avg: 91% Class avg: 89%
<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Not Met</i>

Goal #3: Prepare students to work collaboratively in interprofessional healthcare teams.

Outcome #1 - Class average for *collaborates effectively with the healthcare team* on final preceptor evaluation in program; final two rotations.

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** A class average of ≥ 3
- **Strength:** A class average ≥ 4 , sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
4.70	4.84	4.86	4.96
<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met, Strength</i>

Outcome #2 - Class average for collaboration as a member of an interprofessional health care team on end of program survey.

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** A class average of ≥ 4
- **Strength:** A class average ≥ 4.5 , sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
N/A	N/A	N/A	4.70
N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>Goal Met</i>

Goal #4: Demonstrate student engagement in service to the institution and community.

Outcome #1 – Cohort percentage over service hour minimum.

- **Benchmarks:**

- **Minimum:** Cohorts exceeds by $\geq 10\%$
- **Strength:** Cohorts exceeds by $\geq 20\%$, sustained over 3 years

- **Results:**

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
39.32% (+308.25h)	72.59% (+792.5h)	21.67% (+249.75h)	53.1% (+554.2h)
<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met</i>	<i>Goal Met, Strength</i>

Institutional and Program Accreditation

Rush PA Program Accreditation Status

At its March 2024 meeting, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the PA, Inc. (ARC-PA) placed the Rush University PA Program sponsored by Rush University on Accreditation-Probation status until its next review in April 2026. *The Program anticipates an update by June 2026.*

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 <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-Rush-university/>.

The accreditation status of the Rush University PA Studies Program is public information, and the program will make its accreditation status known to prospective applicants, students, and the general public through appropriate program publications, the program web site, or upon request.

Rush University Accreditation Status

Rush University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a regional accrediting agency that accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region, which includes 19 states. In its accreditation process, HLC assesses the academic quality and educational effectiveness of institutions and emphasizes institutional structures, processes, and resources.

Rush University has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1974. The HLC has reaffirmed Rush's accreditation status through 2028-2029.

Additionally, all health care practice or administration degree programs offered by Rush University are accredited by their respective governing body.

PA National Certification Examination (PANCE)

The National Commission on Certification for the PA (NCCPA) administers the PANCE and maintains the certification status for all PAs in the United States. In order to obtain individual state licensure, all PAs must take and pass the PANCE examination. Adhering to the NCCPA's certification standards ensures that all PAs in the country maintain minimum competency for practice.

The program's curriculum and assessment standards are based on the NCCPA's Content Blueprint and Topic List for the PANCE. The program offers many opportunities for students to develop test-taking skills and take practice exams throughout the program. There is an in-house board review course at the conclusion of the program for each cohort.

Because of the evolving nature of the Content Blueprint and Topic List, students should regularly check the NCCPA website for updates to the PANCE Blueprint, which can be accessed [here](#).

Below is a summary of our most recent 5-year report:



Print Date: 4/21/2026 1:12 PM

Page: 1 of 2

Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination Exam Performance Summary Report

Program Name: Rush University

Program Number: 6016

Test Taker Status: All Test Takers

Definitions of the report headings are provided at the end of the report.
All information is current as of the date the report was generated unless otherwise specified.

Class	Class Graduation Year	Group	Number of Candidates Who Took PANCE	Number of Exam Attempts	Number of Exams Passed	Program Exam Pass Rate	National Exam Pass Rate for the Class Graduation Year	% of Candidates Who Ultimately Passed PANCE
Class 2021	2021	All Takers	30	30	30	100%	91%	100%
		First Time Takers	30	30	30	100%	93%	100%
Class 2022	2022	All Takers	24	26	24	92%	89%	100%
		First Time Takers	24	24	22	92%	92%	100%
Class 2023	2023	All Takers	30	30	30	100%	89%	100%
		First Time Takers	30	30	30	100%	92%	100%
Class 2024	2024	All Takers	32	34	32	94%	89%	100%
		First Time Takers	32	32	30	94%	92%	100%
Class 2025	2025	All Takers	28	30	27	90%	88%	96%
		First Time Takers	28	28	25	89%	91%	96%

**At the time of this report above, one student had yet to take a subsequent attempt. Results anticipated June 2026.*

The program's overall first-time taker pass rate since 2013 is 97.1%.

The program's overall PANCE pass rate is 100%.

Graduation and Attrition Rate

The following table summarizes program outcomes for recent cohorts, including attrition and graduation rates. In accordance with ARC-PA definitions, attrition represents the number of students who attrited from the cohort for any reason, including decelerations, withdrawals, and dismissals.

The program maintains a maximum entering class size of 32 students. Recent cohorts demonstrate strong completion and progression outcomes.

Data Points	Graduated Classes		
	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Maximum entering class size (as approved by ARC-PA)	40	40	40
Entering class size	32	32	32
Graduates	30	32	28
*Attrition rate	6.25%	0%	12.5%
**Graduation rate	93.4%	100%	87.5%

College and University Leadership

Rush University President and Chief Academic Officer	Role:
Robert S.D. Higgins, MD, MSHA	<i>Serves as the University's chief leader and academic officer, providing overall direction for education, research, and strategic initiatives. The President works to advance the University's mission, support high-quality teaching and research, and promote a learning environment that values diversity, equity, and student success.</i>
Rush University Provost and Senior Vice President	Role:
Julie Anne Hoff, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN	<i>Provides leadership for the University's academic programs, supporting academic excellence, advancing research and innovation, and ensuring that educational initiatives align with the University's mission to improve health outcomes and promote equity.</i>
Dean, College of Health Sciences	Role:
Jason S. Turner, PhD, MAE	<i>Oversees the academic programs and operations within the College, supports faculty and students, and ensures program quality, resources, and student success within the discipline.</i>
Vice Provost, Student Affairs	Role:
Debbie Martin, PhD	<i>Leads student support services and initiatives that promote student well-being, engagement, and success, including counseling, wellness, and co-curricular programs.</i>

PA Program Faculty and Staff

Interim Chair, Associate Dean of Research, College of Health Sciences:	Program Director:
Lauren Little, PhD, OTR/L Professor Phone: (312) 942-1759 Email: Lauren_Little@Rush.edu	Alyssa Knueven, MS, PA-C, CAQ-PED Assistant Professor Phone: (312) 943-7467 Email: alyssa_knueven@Rush.edu
Medical Director:	Director of Academic Education:
Pravir Baxi, MD Associate Professor Phone: N/A Email: pravir_v_baxi@Rush.edu	Elena Petrusevska, MMS, PA-C Instructor Phone: (312) 942-8281 Email: Elena_Petrusevska@Rush.edu
Director of Assessment & Outcomes:	Director of Clinical Education:
Alec Weiss, DMSc, MPH, MS, PA-C Assistant Professor Phone: (312) 942-2293 Email: alec_weiss@Rush.edu	Thomas Holland, MD, MS , Assistant Professor Phone: (312) 563-1045 Email: thomas_holland@rush.edu
Principal Faculty – Didactic:	Principal Faculty – Didactic:
Jessica Vlaming, MS, PA-C Assistant Professor Phone: (312) 942-9068 Email: jessica_vlaming@Rush.edu	Renata Block, DMSc, PA-C Instructor Phone: (312) 942-0583 Email: renata_block@Rush.edu
Principal Faculty – Clinical:	Principal Faculty – Clinical:
Kayla C. Martinez, MS, PA-C Assistant Professor Phone: (312) 942-1940 Email: kayla_c_martinez@Rush.edu	Daniel Doherty, MS, PA-C Instructor Phone: (312) 563-8799 Email: daniel_doherty@Rush.edu
Josh Mueller, MPAS, PA-C Instructor Email: Joshua_T_Mueller@Rush.edu	Maria Uhler, MS, PA-C Instructor Email: Maria_E_Uhler@Rush.edu
Program Coordinator:	Clinical Coordinator:
Joy Fidis, BS Phone: (312) 942-1857 Email: joyael_fidis@Rush.edu	Jaelyn Jugo, MHA Phone: (773) 682 - 4712 Email: Jaelyn_m_jugo@Rush.edu

Tuition and Estimated Program Costs

The following information is intended to help prospective and current students estimate their total cost of attendance. The Cost of Attendance (COA) is determined by combining direct expenses, which are directly billed to students by Rush University, and estimated indirect cost-of-living expenses that students will incur. The COA reflects the maximum amount of financial aid students can receive in a given academic year during their enrollment at Rush University.

Direct Expenses

The direct expenses for attending Rush University include tuition and insurance. All charges are divided between the eight semesters of the program. Tuition is subject to annual changes. Check with the program or the Office of Financial Aid for projected tuition rate changes.

Students are required to participate in the school's student health insurance program unless they have a comparable plan that covers them and have received approval for a waiver from the Rush Student Business Office. If there are any questions related to student health insurance, contact SBO@Rush.edu.

Estimated Indirect Cost of Living Expenses

Costs of living are the estimated expenses that students will incur during enrollment that are not paid directly to Rush University. These costs include items such as housing expenses, food, and transportation to campus and SCPE sites. They are determined based on analysis of sample data from the Chicago area.

Tuition is billed directly to the student's account by the University. Actual expenses will vary depending on individual circumstances, so students are encouraged to assess their own anticipated costs while enrolled and budget accordingly. Please note that federal student loans are not available during periods when students are not enrolled (for example, when on a leave of absence).

All categories included as part of the financial aid cost of attendance are increased annually by a standard cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase. The exact amount can vary depending on the publication of the COLA increase by the Social Security Administration.

The table below summarizes the direct and estimated indirect costs of living for attending the PA Program at Rush University. Unless otherwise noted as uncovered, enrolled students can expect the listed amounts to be applied towards their financial aid loan amounts.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

The Department of Education requires that Rush University's Office of Student Financial Aid monitor the academic progress of all financial aid recipients toward the completion of their degree. This process is called satisfactory academic progress. Satisfactory academic progress for graduate students is monitored using the following three factors:

- 1) **Maximum time frame measurement:** The maximum amount of time allowed to complete all PA program requirements is 42 months. This includes time acquired through taking a leave of absence and or deceleration.
- 2) **Pace of completion:** You must successfully complete at least 67 percent of the courses you attempt.
- 3) **Cumulative grade point average (GPA):** You must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

1. More information can be found [here](#).

Estimated Total Cost of Attendance for the “Typical Student”: \$253,091.74

Note: The typical student may complete one out of state elective, which is included in this overall total cost. Refer to the breakdown below.

Category	Term 1 Summer	Terms 2 through 4 Fall, Spring, Summer	Terms 5 through 7 Fall, Spring, Summer	Term 8 Fall	Total
Direct Expenses Cost					
Tuition	\$14,151	\$42,453	\$42,453	\$14,151	\$113,208
Student Health Insurance*	\$2,330	\$6,990	\$6,990	\$2,330	\$18,640
*Health insurance is a mandatory fee, but students can request to waive the insurance upon proof that they have a comparable private insurance plan.					

Indirect Cost of Living (See table below for Away Rotation Cost)					
Living allowance - includes food and housing	\$7,896	\$23,688	\$23,688	\$7,896	\$63,168
Books, Supplies, and Equipment	\$565	\$1,695	\$1,572	\$0	\$3,832
Miscellaneous	\$2,824	\$8,472	\$8,472	\$2,824	\$22,592
General Transportation	\$2,224	\$4,448	\$2,224	\$2,224	\$11,120
Transportation to Clinical Rotations	\$0	\$2,610	\$5,220	\$2,610	\$10,440
Federal Loan Fees	\$528	\$1,584	\$1,584	\$528	\$4,224

Out-of-pocket expenses (Not eligible for financial aid coverage)					
Onboarding fees, Annual drug test, annual TB test	\$161.74	\$103.00	\$103.00	\$0	\$367.74
PANCE Registration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$550.00	\$550.00

Category	Terms 5 through 8 Fall, Spring, Summer, Fall
Travel / Lodging for Away Rotations	
Housing Cost*	\$2,857
Transportation (Flight)	\$355
Transportation (To/from site location)**	\$1,740
Total	\$4,952
*This is the average cost for a 1-bedroom queen bed Airbnb for one single away rotation.	
**Average cost for 10 miles round trip for one month at the 2026 IRS mileage rate.	

CTA UPASS: All students receive a UPASS each term upon enrollment in the program, until graduation. The total cost for CTA UPASS enrollment is \$1,680, and is paid for by the College of Health Sciences. A \$50.00 non-waivable fee will apply anytime a student requires a replacement UPASS.

BLS/ACLS training is included in the cost of attendance. However, students must complete the prework in its entirety and present the proof of completion upon arrival for in-person training. Students are not permitted to complete the training if it is not done and therefore would incur the cost and responsibility of completing and paying for the training on their own, which could cause a delay in starting clinical rotations.

****Please note that these cost estimates are based on the current academic year and may change each year**

Students can also request additional funding for personal expenses such as the purchase of computer technology, unexpected medical expenses, and dependent care expenses through the Office of Student Financial Aid. Those exact costs may vary by student, and not all students request these funds.

For information regarding general financial aid options, contact the Office of Financial Aid at: financial_aid@Rush.edu or (312) 942-6256.

For details regarding the cost of attendance, please visit the Office of Financial Aid's Cost of Attendance website, available [here](#).

Students who withdraw or are dismissed from the University may be eligible for a prorated tuition refund in accordance with the official refund schedule. Tuition refund information is available at: [Tuition Refund and Waivers, Office of Financial Affairs](#)

PA Program Scholarships

The College of Health Sciences and the PA Program provide scholarships to first-year PA students annually. Awards include application-based scholarships, for which students apply, and program-awarded scholarships, which are determined by the program based on established selection criteria. Applications for the application-based scholarships are submitted prior to matriculation, and award decisions for all scholarships are made during the summer term. Students are encouraged to apply for both the CHS Leadership Scholarship and the Grainger Foundation PA Scholarship, as interested. The application-based scholarship cycle opens April 1st with a deadline of April 30th each year.

PA Program Scholarship (Program Awarded) – Merit and need based scholarships intended to help offset the cost of tuition. Recipients are selected through an internal scoring process that evaluates both merit, based on standardized program defined criteria, and demonstrated financial need, as determined in collaboration with the Office of Financial Aid. Approximately \$150,000 is awarded annually and divided among selected students. All incoming students are automatically considered.

CHS Leadership Scholarship (Application-Based) – The College of Health Sciences (CHS) Leadership Scholarship is a competitive, application-based award that recognizes incoming students who demonstrate strong leadership experience and a commitment to continued leadership development throughout the program and in their professional career. The total scholarship funding available each year is equivalent to the cost of one full program tuition and is divided among the selected recipients. All incoming students are eligible to apply. Selection is conducted through a blinded review process.

Grainger Foundation PA Scholarship (Application-Based) – The Grainger Foundation PA Scholarship is a competitive, application-based award that promotes the development, implementation, and evaluation of a community service project aimed at supporting an underrepresented or underserved community in the Chicago area. Up to two incoming students are selected each year to receive \$40,000 toward the cost of attendance. All incoming students are eligible to apply. Previous leadership or community service experience is not required, although prior experience is beneficial. Selection is conducted through a blinded review process.

Students may also be eligible to apply for non-Rush scholarships and are encouraged to do so. However, external funding awards may impact the total amount of funding available to them through Rush scholarships. Students are encouraged to discuss external scholarship awards with the Office of Financial Aid prior to accepting funding.

Scholarship Policies

- All scholarship applications must be submitted in accordance with the application criteria and instructions disseminated for the Grainger Scholarship and CHS Leadership Scholarship programs.
- Late submissions will not be accepted for any reason.
- Students who receive a late acceptance to the program will be provided an equitable submission window for scholarship consideration.
- Scholarships are awarded at the discretion of the PA program and may be withdrawn at any time if a student fails to maintain satisfactory academic performance or does not meet the expectations and commitments associated with the scholarship award.

Program Curriculum

The Rush University PA Program is a rigorous full-time program that prepares students for careers as PAs. Graduates are awarded a Master of Science (MS) in Physician Assistant (PA) Studies degree. Our 30-month curriculum is innovative and distinctive, featuring an extended clinical phase that provides additional clinical training and patient care experiences. The association with Rush University Medical Center offers extensive resources and diverse clinical settings to provide students with an excellent and comprehensive educational experience. The program admits one class of 32 students per year. Attendance in the program is on a full-time basis only.

The curriculum is divided into two main components, the didactic phase, and the clinical phase. The didactic phase (12 months) integrates lectures, case-based discussions, and hands-on skills laboratory training to build the foundational medical knowledge and clinical skills necessary for patient care and clinical rotations. All in-person didactic coursework occurs at Rush University's Armour Academic Center. We do not have a distant campus.

The clinical phase (18 months) is divided into two years. The first year of the clinical phase (program year 2) involves 12 months of core clinical rotations, consisting of 8-week rotations in internal medicine and general surgery, and 4-week rotations in family medicine, emergency medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, behavioral health, and physical medicine and rehabilitation. Students are also provided with two 4-week elective rotations in an area of their choosing.

The second year of the clinical phase (program year 3) involves 6 months of advanced rotations that allow for focused training within a specific area of clinical practice. Current advanced training opportunities include internal medicine, primary care, general surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, critical care, cardiothoracic vascular surgery, orthopedic surgery, emergency medicine, pediatrics, behavioral health, and physical medicine and rehabilitation.

Availability of advanced rotations may vary and is dependent on clinical site capacity and preceptor availability. Toward the midpoint of the second year, students rank their top areas of interest for advanced rotations, and placements are determined through a program-led matching process that considers student preferences, program standing, and clinical site availability. Placement in a specific specialty is not guaranteed.

Clinical rotations take place up to 90 minutes or 90 miles without traffic, from Rush University's Armour Academic Center. Clinical rotations occur in inpatient, outpatient, emergency department, and operating room settings. While on rotation, students are expected to work the schedule as assigned by the preceptor, which at a minimum will include 32-hours per week. Rotation hours can fall on weekdays, evenings, weekends, overnights and holidays. Faculty have the sole responsibility of securing clinical rotation placements. Students are not required to solicit clinical rotation placements.

The sequencing and site placement of rotations is made at the sole discretion of the PA faculty. More information regarding clinical rotations is provided before students embark on their second year and can be found in the clinical year handbooks.

As part of the master's component of the curriculum, students are expected to become competent in reviewing, analyzing, and applying current research literature towards effective, evidence-based clinical decision-making. Students are introduced to research and statistical methods in the first year of the program and these concepts are reinforced throughout the program. To showcase research competence, students develop a master's research project. For this project, students work with a faculty mentor to identify an issue of clinical interest and create a research proposal. Students conduct a literature review, formulate a research question, and create study methodology to investigate their research question. For the final component of the master's research project, students create a poster and present their research proposal to classmates and members of the faculty.

Terminal Program Competencies (TPCs)

The Terminal Program Competencies (TPCs) are the program-defined competencies that outline the knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors required for successful progression through the program and into entry-level PA clinical practice. All formative and summative evaluation criteria are derived from the TPCs, which serve as the foundational framework for student assessment and progression. Students are introduced to the TPCs, tracking and performance expectations, upon matriculation. The curriculum is intentionally structured and sequenced to facilitate progressive attainment of the TPCs, as outlined in the following sections. For the full list, see [Appendix A](#).

Didactic and Clinical Courses

The courses across the program are listed below by year and term. The course descriptions for each course are included in [Appendix B](#).

Program Year 1 - Didactic Courses

Term I – Summer		Credit Hours	Instructional Method
PHA 510	Human Physiology	2	In-person
PHA 511	Human Anatomy	5	Blended
PHA 512	History & Physical Examination	3	In-person
PHA 513	PA Professional Practice	1	Blended
PHA 514	Clinical Medicine I	5	Blended
Term II – Fall		Credit Hours	Instructional Method
IPE 502	Interprofessional Health care Teams	0	Synchronous Online
PHA 520	Principles of Clinical Pharmacology I	3	In-person
PHA 521	Research & Statistics	2	Blended
PHA 522	Clinical Reasoning I	2	In-person
PHA 523	Epidemiology and Public Health	2	In-person
PHA 524	Clinical Medicine II	6	Blended
PHA 525	Principles of Advanced Practice I	2	In-person
Term III – Spring		Credit Hours	Instructional Method
IPE 502	Interprofessional Health care Teams	0	Synchronous Online
CHS 605	Ethics in Health Care	2	Asynchronous Online
PHA 530	Principles of Clinical Pharmacology II	3	In-person
PHA 532	Clinical Reasoning II	2	In-person
PHA 533	Psychosocial Medicine	2	In-person
PHA 534	Clinical Medicine III	6	Blended
PHA 535	Principles of Advanced Practice II	2	In-person
PHA 536	Emergency and Surgical Medicine	2	In-person

Total Credit Hours for Program Year 1:

52

Program Year 2 - Core Clinical Rotations

Sample rotation sequence, individual schedules will vary.

Term I - Summer Term _____ Credit Hours (16)

PHA 581 Family Medicine	4 weeks
PHA 582 Internal Medicine I	4 weeks
PHA 583 Internal Medicine II	4 weeks
PHA 584 General Surgery I	4 weeks

Term II - Fall Term _____ Credit Hours (16)

PHA 585 General Surgery II	4 weeks
PHA 586 Obstetrics and Gynecology	4 weeks
PHA 587 Pediatrics	4 weeks
PHA 588 Behavioral Health	4 weeks

Term III - Spring Term _____ Credit Hours (16)

PHA 589 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	4 weeks
PHA 590 Emergency Medicine	4 weeks
PHA 591 Elective I	4 weeks
PHA 592 Elective II	4 weeks

Total Credit Hours for Year 2: 48

Program Year 3 - Advanced Practice Rotations

Term I - Summer Term _____ Credit Hours (16)

PHA 593 - Advanced Clinical Practice I	
Rotation 1 – Track Core	5 weeks
Rotation 2 – Track Core	5 weeks

PHA 595 - Master's Research Project I

Term II - Fall Term _____ Credit Hours (16)

PHA 594 - Advanced Clinical Practice II	
Rotation 3 – Track Core	5 weeks
Rotation 4 – Track Core	5 weeks
Rotation 5 – Track Elective*	5 weeks

**The third-year elective rotation may be assigned to rotation 1-5; each student schedule varies*

PHA 596 - Master's Research Project II

Total Credit Hours for Year 3: 32

PA Program Total Credit Hours: 132

Note: Changes to the course sequence may occur at the discretion of the PA Program and may be implemented at any time.

Course Sequencing

Due to the sequential nature of the curriculum, students must complete and pass all courses in any given semester to progress to courses for the subsequent semester. Didactic courses are offered once per academic year and must be completed in sequence with the assigned cohort. Students who are unable to progress through the didactic curriculum as scheduled will not be permitted to continue out of sequence. In such cases, students must either submit a request for deceleration into the next cohort (the following academic year) or may be subject to withdrawal or dismissal from the program in accordance with program policies.

Clinical courses are scheduled at the discretion of the PA faculty and depend largely on preceptor and site availability. Students who are unable to progress through the clinical curriculum as scheduled must either submit a request for deceleration or may be subject to withdrawal or dismissal from the program. The length of the deceleration in the clinical year varies from one term to one year, depending on student performance deficiencies as determined by faculty, as well as availability of outstanding placements and training opportunities. For more information, see the section on [Deceleration](#).

There is no mechanism for part-time enrollment in the program. Advanced standing or transfer credit is not awarded in the program, regardless of previous professional or academic experience.

Registration

Faculty batch-register students for all required courses each term; therefore, individual registration is not typically required. If individual registration becomes necessary, students will be provided with instructions.

Students may be ineligible to register for courses if a hold is placed on their account, such as in cases of late tuition payments or failure to meet institutional or program requirements (e.g., incomplete annual training modules). All holds must be resolved in order to be eligible for registration, and therefore progression. Failure to resolve a hold in a timely manner may result in delayed registration, additional fees as determined by the Registrar's Office, and/or a professionalism violation. Students may also be subject to probation or withheld from participating in coursework or clinical rotations until the issue is resolved, which may result in a deceleration.

Course Administration and Evaluation

Course Syllabus and Other Learning Materials

The Course Director will provide students with a syllabus and other relevant materials related to each course at the beginning of each term via Canvas, the University's learning management system. The syllabus provides information regarding the course goals and course learning outcomes, policies, teaching methods, lecture topics, required readings, instructional objectives, and grading criteria. The Course Director is the final arbiter in all matters concerning course grading.

Instructor and Course Evaluations

Students are expected to complete evaluations for each course at the end of every term or rotation. In addition, students are expected to evaluate individual guest speakers and instructional faculty throughout all phases of the program. Timely, constructive, professional completion of evaluations is considered a responsibility and an expectation of all students. Completion may also be a graded component within a course, as outlined in the syllabus. These evaluations are an important component of the program's ongoing self-assessment and continuous quality improvement processes.

Course evaluations are administered through the CHS Dean's Office using the IDEA survey tool. All course evaluations are anonymous; faculty receive only aggregate data and overall response rates.

Evaluations of guest speakers may be administered through platforms selected by course faculty, but again, remain anonymous. Site and preceptor evaluations completed through the program's clinical rotation management system are identifiable only to clinical faculty and staff, and not to preceptors.

Requirements for Progression

General Progression Policy

Progression in the program follows a structured sequence of academic, clinical, administrative and professionalism requirements designed to support students' development and readiness for entry level PA practice. In order to progress, students must be able to meet the technical standards at all times as well as meet satisfactory academic performance and satisfactory professional behavior. In order to progress from one academic year to the next, students must also pass the formative evaluation at the end of the first and second years. In order to progress to graduation, students must also pass the program's summative evaluation within the last four months of the program.

Technical Standards

Students must be able to meet the program's Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodation in accordance with institutional policies, at all times. If at any point a student is unable to meet these standards, they will not be permitted to progress in the program and will be referred to the P&P Committee for consideration of deceleration vs dismissal. For the full list of Technical Standards, see [Appendix C](#).

Mandatory Training Modules

Students are required to complete all assigned electronic training modules as assigned, at least annually by the institutional deadline, or a program-defined deadline when applicable. These modules, delivered through the Rush Learning Hub, include topics such as Compliance and HIPAA Privacy, Infection Prevention and Control, Fire Safety, Cybersecurity Awareness, Emergency Management, and Sexual Harassment Prevention.

Failure to complete required modules by the designated deadline will result in a professionalism violation and students are not permitted to progress in the program until all outstanding modules are completed and all associated requirements are satisfied.

Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Academic Performance

Satisfactory academic performance is an ongoing designation used by the program to assess a student's academic standing and to inform decisions regarding progression as it relates to academic performance.

Satisfactory academic performance is defined as meeting all of the following criteria:

- A final grade of a "B" or higher in every didactic course
- A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the completion of each term
- A final grade of "Pass" in every clinical course
- Completion of all remediation activities, as applicable
- A passing score on all remediation reassessments, as applicable
- Compliance with the terms of probationary requirements, as applicable

Unsatisfactory academic performance is defined as meeting any one of the following criteria:

- A final grade of a "C" or lower on any didactic course
- A cumulative GPA below 3.0 at the completion of any term
- A final grade of "Fail" on any clinical course
- Failure to complete a required remediation activity
- Failure to pass a required remediation reassessment
- Noncompliance with the required academic terms of probation

Unsatisfactory academic performance will result in the convening of the P&P Committee for consideration of deceleration vs dismissal.

Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Professional Performance

Satisfactory professional performance is an ongoing designation used by the program to assess a student's professional standing and to inform decisions regarding progression as it relates to professionalism.

Satisfactory professional performance is defined as meeting all of the following criteria:

- Demonstrate behavior consistent with program professionalism policies
- Completion of any required professionalism remediation activities, as applicable
- A passing score on all remediation reassessments, as applicable
- Compliance with the terms of probationary requirements, as applicable

Unsatisfactory professional performance is defined as meeting any one of the following criteria:

- An egregious professionalism violation
- Failure to complete any required professionalism remediation activities
- A failing score on any required remediation reassessment
- Noncompliance with any of the required professionalism terms of probation

The presence of a non-egregious professionalism violation does not, in itself, constitute unsatisfactory professional performance or preclude progression, provided the student is committed to demonstrating improvement.

Unsatisfactory professional performance will result in the convening of the P&P Committee for consideration of deceleration vs dismissal.

Progress and Promotions (P&P) Committee

The P&P Committee serves as the designated body responsible for the review of student performance and progression concerns within the program. The P&P Committee is composed of PA faculty (excluding the Program Director and Department Chair), along with selected external members from the College, University, medical center, and/or the profession. This composition is intended to ensure fairness, objectivity, and an independent perspective in all deliberations. The Committee determines outcomes by majority vote.

The P&P Committee reviews formative and summative evaluations for students who do not meet established academic and/or professional standards and progression criteria. The P&P Committee also reviews significant egregious academic or professional conduct concerns, as well as cases in which students fail to meet the terms of probation. Following review, the P&P Committee determines appropriate outcomes, including progression status (e.g., eligible to progress, eligible to progress on probation, or ineligible to progress), as well as the need for remediation, deceleration, or dismissal.

The P&P Committee may also be convened to review and render decisions on student requests for deceleration and associated leaves of absence, establishing the terms and conditions of such actions, including administrative, medical knowledge and clinical requirements and competency-based assessments required for re-entry and resumption of the curriculum.

For students requiring placement on probation, the P&P Committee establishes the terms of probation in accordance with program and University policies, as well as the remediation plans.

The P&P Committee may be convened either via electronic communication or in person, depending on the severity and nature of the matter under review, at the sole discretion of the P&P Committee. Students may have the opportunity to provide input to the P&P Committee through a written statement, in-person appearance, or representation by a faculty advisor; however, the format and extent of student participation are determined at the discretion of the P&P Committee, as not all matters require or warrant direct student involvement prior to a decision being rendered.

Students are provided with written notification of the outcome of P&P Committee decisions.

Requirements for Graduation

In order to receive the degree of Master of Science (MS) in PA Studies, students must:

1. Successfully complete all required coursework, assessments, curricular activities, and administrative requirements, including any academic or professionalism remediation activities
2. Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
3. Meet the program's standards for satisfactory academic and professional performance
4. Complete and pass all required formative and summative evaluations
5. Fulfill the program's service hour requirement
6. Fulfill all financial obligations to the institution
7. Return all program-issued equipment, materials, and borrowed items in good working order

Terminal Program Competency Assessments

Program Formative and Summative Evaluations

At the end of each academic year, all students are evaluated on cumulative performance to determine eligibility for progression within the program and, ultimately, graduation. These evaluations are based on the program's Terminal Program Competencies and include both formative and summative components.

Formative evaluations determine a student's eligibility to progress from one year of the curriculum to the next. Summative evaluations determine a student's eligibility for graduation.

Both formative and summative evaluations are conducted by PA faculty. Students who do not meet established criteria for progression or graduation will be referred to the P&P Committee for review and determination of appropriate action.

First Year Formative Evaluation

The first-year formative evaluation consists of the various assessments and requirements of the didactic year, with corresponding benchmarks (See [Appendix D](#)). In order for a student to progress to the second year in the program, they must meet all assessment benchmarks and have completed all administrative components listed. If a student required a remediation on any of the assessments and successfully passed the reassessment, that will be noted on the form. A student may require a deceleration if there are significant remediation needs at the end of the first year. A student cannot progress in the curriculum unless all remediations have been completed, unless otherwise directed by the P&P Committee.

As discussed in this handbook, all didactic courses require a final grade of B or higher. Course grading policies can be referenced in each course syllabi. Further details on the OSCE can be found in the corresponding course syllabi and on Canvas (History and PE OSCE in PHA 512, Communication OSCE in PHA 525). The Skills Training information are discussed further in the PHA 536 syllabi and Canvas shell.

The other components of the formative evaluation are discussed below:

End of Year Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

The End of Year OSCE is an assessment designed to evaluate students' knowledge, skills and behaviors. It is administered at the end of each year in the program.

The OSCE consists of three standardized patient encounters, each performed with trained simulated participants/patients (SPs) in the Rush Center for Clinical Skills and Simulation. During each encounter, students are allotted a designated amount of time to complete a focused clinical interaction, including history-taking and a focused physical examination. This is followed by a timed post-encounter write-up station in which the student formulates an initial assessment and management plan without resources. Students rotate through all three cases in a single examination session.

Students are given an overview presentation by faculty on the format, requirements and expectations in advance to guide adequate preparation.

Performance is evaluated by both SPs and PA faculty, with competencies and sub-competencies related to communication, history-taking, physical examination, assessment, and management plans. Scores are aggregated by competency across all three cases.

The minimum OSCE performance benchmarks are as follows:

- **Communication** (aggregate across cases): 80%
- **History-taking** (aggregate across cases): 80%
- **Physical examination** (aggregate across cases): 80%
- **Assessment/Management** (sub-competency aggregates across cases): 80%
- **Overall OSCE score** (overall performance): 80%

Review of OSCE scoring rubrics is not permitted; however, students will receive a score report along with feedback from SPs and PA faculty.

Remediation generally standardized, but some components are individualized based on student performance. Students who do not meet the above competency benchmarks must participate in an assigned focused remediation and reassessment as indicated with PA faculty, typically occurring outside of the simulated patient center. The reassessment must be passed with a score of at least 80% in order to progress. Failure of a focused remediation attempt will result in probation and assignment of a more intensive remediation plan, followed by another reassessment. The remediation process may result in a deceleration at the discretion of the P&P Committee. A subsequent failure on the reassessment will be referred back to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

Students who do not meet the Overall OSCE benchmark of 80% will be immediately placed on probation, and must complete a comprehensive (global) remediation, which would require a deceleration at the discretion of the P&P Committee. The global remediation would culminate in a reassessment consisting of three new simulated cases administered in the simulated patient center. The global remediation must be passed with a score at or above 80% in order to progress. Failure of the global remediation reassessment will be referred back to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

If a student is already on probation at the time of an Overall OSCE failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

Students requiring accommodations must work with the Office of Student Accessibility Services; determinations will be made in accordance with institutional policies. Certain timed assessments may not be eligible for accommodations when the ability to perform tasks within a defined time frame is an essential component of the competency being evaluated. In such cases, the timing element is considered integral to the assessment of clinical performance and may be required for all students.

PA Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT)

The PACKRAT is a standardized, national self-assessment examination developed by the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) to evaluate students' medical knowledge and readiness for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE).

The PACKRAT consists of 225 multiple-choice questions administered over four hours. Examination content is aligned with the PANCE blueprint and topic list and assesses knowledge across major disciplines of primary care medicine.

The PACKRAT is administered at the end of each academic year to provide both students and faculty with objective feedback regarding medical knowledge acquisition, progression, and readiness for the PANCE.

Completion of the PACKRAT is required for progression in the program; however, the examination is not tied to any individual course grade. The program utilizes a performance benchmark of within one standard deviation below the national mean, and 70% for each organ system and task area, for the corresponding exam version as an indicator of satisfactory knowledge development. Review of individual PACKRAT questions is not permitted; however, students will receive a score report with performance breakdowns by organ system and task area. Scores are used to guide academic counseling and identify areas for further study or support.

Students are expected to take the PACKRAT at the scheduled date and time. In the event of illness or an emergency, appropriate documentation is required, and the student must complete the examination in accordance with the program's Missed Exam policy.

End of Year Professionalism Assessment

The Professionalism Assessment is an evaluation of student professional behaviors conducted by PA program faculty at the end of each academic year. This assessment is designed to evaluate the professional behavior and interpersonal skill competencies essential to clinical practice and professional development (See [Appendix E](#)).

The assessment includes the following sub-competencies:

- Communication
- Appearance and demeanor
- Dependability and engagement
- Self-awareness and accountability
- Honesty and ethics
- Teamwork and collaboration

Each sub-competency is scored using a standardized rating scale of 1-5 (Never-Always). The program's defined benchmark is an average score of 4.0 or higher in each.

Students who do not meet the benchmark in any individual sub-competency will be required to complete a focused remediation specific to the area(s) of deficiency followed by a reassessment. Remediation plans are developed by the PA faculty and may include reflective exercises, faculty mentorship, or other structured activities to support professional growth. Successful completion of all required remediation is necessary for progression within the program. Failure to pass the reassessment with a score of 4.0 or above, warrants placement on probation. If a student is already on probation at the time of a reassessment failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

Students who do not meet the benchmark across all sub-competencies will be immediately placed on probation, and be required to complete a global professionalism remediation, requiring a deceleration of at least one term, followed by a reassessment. The remediation plan is developed by the P&P Committee and may include reflective exercises, faculty mentorship, and other structured activities to support professional growth. Successful completion of all required remediation is necessary for progression within the program. Failure to pass the reassessment with a score below 4.0 in all areas, warrants referral back to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

If a student is already on probation at the time of a global assessment failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

Community Service

Rush and the PA Program are committed to providing service to our community, as set forth in our mission statements. Throughout the program, students are expected to participate in various community service activities in the PA Program, the University and throughout the Chicago area.

The PA Program requires that each student completes at least twelve (12) hours per academic year of approved community and/or professional service – eight (8) of which must be service to the community. Examples of activities that may be used to meet this requirement include participation in community health

fairs, participation in Rush organized and approved service activities, participation in PA Program admissions recruitment and interviews, and participation in community health education events. In addition to Rush and PA Program sponsored service activities, students may participate in appropriate events that serve the community. Note the following criteria regarding participation in service activities:

- Participation in any service activity must not conflict with class or other program related activities. Requests for time off from class or rotation to participate in service activities are not permitted.
- For all activities not sponsored by Rush or the PA Program, students should notify the program and obtain approval to participate from the Faculty Advisor for Student Activities, prior to attending the event itself.
- For every service event, students should complete and submit a PA Program Professional and Service Documentation Log form on Microsoft Forms. This form must be submitted within 4 weeks of completion of the service activity. Students will not receive credit for their service activity if the forms are not submitted by this deadline.
- The Service Documentation Log must contain the event name, date, hours served, and the contact name / information for the event organizer or supervisor as available. The student will be required to attest on their form that the information submitted is true and accurate as to their completed service hours. Any falsification of service hours is considered an egregious violation and students will be presented to the P&P Committee for consideration of deceleration vs. dismissal.
- Students may refer to the Canvas shell for more information regarding Service Hours. Any questions regarding the service requirement should be directed to the Faculty Liaison.
- All service hours must be completed by 2 weeks before the last date of the academic year in order to progress.

Medical Terminology Exam

Upon matriculation into the program, students are required to complete a medical terminology examination assessing foundational knowledge of medical prefixes, suffixes, and organ system terminology. Students are provided preparatory materials in advance of the first day on campus to support readiness for this assessment.

The examination is administered during the first week of classes and consists of a multiple-choice format. A minimum score of 70% is required to pass.

Students who do not achieve the passing benchmark must complete remediation and reassessment at the discretion of the Director of Academic Education. Failure to successfully complete remediation and pass the examination will result in probation and assignment of a more intensive remediation plan. A subsequent reassessment failure will result in referral to the P&P Committee for consideration of deceleration or dismissal. Successful completion of the medical terminology examination with a passing score is required for progression in the program.

Progression Outcomes

Based on formative evaluation, students are determined to be:

- Eligible for progression without reservation
- Eligible for progression but remain on probation
- Not eligible for progression

Students who do not meet progression criteria will be referred to the P&P Committee for review and determination of required remediation, deceleration, dismissal or other academic or professionalism action.

Probation and Progression Considerations

Students on probation are reviewed during formative evaluations to determine whether they have met the conditions outlined in their probation plan. In some cases, a student may demonstrate adequate progress but still have outstanding remediation requirements. Under these circumstances, a student may be permitted to progress while remaining on probation.

Progression under probationary status does not remove or alter probation conditions. All decisions regarding progression while on probation are made at the discretion of the P&P Committee.

Second Year Formative Evaluation

The second-year formative evaluation consists of various assessments with corresponding benchmarks to track progression to meeting the TPCs. In order for a student to progress to the third year in the program, they must meet all assessment benchmarks and have completed all administrative components listed. If a student required a remediation in any of the assessments, that will be noted on the form. A student may require a deceleration if there are significant remediation needs at the end of the second year. A student cannot progress in the curriculum unless all remediations have been completed, unless otherwise directed by the P&P Committee.

Included on the second-year formative are final preceptor evaluations, end of rotation exam performance, second year assignments, the End of Second Year OSCE, the Second Year PACKRAT, the Second Year Professionalism Assessment, as well as the Second Year Administrative Components. Further details on the second-year formative evaluation are outlined in the second-year handbook.

Summative Evaluation

Summative evaluations are high-stakes assessments intended to determine readiness for entry-level clinical practice. It is comprised of four different assessments as outlined below. Failure of any component represents a significant deficit in the knowledge, skills, and or professional behaviors required for safe and effective practice and carries serious academic consequences, including potential delay of graduation or dismissal from the program. Students who do not meet established performance expectations cannot be recommended for graduation.

Students should periodically reference the program's TPCs to self-assess their progress and ensure they are consistently preparing for successful performance on the summative evaluation over time.

The summative performance benchmarks, remediation policies, as well as grounds for probation, deceleration and dismissal are outlined further below and in the third-year handbook.

As a general overview, the summative evaluation includes the following four components:

End of Curriculum Written Examination

The PAEA End of Curriculum exam is a 300-question multiple-choice standardized examination that assesses medical knowledge at the end of the program. The exam is delivered over five hours and contains five 60-question sections. Students are encouraged to begin studying at the beginning of their third year with the materials as referenced in the third-year handbook. Students are expected to complete the exam in-person, on their scheduled day and time. Virtual proctoring for this exam is not permitted.

Performance benchmarks are outlined in the third-year handbook. Students who fall below the Core Task benchmarks will require a focused remediation. Remediation is individualized based on the performance deficiency(ies) and are at the discretion of the Third Year Course Director and Director of Clinical Education. A reassessment is required at the end of the remediation period. Failure to pass the reassessment will result in a student being placed on probation. A subsequent reassessment failure will be referred to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

An overall score failure warrants immediate placement on probation, global remediation, and repeat of the End of Curriculum Exam. Failure to pass a global reassessment will be referred to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

If a student is already on probation at the time of a focused remediation failure, or global failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

See the third-year handbook for more information.

Summative Case-Based OSCE

The Summative Case-Based OSCE is an assessment designed to evaluate students' clinical performance across multiple competencies at the end of the program. The Case-Based OSCE consists of three standardized patient encounters, each performed with trained simulated participants/patients (SPs) in the Rush Center for Clinical Skills and Simulation. Students are responsible for adequately preparing for this assessment by actively engaging with and utilizing the materials, instruction, and expectations provided by faculty, and by independently ensuring readiness to meet performance standards. Students are expected to complete the exam in-person, on their scheduled day and time.

For the Summative Case-Based OSCE, the format may include history-taking and a focused physical examination or a patient education/counseling session regarding a test result, new diagnosis, and or a health maintenance topic. This is followed by a timed post-encounter write-up station in which the student either formulates an initial assessment and management plan or documents their education/counseling discussion and next steps. Students rotate through all three cases in a single examination session.

Performance benchmarks are outlined in the third-year handbook. Students who fall below the aggregate benchmarks for competency components will require focused remediation. Remediation is individualized based on the performance deficiency(ies) and are at the discretion of the Third Year Course Director and Director of Clinical Education. A reassessment is required at the end of the remediation period. Failure to pass the reassessment will result in the student being placed on probation. A subsequent failure will be referred to the P&P Committee for consideration of deceleration or dismissal. An overall score failure warrants immediate placement on probation, global remediation, and repeat of the Case-Based OSCE with three new cases. Failure to pass a global reassessment will be referred to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

If a student is already on probation at the time of a focused remediation failure, or global failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

See the third-year handbook for more information.

Technical Skills Station OSCE

The Technical Skills Station OSCE is an assessment designed to evaluate students' clinical competence with program-defined technical skills at the end of the program. This Technical Skills Station OSCE consists of multiple stations which correlate with the technical skills as identified on the Terminal Program Competencies document.

Students are responsible for adequately preparing for this assessment by actively engaging with and utilizing the materials, instruction, and expectations provided by faculty, and by independently ensuring readiness to meet performance standards. Students are expected to complete the exam in-person, on their scheduled day and time. Students rotate through all stations in a single examination session.

Performance benchmarks are outlined in the third-year handbook. Students who fall below the benchmarks will require focused remediation. Remediation is individualized based on the performance deficiency(ies) and are at the discretion of the Third Year Course Director and Director of Clinical Education. A reassessment is required at the end of the remediation period. Failure to pass the reassessment will result in the student being placed on probation. A subsequent reassessment failure will be referred to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

If a student is already on probation at the time of a focused remediation failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter. of deceleration or dismissal.

See the third-year handbook for more information.

Professionalism Assessment

The Summative Professionalism Assessment is an evaluation of student professional behaviors conducted by PA program faculty at the end of the program. This assessment is designed to evaluate the professional behavior and interpersonal skill competencies essential to clinical practice and professional development (See [Appendix E](#)).

The assessment includes the following sub-competencies:

- Communication
- Appearance and demeanor
- Dependability and engagement
- Self-awareness and accountability
- Honesty and ethics
- Teamwork and collaboration

Each sub-competency is scored using a standardized rating scale of 1-5 (Never-Always). The program's defined benchmark is an average score of 4.0 or higher in each.

Students who do not meet the benchmark in any individual sub-competency will be required to complete focused remediation specific to the area(s) of deficiency followed by a reassessment. Remediation plans are developed by the PA faculty and may include reflective exercises, faculty mentorship, or other structured activities to support professional growth. Successful completion of all required remediation is necessary for progression within the program. Failure to pass the reassessment with a score of 4.0 or above, warrants placement on probation. If a student is already on probation at the time of a reassessment failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

Students who do not meet the benchmark across all sub-competencies will be immediately placed on probation, and be required to complete a global professionalism remediation, which may require a deceleration of at least one term, followed by a reassessment. The remediation plan is developed by the P&P Committee and may include reflective exercises, faculty mentorship, and other structured activities to support professional growth. Successful completion of all required remediation is necessary for graduation. Failure to pass the reassessment with a score below 4.0 in all areas, warrants referral back to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

If a student is already on probation at the time of a global assessment failure, they will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.

Summative Evaluation Failures on Probation

Students who enter any component of the summative evaluation process while on probation are held to the conditions outlined in their probation letter. In accordance with these terms, such students are not permitted to fail any focused remediation, or global component of the summative evaluation and continue progression in the program.

Students already on probation at the time of a summative evaluation failure will be referred immediately to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter, regardless of previous performance or standing in the program. Failure of any summative evaluation component may result in a delay of graduation for a minimum of one academic term, which may incur additional tuition and associated costs.

PA Program Policies

Students enrolled in the PA Program are subject to all applicable policies, rules, and regulations of Rush University and its administrative departments, the CHS, and the PA Program. The following policies are either programmatic additions to other University policies or applications of University policies in the PA Program. The policies in this handbook do not supplant any University or CHS policies. Students are advised to refer to the [Rush University Catalog](#) for additional applicable policies.

Academic Calendar and Term Breaks

Classes and activities during the first year of the program are scheduled in accordance with the Rush academic calendar, available here: [Rush University Academic Calendar](#). There are typically two weeks of “term break” in between summer, fall, and spring semesters. These breaks are considered protected time for students to rest and recharge. However, in circumstances where remediation activities or additional clinical experiences are required for student progression, students may choose to complete such activities during the term break periods to avoid a deceleration in the program.

Students are expected to remain in the local area and be available through Friday at 5:00 pm on the final day of each term, even if their schedule appears to contain open or “placeholder” time, unless directed otherwise by the Directors of Academic and Clinical Education. The program reserves the right to implement last-minute schedule adjustments to support student learning and program requirements.

Requests to leave prior to the official end of term, or to be scheduled at an earlier time for a required assessment is considered unprofessional behavior and may result in a professionalism violation.

During the clinical phase of the program, rotation schedules do not follow the published academic calendar, as they are structured to meet clinical training requirements. During the clinical rotations, breaks are determined at the discretion of the PA Program and are outlined in the clinical year handbooks.

Students are expected to adhere to all assigned schedules as determined by the program. Flexibility may be required, as changes can occur with limited notice in order to optimize educational experiences.

Class Hours

In the didactic year, the faculty considers 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday as available class time. Students must refer to the PA Program Calendar on a daily basis for class time and format information. The faculty makes every effort to provide students with the schedule of classes at the start of each week; however, changes in the schedule may occur. Please note that not all unscheduled time is “free time”. Placeholders can be filled up until the start of that class time.

Students should refrain from scheduling non-school related activities during the class hours and days above, in the event a last-minute change occurs. Students are also expected to be available during class hours to complete group work. Reports from classmates that students are unavailable during class hours is considered unprofessional behavior and is subject to a violation of the program’s professionalism policy.

While every effort will be made to minimize schedule changes, the program requests that students be flexible regarding the class schedule. Students are responsible for monitoring the calendar for last minute changes.

In the clinical year, the faculty considers 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM as available time for return to campus and other training activities as needed. Students are expected to abide by the expectations above.

Throughout the program, course-related activities may occur during non-class hours and off the main campus. The dates and times will be posted on the PA Program Calendar and details for these activities will be presented at the start of the relevant term. If the activity involves individual or small groups of students, information regarding scheduling and other details will be provided as appropriate.

Attendance and Tardiness

Attendance in the program is on a full-time basis only. The volume and the pace of instruction in the program require attendance in all classes for academic success. Students are expected to be on time and present for all classes and activities as scheduled.

Class attendance and punctuality are criteria within the standards of professional behavior. Students who do not abide with the attendance and notification policy will receive a professionalism violation.

Students are expected to be seated and ready to start class by the designated start time. Students are encouraged to arrive 5 minutes early. If a student is running late, they must email the Course Director or lead faculty prior to the scheduled start time, with the subject, "Late Arrival". Upon arrival, students are asked to enter the room quietly, and take a seat in the back of the room to minimize disruption. Depending on the nature of the class or activity, and the arrival time, the faculty have the discretion to prohibit entrance, and the student will be held accountable for making up the material as available. The absence will be considered unexcused.

A trend of missed classes and or late arrivals are considered violations of the program's professionalism policy. Please refer to the section on professionalism for more information.

For expectations related to the clinical years, see the clinical year handbooks.

Absences and Illnesses

Students are responsible for understanding and complying with all attendance policies outlined below, as well as any additional course-specific requirements as listed in the syllabi.

For any absence, students are required to notify both the Course Director and the Director of Academic Education each day, prior to the start of class, with the subject, "Absence Notification". Notification must be made by email and must include the reason for the absence and the expected duration. Failure to provide timely and appropriate communication may result in an otherwise excused absence being classified as unexcused.

Absences are considered excused when they are due to legitimate and unavoidable circumstances such as personal illness, bereavement, or other serious, unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control, at the discretion of the Director of Academic or Clinical Education.

Students may also be granted an excused absence for required medical or dental appointments. Such absences are limited to the time necessary to attend the appointment and do not excuse the student from the remainder of the day. Students are expected to attend all other scheduled activities. Appointments should be scheduled at times that minimize disruption to academic responsibilities. Documentation confirming the appointment must be submitted to the Director of Academic or Clinical Education. Students must notify the program in advance in accordance with the communication requirements described above.

In cases resulting in more than one consecutive day of absence (including the day before or after a personal day), the student must email all Course Director(s) and Director of Academic and or Clinical Education immediately. Documentation from a healthcare provider, or if the absence is not due to illness, other appropriate third-party verification, is required and accepted at the discretion of the Director of Academic Education.

Documentation is required for a single day absence when it involves a/an:

- In-person lab (including but not limited to case-based labs and sim labs)
- Skills training
- Assessment (presentation, exam, OSCE, etc)
- Return to campus (RTC)
- Mandatory on campus activity as identified by the Director of Academic or Clinical Education

Documentation is also required if there is a trend of missing class before or after an assessment and or if a student misses a day before and or after a personal day.

Whenever documentation is required, it must be submitted with 24 hours of the absence.

If a student anticipates missing more than one week of class, the student must apply for an official Leave of Absence. During the didactic year, a Leave of Absence generally requires deceleration into the next cohort. During the clinical year, a Leave of Absence generally requires deceleration of at least one term. Additional information can be found in the [Leave of Absence](#) section of the handbook.

Absences are considered unexcused when they do not meet the criteria for excused absences or when communication and or documentation requirements are not followed.

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to leaving class prior to the end time, personal travel, vacations, social events, weddings (including a student's own wedding and participation in the bridal party), family or personal celebrations, relocation or moving activities, extracurricular, volunteer, or professional activities not required by the program. Students may request a Personal Day in accordance with the policy. Unexcused absences are considered professionalism violations and are subject to both academic deductions and or professionalism violations depending on the nature of the unexcused absence.

For any absence, students are required to complete make-up work at the discretion of the Course Director, even if no academic credit will be received.

Policies regarding absences during the clinical year are addressed separately in the clinical year handbooks.

Personal Days

During the didactic year, students are allowed to take two personal days in accordance with the following policies:

1. Students must notify the Director of Academic Education via email at least **two weeks** in advance of the date with the subject, "**Personal Day Request**".
 - a. Submission of a personal day request does not guarantee approval. Requests are not finalized until approval is received from the Director of Academic Education. Students should not make travel plans until their request is approved.
2. Students must ensure the requested personal day meets the following criteria:
 - a. Personal days cannot be used on the first or last day of the term, the day of an assessment (including student presentation), or an in-person lab (including case-based, simulation or skills activities)
 - b. Personal days cannot be split into half days; the entire personal day must be used at one time
3. Personal days cannot be saved and do not roll over to subsequent terms.
4. Personal days cannot be used on Mondays in the Fall and Spring term due to mandatory in-person courses with group work, that occurs on that day.
5. There will be additional days throughout the year in which personal days will not be permitted due to mandatory meetings and assessments. These will be outlined at the beginning of each term. While every attempt to avoid changes in these dates is made, the program has the discretion to change them if needed.
6. Students must notify all Course Directors of personal days upon approval by the Director of Academic Education.

Violations of the personal day policy constitute professionalism violations and may result in loss of subsequent personal days.

Policies regarding personal days in the clinical years can be found in the clinical year handbooks.

Religious Holiday Time Off

The program will work with students to support the observance of their religious practices, to the extent possible while maintaining essential academic and clinical requirements. This includes consideration for

religious holidays, daily or periodic prayer obligations, fasting requirements, and other related practices that may impact scheduling or participation.

Students requesting time off for religious observances should notify the Director of Academic Education and/or the Director of Clinical Education as soon as possible upon admission to the program. Students are also expected to provide an anticipated schedule of religious observances and related time needs at the beginning of each academic year to support appropriate planning. Any additional or updated accommodation needs should be communicated as soon as they are known.

Students are required to complete all missed work and are responsible for coordinating with each Course Director to arrange and fulfill any required make-up work in accordance with course expectations.

Dress Code

Students in the PA Program are expected to maintain a professional appearance for all program-related activities. Professional appearance reflects respect for the learning environment and promotes a positive representation of Rush PA students to colleagues, faculty, hospital staff, administration, and patients.

General Requirements:

- Student ID badge must be visible at all times.
- Appearance must be clean, neat, and clothes appropriately fitted.
- Clean, professional footwear required
- Clean athletic shoes permitted with scrubs unless otherwise specified
- Closed-toe shoes required in all lab and patient-facing settings
- Hair must be secured during patient-facing activities
- Jewelry permitted if safe; minimal visible body piercings; all jewelry removed in OR/sterile settings
- Head coverings permitted for religious/medical reasons; must be safe, clean, and professional
- Nails must be short and clean; no artificial nails, or similar enhancements in patient-facing settings
- No strong odors (perfume, cologne, smoke, vaping residue, or similar)
- Tattoos must be covered to the extent possible
- Body art/modifications must not be offensive, unsafe, or inappropriate; visible stretched piercings or similar modifications must be removed or concealed when possible
- Smartwatches/wearable devices permitted unless restricted by site or activity; must not interfere with care or sterile environments

Scrubs:

- Scrub tops and pants must be matching sets, solid in color, *clean and* wrinkle-free
- Scrubs may be any color except powder blue, which is reserved for operating room personnel.
- No external branding *or* hospital logos (manufacturer logos *ok*) are permitted on scrubs or clothing.
- T-shirts may not be worn without a scrub top.
- Scrub pants may be worn with a *Rush* logo or plain long-sleeve half- or quarter-zip top in place of a scrub top.

Business Casual:

- Business casual attire includes collared or button-down shirts, blouses, sweaters, slacks, and dresses or skirts of appropriate length.
- Inappropriate attire includes sweatshirts, sweatpants, leggings, shorts, jeans, crop tops, hooded tops, tight-fitting clothing, or clothing with logos.

Activity-Specific Requirements

- **Lectures:**
 - Scrubs or business casual attire are permitted unless otherwise specified.
- **Skills Laboratories:**
 - Scrubs are recommended.
 - Business casual attire is also permitted unless otherwise directed.

- **Physical Exam–Based Learning Activities (e.g., PE labs, refreshers, case-based labs):**
 - Students must wear loose-fitting clothing that allows for appropriate physical examination practice, which includes exposure of the trunk and extremities.
 - Acceptable attire includes loose scrubs (not jogger-style), athletic wear, shorts, tank tops, and sports bras.
 - A gown and drape will be provided for privacy and coverage during sessions.
 - Business casual attire is not permitted.
- **Anatomy Laboratory:**
 - Students must wear a dedicated set of scrubs reserved exclusively for anatomy lab.
 - Any color is permitted.
 - These scrubs may not be worn in any other setting.
- **Standardized Patient Encounters:**
 - Business casual attire is required, along with a short white lab coat and visible PA student ID badge.
- **Presentations:**
 - Business casual attire is required.
- **Clinical Rotations:**
 - Refer to clinical year handbooks

Lab Coat Requirements:

- A short white lab coat is required for all activities involving actual or simulated patient contact. At a minimum, the coat must display the Rush logo patch on the left chest.
- Students on clinical rotations must wear the program-issued short white lab coat with the PA Program patch affixed to the upper left sleeve.

Attire Transitions and Planning:

- Some program days may include multiple activities requiring different forms of attire. Students are expected to plan accordingly and change attire as needed to meet the requirements of each activity.
- Requests to deviate from this policy will not be granted.

Professionalism and Professional Behavior

Professionalism encompasses the intellectual, ethical, behavioral, and attitudinal attributes expected of a healthcare provider. All students are expected to adhere to the professionalism policies of the program, College, and University.

PA Program Professionalism Policies

Students in the PA program are expected to demonstrate professional conduct consistent with that of a clinician-in-training throughout all phases of the program. This includes accountability, integrity, respect for others, and appropriate professional behavior in all academic, clinical, and professional interactions across the program.

Criteria to be evaluated in the professionalism component will include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

- Honesty and academic integrity
- Attendance and punctuality
- Student work ethic, dependability, and accountability
- Appropriate behavior in all University and PA program activities
- Preparedness for class, presentations, and other assignments
- Attentiveness and engagement all class and clinical activities

- Respectful and appropriate interaction with lecturers, faculty, staff, preceptors, and fellow students
- Respectful behavior in all clinical settings towards patients, their family, and their loved ones
- Ability to work effectively as a team member on group assignments, projects, and in the clinical setting
- Respectful attitude towards the faculty, staff, preceptors, and peers
- Handling of complaints and disputes, including the following of established protocols and chain of command
- Appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication
- Respond to all communication requests, such as emails and phone calls, in a timely manner
- Appearance and attire appropriate to place and situation as defined by faculty
- Compliance with departmental and University policies and procedures
- Adherence to deadlines

Professionalism Policy Violations

Students in the program are expected to always behave in a manner which conveys the highest degree of personal, moral, and intellectual integrity. PA students are expected to demonstrate their professional capacity by treating one another and others with respect, being reliable in all program activities, communicating effectively in both written and oral forms, accepting personal responsibility for one's actions, and exhibiting knowledge of their limitations.

As discussed in the Formative Evaluation section above, at the end of each year students will receive a Professionalism Assessment that must be passed in accordance with the defined benchmarks in order to progress.

The PA program faculty and instructional faculty evaluate student professionalism at all times.

The following is an outline of actions taken if students encounter professionalism issues during the program:

- At the first occurrence of a professionalism issue, students are given a written warning that any subsequent issues will constitute the first official professionalism violation
 - This is referred to as a "Professionalism Warning".
- If a student has another occurrence of a professionalism issue, or if the student commits a serious professionalism violation at the discretion of the PA faculty, the student will be issued the first official professionalism violation
 - This is referred to as "Professionalism Violation #1"
 - Students are expected to revisit the professionalism policy and make corrective action to remediate the behavior; refraining from subsequent violations of the policy of any nature.
 - Students are encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor for remediation support and professionalism mentoring as needed.
- If students have another occurrence of a professionalism issue (whether of the same or different nature), they will be issued another professionalism violation
 - This is referred to as "Professionalism Violation #2"
 - This stage warrants completion of the program's corresponding Professionalism Assessment for professionalism violation remediation by the Director of Academic or Clinical Education. See [Appendix F](#)
 - All current professionalism issues will be outlined on the assessment, and expectations for remediation and reassessment will be listed.
 - Students are required to outline an action plan for how they will remediate their behavior and meet expectations moving forward.
 - If students do not pass the reassessment, they will be placed on probation, and require a more intensive remediation, which may result in a deceleration at the discretion of the P&P Committee.
- If students have another occurrence of a professionalism issue (whether of the same or different nature), OR they commit an egregious professionalism violation at the discretion of the PA faculty, they will be placed on probation

- Probation requires an intensive remediation plan, which may result in a deceleration at the discretion of the P&P Committee
- This stage warrants a discussion with the Program Director to outline the terms of probation and outcomes for subsequent professionalism violations, including deceleration or dismissal from the program.
- Serious professionalism violations reflect failures of reliability or required participation that directly impact assessment, instruction, or program operations, even when not intentional or malicious.
 - *Serious professionalism violations include, but are not limited to, failure to report for a required examination, assessment, or scheduled academic or clinical activity without prior notification (unexcused absence); failure to meet mandatory program deadlines or required submissions (including absence documentation requirements); leaving an examination, assessment, or required session without authorization; and failure to follow required academic or clinical instructions resulting in disruption of learning, assessment integrity, or program operations.*
- Egregious professionalism violations reflect severe breaches of professional, ethical, or behavioral standards that place patients, peers, faculty, or the program at risk, or fundamentally undermine academic or clinical integrity, regardless of intent.
 - *Examples of egregious professionalism violations may include, but are not limited to, academic dishonesty (including cheating, plagiarism, or unauthorized collaboration, assistance, or use of prohibited resources on examinations or assignments), falsification or fabrication of academic or clinical records, breaches of patient confidentiality, impairment or unsafe behavior in an academic or clinical setting, harassment or discrimination of any kind, threats or acts of violence, and any conduct that compromises patient safety or places patients, peers, faculty, or the program at risk.*

Professionalism Progression Policy

- At the end of the didactic year, a Professionalism Assessment will be completed as part of the Formative Evaluation and will reference professionalism warnings and violations from the entire year.
- The didactic and clinical phases of the program are distinct, each presenting different demands, environments, and opportunities for professional development. As such a “Professionalism Warning” or “Professionalism Violation #1” accrued during the first year will remain part of the student’s record for reference and support purposes but will not carry forward.
- If students have received a “Professionalism Violation #2” and written Professionalism Assessment, in which they have successfully remediated by the time of the Formative Evaluation, it is at the discretion of the P&P Committee to consider that resolved and not carry it forward. However, if a student has recently received a “Professionalism Violation #2” and Professionalism Assessment or is believed to have significant ongoing professionalism concerns at the time of the Formative Evaluation, the P&P Committee has the sole discretion of carrying this designation forward into the clinical years, in which a failed reassessment and or subsequent professionalism issue would warrant probation as the next step.
- If a student is on probation with ongoing professionalism issues, the P&P Committee has the sole discretion to extend their probation status into the clinical years or consider the student for dismissal as outlined in their probation letter..

For additional policies related to professionalism in the clinical year, please refer to the clinical year handbooks.

Academic Honesty

Students in the program are expected to approach all program activities with the highest level of academic and intellectual honesty. With the vast amount of information available through electronic and other media, we must acknowledge, through proper citation, the originators of any print, electronic, or oral presentation used in our work. All assignments must be the student's own work and must properly cite when another author's work is used.

It is considered academic dishonesty to represent another's work as one's own, or to collaborate in such falsification in others. Activities such as plagiarizing, cheating, inappropriate testing behavior, unauthorized use of Rush computer hard- or software or permitting others to use your work for such ends, are all forms of academic dishonesty. It is also dishonest to misrepresent yourself or your role to patients, their families and loved ones, or preceptors. Additionally, it is considered academic dishonesty to share confidential assessment information with other individuals, including both classmates and those outside of the PA program.

Academic dishonesty is considered an egregious professionalism violation which warrants immediate placement on probation or dismissal from the program, despite prior academic or professionalism performance, at the sole discretion of the P&P Committee.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in coursework and studying is evolving. Students are encouraged to explore AI responsibly to support their learning, such as for summarizing materials, organizing study notes, or generating practice questions. However, it is essential to understand that AI is not always accurate and does not singularly use the resources required by the PA Program.

Students should continue to reference the required and recommended materials assigned to each course to guide their studying. Furthermore, individual courses may have specific guidelines regarding the permitted use of AI. Students must adhere to each course's policy and consult with instructors when in doubt. Unauthorized use of AI for assignments, exams, or clinical documentation may be considered an egregious professionalism violation which warrants immediate placement on probation or dismissal from the program, despite prior academic or professionalism performance, at the sole discretion of the P&P Committee.

Copyright and Use of Materials

Educational materials include, but are not limited to, course syllabi, course learning outcomes and instructional objectives, lecture handouts, recordings, readings and assignments. All PA program materials are protected under state and federal copyright law.

The materials provided by the program are for students' personal study purposes only. Copying, sharing, or distributing the materials in any manner without specific and express approval of the author and Course Director is considered an act of academic dishonesty and a violation of Rush's Academic Honesty and Student Conduct policy. This includes sharing electronic or print copies of the materials or posting materials online. Students who fail to comply with this standard are liable for copyright infringement and subject to disciplinary action. This is also considered an egregious professionalism violation which warrants immediate placement on probation or dismissal from the program, despite prior academic or professionalism performance, at the sole discretion of the P&P Committee.

Patient Information Confidentiality

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy and security rule creates a framework to ensure the safety, security and integrity of all patient medical record information. This includes all forms of patient record information, whether in electronic and paper file formats, and all health care information communication, whether electronic, written or verbal. The goals of the privacy and security rule are to:

- Protect and enhance patient rights by providing access to and controlling inappropriate use of health care information.
- Improve health care quality by maintaining trust between patients, providers, and payers.
- Improve efficiency and effectiveness of care delivery by creating a national framework for the privacy, confidentiality, and security of patient information, whether held electronically or in paper.

Protecting the privacy, confidentiality, and electronic security of patient information is of utmost importance at Rush. The institution is committed to maintaining patient confidentiality and understands the sensitivity of patient information. All Rush University students are expected to complete annual HIPAA Privacy and Security education.

Classroom Expectations

Use of Electronic Devices During In-Person Class

Students may use portable electronic devices in class for the purpose of taking notes or engaging in activities directly related to the current instructional content. Browsing the internet, messaging, emailing, or working on other course materials during class is not permitted, unless explicitly authorized by the Course Director or in the case of an urgent matter. This behavior is distracting to individual student learning, fellow classmates, and is disrespectful to the lecturer or facilitator of the activity.

Mobile phones must be silenced and stored away during class and assessments. Students may not disrupt class to respond to calls or messages except in emergencies. If a student anticipates an urgent need to take a call during class, they must notify the Course Director in advance and step out of the classroom quietly if needed.

Course Directors may restrict or prohibit the use of electronic devices during class to support engagement and participation. In such cases, students may take handwritten notes for personal use.

Students who exhibit patterns and or trends of noncompliance with this policy will be given a professionalism violation.

Etiquette for Synchronous Online Lectures and Activities

Remote lectures and activities are delivered via the Zoom platform, with access links provided through Canvas.

For all synchronous online sessions, students are expected to be logged in and ready to participate at the scheduled start time. Cameras must be turned on for the duration of the session unless otherwise directed by the Course Director, with the student's full face and head clearly visible. Students are expected to participate from a quiet, professional, and distraction-free environment appropriate for learning, such as a home workspace, classroom, or library. Participation from distracting or inappropriate environments, including but not limited to public transportation, vehicles, airports, restaurants, or while in motion, is not permitted.

Students are expected to be on time for all sessions. Late arrival may result in denial of entry to the session at the discretion of the Course Director.

If a student is unable to maintain camera functionality due to technical issues or other unforeseen circumstances, the student must notify the Course Director immediately using the Zoom chat function or email.

Students will generally remain muted during instruction unless otherwise directed; however, they must be prepared to unmute and engage when called upon.

For guest speaker sessions, students will receive specific instructions regarding participation expectations at the start of the session. Direct private messaging of guest speakers is not permitted.

Patterns and or trends of noncompliance with this policy, including but not limited to repeated failure to use video, participation from inappropriate environments, tardiness, or lack of engagement, will be considered a professionalism violation and be addressed in accordance with program professionalism policies.

Lecture Recording

Lectures are not routinely recorded during in-person or remote classes. Similarly, the program does not offer a synchronous virtual component for in-person lectures. Lecture recordings are not provided for personal days,

excused absences, including illness, religious observance, or other approved absences. Students remain responsible for obtaining all missed content through collaboration with classmates and/or Course Directors.

In the instance of an extended absence (3 days or more), such as for a mandatory isolation period due to a medical illness, such as COVID, the faculty may provide asynchronous recordings of missed classes. If a student has an excused extended illness, they must submit a lecture recording request to the Director of Academic Education as soon as possible and provide documentation from a medical provider verifying the mandated absence from class or proof of a positive COVID test. It is important to note that some courses may not be able to be recorded due to the sensitive nature of the content and the discussions shared in class, or due to logistical aspects of the course format.

Students may request permission to record a lecture on their own device at any time from a speaker and Course Director. Students are not permitted to record lectures on their own devices, whether class is conducted in-person or virtually, without prior authorization from the Course Director and lecturer.

Assessment Procedures and Policies

Student performance is assessed throughout the program using various mechanisms such as assignments, group presentations, quizzes, OSCEs, and examinations.

The course syllabi outline the specific assessments used in each course. The multiple-choice exam format is the primary method of student assessment used throughout the program. However, some courses will utilize other types of questions in assessments. Exams are predominantly taken on campus via computer-based test-taking applications.

All examination materials are strictly confidential. Students may take examinations at different times, and maintaining the integrity of all assessments is required. Cross-cohort communication or sharing of any examination content is strictly prohibited and constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy. Such behavior is considered an egregious professionalism violation and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

Students within cohorts are also prohibited from discussing examination content with classmates until all associated assessments and any required remediation activities have been completed and finalized. Violations of this policy will result in a professionalism violation and may lead to further disciplinary action.

These expectations apply to all program assessments, including but not limited to, course examinations, formative and summative evaluations, and OSCE assessments.

The following policies apply to all program exams:

Late Arrival to Exams

- Students are expected to arrive, be seated and ready to begin at least 5 minutes before the exam start time.
- The first episode of tardiness to an exam will result in a warning; the subsequent episode will result in a professionalism violation.
- A trend of tardiness to exams will result in the student being placed on probation.
- If a student is running late for an exam, they must notify the Course Director as soon as possible. If a student is late and has not notified the Course Director, it will be considered a professionalism violation #1.
- Students who arrive late should be as quiet and undistruptive as possible.
- If a student arrives more than 5 minutes but fewer than 15 minutes past the exam start time, they will be permitted to take the exam, but they will not receive additional time to complete the exam.
- If a student arrives more than 15 minutes past the start time for an exam, the student will not be permitted to sit for the exam, and this is considered a missed exam (see section on [Missed Exams](#) below).
- A makeup exam will be scheduled at the discretion of the Course Director and may occur during the evening or over the weekend. For any exam that occurs outside of regular business hours, the student's score will be released the next business day.

Taking Exams

- Most exams in the PA program are electronic and may be administered either in person on campus or remotely via an online proctor. Course Directors will provide information about examinations at the beginning of each term. Detailed instructions will be provided regarding exam procedures.
- Exams are typically taken on students' personal devices, unless they take place on campus in the testing center.
- Only a pen or pencil and one blank sheet of paper is allowed at the students' workspace. If the exam occurs on campus, the program will provide scratch paper. You must leave your scratch paper with the testing exam proctor.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the test station area and should be stored with the students' personal belongings during exams.
- Use of programmable calculators, cell phone calculators, or any other electronic devices (including smart watches) are prohibited during an exam.
- All personal belongings, must be placed away from the student either at the front or rear of the examination room for the duration of the exam. Personal belongings should not obstruct aisles or other walkways in the room.
- All electronic devices must be completely silenced during examinations and stored with personal belongings.
- Noise-blocking foam earplugs may be worn during an exam. Other forms of noise blockers, such as headphones and earbuds, are not permitted.
- Students are expected to complete examinations without breaks. Bathroom breaks are only permitted in cases of emergency. Only one student at a time may leave the room during an exam, and only with permission from the exam proctor. If a student needs to leave the room in an emergency, they must quietly notify the proctor and wait to be acknowledged before exiting.
- Students should notify the proctor if there is a technical problem with the exam.
- Proctors will not answer questions related to understanding or interpreting exam material.
- If a remote proctor is used, you may be recorded during the examination as part of the monitoring process. Recordings are the sole property of the PA Program and are used only to verify students' behavior during a scheduled examination.
- Upon completing an on-campus exam, unless otherwise instructed, students must exit the exam room quietly and with minimal disruption to the remaining test takers.
- Failing to adhere to these examination procedures are subject to a professionalism violation.

Academic Integrity: Cheating

- Cheating is strictly prohibited on any assessment and encompasses any attempt to gain an unfair academic advantage, including, but not limited to, the use of unauthorized materials or devices, accessing or sharing assessment content, communicating with others during an assessment, or using digital platforms, online resources, or artificial intelligence-based tools to generate or assist in responses.
- A student suspected of cheating during an assessment may be required to forfeit it at the discretion of the proctor and/or Course Director.
- The exam proctor and/or Course Director has the authority to determine whether a violation has occurred. Determinations regarding a student's testing behavior are considered final.
- Any instance of cheating will be referred to the Program's P&P Committee for review and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

Exam Scoring

- Electronic exams are scored via the assigned test platform.
- Unanswered questions receive no points.
- Electronic exams cannot be retrieved once submitted.
- Students are solely responsible for ensuring the correct and accurate completion of an exam form before submitting it for scoring.

Missed Exams

- Students are expected to take all examinations on the scheduled date and time.

- If a student is unable to attend a scheduled examination due to a significant acute illness or a personal emergency, they must notify both the Course Director and the Director of Academic Education as soon as possible and prior to the start of the examination whenever feasible.
- Notification must occur using the method specified in the course syllabus. If the Course Director or Director of Academic Education is unavailable, the student must contact the Program Director.
- To be considered for an excused absence, the student must provide appropriate documentation (e.g., medical documentation for illness or other supporting documentation as applicable). Approval of an excused absence is at the discretion of the Director of Academic Education.
- Except under extraordinary circumstances, failure to notify the program prior to the start of the examination will result in the absence being considered unexcused.
- Students with an excused absence must complete the examination as soon as possible at the earliest time designated by the Course Director. Makeup examinations are typically scheduled within 48 hours of the originally scheduled time; however, the exact timing is determined at the sole discretion of the Course Director and may occur sooner. Makeup examinations may be scheduled outside of regular business hours, including evenings or weekends. Students are not permitted to miss classroom or program activities in order to make up an exam.
- Students with an unexcused absence must complete the examination within 24 hours of the originally scheduled time, as directed by the Course Director. The timing of the makeup examination is at Course Director discretion, and may be scheduled outside of regular business hours, including evenings or weekends. Students are not permitted to miss classroom or program activities in order to make up an exam.
- In cases of an unexcused absence, the student will receive a professionalism violation, and the maximum score attainable on the examination is 70%. A second unexcused missed examination will result in a student being placed on probation, and they will receive a score of zero for that exam, which may jeopardize progression in the course and program.

Late and Missed Quizzes and Assignments

- This policy applies to all quizzes and assignments unless otherwise specified in the course syllabus.
- Students are expected to complete all quizzes and assignments by the posted deadline.
- Late submissions are those completed after the deadline but within a timeframe permitted by the Course Director or course syllabus and may be subject to academic penalty.
- Missed submissions are those not completed by the deadline nor within the permitted timeframe. The student must still complete it within the new designated deadline, but the maximum score attainable on the quiz or assignment will be 70%.
- Students are strongly encouraged to complete work in advance of the deadline to account for potential illness, technical issues, or other unforeseen circumstances that may interfere with timely submission. Absences, including personal days do not extend assignment or quiz deadlines.
- Students who anticipate difficulty meeting a deadline must notify the Course Director no later than the previous business day. Requests made on the day of the deadline are generally not considered and may result in a score of zero or the application of late penalties as outlined in the course syllabus.
- Students are required to complete all quizzes and assignments to meet course requirements, even if no academic credit is awarded due to late or missed submission.
- A trend of late or missed quizzes and assignments within and or across courses is considered a professionalism concern and is subject to a professionalism violation.

Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)

- Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) are required formative and summative assessments.
- Students are expected to complete their OSCE on their scheduled day and time.
- Students are required to arrive prepared and ready to go, no later than 5 minutes prior to their assigned OSCE start time. Students who arrive more than 5 minutes after their arrival time will not be permitted to enter the examination and will be considered to have missed the OSCE. This will result in a serious professionalism violation.
- If a student is unable to attend a scheduled OSCE due to a significant acute illness or a personal emergency, they must notify the Director of Academic Education as soon as possible and prior to the scheduled start time whenever feasible. To be considered for an excused absence, appropriate

documentation is required. Approval of an excused absence is at the discretion of the Director of Academic Education.

- Students who miss an OSCE, including due to late arrival, will be rescheduled at a time determined by the program. Due to the complexity of OSCE administration, makeup examinations are limited, which may impact a student's ability to progress in the program and may delay the anticipated graduation date.
- Failure to notify the program prior to the scheduled start time, except under extraordinary circumstances, will result in the absence being considered unexcused and will result in an egregious professionalism violation.

Hands-on Laboratory and Skills Training

- Attendance at all laboratory and hands-on skills training sessions (including physical examination labs, simulation sessions, and technical skills training) is required. These sessions are essential to the development and demonstration of clinical competencies.
- Students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions and arrive on time. If a student is unable to attend due to a significant acute illness or a personal emergency, they must notify the Course Director or lead faculty member as soon as possible and prior to the start of the session whenever feasible.
- The program reserves the right to require documentation to support an absence that impact these sessions in order for it to be considered excused. Approval of an excused absence is at the discretion of the Director of Academic Education.
- Students are responsible for completing all missed laboratory or skills training content. Makeup opportunities may include attendance at a scheduled makeup session, completion of alternative assignments, or demonstration of required skills at a later time, as determined by the Director of Academic Education.
- Makeup opportunities are not guaranteed and are subject to faculty availability, course structure, and resource limitations. Some skills may only be available for assessment or instruction during scheduled sessions.
- Failure to complete required laboratory or skills training activities may result in an incomplete course or program requirement and may impact course and or program progression.
- Repeated absences from required laboratory or skills training sessions is considered a professionalism concern and is subject to a professionalism violation.

Reviewing Exams

- Post-exam reviews may be offered at the discretion of the Course Director to provide students with the opportunity to learn from assessment performance.
- Reviews may include discussion of select questions, key concepts, or topics with lower overall performance.
- Exam reviews are intended for educational purposes only and are not a forum for debating exam content or answers. Concerns regarding exam items must be submitted in accordance with course policy, if applicable and if permitted by the Course Director.
- Students are not permitted to take notes or reproduce exam content in any form during the review.
- If access to exam materials is provided during a review session, the following conditions apply:
 - Exam materials may not be removed from the designated review location.
 - Copying, photographing, recording, or otherwise reproducing exam materials is strictly prohibited.
 - Students may review only their own exam materials.
 - All materials must be returned by the designated time established by the Course Director.
- Failure to adhere to exam review policies constitutes unprofessional behavior and are subject to a serious professionalism violation.

Exam Validation Review and Rescoring

- The program does not curve assessment scores.
- For each assessment, the Course Director reviews all questions prior to posting final scores. Any item answered incorrectly by 30% or more of the class is reviewed for clarity, accuracy, and alignment with the instructional objectives.

- Rescoring or adjustment of individual questions may occur based on this review at the discretion of the Course Director to ensure exam validity and fairness. Any adjustments are applied consistently across all student responses.

Exam Score Posting

- Posted exam scores are final.
- Scores are released to students per the Course syllabi, but typically within 48 business hours of the examination. The Course Director will notify students if there is a delay in releasing the scores.

Grading Scale

The PA Program is committed to providing a high-quality education that produces exceptional clinicians. To maintain our high educational standards, we use the following grading scale for final course grades:

Grading Scale (Final Course Grade)

89.5 – 100	= A
79.5 – 89.4	= B
69.5 – 79.4	= C
69.4 or below	= F

Assessment and course grades are calculated and maintained to two decimal places throughout the course (for example, 89.49). At the conclusion of the course, the final course grade is rounded to one decimal place using standard rounding rules (≥ 0.05 rounds up, so 89.49 to 89.5). The rounded final grade is then used to assign the final letter grade according to the grading scale above.

Course Grade Assignments

Course grades are assigned according to the policies set forth in each course syllabus.

Students are expected to complete all required course learning, assessment activities and administrative components during the assigned term dates. Under extraordinary circumstances, if a student is unable to complete the required work within the designated time frame, they may be granted an extension to complete it. Extensions will result in the granting of a course grade of incomplete, or "I." An incomplete grade is given solely at the discretion of the Course Director or Directors of Academic or Clinical Education (as appropriate) upon careful consideration of the circumstances affecting the student's ability to complete assigned tasks on a timely basis. If an incomplete grade is given, it must be rectified within a predetermined time frame set forth by the Course Director and Directors of Academic or Clinical Education. If the student successfully completes the requirement(s), the incomplete grade will be converted to a final course grade according to the course grading criteria. Failure to complete the required work on time, or in a satisfactory manner as per the Course Director, will result in the incomplete grade converting to an "F," and the student is subject to probation, deceleration, or dismissal from the program.

Remediation

The following section outlines the process for addressing performance concerns during the didactic year. Policies related to remediation during the clinical phases of the program are described in the second and third year clinical handbooks.

Remediation is a structured educational process designed to address deficiencies in medical knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors. The program utilizes a defined process to identify performance concerns, implement targeted interventions, and monitor student progress toward meeting established academic and professionalism standards.

Remediation processes are aligned with the type of assessment and content area in which the deficiency occurred; however, specific components may be individualized based on the nature and extent of the student's performance concerns to maximize success on the reassessment. Determination of remediation requirements is made at the discretion of the Course Director in collaboration with the Director of Academic Education.

Remediation typically includes identification of factors contributing to the performance deficiency, development of a structured remediation plan, and engagement in targeted learning activities. These may include, but are not limited to, faculty-guided review of content, academic counseling or mentoring, directed independent study, skills practice, and referral to institutional or program-specific academic support resources, at the discretion of the Course Director in collaboration with the Director of Academic Education.

Faculty play an active role in guiding the remediation process by helping to identify knowledge gaps, clarifying complex concepts, and providing direction on effective study and learning strategies. However, remediation requires active student engagement and accountability. Students are expected to take primary responsibility for their learning by demonstrating initiative, completing assigned remediation activities, and independently integrating and applying the material. Remediation is not intended to replicate or replace original instruction. The remediation period may vary in length and structure depending on the course, content area, and severity of the deficiency. It may include scheduled meetings with faculty, completion of assigned learning activities, and defined timelines for reassessment at the discretion of the Course Director in collaboration with the Director of Academic Education.

Successful completion of remediation typically requires demonstration of competency through reassessment. Reassessment methods may include, but are not limited to, written or oral assignments, quizzes or examinations, practical or skills-based evaluations, or other assessment formats consistent with the original deficiency. A passing performance on reassessment is typically required to demonstrate that the student has met the expected learning outcomes at the discretion of the Course Director in collaboration with the Director of Academic Education.

Remediation is intended to support student success while upholding the academic and professional standards of the program. Failure to successfully complete and or pass remediation or repeated need for remediation may result in further academic action, as outlined in program policies.

Examination Remediation

- The minimum passing score for all examinations in the didactic year is a 70% (including final exams, unless otherwise specified). Students who receive a score below 70% on any examination must complete a remediation and reassessment.
- The content, format, timing and deadline of the remediation and reassessment are determined at the discretion of the Course Director in collaboration with the Director of Academic Education. Failure to complete the remediation and reassessment by the specified deadline will be considered unprofessional behavior and will be subject to a serious professionalism violation. In addition, a penalty on the reassessment may be applied at the discretion of the Course Director, up to 48 hours after the deadline. If a remediation reassessment is not submitted within 48 hours of the deadline, it will no longer be considered a late submission, but a missed submission. The student will be placed on probation, and the P&P Committee will be convened. If the student is already on probation, the P&P Committee will meet to determine deceleration vs. dismissal.
- A course grade of incomplete will be assigned until all required remediation activities are completed and the reassessment is successfully passed. A student cannot progress to a subsequent term until this is completed. Students may have the option to complete remediation and reassessment activities during scheduled breaks to avoid delaying their progression to the next term.
- Students must score at or above the 70% passing threshold on the reassessment as evidence of competency in the deficient content area.
- Failing to score above 70% on a reassessment constitutes a remediation exam failure, which is considered an additional failure, and the student will be placed on probation for further action as described in this Handbook. Refer to the section on [Probation](#) for more information. If the student is already on probation, the P&P Committee will meet to determine deceleration vs. dismissal.
- Per the course syllabus and at the discretion of the Course Director, if a student passes the reassessment, a score of 70% may replace the original score. The reassessment score will not exceed 70% regardless of the score achieved. If the student does not pass the reassessment, the remediation score may replace the original score.

Quiz and Assignment Remediation

- The minimum passing score for all quizzes and assignments in the didactic year is a 70% unless otherwise specified. Students who receive a score below 70% must complete a remediation.
- The content, format, timing and deadline of the remediation and reassessment are determined at the sole discretion of the Course Director. Failure to complete the remediation and reassessment by the specified deadline will be considered unprofessional behavior and will be subject to a serious professionalism violation. In addition, a penalty on the reassessment may be applied at the discretion of the Course Director, up to 48 hours after the deadline. If a remediation reassessment is not submitted within 48 hours of the deadline, it will no longer be considered a late submission, but a missed submission. The student will be placed on probation, and the P&P Committee will be convened. If the student is already on probation, the P&P Committee will meet to determine deceleration vs. dismissal.
- A course grade of incomplete will be assigned until all required remediation activities are completed and the reassessment is successfully passed. A student cannot progress to a subsequent term until this is completed. Students may have the option to complete remediation and reassessment activities during scheduled breaks to avoid delaying their progression to the next term.
- Students must score at or above the 70% passing threshold on the reassessment as evidence of competency in the deficient content area.
- Failing to score above 70% on a reassessment constitutes a remediation failure, which is considered an additional failure, and the student may be placed on probation for further action as described in this Handbook. Refer to the section on [Probation](#) for more information. If the student is already on probation, the P&P Committee will meet to determine deceleration vs. dismissal.
- Per the course syllabus and at the discretion of the Course Director, if a student passes the reassessment, a score of 70% may replace the original score. The reassessment score will not exceed 70% regardless of the score achieved. If the student does not pass the reassessment, the remediation score may replace the original score.

Group Presentation Remediation

- Group presentations are considered assignments, and are subject to the policies as outlined above.
- All students are expected to participate in scheduled group presentations as part of their course requirements. If a student is absent or does not participate in a group presentation, the Course Director will determine appropriate next steps, which may include an individual make-up presentation, alternative assignment, or other remediation activity.
- If a student has an unexcused absence on the date of a group presentation, this is considered unprofessional behavior and will be considered a serious professionalism violation, in addition to an academic penalty as determined by the Course Director.
- Any required make-up or remediation related to a missed group presentation must be completed within the timeframe established by the Course Director. Failure to meet the established deadline may result in additional academic or professionalism consequences, including probation.

Failed Course and Global Remediation

- The minimum passing score for all courses in the didactic year is a 79.5% (B minimum). Students who receive a score below 79.5% on any course will be placed on Probation and must complete a global remediation (if eligible) and reassessment in order to progress.
- The content, format, timing and deadline of the remediation and reassessment are determined at the discretion of the Course Director in collaboration with the Director of Academic Education. The remediation and reassessment must be completed prior to progressing to the next term and therefore must be completed over the term break to avoid a deceleration.
- Students must score at or above the 79.5% passing threshold on the reassessment as evidence of competency in the deficient content area(s).
- Failing to score above 79.5% on the reassessment constitutes a global remediation failure, which meets Program criteria for dismissal. Students are not eligible for any further remediation activities or attempts.
- If a student passes the reassessment, a score of 79.5% will be the overall course grade, regardless of the score achieved. If the student does not pass the reassessment, original final course letter grade stands on the official transcript. Once a global remediation attempt has been completed, a student is no longer eligible to withdraw or request a deceleration from the Program.

OSCE Remediation

Please refer to the section on the [OSCE](#) for a detailed description of the program's approach to remediation on that assessment.

Professionalism Remediation

Please refer to the section on [Professionalism Policy Violations](#) for a detailed description of the program's approach to remediating professionalism.

Academic and Professional Standing

In cases where performance concerns require continued monitoring beyond remediation, the program utilizes formal designations to ensure appropriate oversight and support. The designations used are Warning and Probation and are applied to identify and track ongoing academic or professionalism performance.

These designations are internal to the program and do not affect a student's university standing, are not reflected on official transcripts, and do not impact financial aid

Good Standing

Refers to students who meet satisfactory academic and professional performance and are not on Probation. When students are on Warning (below), they are still classified as being in Good Standing.

Warning

Warning indicates that a student has performance deficiencies and is at risk of being placed on Probation. This designation serves as an early intervention to support improvement and attempt to prevent further academic concerns. A Course Director may issue a Warning at their discretion when performance concerns are identified. In the didactic year, examples of conditions that may result in a Warning include, but are not limited to, a cumulative course grade below 80% at the midpoint of a term or failure of multiple assessments within a course.

Students who receive a Warning are required to meet with the Course Director and the Director of Academic Education to review performance, identify contributing factors, and develop strategies for improvement. Expectations for the remainder of the term will be clearly outlined.

Probation

Probation indicates that a student is not meeting expected academic and or professionalism standards and requires structured remediation and close monitoring.

During the didactic year, students will be placed on Probation for reasons including but not limited to, earning a course grade below a B; overall failure of the end-of-year OSCE; failure of a remediation assessment; accumulation of three professionalism violations; or an egregious professionalism or policy violation.

The P&P Committee will be notified, and formal terms and conditions of probation, along with an individualized remediation and reassessment plan, will be developed and provided to the student in writing.

The terms of probation require the student to demonstrate consistent academic and professional performance in accordance with program policies. Students on Probation must complete all assigned remediation activities by designated deadlines and achieve all required reassessment benchmarks on the first attempt, unless otherwise specified. While on Probation, any additional academic or professionalism deficiency that would independently warrant probation may warrant deceleration or dismissal, despite prior academic and/or professionalism performance.

Students placed on Probation are required to meet with the Program Director and Director of Academic Education to review the terms and conditions outlined in the probation letter. Students must acknowledge receipt of the probation letter and are expected to comply fully with all stated conditions. Failure or refusal to sign the probation letter does not negate or invalidate its terms, which remain fully in effect.

Failure to comply with any term or condition of Probation will result in deceleration or dismissal from the program. Final determinations are made by the P&P Committee.

In certain circumstances, a student may be placed directly on Probation without a preceding Warning.

Even with successful remediation and reassessment, students remain on Probation for the remainder of the didactic year to demonstrate sustained improvement. If all expectations are met and no further concerns arise by the time of the Formative Evaluation, the student may be removed from Probation and permitted to progress to the clinical year at the discretion of the P&P Committee. Students will receive written notification of any change in status from the Director of Academic Education.

If performance concerns remain unresolved despite remediation efforts, the student may remain on Probation, be denied progression, and/or be subject to dismissal at the discretion of the P&P Committee.

In some cases, a student may demonstrate sufficient progress to advance to the clinical year while remaining on Probation. In such instances, Probation status will continue until all remediation requirements and reassessments are successfully completed. Decisions regarding progression and continuation of Probation status are determined by the P&P Committee and communicated to the student in writing by the Director of Academic Education.

Performance Expectations on Probation

Students on Probation are expected to demonstrate consistent academic and professional performance in accordance with program standards and to actively engage, complete and pass all assigned remediation activities on the first attempt.

The student's probation letter outlines the official terms and conditions, expectations, and consequences for failure to comply. The following section provides general guidance regarding typical expectations for common scenarios for awareness.

- If a student is placed on Probation due to failing a didactic course:
 - They will be given the opportunity to globally remediate that course by a defined deadline.
 - If the student does not pass the global remediation reassessment, they will be referred back to the P&P Committee as this meets criteria for dismissal from the program.
 - If the student passes the global remediation reassessment, they are permitted to progress.
 - They are required to pass all future didactic courses with a final course grade of a B or higher, as well as the End of Year OSCE with an Overall Score of 80%, and all focused remediation reassessments, on the first attempt, or else they meet criteria for dismissal from the program.
- If a student is placed on Probation due to academic deficiencies, such as failing an individual assessment remediation:
 - They may be given an intensive remediation plan, and opportunity for reassessment, with or without a deceleration from the program, or may be considered for dismissal based on previous academic performance issues.
 - If a student passes, and then requires a subsequent remediation and fails the reassessment, they may be given an intensive remediation plan, and opportunity for reassessment, with or without a deceleration from the program, or may be considered for dismissal based on previous academic performance issues.
 - Alternatively, if a student passes, and then goes on to receives a grade of less than a B in a course, or less than 80% on the Overall Score of the OSCE, they will have one opportunity to globally remediate. If they do not pass the global remediation, they will be referred to the P&P Committee as that meets criteria for dismissal from the program.
- If a student is placed on Probation due to professionalism issues without previous/current academic issues:

- They will be given the opportunity to remediate the behaviors and complete a reassessment. If the student does not pass the global remediation reassessment, or commits a subsequent violation, they will be referred back to the P&P Committee as that meets criteria for dismissal from the program.
 - If the student passes the remediation reassessment, without any further professionalism issues, they are permitted to progress, on or off Probation as per the P&P Committee.
 - If the student goes on to receive a grade of less than a B in a course, or less than 80% on the Overall Score of the OSCE, they will have one opportunity to globally remediate. If they do not pass the global remediation, they will be referred to the P&P Committee as that meets criteria for dismissal from the program.
 - Alternatively, if the student goes on to require a focused remediation, for failing an individual assessment in a course or an individual competency on the OSCE, they will have one opportunity for a focused remediation. If they do not pass the focused remediation, they will be referred to the P&P Committee for determination of deceleration or dismissal as outlined in their probation letter.
- If a student is on Probation due to academic deficiencies and has a professionalism issue, they will follow the three-step professionalism process outlined in the Professionalism section.
 - If a student on Probation receives three professionalism violations, or commits an egregious professionalism violation, they will be referred to the P&P Committee and will be subject to dismissal from the program.

Program Dismissal

Dismissal is defined as the removal of a student from the program due to significant academic and/or professionalism deficiencies that persist despite remediation efforts, or due to an egregious lapse that warrants dismissal without opportunity for remediation.

A student may be dismissed if they fail to demonstrate the ability to achieve and sustain the academic and/or professional standards of the program. Decisions regarding dismissal are made in accordance with the program's responsibility to uphold the standards of the profession and ensure the safety of patients and the public.

Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to, violations of the PA Program's Professionalism and Professional Behavior Policy, the Rush Academic Honesty Policy, the Rush University Student Honor Code, or the Rush University Drug and Alcohol-Free Campus Policy. Violations of program policies, university policies, technical standards, or applicable laws may also result in dismissal.

Students may be dismissed from the program without prior placement on Warning or Probation in cases of egregious academic or professional misconduct, as determined at the discretion of the P&P Committee.

The process for consideration of dismissal is as follows:

- Students under consideration for dismissal will be notified in writing by the Program Director. This notification will include the basis for the potential dismissal.
- The P&P Committee will review the student's academic and professional performance to date, along with the identified deficiencies and or performance concerns.
- Students are strongly encouraged to appear before the P&P Committee to provide relevant information or context regarding their performance. Students may waive this opportunity in writing. Students must notify the Program Director in advance of the scheduled meeting of their intent to appear. In lieu of an appearance, students may submit a written statement for consideration by the Committee.
- The P&P Committee will render a decision by majority vote, based on the information and evidence presented.
- The student will be notified of the dismissal decision in writing.
- If a student is dismissed from the program, they may appeal the decision in accordance with College policy. Refer to the section on [Appeals](#) for additional information.

- If a student elects to appeal, they may be permitted to continue in the curriculum during the appeal process if in accordance with university policies. Eligibility to continue during the appeal process is contingent upon the student meeting progression criteria and maintaining appropriate academic and professional standing. Students who do not meet progression criteria or who have engaged in an egregious professionalism violation will not be permitted to progress in the curriculum while an appeal is under review.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal is defined as a permanent departure from the program and the University without the expectation of returning. Students who withdraw must reapply for admission if they wish to return at a later time.

Students who intend to withdraw should meet with the Program Director immediately to review the process.

Students must submit a [Petition for Withdrawal](#) through the Office of the Registrar, which serves as the official point of notification. The effective date of withdrawal is determined by the date the petition is initiated in accordance with University policy. Students are responsible for reviewing and complying with all University requirements related to withdrawal, including deadlines, financial implications, and processing procedures. Refer to the [Rush University Catalog](#) for the full Withdrawal policies.

Students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment unless on an approved leave of absence. Failure to obtain an approved leave of absence, or formally withdraw may result in administrative withdrawal by the University. Administrative withdrawal is recorded on the student's transcript and requires reapplication for readmission.

A student who meets the criteria for Program Dismissal is not eligible to withdraw from the University or from individual courses for the purpose of avoiding dismissal. Once dismissal criteria are met, any pending or future withdrawal requests for the applicable term may be denied.

Withdrawal from courses is not permitted during the final three weeks of any academic term. Students who submit a Petition for Withdrawal during this period will receive final grades in all registered courses and will be subject to academic progression review based on those grades.

Students should be aware that withdrawal may have financial aid implications. Additional information is available through the [Office of Student Financial Aid](#).

Leave of Absence and Deceleration

Leave of Absence (LOA) and deceleration are distinct mechanisms that may interrupt or modify a student's progression through the program. While a deceleration may occur independently or in combination with an LOA, they serve different purposes and are governed by separate processes.

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is a temporary, approved suspension of enrollment in which a student is not actively participating in coursework. An LOA must be initiated by the student and approved by the University. A specific return date is established at the time of approval.

Deceleration is a modification of a student's curricular progression that results in a delay in graduation beyond the original cohort timeline. This delay may extend by one academic term or one academic year, requiring the student to join a subsequent cohort.

Deceleration does not automatically require a Leave of Absence, as students may remain continuously enrolled depending on the structure of their remediation plan. However, in most cases of an LOA, a deceleration is also required.

Deceleration

Deceleration may occur at the request of the student or as a requirement of the program based on academic or professionalism deficiencies. The duration and structure of deceleration are determined by the P&P Committee

based on the nature and severity of academic or professionalism concerns. Approval of student-requested deceleration is not guaranteed and is granted on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the P&P Committee.

Students must meet with the Program Director to review the academic implications of deceleration, including changes to the program of study and anticipated graduation date. Students are also required to meet with the Office of Financial Aid to review potential financial implications.

Deceleration requests may be considered following failure of a course or global assessment; however, students are not eligible to request deceleration after failure of a global remediation assessment.

Students who decelerate during the didactic year and subsequently restart the program are required to maintain medical and clinical currency as outlined by the P&P Committee. Students must provide documentation supporting compliance with these requirements prior to reentry. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in inability to restart and/or progress in the program.

Didactic Phase

During the didactic year, courses are offered once per academic year and serve as prerequisites for subsequent coursework. As a result, deceleration typically extends through the remainder of the academic year and requires the student to rejoin the program with the next cohort at the start of the following academic year. Deceleration is permitted only once during the didactic phase and may not exceed 12 months in total. Use of a didactic deceleration may limit or preclude eligibility for additional deceleration or leave of absence later in the program.

Students who have successfully completed courses are required to audit coursework without credit to demonstrate currency of knowledge. Auditing may incur additional fees.

Clinical Phase

During the clinical phase, deceleration typically results in a delay of one to two terms. Depending on the circumstances, students may either remain continuously enrolled or petition for a LOA.

Leave of Absence (LOA)

Examples include, but are not limited to, significant medical conditions, parental leave, or other extraordinary personal circumstances.

LOA Approval and Process

To request an LOA, students must:

- Meet with the Program Director to discuss the request.
 - The terms of the leave and expected return date must be agreed upon in writing prior to the start of the leave.
 - Any conditions for reentry will be established at the discretion of the P&P Committee.
- Meet with the Office of Financial Aid to review potential financial implications, including tuition and loan impact.
 - Students are responsible for understanding these implications prior to initiating the leave.
- Submit a [Petition for Leave of Absence](#) through the Office of the Registrar.
- If requesting a medical leave of absence, provide documentation from a healthcare provider.
 - Also, prior to return, documentation of medical clearance confirming their ability to resume full-time participation without restrictions is required.
- Submit the request by the University's add/drop deadline to avoid full tuition charges.

Students must satisfy the conditions of the LOA before re-entering and must comply with all policies, requirements and course sequences in effect at the time of re-entry. Students must re-enter the program at the start of a term. Students must submit a letter of intent to return to the Program Director at least 30 business days prior to their expected return or as outlined in the original approval letter. Student must also complete the [Return from Leave of Absence form](#). If unable to return as agreed, the student is required to contact Program Director immediately, but a minimum of 30 days prior to the beginning of the expected term of return and discuss the options open to them.

Return from Deceleration or Leave of Absence

Upon return, students may be required to demonstrate competency prior to resuming the curriculum. This may include written examinations, practical assessments, repetition of prior coursework or clinical rotations, or participation in a structured learning plan. Requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the P&P Committee. Failure to accept these terms and or failure to pass these requirements will result in inability to progress and will be referred back to P&P Committee for consideration of deceleration or dismissal.

Program Completion Deadline

Students are expected to complete the program within the prescribed 30-month curriculum timeline. The maximum time allowed to complete all program requirements is 42 months from matriculation, inclusive of any approved deceleration and or leave of absence. Failure to complete the program within this timeframe will result in withdrawal. Students at risk of exceeding the maximum time to completion must meet with the Program Director to develop a plan for successful program completion.

Social Media

Rush maintains a strict policy regarding the use of its name, logo, trademark, and image in any form of social media. Students, faculty, and employees are not permitted to use the Rush name, refer to, make statements on behalf of Rush, or represent themselves as an agent of Rush without express advance permission from the Department of Marketing and Communications. This relates to all publicly accessible forms of communication via the internet, including but not limited to or any other form of on-line publishing, including blogs, discussion forums, newsgroups and e-mail distribution lists. For more information, refer to the complete RUMC policy on social media (See [Appendix G](#)).

Students are not permitted to refer to faculty, staff, classmates, clinical rotation sites, preceptors, or other program associates on any personal social media forum without explicit permission. Students are not permitted to refer to or identify patients or their protected health information in any social media forums or other non-Rush electronic communications under any circumstances.

The officers of the program's student society that manage its social media account are expected to adhere to these policies.

Always keep in mind that you are personally responsible for the content you publish on-line, and that what you publish online can never be truly erased or deleted. Failure to adhere to this policy constitutes an egregious lapse in professionalism and will require disciplinary action.

Name and Address Changes

Students are responsible for ensuring that their name and contact information are accurate and up to date with the Office of the Registrar.

Students requesting a legal name change must complete and submit the appropriate [Legal Name Change form](#) to the Office of the Registrar, along with required supporting documentation verifying the change. Acceptable documentation may include a valid driver's license, marriage license (official government document), passport, Social Security card, court order, or dissolution decree.

Student Employment During the Program

Students are not permitted to work while enrolled in the program. The PA Program maintains an intense curriculum that demands a great deal of time, effort, and energy. It is important that students maintain personal balance and allow sufficient time for social activities, recreation, and rest.

Students should not accept any form of payment for the tasks they perform while on clinical rotations. While on clinical rotations, students may not provide services within the preceptor's practice apart from those rendered for their educational value and as part of the clinical instruction experience. Students may not receive monetary compensation for work performed within the preceptor's practice.

Students should not perform any services outside of those appropriate for a PA student in training, regardless of the student's prior professional or academic background. This includes but is not limited to substituting for instructional or clinical faculty or performing staff clerical or administrative duties.

Students of the PA Program are not permitted to participate in the Rush University work-study program. Students are not allowed to work for the PA program or its clinical agents in any capacity.

Discrimination and/or Harassment of Students

Rush is committed to preventing harassment of any type in the institution, and the PA Program has a zero-tolerance stance towards acts of discrimination by or towards any of its students. The program strictly adheres to the University's policies on the reporting and handling of any complaint of discrimination or harassment related to its students. Under these policies and procedures, harassment of a sexual nature, as well as harassment related to age, ancestry, color, disability (as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act), gender, gender identity and/or expression, marital or parental status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, or any other category protected by federal or state law, is prohibited.

The Rush policies include protections for, and prohibit retaliation against, an individual making a complaint or supplying information about a complaint. They also incorporate protections for a person who considers themselves accused in bad faith.

All complaints and concerns about conduct that may violate this Policy (including retaliation for reports made pursuant to this Policy) should be filed with Rush's Title IX Coordinator:

Catherine C. Howlett, JD, Title IX Coordinator, Rush University Medical Center

catherine_c_howlett@Rush.edu

Confidential reports can also be made through the Rush Hotline at (877) 787-4009 or via the Rush web reporting tool at <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/56889/index.html>. The Rush policy on harassment and/or discrimination, and is located here: [Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention](#)

Grievances, Complaints, and Student Appeals

All issues and or concerns related to PA Program courses should be first directed to the respective Course Director. If the student's issue is not resolved by the Course Director, the matter should be referred to the Director of Academic or Clinical Education, as appropriate. If the issue remains unresolved, the chain of command within the PA department requires the matter be brought next to the Program Director, then Department Chair.

If the matter in question cannot be resolved at the Chair level, it will be directed to the P&P Committee for further consideration. This committee will discuss and render a decision by a voting majority.

If the student's issue and or concern remains unresolved, and the student believes that a rule, procedure, or policy has been applied in an unfair or inequitable manner or that there has been unfair or improper treatment by a person or persons, they should follow the [Student Academic Appeal and Grievance Procedures](#) as outlined in the College of Health Sciences section of the Catalog.

In the case where a student feels their complaint would be best handled through formal procedures, Rush University offers a process for students to confidentially submit their formal complaints through the Student Complaint Portal. The Student Complaint Portal can be located at: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/56889/index.html>.

Certain complaints have specific procedures, such as regarding Title IX sexual misconduct, harassment or grade appeals. Under circumstances where a student files a formal complaint through the Student Complaint Portal requiring a specific procedure or contact person, the complaint will automatically be routed to the appropriate area for additional review and follow-up. The University's goal is to make it seamless for students to file a complaint, regardless of if the student is not exactly sure where the complaint should be filed. Please

review the [Student Complaint Portal FAQs](#) for additional information. Students should also refer to their University student handbook or their specific academic program guidebook for certain procedures.

Student complaints can also be submitted anonymously. However students should keep in mind that there are inherent limitations with the University conducting a thorough investigation if the complaint is submitted anonymously.

In accordance with Standard 668.43(b) under the Code of Federal Regulations, the program provides students with information on how to submit complaints regarding the program's compliance with accreditation standards. Students may file complaints with the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) [here](#).

Complaints submitted to an accrediting body should be limited to substantive concerns regarding the program's adherence to accreditation standards and its own published policies. Accrediting bodies review issues at the programmatic level rather than individual matters; therefore, concerns such as grade disputes or interpersonal issues should be addressed through established institutional grievance processes.

Student Support, Resources and Referral Services

The program is committed to supporting students' academic progression and professional development by ensuring timely access to services that address personal, health, behavioral, or other concerns that may impact student performance or progression in the program.

Students who experience challenges that may affect their ability to meet program expectations are encouraged to seek support early. Concerns may include, but are not limited to, academic stress, mental health concerns, personal or family issues, financial stressors, or other circumstances impacting well-being or performance.

Access to Support Services

Students have access to institutional student support resources, including wellness resources, academic support services, and disability support services. Information regarding available services is outlined below, and readily accessible through the University website.

Referral Process

Students may self-refer or be referred by program faculty or staff when concerns are identified that may impact academic or clinical performance. Faculty may initiate a referral to appropriate institutional support services when concerns arise regarding a student's well-being or ability to meet program expectations.

When a referral is made, students are provided with timely information regarding available resources and encouraged to engage with appropriate services without delay.

Timely Access

The program promotes timely access to support services. Students experiencing concerns that may affect progression are expected to engage with appropriate resources as soon as possible to support successful resolution and continuation in the program.

Consistency of Application

This policy is applied consistently to all students. The program maintains communication with institutional support services as appropriate and in accordance with applicable privacy regulations and institutional policies to support student success while respecting confidentiality.

Advising

Each student is assigned a PA faculty advisor. Students are required to meet with their advisor for routine advising once per term but can also request to meet with their advisor at any time.

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the required advising session. Failure of the student to reach out to their advisor to schedule the meeting is a violation of the professionalism policy. Upon reaching out, students should provide their advisor with several days/times they are available to meet, during business hours Monday through Friday, unless the advisor specifies otherwise.

Prior to routine advising meetings, students are required to fill out a pre-advising meeting form in order to guide the discussion with their advisor. Failure to complete the form prior to the meeting will result in a professionalism violation and may result in the meeting being rescheduled.

Additional advising sessions may be initiated by the student or faculty advisor as needed. Students are expected to log in on time for the meeting, have their cameras on framed to include their face, and to be in a quiet location appropriate for discussion, such as at home, in a classroom, or at the library. Students should not log onto meetings in noisy locations such as on the train, in a car, at a busy café, walking outside, or in the airport.

Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor to discuss any concerns or issues that may impact their performance or progression through the program. Students must comply with faculty requests to meet with their advisor in a timely manner. Failure to meet with their advisor or complete the pre-meeting review form constitutes a professionalism violation.

Routine advising discussions focus on two areas – review of the student's academic progress and counseling on professional development. Advisors are also a resource for exploring issues regarding rotations and to explore employment strategies following graduation.

If a student has challenges maintaining acceptable academic performance during the program, the advisor is the student's primary resource for guidance and assistance. The advisor will work with the student to identify potential sources of academic difficulty and will assist the student in overcoming those difficulties. Advising may entail referral to other counseling and support services available through the University.

In addition to the PA faculty advisor, students are encouraged to meet with Course Directors for any concerns related to a specific course.

Center for Clinical Wellness

Rush University provides offers students access to professional counseling, at no charge, for a variety of concerns ranging from academic problems to issues of personal development. Students may seek guidance on a wide range of personal issues that may be affecting their health and academic performance. Students may voluntarily seek the services of the counseling center at any time. Additionally, the PA program faculty may recommend the wellness center to students. Information regarding student wellness center resources can be found [here](#).

The Center for Clinical Wellness maintains strict standards of privacy and confidentiality. No information about an individual student is released to anyone, inside or outside the University, without the prior consent of the student. No student contact with the Wellness Center becomes a part of any other University record.

Students who wish to utilize the Center for Clinical Wellness, should follow the contact pathways below:

Wellness Pathways

You can reach a behavioral health professional 24/7 for support, as well as establish care at the Center for Clinical Wellness.

How to use:

- Email 2323@page.rush.edu
- Call 312-942-6000, ext. 2323
- Use the [online paging directory](#), and search "2323" under ID

 RUSH | WELLNESS

Wellness Pathways

"I am in danger/crisis."

If you or someone you know is at risk of harming themselves or others, **call 911 immediately.**

Call 911

"I need support now."

Call/text the Rush Wellness Assistance Program.* You can connect with support **immediately – 24/7.**
*Powered by Perspectives



"I am overwhelmed and unsure what to do."

Page the Rush Center for Clinical Wellness 24/7. Your page will be responded to **within 60 minutes.**



"I want Wellness to support me or my department."

Schedule an appointment with the Rush Center for Clinical Wellness now. For scheduling questions or other needs, email RushWellness@rush.edu.



 RUSH | WELLNESS

Accommodations

Being a PA requires certain cognitive, motor, communication, and behavioral capacities. The minimum expected capacity in these domains are expressed in the Technical Standards for PA Students ([Appendix C](#)). Technical standards may be met with or without accommodation. Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation to meet the Technical Standards, program requirements, or learning outcomes in didactic or clinical years of the PA Studies program must contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services to request accommodations. Accommodations are never retroactive, so timely requests are essential and encouraged. To learn more about the accommodation request process, visit the [Office of Student Accessibility Services website](#).

Students should be advised that some accommodations may not be deemed reasonable in every setting, given that an accommodation could not create a fundamental alteration of course, assessment, or clinical experience objectives. Students with accommodations should work closely with the Office of Student Accessibility Services to understand parameters around their accommodations and assess any alternate accommodations that may be appropriate.

Student Activities

PA Student Society

The student government of the PA Program is called the Rush PA Student Society and is comprised of several Class Officer roles. Class Officers take on important, additional leadership roles and responsibilities. They facilitate communication among their cohort, between classes, and in interactions with the larger community both at Rush and beyond. Class Officers are elected by their cohort annually during the summer term. Most officer roles continue through the duration of the program. A list of the Class Officer positions, responsibilities, and terms of participation are discussed during the summer term.

Any student who wishes to hold an officer position must be meet satisfactory academic and professional performance at the time of elections and for the duration of the program. In the event a class officer is unable to maintain their duties and responsibilities, or falls behind in their studies, the vacant seat will be filled in a manner deemed appropriate by the remaining officers and the program's Student Society faculty advisor.

Professional Organization Membership

Students are strongly encouraged to sustain membership and participation in PA professional organizations while in the program and for the remainder of their career. Membership provides critical support for these organizations' political and professional advancement activities. Students will have the opportunity to become actively involved in these organizations.

The Program provides student membership in both the AAPA and IAPA during enrollment, as well as encourages any student leadership roles in these organizations. A list of PA professional organizations and their contact information is available in the [PA Professional Organizations](#) section below.

Student Conference Attendance

Students may be invited or accepted to attend conferences and professional meetings as a representative of the program. Examples of such activities, include but are not limited to, attendance at state and local PA professional meetings as the Rush PA Student legislative representative, acceptance at a medical or professional conference to present a lecture, research, or poster, and participating in the AAPA National Student Challenge Bowl competition. The program strongly encourages participation in such activities and will help support student involvement whenever possible. Based on annual budget availability, the program may supplement registration, travel, and accommodations to students on a case-by-case basis. All requests to attend conferences or professional meetings must be submitted to and approved by the program director prior to the student confirming their attendance and booking travel.

Students are not excused from class or clinical rotations to attend conferences or professional meetings at which they are not presenting, aside from IAPA CME events, the national AAPA Conference, IAPA Lobby Day, and the AAPA Advocacy and Leadership Summit. Students must request approval to attend these events and must provide proof of attendance. Any costs, including registration fee, flight, lodging, etc., are at the student's expense.

All student travel, even if in-state, requires completion of the College of Health Sciences travel form by the deadline given per the Program Coordinator. Failure to complete the form prior to the deadline as well as any other travel guidelines as directed by the Program Coordinator will result in a professionalism violation.

Clinical Rotations

Students must pass the Formative Evaluation in order to progress to clinical rotations.

Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs) offered during the clinical years of the program do not follow the academic calendar.

Clinical Rotation Assignments

All clinical rotations are assigned by the PA program based on preceptor availability. Details regarding clinical rotation assignments are further outlined in the Clinical Handbooks and are provided to students during Clinical Rotation Onboarding Meetings, take that place in the Spring term, prior to the start of the clinical year each May.

The PA Faculty have the sole responsibility for providing and soliciting clinical sites and preceptors. Prospective and enrolled students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. Students are permitted to ask a clinician if they would be a willing preceptor for elective rotations, only. If a student identifies a willing preceptor, they can make this request to their designated clinical Course Director. Requesting a new site for an elective rotation does not guarantee placement. The PA program has a thorough vetting process that each clinical site and preceptor must undergo, and an affiliation agreement that meets ARC-PA, University and PA Program standards must signed by both parties, prior to the first placement. Each clinical rotation site and preceptor must also meet ARC-PA and PA Program standards to be deemed qualified. Second and third year core clinical rotations take place within a 90-minute/90-mile radius from Rush University. Students may complete an out of state rotation for elective rotations only. Students are required to have immediate access to a car for the duration of the clinical years. Sometimes, due to unforeseen circumstances, there may be a late change in site placement.

Each rotation has minimum duty hours and patient contact requirements. Duty hours may include nights, weekends, overnight call, and holidays. Students will be given more information about clinical year policies and placements in the spring term of the didactic year.

Global Health Trips

Students may be permitted to attend a week-long Rush global health trip during the clinical years of the program. Global health trips may only be available to students during specific clinical rotations of the clinical year. Students must be in good standing and receive approval from the Director of Clinical Education prior to committing to a trip. Students must follow all international travel policies as outlined through the Office of Global Health website (<https://www.Rushu.Rush.edu/about/faculty-affairs/global-health>). These policies are based on current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for health professionals and applicable state and host country mandates.

In order to participate in an international global health trip, students must:

- Complete all required compliance documentation through the Office of Global Health
- Adhere to all current CDC travel health recommendations, including but not limited to:
 - Required and recommended vaccinations
 - Pre-travel health screening and clearance
 - Infectious disease prevention measures
- Comply with all applicable state, federal, and host country public health mandates, which may include testing, quarantine, or additional documentation
- Purchase comprehensive travel health insurance, including coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation

The program monitors CDC guidance and international travel advisories and reserves the right to modify, delay, or cancel student participation in global health experiences based on safety considerations or changes in public health recommendations.

All trip costs are at the expense of the student; however, Rush offers partial scholarships to cover a portion of the costs related to the administrative fee of the global health trip. Students can learn more about global health by visiting <https://www.Rushu.Rush.edu/about/faculty-affairs/global-health>.

Students are required to complete a post-trip evaluation and assigned coursework related to the global health experience. Due to the nature of clinical rotations and scheduling:

- Students may be required to make up missed coursework or clinical time
- Students must discuss planned absences with their Course Director prior to making travel arrangements

Due to the nature of clinical rotations and scheduling, students are not permitted to attend non-Rush global health trips while in the program.

Student Health and Safety

On admission to the program, students are required to obtain and document health and background status clearance in order to attend classes and care for patients. Health screening entails documentation of immunity to major communicable diseases, for personal and public health safety. The program adheres to the CDC standards on vaccinations for health care workers, available here: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/hcw.html>.

For more information regarding the program's screening clearance requirements, refer to the packet received upon acceptance to the program. Rush University uses CastleBranch to conduct its student screening services. The program also requires each student complete a criminal background check and drug screening on file at the time of registration for class. The drug screen is repeated each year of the program. Students are responsible for the cost of these screenings. Please note: dilute negative is not a "negative screen"; it is an inconclusive screen, which warrants repeat.

Criminal background check clearance is a common requirement for student placement at clinical rotation sites. If a student has a history of any misdemeanor or felony conviction, they should disclose these activities in their applications, or as soon as possible upon admission to the program. Positive results in the criminal background check will be handled on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature of the charges and its outcome. Students with a history of a felony conviction are not guaranteed availability of clinical placement, which may compromise their ability to complete the program.

Documentation of negative drug screening is also a common requirement for clinical placement and is consistent with Rush's zero-tolerance, drug-free campus and workplace policy (refer to [Drug Free Campus and Workplace](#) for information). Students with a positive drug screen at any time during enrollment in the program will be advised on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to action in accordance with the policies described in the Student Catalog.

Immunization, Health Screening and Onboarding Requirements:

Immunizations:

Rush University and the PA Program adhere to the CDC and State of Illinois standards on vaccinations for health care workers. Information on the CDC guidelines are available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/adult-age.html>. The State of Illinois guidelines are available here: <https://dph.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idph/documents/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/respiratory-disease/adult-combined-schedule-08072025.pdf>.

The required immunizations are due two weeks prior to the first day of orientation:

<u>Required</u>	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Not Required</u>	
1. Influenza, inactivated (every year) 2. Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (every 10 years) 3. Measles, Mumps, Rubella 4. Varicella 5. Hepatitis B 6. Meningococcal Serogroup ACWY	1. COVID-19* <i>*Not required by Rush University but required by some of the PA Program's clinical rotation sites.</i>	1. Influenza, live attenuated 2. Respiratory Syncytial Virus 3. Recombinant Zoster 4. Human Papillomavirus 5. Pneumococcal	6. Hepatitis A 7. Meningococcal B 8. Serogroup B 9. Haemophilus influenzae type b 10. Mpox 11. Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine

In addition to the required immunization schedule, students must submit documented proof of immunity, ***as demonstrated by serologic titers***, for the following:

- Hepatitis B
- Measles (Rubeola), Mumps, Rubella
- Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap)
- Varicella

Providing a vaccination history is **not** sufficient to document immunity. Waivers for non-conversion are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the Rush Employee Health standards.

Medical and Religious Exemptions:

Students may pursue medical and/or religious exemptions for required immunizations. A separate written request is recommended for each immunization. Medical exemptions are requested from a licensed health care provider, and religious exemptions are requested from an authorized religious leader. For annual immunizations, these letters must be updated each year. Rush University reserves the sole discretion to review and approve all medical and religious exemption requests for program immunization requirements. Students with approved exemptions may matriculate and participate in didactic coursework; however, immunization requirements vary by clinical site and may change based on site policies or circumstances. Students must comply with all health and immunization requirements established by clinical rotation sites.

Clinical sites may not accept medical or religious exemptions, and the program is not required to provide alternate rotation assignments based on personal preferences or exemption status. Therefore, the program cannot guarantee that approved exemptions will not affect clinical placement or progression. This may result in delays in a student's ability to complete the program.

During the clinical years, students are required to provide updated health records. Certain rotations may specify that students must be in compliance with other requirements such as additional drug screens or vaccinations, such as COVID-19. If required, this is an out-of-pocket expense for the student. The program will inform students of any necessary procedures to meet such requirements in advance of the rotation start date. There are no international clinical rotation experiences. For students who volunteer on a global health trip, there may be additional recommended immunizations as outlined in the PA Program Handbook.

Student health records are confidential and will remain on file through CastleBranch. However, each student is required to sign a release of information that permits the program to provide affiliated clinical practice sites, agencies, and preceptors proof of the student's health status, as needed.

For more information regarding this policy, please refer to the PA Program Handbook and Clinical Rotation Handbooks posted on the PA Program website. If you have any, please reach out to PA_admissions@rush.edu.

Health Screenings:

Due two weeks prior to the first day of orientation:

- History and physical examination by a licensed health care provider completed on the Program's form
- A two-step PPD, T-Spot, QuantiFERON Gold, or T-SPOT.TB test done within three months of matriculation (then yearly thereafter)
- Drug screening (then yearly thereafter)
- Criminal background check

During the clinical years, it is required to provide updated health records. Certain rotations may specify that students must be in compliance with other requirements such as additional drug screens or vaccinations, such as COVID-19. If required, this is an out-of-pocket expense for the student. The program will inform students of any necessary procedures to meet such requirements in advance of the start of clinical rotations.

Student health records are confidential and will remain on file through CastleBranch. However, each student is required to sign a release of information that permits the program to provide affiliated clinical practice sites, agencies, and preceptors proof of the student's health status, as needed.

Health Insurance

Students are required to carry personal health insurance at all times during the program. In addition to providing coverage in the event of a health issue, the student's health insurance will be used to cover expenses if a hazardous exposure incident occurs in the clinical setting. Neither Rush nor the PA Program will cover the cost of evaluation and management if a hazardous exposure event were to occur during the program.

Students who do not carry a personal policy must purchase coverage through the University. More information regarding acquiring health insurance during enrollment is available [here](#).

Students are responsible for maintaining their personal health and are required to have health insurance to cover the cost of all necessary medical care throughout the program, including hazardous exposure incidents regardless of the location in which the exposure occurs. Refer to the Rush University Catalog for information regarding compliance with mandatory health insurance policies and the University sponsored health insurance program. The program's student health policies are aligned to comply with CDC, state, and Rush guidelines, as applicable.

The program director, principal faculty and medical director are not permitted to act as healthcare providers or offer healthcare services to students, except in an emergency in which no other healthcare providers are available.

Drug Free Campus and Workplace

Rush University Medical Center maintains compliance with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA) and all members of the Rush community are expected to comply with these standards at all times, regardless of state and local laws governing social practice. Violations of this policy will be handled on a case-by-case basis, consistent with Rush policies and practices. The full policy is posted [Drug and Alcohol-Free Campus Policy](#).

Safety Incidents

Any incident that affects patient, student, or staff well-being, or a patient's care, must be reported to the program immediately. Incidents occurring during the didactic year should be reported to the Director of Academic Education. Incidents occurring during the clinical year should be reported to the preceptor and the Director of Clinical Education. Filing a hospital incident report may also be required, depending on the issue and the policy of the particular institution involved. Incidents involving gross errors in judgment or practice on the part of the student may constitute grounds for dismissal from the program. If a student is in immediate danger, call Rush Security 3-4567 if on campus and 911 if off-campus.

Hazardous Exposure Incidents

Exposure Incident Definition: Eye, mouth, mucous membrane, non-intact skin contact, or parenteral exposure to blood or potentially infectious or hazardous materials, that results from the performance of a duty related to a student's educational program.

Prevention Methods

During program orientation/bootcamp and at designated intervals throughout the curriculum, students receive required instruction on the prevention of infectious and environmental hazards prior to any clinical or laboratory activities that may place them at risk. This instruction includes standard precautions, transmission-based precautions, and appropriate selection and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Students are expected to apply this training consistently in all educational and clinical settings. This includes adherence to standard and transmission-based precautions, proper use of PPE based on anticipated exposure risk, safe handling and disposal of sharps and other potentially hazardous materials, and compliance with all clinical site-specific safety requirements.

Students must also complete all required institutional and program-based safety and infection control training prior to participation in activities with potential exposure risk, and as required throughout the curriculum.

Procedure at Rush University Medical Center

- Wash injured area with soap and water. If eyes, nose, or mouth, use water only.
- Immediately report the incident to your preceptor / course instructor.
- Immediately call and then report to Employee and Corporate Health Services (ECHS), 4th floor Atrium, 312-942-5878.

- If the ECHS is not available, leave a message reporting the incident. Include your name, student ID, and a contact number for a staff member to contact you. YOU MUST report the incident to ECHS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to ensure you are cared for appropriately.
- If ECHS is closed, immediately report to the Rush Emergency Room (ER), Rush Tower, 1st floor, 312-947-0100. Please bring your student ID or indicate that you are a student and not an employee. If student is seen in ER, the student must report to ECHS on the next business day.
- Supply ECHS or ER nurse/physician with the following information on the source: (a) name, (b) date of birth, (c) medical record number, (d) known medical diseases (Hepatitis B, HIV), and (e) patient room number. All information is recorded confidentially in the Blood/Body Fluid Exposure Record.
- Students will be counseled or treated as deemed appropriate by ECHS or ER personnel.
- Return to ECHS or to consultants as directed for follow-up lab work and treatment as indicated.
- Failure to comply with procedure in a timely manner may result in additional costs or risk to the student.

Procedure Off-Campus

If an exposure incident occurs off campus, follow the protocol at your facility and contact the Rush ECHS at 312-942-5878 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to report the incident. Follow-up care should be received at ECHS or at consultants as directed by ECHS.

Financial Responsibility

Students are responsible for all costs associated with evaluation, treatment, testing, and follow-up care resulting from an exposure incident, including those not covered by personal insurance or institutional coverage.

Emergency Communication

In an emergency, if anyone outside the University needs to reach a student, they should call the Program Coordinator at the phone number provided. The program staff will attempt to forward a message to the student. The program does not give out student contact or location information to anyone, regardless of circumstances, without prior written permission from the student.

Emergent communication between the Program and students after class hours is by email or phone. Students are expected to check their email at least once a day for notices such as class cancellations or other announcements during non-class hours.

In the event of a significant threat to student safety, follow the Rush Safety and Security protocols outlined [here](#).

Medical Liability Insurance

Rush University medical liability insurance coverage applies to those learning opportunities assigned to a student by the PA Program as part of training in the PA curriculum. Coverage is not in effect and does not cover student activities associated with outside employment, volunteer work, or observational activities not required or assigned by the PA Program.

The Rush medical liability insurance only applies if a student participates in a PA Program-approved activity. Students should not accept invitations to work with, observe, or shadow a clinician unless the program has approved the activity and/or assigned the student to that activity.

University Student Services

Rush University provides a wide range of services to its students. Students are encouraged to use the services as needed.

Below is a partial list of the student services available on campus. Students are directed to the University [website](#) for more information.

- Bookstore
- Career services
- Financial aid
- Center for Academic Excellence
- Center for Clinical Wellness
- Office of Student Life and Engagement
- Library
- Lockers
- McCormick Educational Technology Center (METC) Computer resources Copy machines printing
- Media services
- Parking
- Registrar
- Security
- Shuttle bus services
- Student affairs
- Student health insurance
- Study spaces

Transcripts

Office transcripts must be requested through the Registrar's Office using the [Transcript Request Form](#). Currently enrolled students who need an Unofficial Transcript may download one from the Student Planning Self-Service portal. Unofficial transcripts are not available to alumni or to students who are no longer enrolled.

Important Rush Phone Numbers

Rush University Center for Clinical Wellness	312-942-3687
RUMC Campus Security	312-942-5678
RUMC Emergency Room	312-947-0100

PA Professional Organizations

The American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) / The Student Academy of the AAPA (SAAAPA)

The AAPA is the national organization representing the PA profession. The Academy's purpose is to promote the professional and personal development of its members and to promote the interests of the profession. Students are encouraged to join the national organization.

SAAAPA is the organization of chartered student chapters of the AAPA. Each accredited PA program is eligible to charter and maintain a student organization. Students are encouraged to work with a faculty advisor to establishing a SAAAPA chapter at Rush University.

American Academy of PAs
2318 Mill Road, Suite 1300
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (703) 836-2272
Websites:

AAPA: <http://www.aapa.org/>
SAAAPA: <https://www.aapa.org/governance/student-academy/>

The Illinois Academy of Physician Associates (IAPA)

The constituent chapter of AAPA for PAs in Illinois. Student involvement in the state academy is strongly encouraged.

Illinois Academy of PAs
100 East Washington Street Springfield, IL 62701
Phone: (217) 528-9970
Website: <http://www.illinoispa.org>

The PA Education Association (PAEA)

The national organization of PA educational programs. It was formed in 1972 for the purpose of enhancing the quality of education offered by PA Programs.

Association of PA Programs
655 K Street NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC, 20001-2385
Phone: (703) 548-5538
Website: <http://www.paeonline.org/>

The National Commission on the Certification of PAs (NCCPA)

Develops and administers the national certification examination, awards certification, monitors continuing medical education, and administers the periodic recertification examinations for PAs.

National Commission on the Certification of PAs
12000 Findley Road, Suite 200
Duluth, Georgia, 30097-1409
Phone: (678) 417-8100
Website: <http://www.nccpa.net>

APPENDIX A - TERMINAL PROGRAM COMPETENCIES (TPCs) 2026-2027

This document outlines the terminal program competencies that all students in the Rush University PA Program must achieve to graduate. The didactic and clinical curriculum prepares students to attain entry-level knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors across five core domains: medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving.

Program learning outcomes support the development and assessment of these competencies. Students must demonstrate attainment of all competencies during the final four months of the program through the summative evaluation process. Refer to the Summative Evaluation section of the PA Program Handbook for detailed performance expectations. Students should refer to the End of Curriculum Content Area List and the NCCPA PANCE Blueprint for the comprehensive list of common conditions and be familiar with the laboratory and diagnostic studies associated with each.

1. Medical Knowledge

- 1.1. Demonstrate knowledge of scientific concepts in medicine.
- 1.2. Outline the signs, symptoms, and physical examination findings for common conditions.
- 1.3. Recognize the indications, contraindications, complications, normal and abnormal findings for laboratory and diagnostic studies.

2. Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities

- 2.1. Devise a differential and identify the most likely diagnosis based on age, clinical presentation, laboratory, and diagnostic studies.
- 2.2. Develop management plans for acute, chronic, and emergent conditions, incorporating appropriate:
 - a) Clinical interventions
 - b) Clinical therapeutics
- 2.3. Determine appropriate preventative health care plans.
- 2.4. Apply evidence-based knowledge in the delivery of patient care.

3. Clinical and Technical Skills

- 3.1. Obtain an appropriate history based on age and clinical presentation.
- 3.2. Perform an appropriate physical examination based on age and clinical presentation.
- 3.3. Order and interpret laboratory and diagnostic studies.
- 3.4. Document patient encounters in the medical record.
- 3.5. Provide pertinent patient education and counseling.
- 3.6. Demonstrate effective interpersonal and communication skills during patient interactions.
- 3.7. Perform the designated technical skills accurately and safely.
 - a) Chest compressions
 - b) Basic airway management
 - c) Basic suturing
 - d) Injections
 - e) Incision and drainage

4. Professional Behaviors and Interpersonal Skills

- 4.1. Exhibit professional behaviors and interpersonal skills across the following areas:
 - a) Communication
 - b) Appearance and Demeanor
 - c) Dependability and Engagement
 - d) Self-Awareness and Accountability
 - e) Honesty and Ethics
 - f) Teamwork and Collaboration
- 4.2. Demonstrate knowledge of professional and legal responsibilities in PA practice.

APPENDIX B - COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Program Year I

SUMMER:

PHA 510 – Human Physiology (2 credit hours)

This lecture-based course will present a comprehensive and advanced review of organ systems, including human physiologic function, regulation and integration as a basis for understanding the complex interaction of specific body systems and their relationship to disease. Commonly occurring pathophysiologic processes will be introduced to prepare students for more in-depth learning about specific disease states and patient presentations in subsequent courses.

Pre-requisite for PHA 510: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 510: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 511

PHA 511 – Human Anatomy (4 credit hours)

This course provides students with a thorough understanding of the principles of functional and applied human anatomy necessary for the practice of clinical medicine. The course has laboratory (small group), lecture, and discussion components.

Pre-requisite for PHA 511: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 511: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 510

PHA 512 – History & Physical Examination (3 credit hours)

This course will introduce students to the proper skills and techniques for patient assessment. This lecture and lab-based course teaches students how to conduct an effective patient interview, how to perform a physical exam, and how to document clinical findings in the medical record. Students will learn both the comprehensive and problem-focused medical history formats and be introduced to important concepts for communication. Students will learn how to perform a comprehensive physical examination, and to recognize the normal examination findings associated with each organ system. The course will also introduce students to common pathological PE findings and how to interpret the significance of these findings to diagnosing disorders. Finally, students will learn to accurately record history and physical exam findings as part of a patient medical record using the SOAP note format. The course material will be presented sequentially in an organ system basis.

Pre-requisite for PHA 512: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 512: none

PHA 513 – PA Professional Practice (2 credit hours)

This course is designed to introduce and familiarize the student with the major professional issues and communication skills important to a practicing PA working on a medical team. Topics include the history and development of the PA profession, the physician/PA relationship, PA scope of practice and professional regulations, licensure, certification and recertification, PA program accreditation and PA professional organizations. The course also covers legal issues in health care related to PA practice, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), professional liability, laws and regulations, billing and reimbursement, quality assurance, and risk management.

Pre-requisite for PHA 513: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 513: none

PHA 514 – Clinical Medicine I (5 credit hours)

This is the first in a three-part course series designed to provide students with an intensive study of the principles essential to the practice of clinical medicine. Lectures will discuss the etiology, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, diagnostic evaluation, and management principles of various diseases in the following topic categories: Introduction to Pharmacology, Genetics, Introduction to Pediatrics, Dermatology, Allergy & Immunology, Hematology & Oncology, Otolaryngology, Orthopedics, Rheumatology, and Infectious Disease. Lectures, readings, case study analyses, and discussions of specific disorders in each category will provide an understanding of the key clinical concepts relevant to patient care.

Pre-requisite for PHA 514: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 514: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 510, PHA 511, and PHA 512

FALL:

IPE 502 – Interprofessional Patient Centered Teams (0 credit hours)

IPE 502 will introduce students to the four Interprofessional Educational and Collaborative Practice (IPEC) domains: Values/Ethics, Roles/Responsibilities, Teams/Team work, and Communication. Students will use experiential team-based learning to apply knowledge, skills, and values of the IPEC competencies.

Pre-requisite for IPE 502: none

Co-Requisite for IPE 502: none

PHA 520 – Principles of Clinical Pharmacology I (3 credit hours)

This is the first in a two-part course series designed provide students with an intensive study of the pharmacology and pharmacotherapeutics principles required for patient care. Emphasis in the course is placed on the applications of pharmacological principles in clinical medicine.

This course is organ system-based; the topics discussed will mirror the major organ systems covered in Clinical Medicine II. Pharmacological principles discussed in this course include the following: principles of pharmacology and drug action; pharmacokinetics and dynamics; drug dosage calculation; the usage profile for major classes of clinically important drugs, including indications, contraindications and side effects and dosing and administration; principles of drug selection and assessment of therapeutic efficacy and outcome.

Pre-requisite for PHA 520: Successful completion of PHA 510, PHA 511, and PHA 514

Co-Requisite for PHA 520: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 524

PHA 521 – Research and Statistics (2 credit hours)

This blended course is designed to discuss the different components and terminology of research, as well as various research models ranging from the highly quantitative to broad qualitative methods. The course will provide a practical approach to research planning through the logical sequence of developing a research proposal pertaining to the research interests of individual students.

Formulation of research questions, hypotheses, literature search techniques, ethical issues and the writing of the research proposal/final research reports and the dissemination of research findings will be discussed. This course is designed to provide first-time researchers with the skills to undertake research and to write up proposals and final reports in areas of their choice.

Pre-requisite for PHA 521: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 521: none

PHA 522 – Clinical Reasoning I (2 credit hours)

This is the first in a two-part course series designed to develop students' skills in clinical problem solving and promote application of knowledge gained throughout PA school for use in patient assessment and management and formulating patient care plans. In class, students develop their patient care skills through case analysis and discussion. Students are presented with clinical case scenarios that they must analyze and make decisions relevant to patient evaluation and management. The cases in this term gradually progress from less to more complex diagnostic and management issues. The goal of this course is to develop students' clinical critical thinking and problem-solving skills, including utilizing previously learned information and recognition of how to find necessary information to fill knowledge gaps.

Pre-requisite for PHA 522: Successful completion of PHA 512 and PHA 514

Co-Requisite for PHA 522: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 520 and PHA 524

PHA 523 – Public Health and Epidemiology (2 credit hours)

This course is an introduction to principles and practices of population health in the United States health care system, focusing on the Chicago metropolitan area and Chicago Medical District as an exemplar microcosm to represent the larger health system paradigm. The course will discuss issues related to health care access, population health trends and current topics in public health policy and health care reform. Additionally, the role of social determinants of health on disease management is explored as a tool for reviewing health outcomes in

the United States. Course discussions will explore the influence of race, class, gender, immigration and social status on health care policy. These discussions are designed to provide students with various lenses through which to analyze current and emerging public health policies, practices and health care outcomes.

Pre-requisite for PHA 523: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 523: none

PHA 524-Clinical Medicine II (6 credit hours)

This is the second in a three-part course series designed to provide students with an intensive study of the principles essential to the practice of clinical medicine. Lectures will discuss the etiology, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, diagnostic evaluation, and management principles of various diseases in the following topic categories: Pulmonology, Cardiology, and Gastroenterology & Nutrition, Nephrology, and Urology. Lectures, readings, case study analyses, and discussions of specific disorders in each category will provide an understanding of the key clinical concepts relevant to patient care.

Pre-requisite for PHA 524: Successful completion of PHA 514

Co-Requisite for PHA 524: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 520 and PHA 522

PHA 525 – Principles of Advanced Practice I (2 credit hours)

This is the first of a two-part course series that prepares students for clinical practice. The course focuses on developing effective patient-centered communication skills that enhance the patient experience and improve health outcomes. Through practical strategies and evidence-based methods, students will learn how to engage patients in shared decision-making, tailor health education to individual needs, and foster trust and collaboration in the healthcare setting.

Pre-requisite for PHA 525: Successful completion of PHA 512, and PHA 514

Co-Requisite for PHA 525: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 524

SPRING:

PHA 530 – Principles of Clinical Pharmacology II (3 credit hours)

This is the second in a two-part course series designed to provide students with an intensive study of the principles of pharmacology and pharmacotherapeutics required for patient care. Emphasis in the course is placed on the applications of pharmacological principles in primary patient care. This course is organ system-based; the topics discussed will mirror, as much as possible, the major organ systems covered in the Clinical Medicine III. Pharmacological principles discussed in this course include mechanism of drug action, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics, clinical indications, contraindications, drug interactions, adverse effects, drug selection, and assessment of therapeutic efficacy and outcome.

Pre-requisite for PHA 530: Successful completion of PHA 520 and PHA 524

Co-Requisite for PHA 530: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 534

PHA 532 – Clinical Reasoning II (2 credit hours)

This is the second in a two-part course series designed to develop students' skills in clinical problem solving and promote application of knowledge gained throughout PA school for use in patient assessment and management and formulating patient care plans. In class, students further refine their patient care skills through case analysis and discussion. The format of the course is similar to PHA 522 - Clinical Reasoning I, where students will be presented with clinical case scenarios that they must analyze and make decisions relevant to patient evaluation and management. The cases in this term present more complex diagnostic and management issues than in the previous course.

The goal of this course is to further develop students' clinical critical thinking and problem-solving skills, including utilizing previously learned information and recognition of how to find necessary information to fill knowledge gaps.

Pre-requisite for PHA 532: Successful completion of PHA 520, PHA 522, and PHA 524

Co-Requisite for PHA 532: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 530 and PHA 534

PHA 533 – Psychosocial Medicine (2 credit hours)

This two-credit course will explore the psychosocial aspects of patient care to help students develop a greater understanding of the dynamic between one's own and patient's attitudes, biases, and values and the impact these have on one's medical practice, patient relationships, and communication. The course discusses basic counseling and patient education skills necessary to help patients and families cope with illness and injury and to modify behaviors as needed to adhere to therapeutic management plans and improve outcomes. Topics discussed in the course will address the intersection of culture, faith, religion, and sexuality and these forces' impact on attitudes regarding health, wellness, and patient care.

Pre-requisite for PHA 533: none

Co-Requisite for PHA 533: none

PHA 534 – Clinical Medicine III (6 credit hours)

This is the third in a three-part course series designed to provide students with an intensive study of the principles essential to the practice of clinical medicine. Lectures will discuss the etiology, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, diagnostic evaluation, and management principles of various diseases in the following topic categories: Neurology, Psychiatry, Endocrinology, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Gerontology, and Preventative Medicine. Lectures, readings, case study analyses, and discussions of specific disorders in each category will provide an understanding of the key clinical concepts relevant to patient care.

Pre-requisite for PHA 534: Successful completion of PHA 520 and PHA 524

Co-Requisite for PHA 534: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 530 and PHA 532

PHA 535 – Principles of Advanced Practice II (2 credit hours)

This is the second of a two-part course series that prepares students for clinical practice. The course focuses on developing essential communication skills for effective collaboration among healthcare team members. Students will also learn key decision-making considerations critical for PA practice.

Pre-requisite for PHA 535: Successful completion of PHA 512, PHA 524, and PHA 525

Co-Requisite for PHA 535: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 534

PHA 536 – Emergency and Surgical Medicine (2 credit hours)

This two-credit course will provide students with an introduction to the diagnosis and treatment of disease states and conditions encountered in emergency and urgent care settings. Students will also be introduced to surgical concepts needed to assess patients and provide care in surgical settings. Emergency medicine lectures will discuss the role of triage, assessment, and the management of commonly encountered chief complaints of adult and pediatric patients in the Emergency setting. Surgical lectures will discuss general surgical concepts, including pre-, intra-, and post-operative care. The course will culminate with an intensive, hands-on skills training for a variety of skills and procedures.

Pre-requisite for PHA 536: Successful completion of PHA 514 and PHA 524

Co-Requisite for PHA 536: Concurrent enrollment in PHA 534

CHS 605 – Introduction to Ethics in Health Care: Interdisciplinary Perspectives (2 credit hours)

This interdisciplinary course will introduce students to foundational theories of health care ethics, ethical decision-making frameworks, legal and professional standards in health care ethics, institutional and interprofessional ethical constraints, and major ethical issues facing health care professionals. Students will have the opportunity for case analysis and discussion with students from other professions with which they will someday be practicing. Course content will include lecture, online content, case analysis, and discussion.

Pre-requisite for CHS 605: none

Co-Requisite for CHS 605: none

IPE 502 – Interprofessional Patient Centered Teams

IPE 502 will introduce students to the four Interprofessional Educational and Collaborative Practice (IPEC) domains: Values/Ethics, Roles/Responsibilities, Teams/Team work, and Communication. Students will use experiential team-based learning to apply knowledge, skills, and values of the IPEC competencies.

Pre-requisite for IPE 502: none

Co-Requisite for IPE 502: none

Program Year II - Core Clinical Rotations

PHA 581 – Family Medicine (4 credit hours)

The family medicine rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in delivering primary care to patients across the lifespan. Students will work closely with family medicine providers to assess, diagnose, and manage a wide range of medical conditions, from chronic illnesses to acute issues. Key skills include conducting patient histories, performing physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, and developing treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on patient-centered care, communication, and preventive health strategies. Students will also gain experience in patient education, counseling, and procedures relevant to the setting.

Prerequisite for PHA 581: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 582 – Internal Medicine I (4 credit hours)

The internal medicine I rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in the assessment, diagnosis, and management of adult patients with a variety of medical conditions. Students will work alongside internal medicine providers to manage complex, chronic, and acute illnesses. Key skills include conducting thorough patient histories, performing detailed physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, and developing individualized treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on the management of comorbidities, patient-centered care, and interdisciplinary communication. Students will also gain experience in patient education, counseling, and evidence-based practices for managing adult health.

Prerequisite for PHA 582: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 583 – Internal Medicine II (4 credit hours)

The internal medicine II rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in managing adult patients, with an emphasis on an assigned medical subspecialty. This rotation directly follows internal medicine I, building on foundational skills to assess, diagnose, and treat a wide range of chronic and acute conditions. Key skills include taking thorough patient histories, performing detailed physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, and developing treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on managing comorbidities, patient-centered care, and clear communication within the healthcare team. Students will also gain experience in patient education and applying evidence-based practices in adult healthcare.

Prerequisite for PHA 583: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 584 – General Surgery I (4 credit hours)

The general surgery I rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in the care of surgical patients. Students will work alongside surgery providers to assess, diagnose, and manage a range of surgical conditions, in the preoperative, operative, and post-operative setting. Key skills include performing patient histories, conducting physical exams, assisting in surgical procedures, and developing post-operative care plans. Emphasis is placed on patient safety, aseptic techniques, and the management of surgical complications. Students will also gain experience in patient education, including post-surgical care instructions and recovery strategies.

Prerequisite for PHA 584: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 585 – General Surgery II (4 credit hours)

The general surgery II rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in the assessment, diagnosis, and surgical management of patients, with a focus on an assigned surgical subspecialty. This rotation directly follows General Surgery I, expanding on foundational surgical skills while allowing students to work closely with specialists in a focused area of surgery. Key skills include conducting

pre-operative assessments, assisting in surgeries, managing post-operative care, and developing comprehensive treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on surgical techniques, patient safety, and effective communication within the healthcare team. Students will also gain experience in patient education, wound care, and the management of surgical complications.

Prerequisite for PHA 585: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 586 – Obstetrics and Gynecology (4 credit hours)

The obstetrics and gynecology rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in the care of reproductive health. Students will work closely with OB/GYN providers to assess, diagnose, and manage a variety of gynecological and obstetrical conditions. Key skills include conducting gynecological histories, performing physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, and providing prenatal, postnatal, and preventive care. Emphasis is placed on patient-centered care, family planning, and communication with diverse patient populations. Students will also gain experience in prenatal monitoring, labor and delivery support, and reproductive health counseling.

Prerequisite for PHA 586: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 587 – Pediatrics (4 credit hours)

The pediatrics rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in delivering primary care to infants, children, and adolescents. Students will work closely with pediatric providers to assess, diagnose, and manage common childhood illnesses and developmental concerns. Key skills include performing pediatric histories, conducting age-appropriate physical exams, interpreting pediatric diagnostic tests, and developing treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on preventive care, patient education, and effective communication with both patients and families. Students will also gain experience in immunizations, growth monitoring, and addressing the unique healthcare needs of children.

Prerequisite for PHA 587: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 588 Behavioral Health (4 credit hours)

The behavioral health rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in the assessment and management of mental health conditions. Students will work alongside behavioral health providers to diagnose and treat a range of psychiatric disorders. Key skills include conducting mental health assessments, performing psychiatric interviews, and developing treatment plans, including pharmacological and therapeutic interventions. Emphasis is placed on empathy, therapeutic communication, and patient advocacy. Students will also gain experience in crisis intervention, patient counseling, and understanding the intersection of mental health and physical health.

Prerequisite for PHA 588: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 589 – Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (4 credit hours)

The physical medicine and rehabilitation rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in the care of adults with rehabilitation needs. Students will work closely with rehabilitation medicine providers to assess, diagnose, and manage complex health issues. Key skills include conducting comprehensive assessments, managing acute and chronic conditions, and addressing the physical and psychosocial needs of these patients. These experiences also include exposure to procedural interventions, such as joint injections. Emphasis is placed on patient-centered care and interdisciplinary team collaboration. Students will also gain experience in fall prevention, medication management, optimizing functional support, and improving quality of life.

Prerequisite for PHA 589: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 590 – Emergency Medicine (4 credit hours)

The emergency medicine rotation is a core clinical rotation that provides PA students with hands-on experience in the fast-paced environment of the emergency department. Students will work closely with emergency medicine providers to assess, diagnose, and manage a wide range of acute, life-threatening, and urgent conditions. Key skills include conducting rapid patient histories, performing focused physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, and initiating emergency treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on triage, rapid decision-making, and effective communication in high-stress situations. Students will also gain experience in trauma care, resuscitation, and patient stabilization.

Prerequisite for PHA 590: Successful completion of all first-year PA program courses

PHA 591 – Elective Rotation I (4 credit hours)

The first elective clinical rotation offers PA students the opportunity to explore a specialized area of medicine or surgery. In the medical rotation, students will work alongside specialists to assess, diagnose, and manage complex conditions in a focused field of practice. In the surgical rotation, students will gain hands-on experience in the perioperative care of surgical patients, assisting in procedures and managing post-operative recovery. Key skills across both rotations include performing patient histories, conducting physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, and developing treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on clinical decision-making, patient-centered care, and effective communication within the healthcare team. This elective provides students the chance to refine their skills in a particular area of interest, preparing them for a diverse range of future clinical opportunities.

Prerequisite for PHA 591: Successful completion of all first year PA program courses

PHA 592 – Elective Rotation II (4 credit hours)

The second elective clinical rotation offers PA students the opportunity to explore a specialized area of medicine or surgery. In the medical rotation, students will work alongside specialists to assess, diagnose, and manage complex conditions in a focused field of practice. In the surgical rotation, students will gain hands-on experience in the perioperative care of surgical patients, assisting in procedures and managing post-operative recovery. Key skills across both rotations include performing patient histories, conducting physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, and developing treatment plans. Emphasis is placed on clinical decision-making, patient-centered care, and effective communication within the healthcare team. This elective provides students the chance to refine their skills in a particular area of interest, preparing them for a diverse range of future clinical opportunities.

Prerequisite for PHA 592: Successful completion of all first year PA program courses

Program Year III – Advanced Clinical Rotations

SUMMER:

PHA 593 – Advanced Clinical Practice I (15 credit hours)

This is the first of a two-part clinical rotation series, designed for third-year PA students to gain advanced clinical experience in a focused area of medicine or surgery. The focused area of practice is determined based on student interest and clinical availability. This advanced rotation series allows students to enhance their clinical skills and deepen their expertise in their assigned focused area. Key skills include conducting patient histories, performing physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, developing evidence-based treatment plans and performing various procedures with a higher level of autonomy.

Prerequisite for PHA 593: Successful completion of second year PA rotations.

PHA595 – Master's Research Project I (1 credit hour)

This is the first of a 2-part course sequence that will integrate the critical thinking, application of research data analysis, and presentation skills taught throughout the program in a formative research capstone project. Students are expected to apply knowledge obtained from the PHA521 Research and Statistics, and participation in journal club activities in the development of their project.

Students will work with an assigned faculty advisor to develop a clinical research question and gather, analyze, and critique relevant research literature related to the proposed question to develop an extensive literature review paper. Students will use this information in the next part of the course sequence to prepare a master's capstone project designed to develop a potential original research study.

Prerequisite for PHA 595: Successful completion of PHA 521 – Research and Statistics

FALL:

PHA 594 – Advanced Clinical Practice II (15 credit hours)

This is the second of a two-part clinical rotation series, designed for third-year PA students to gain advanced clinical experience in a focused area of medicine or surgery. The focused area of practice is determined based on student interest and clinical availability. This advanced rotation series allows students to enhance their clinical skills and deepen their expertise in their assigned focused area. Key skills include conducting patient histories, performing physical exams, interpreting diagnostic tests, developing evidence-based treatment plans and performing various procedures with a higher level of autonomy.

Prerequisite for PHA 594: Successful completion of PHA 593 – Advanced Clinical Practice I

PHA 596 – Master’s Research Project II (1 credit hour)

This is the second of a 2-part course sequence that will integrate the critical thinking, application of research data analysis, and presentation skills taught throughout the program in a formative research capstone project. Students are expected to apply knowledge obtained from the PHA521 Research and Statistics, and participation in journal club activities in the development of their project.

Students will work with an assigned faculty advisor to develop a feasible clinical research project based on the research question and literature review developed in PHA 595. Students will then prepare a master’s capstone paper and presentation based on their original research study design.

Prerequisite for PHA 596: Successful completion of PHA 595 – Master’s Research Project I.

APPENDIX C - TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Rush University is committed to diversity and to attracting and educating students who will make the population of health care professionals representative of the national population.

Our core values — ICARE — Innovation, Collaboration, Accountability, Respect and Excellence, translate into our work with all students, including those with disabilities. Rush actively collaborates with students to develop innovative ways to ensure accessibility and creates a respectful accountable culture through our confidential and specialized disability support. Rush is committed to excellence in accessibility; we encourage students with disabilities to disclose and seek accommodations.

The following technical functions are required of all students enrolled in the PA Program.

Acquire Information

- Acquire information from demonstrations and experiences in courses such as lecture, group, and physical demonstrations.
- Acquire information from written documents and computer systems (e.g., literature searches & data retrieval).
- Identify information presented in accessible images from paper, slides, videos with audio description, and transparencies.
- Identify information presented in images from paper, slides, videos, and transparencies.
- Recognize and assess patient changes in mood, activity, cognition, verbal, and non-verbal communication.

Use and Interpret

- Use and interpret information from assessment techniques/maneuvers.
- Use and interpret information related to physiologic phenomena generated from diagnostic tools.

Motor

- Possess psychomotor skills necessary to provide or assist in holistic PA care and perform or assist with procedures and treatments.
- Practice in a safe manner and appropriately provide PA care and assessment in emergencies and life support procedures and perform universal precautions against contamination.

Communication

- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and families.
- Communicate effectively with faculty, preceptors, and all members of the healthcare team during practicum and other learning experiences.
- Accurately elicit information including a medical history and other information to adequately and effectively evaluate a population's, client's or patient's condition.

Intellectual Ability

- Measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data related to diagnosis and treatment of patients and populations.
- Exercise proper judgment and complete responsibilities in a timely and accurate manner according to the "program name" role.
- Synthesize information, problem solve, and think critically to judge the most appropriate theory, assessment, or treatment strategy.

Behavioral

Maintain mature, sensitive, effective relationships with clients/patients, families, students, faculty, staff, preceptors, and other professionals under all circumstances.

- Exercise skills of diplomacy to advocate for patients in need.

- Possess emotional stability to function under stress and adapt to rapidly changing environments inherent to the classroom and practice settings.

Character

- Demonstrate concern for others, integrity, accountability, interest, and motivation are necessary personal qualities.
- Demonstrate intent and desire to follow the Rush University and PA Code of Ethics.

The technical standards delineated above must be met with or without accommodation. Students who, after review of the technical standards, determine that they require accommodation to fully engage in the program, should contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services [here](#), to confidentially discuss their accommodations needs. Given the clinical nature of our programs time may be needed to implement accommodations. Accommodations are never retroactive; therefore, timely requests are essential and encouraged.

APPENDIX D - FIRST YEAR FORMATIVE EVALUATION

Student Name:

Evaluation Date:

This formative evaluation is conducted by PA program faculty at the conclusion of the didactic year to assess PA student progress towards achieving terminal program competencies. The evaluation is designed to provide both students and faculty with critical feedback on knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors essential for clinical practice. By aligning assessment tools with the program's defined competencies, this evaluation serves as a checkpoint to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth prior to students entering their clinical rotations. Students will undergo another formative evaluation at the end of their second year and a summative evaluation in the last 4 months prior to graduating.

Academic and Professionalism Components:					
Assessment	Assessment Benchmark	Meets Benchmark (Y/N)	Completed Remediation(s)	Terminal Program Competency Mapping	Competencies in Need of Improvement
Didactic courses	Passes each course with a final grade of B or above			1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7a, 3.7b, 3.7c, 3.7d, 3.7e, 4.1a, 4.1b, 4.1c, 4.1d, 4.1e, 4.1f, 4.2	
History OSCE	A score of 80% or above			3.1, 3.4, 3.6	
PE OSCE	A score of 80% or above			3.2, 3.4, 3.6	
Communication OSCE	A score of 80% or above			3.5, 3.6	
Technical Skills Trainings	A score of 80% or above			3.7a, 3.7b, 3.7c, 3.7d, 3.7e	
End-of-Year OSCE	A score of 80% or above for each competency			1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6	
PACKRAT exam	Completes exam; Goal ≤ 1 SD of national mean for first time takers			1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.3, 4.2	

Professionalism Assessment	4.0 and above on each section			4.1a, 4.1b, 4.1c, 4.1d, 4.1e, 4.1f	
Medical Terminology Exam	A score of 70% or above			1.1	

Academic and Professionalism Standing:

	Yes / No	Comments
Was the student on warning or probation during first year? <i>If yes, does the student meet criteria to be removed?</i>		
Was the student on a professionalism plan? <i>If yes, did student adhere to plan?</i>		

Administrative Components:

	Meets the following (Y/N)	Comments
Completed mandatory service hours		
Completed review of Professionalism Assessment		
Returned all program equipment (otoscope)		
Completed all second-year onboarding requirements		

Decision:

Progress to second year	Progress to second year and remain on probation	Ineligible to progress to second year
-------------------------	---	---------------------------------------

Comments/recommendations for student:

--

**APPENDIX E - PROFESSIONALISM ASSESSMENT –
FORMATIVE
2026-2027**

Student professionalism is formally assessed at the end of every year as part of the program's formative evaluation process and at the end of the program, as part of the summative evaluation process. An evaluation may occur at other times if an issue regarding a student's professional behavior arises, per the PA Program Handbook.

Student Name			
Year in the Program	PA-S1	PA-S2	PA-S3
Evaluation Date			
Setting			

Directions: For each, please check the box corresponding to the most appropriate rating for the student's professional behavior.

Communication (TPC 4.1a)					
Behaviors	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Displays a respectful and positive attitude towards others.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates clear and professional verbal communication.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates clear and professional written communication.	1	2	3	4	5
Responds to emails within 48 hours when a response is requested.	1	2	3	4	5
Passing Benchmark (Average Score): 4.0		Average Score:			
Comments (if any score less than "4" is chosen, please include specific comments):					

Appearance and Demeanor (TPC 4.1b)					
<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
Maintains a neat and professional appearance consistent with the program dress code.	1	2	3	4	5
Displays professional body language and facial expressions.	1	2	3	4	5
Maintains composure under pressure or in challenging situations.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Passing Benchmark (Average Score): 4.0</i>		<i>Average Score:</i>			
Comments (if any score less than “4” is chosen, please include specific comments):					

Dependability and Engagement (TPC 4.1c)					
<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
Completes assigned tasks and responsibilities according to deadlines without prompting.	1	2	3	4	5
Attends required classes and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Follows absence policy in the event of any absences.	1	2	3	4	5
Arrives on time for classes and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Actively participates in class without obvious distractions.	1	2	3	4	5
Prepares adequately for didactic and clinical coursework/activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Follows through on commitments.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Passing Benchmark (Average Score): 4.0</i>		<i>Average Score:</i>			
Comments (if any score less than “4” is chosen, please include specific comments):					

Self-Awareness and Accountability (TPC 4.1d)					
Behaviors	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Recognizes their own limitations as a student without overstepping boundaries.	1	2	3	4	5
Accepts feedback in a professional and receptive manner	1	2	3	4	5
Takes responsibility for their own actions without making excuses or blaming others	1	2	3	4	5
Acknowledges and learns from mistakes, taking steps to prevent recurrence.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates cultural competence.	1	2	3	4	5
Passing Benchmark (Average Score): 4.0		Average Score:			
Comments (if any score less than “4” is chosen, please include specific comments):					

Honesty and Ethics (TPC 4.1e)					
Behaviors	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Conducts themselves in an ethical manner.	1	2	3	4	5
Is honest and transparent in their actions.	1	2	3	4	5
Attributes work appropriately, with proper use of references and citations.	1	2	3	4	5
Adheres to institutional HIPAA patient confidentiality policies.	1	2	3	4	5
Passing Benchmark (Average Score): 4.0		Average Score:			
Comments (if any score less than “4” is chosen, please include specific comments):					

Teamwork and Collaboration (TPC 4.1f)					
<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
Actively participates as a member of the team.	1	2	3	4	5
Allows others to express their opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
Is open-minded to other perspectives and ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
Collaborates well with other members of the team.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Passing Benchmark (Average Score): 4.0</i>		<i>Average Score:</i>			
Comments (if any score less than “4” is chosen, please include specific comments):					

If any section falls below the passing score, a remediation plan culminating in a reassessment is indicated per the PA Program Handbook. Upon the re-evaluation, students are expected to meet the passing score as listed.

Student's signature:

Date:

**APPENDIX F - PROFESSIONALISM ASSESSMENT -
PROFESSIONALISM VIOLATION #2
2026-2027**

A Professionalism Assessment is indicated as part of the professionalism remediation process for Professionalism Violation #2.

Student Name			
Year in the Program	PA-S1	PA-S2	PA-S3
Evaluation Date			

Directions: For each, please check the box corresponding to the most appropriate rating for the student's professional behavior.

Communication (TPC 4.1a)					
Behaviors	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Displays a respectful and positive attitude towards others.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates clear and professional verbal communication.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates clear and professional written communication.	1	2	3	4	5
Responds to emails within 48 hours when a response is requested.	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Comments:</u> <u>Score:</u>					

Appearance and Demeanor (TPC 4.1b)					
Behaviors	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Maintains a neat and professional appearance consistent with the program dress code.	1	2	3	4	5
Displays professional body language and facial expressions.	1	2	3	4	5
Maintains composure under pressure or in challenging situations.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:**Score:****Dependability and Engagement (TPC 4.1c)**

<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
Completes assigned tasks and responsibilities according to deadlines without prompting.	1	2	3	4	5
Attends required classes and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Follows absence policy in the event of any absences.	1	2	3	4	5
Arrives on time for classes and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Actively participates in class without obvious distractions.	1	2	3	4	5
Prepares adequately for didactic and clinical coursework/activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Follows through on commitments.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:**Score:****Self-Awareness and Accountability (TPC 4.1d)**

<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
Recognizes their own limitations as a student without overstepping boundaries.	1	2	3	4	5
Accepts feedback in a professional and receptive manner	1	2	3	4	5

Takes responsibility for their own actions without making excuses or blaming others	1	2	3	4	5
Acknowledges and learns from mistakes, taking steps to prevent recurrence.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates cultural competence.	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Comments:</u> <u>Score:</u>					

Honesty and Ethics (TPC 4.1e)					
<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
Conducts themselves in an ethical manner.	1	2	3	4	5
Is honest and transparent in their actions.	1	2	3	4	5
Attributes work appropriately, with proper use of references and citations.	1	2	3	4	5
Adheres to institutional HIPAA patient confidentiality policies.	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Comments:</u> <u>Score:</u>					

Teamwork and Collaboration (TPC 4.1f)					
<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
Actively participates as a member of the team.	1	2	3	4	5
Allows others to express their opinions.	1	2	3	4	5

s open-minded to other perspectives and ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
Collaborates well with other members of the team.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:**Score:****Professionalism Remediation need(s):****Expected Behaviors:****Benchmark(s) for Reassessment:****Student Action Plan:**

Upon the reassessment, students are expected to meet the passing score as listed above.

Student's signature:

Date:

APPENDIX G - SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

2/26/2020



Policy

Title	Social Media
Policy Number	OP-0362
PolicyType	Operational
Category	Leadership
Subcategory1	
Subcategory2	
Subcategory3	
Approval Date	10/1/2017
Contact	thurston_hatcher@rush.edu, social media manager
Applies To	
Purpose	
Executive Summary	Rush relies not only on the strong formal competencies of its employees, students and contractors, but also on the trust and support of the communities it serves. While we encourage open communication both internally and externally in all forms, we expect and insist that such communication does not demean our enterprise, violate our patients' or students' privacy and trust, or breach the fiduciary obligations of employment. Personal communications that include information about business or clinical operations at Rush, or about any of its patients, are always forbidden and may support grounds for immediate action in accordance with Rush policy, as well as federal, state and local regulations.
Definitions	
Equipment	
Information	.
Policy	The following policy applies to all employees, students and contractors of Rush University Medical Center and covers all publicly accessible communications via the internet relating to Rush, Rush University Medical Center, Rush Oak Park Hospital, Rush University and their affiliates (hereinafter referred to as "Rush"). This includes, but is not limited to, wikis; video-sharing websites such as YouTube and Vimeo; online social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat; social bookmarking sites such as Reddit; or any other form of online publishing, including blogs, discussion forums, newsgroups and email distribution lists.
Outcome	

2/26/2020

Guidelines	
Responsibility and Procedure	All Rush employees, students and contractors: 1. Know and follow the Rush Code of Conduct and all other organizational policies. Do not let your online activity interfere with your work commitments to Rush. 2. You are personally responsible for the content you publish online. Be mindful that what you publish on blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated media may never truly be erased or deleted. 3. You may not make public statements on behalf of Rush in letters to the editor, blog comments, discussion boards or any other social media forums for sharing thoughts and opinions. If, for some reason, you must indicate your association with Rush in a personal online communication, write in the first person, identify yourself by stating your first and last name, state your role at Rush, and use a disclaimer that makes it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Rush. You may use a disclaimer such as the following: "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent Rush's positions, strategies or opinions." 4. Do not use Rush's logo or trademarks or make endorsements of any kind unless you have received approval from the Department of Marketing and Communications. 5. You may not use "Rush" in your username or handle if you are not operating an official Rush social media account. 6. You may not use Rush's name or Rush's resources, including computer equipment, in relation to any political campaign or candidate. 7. Do not disclose Rush's confidential or other proprietary information to any third party, and certainly do not post Rush's confidential or other proprietary information on any social media or other public website. 8. Never identify patients or share their protected health information in social media forums or any other non-Rush electronic communications. 9. Ensure that all communications in social media forums comply with relevant Rush policies regarding privacy and confidentiality of student records. 10. Respect copyright, trademarks and other intellectual property rights of others. For example, just because you were able to pull an image or logo off a web page does not mean you are authorized to republish that image or logo on a different site. 11. Do not cite or reference vendors, clients or suppliers without their approval. When you do refer to a vendor, client or supplier, where possible, link back to the source. 12. When contributing content in an online forum, do not use ethnic slurs, racial epithets, personal insults or obscenity, or engage in any offensive conduct. You should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory, such as politics and religion.

2/26/2020

	13. Be aware of your association with Rush in online social networks. If you identify yourself as an employee, student or contractor of Rush, ensure that your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, classmates and clients. From time to time, Rush reserves the right to check employees' publicly available online profiles and can act accordingly in response to content inconsistent with the terms of this policy. 14. Do not use photos without obtaining proper consent and authorization to release information. 15. If your online postings become the subject of a third-party claim, do not delete those postings or alter previous posts. 16. Do not create a social media account or page, or claim an existing listing, on behalf of a Rush department, section, service, program or group. All official Rush social media accounts are to be managed by the Department of Marketing and Communications unless special permission has been granted by Marketing and Communications. These include, but are not limited to, the following: ◦ Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat and Google+ ◦ YouTube and other video-sharing channels ◦ Flickr and other photo-sharing accounts ◦ Yelp and other user review websites ◦ Blogs 17. Whenever possible, all Rush-affiliated social media accounts must be administered through Rush's primary social media management platform. 18. If you wish to administer an informal group for your department, you must secure your supervisor's permission in advance. For such groups, you must provide contact information (first and last name, email address and phone number) for a site administrator. You may not use the Rush logo in these cases, and you must publish a disclaimer indicating that content on the site does not necessarily represent the views of Rush. You may use the name of the institution solely for the purpose of identification (that is, to indicate that the site is for people associated with a certain department, group or graduating class). Take all necessary precautions to prevent the inappropriate release of protected health information. 19. If you do not abide by this policy, you could subject yourself to disciplinary action up to and including termination and/or legal action taken by Rush. If you have questions about this policy, send an email to thurston_hatcher@rush.edu.
Regulatory Elements	
Related Policies	
Reference	Following is a list of policies and resources that are directly relevant to the use of social media by faculty, staff, students and contractors at Rush. This list is not exhaustive. It is your responsibility to understand and follow all policies pertinent to your position at Rush. If you have questions about Rush policy in general, talk to your supervisor. View

2/26/2020

	policies online at inside.rush.edu, where you will find a searchable database of operational policies and procedures for Rush. • Code of Conduct (HR-E 01.00) • Student Conduct, Rush University Catalog • Harassment (HR-E 02.00) • Code of Ethical Behavior (OP-0207) • Obtaining Consent Regarding Rush University Students (AD-0006) • Rush General Consent Form for Photographing, Videotaping or Audiotaping (form; copies available in print shop) • Photo, Video and Sound Recording (OP-0419) • Privacy, Confidentiality and FERPA • HIPAA Privacy Policy (HP-0002) • HIPAA Security Policy (HS-0001) • Notice of Privacy Practices (HP-0008) • Disclosure of Patient Health Information (OP-0142) • Employee Access to Patient Information (OP-0032) • Release of Information to the News Media (OP-0002) • Use of Rush Name and/or Logo (OP-0313) • Prohibition of Making Political Contributions or Attempting to Influence Legislation (CC-E001)
Last Published	10/1/2017 12:00 AM
Archive Flag	No

Content Type: Policy

