Physician Assistant Educational Program

2015 - 2016
STUDENT HANDBOOK
CLASS OF 2017

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COMMUNICATION

Heritage University Contacts Phone Number
Emergencies Rob Carroll 911
Physical Plant Director
Maintenance Office 509-901-7838
509-865-8631
Security Cell Phone 509-961-4674
Sat/Sun Security Assistance Cell Phone 509-314-9310
PA Program Office 509-865-0707

Campus Emergency and Security Procedures
1. Do not get in a confrontation or argument with anyone.
2. Be polite as you tell them that you will call somebody that can help them.
4. If you feel the threat of life or safety please call 911.

PROGRAM PERSONNEL
The program’s faculty and administrative staff work together as a team to deliver the PA Educational curriculum. Key contact information about each team member is listed below and will be updated as needed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Hatch, DHEd, PA-C</td>
<td>Academic Coordinator</td>
<td>509-865-8605 X2148</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hatch_b@heritage.edu">hatch_b@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagmar Schnader, MD</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>509-865-0745 X2149</td>
<td><a href="mailto:schnader_d@heritage.edu">schnader_d@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:kanzler_d@heritage.edu">kanzler_d@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph DiMeo, DO</td>
<td>Medical Director</td>
<td>509-865-0707</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dimeo_j@heritage.edu">dimeo_j@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Hargis, MCHS, PA-C</td>
<td>Clinical Coordinator</td>
<td>509-865-8664 X2147</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hargis_j@heritage.edu">hargis_j@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Dale, DHEd, PA-C</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>509-865-0706 X2145</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dale_l@heritage.edu">dale_l@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle May</td>
<td>Clinical Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>509-865-8526 x2150</td>
<td><a href="mailto:may_m@heritage.edu">may_m@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael McCrary, MS, PA-C</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>509-865-0728 X2144</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mccrary_m@heritage.edu">mccrary_m@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica Sanchez</td>
<td>Admin Coordinator</td>
<td>509-865-0707 X2140</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sanchez_m@heritage.edu">sanchez_m@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randy Cupp, MEd, PA-C</td>
<td>Clinical Faculty</td>
<td>509-865-8532 X2142</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cupp_r@heritage.edu">cupp_r@heritage.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all lectures, labs, discussion groups, and other assigned functions is required and monitored. There must be an appropriate reason and documentation for any absence. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action. The determination of absence validity in the academic year is the responsibility of the Academic Coordinator; during the clinical year it is the responsibility of the Clinical Coordinator. Lack of attendance will be recorded in the student’s file.

Excused absences will be allowed on a case-by-case basis for such things that are emergent, personal, compassionate, professional, or health related. If the student must miss a class, they must send an email notification to the Course Coordinator responsible for that class. A verbal will not be accepted. All notifications need to be in writing. In all circumstances, the student is responsible for any coursework missed. Students requesting an extended leave of absence should discuss the situation with the Academic Coordinator, who may opt to take it to the Student Promotions Committee for final consideration. The student must discuss this with the Academic Coordinator at least 14 days in advance in order for the leave of absence to be considered as excused. In most cases, the Program Director will be consulted regarding the request. Due to the fast pace in PA education time in class is very important. If a leave of absence is requested during the didactic year, it may be recommended that the student withdraw and return the following year. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Student Progress Committee SPC.

OFFICIAL MAILING ADDRESS

It is imperative that the PA Program office has current records with regards to name, mailing address, telephone number, and emergency contact information. Typhon and student services in MyHeritage must be updated immediately with any change(s).

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The Rave System is a notification students receive via email/text message sent by Heritage University Physical Plant Office the Heritage Village – 3400 in the event of school closures due to weather conditions and emergencies. If inclement weather prevents you from attending school on a day that Heritage University is open, you are responsible for making up any work or exams missed.
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

MISSION AND GOALS
Heritage University is in a medically underserved area and serves a large minority population which is also medically underserved. Part of the Heritage mission is to enrich the quality of life of its students and the community.

The mission of Heritage University:
The mission of Heritage University is to provide quality, accessible higher education to a multicultural population which has been educationally isolated. Within its liberal arts curriculum, Heritage University offers strong professional and career-oriented programs designed to enrich the quality of life for students and their communities.

Cultural Pluralism Vision Statement
Heritage University seeks to provide leadership in supporting cultural pluralism within our own and other communities. Cultural pluralism creates a climate of respect and appreciation by fostering learning about us in an interdependent and connected world. Heritage University acts to make its curriculum, staffing, teaching, and other college activities reflect this learning.

The goals of Heritage University: Students will gain:
1. Knowledge of the Physical World and of Human Cultures
2. Intellectual and Practical Skills
3. Personal and Social Responsibility
4. Integrative and Applied Learning

Physician Assistant Educational Program Mission Statement
The mission of the program is to increase access to healthcare, particularly in the rural or underserved areas of the Pacific Northwest, by educating future Physician Assistants who will provide high quality medical care in a compassionate and competent manner.

Physician Assistant Educational Program Goals
In addition to the Mission Goals of Heritage University the program’s goals are:
1. To actively recruit qualified candidates from diverse cultural backgrounds.
2. To foster intercollegiate relationships to ensure applicants receive the prerequisite education and experience to become successful students at Heritage University.
3. To provide a broad-based medical education, which will allow graduates to thrive in a dynamic health care environment.
4. To equip the physician assistant students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are essential elements of professional practice and instill a desire for life-long learning.
5. To provide opportunities for, and encourage involvement in, professional activities and organizations that advance the physician assistant profession.
PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY
The program strives to achieve its mission and goals in all aspects of its operations, including student selection, didactic and clinical curriculum, and graduate outcomes. The focus is on working with the rural and underserved areas in the Pacific Northwest in order to recruit qualified candidates and provide them with the core knowledge, skills, and professionalism for practice as a physician assistant.

The clinical curriculum was specifically designed to return the student to their rural community. The community-based Clinical Learning Centers will allow the student to obtain their clinical experiences while building relationships within the community that will encourage the graduates to remain in the area to provide health care where it is most needed.

DIVERSITY
Heritage University has a student body with substantial diversity, which creates an effective learning community where each cultural group is valued. To develop community and concern for the common good, Heritage University and the PA Program seeks to provide leadership in supporting cultural pluralism within our own and other communities. Cultural pluralism creates a climate of respect and appreciation by fostering “learning about us” in an interdependent and connected world. Heritage University acts to make its curriculum, staffing, teaching, and other collegiate activities reflect this learning. (ARC-PA: A3.15.a)

HISTORY OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSION
In the mid-1960s there was a shortage of primary care physicians, particularly in the rural areas of the United States. In 1965 at Duke University Medical Center, Dr. Eugene Stead developed a program, patterned after the fast-track training of physicians used during World War II, to expand the delivery of quality health care. He selected Navy corpsmen, who had medical experience during their military service and during the Vietnam War, and added additional training to round out that experience so they could perform as civilian health care providers. “On October 6, 1967, Duke University PA program graduated the first PA (physician assistant) students who went on to start practicing as Pas.”

Physician assistants are health care professionals who practice medicine with physician supervision. They conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel on preventive health care, assist in surgery, and write prescriptions. Their practice may include education, research, and administrative duties.

Because PAs are educated in the medical model, they have a close relationship with their supervising physician, which allows them autonomy in medical decision making.

Upon graduation from an accredited program, physician assistants take a national certification examination developed by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants in conjunction with the National Board of Medical Examiners. To maintain that certification, PAs must log 100 hours of continuing education every two years and recertify every ten years. PAs are licensed in the state in which they practice, or in the case of those employed by the federal government, they are credentialed.

ACCREDITATION STATUS
The ARC-PA has granted Accreditation - Provisional status to the Physician Assistant Educational Program sponsored by Heritage University.

Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class. (ARC-PA: A3.14a)

PROGRAM STRUCTURE and ORGANIZATION
Physician Assistant Educational Program is a department in the College of Arts and Sciences and is under the leadership of the program director. The PA program director directly reports to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences who then reports to the Provost. The program director supervises the medical director and all faculty and staff in all activities that directly relate to the PA program.

PROGRAM COMMITTEES
The program’s governance and self-assessment is conducted by the following committees:

- **Core Faculty/Staff – Meetings - chaired by the Program Director**
The core faculty meet at least monthly to review issues of day-to-day operation. Issues that require analysis and recommendations for action are referred to one of the other standing committees described below. Most actions regarding admissions and students are made by the Core Faculty/Staff Committee, based on recommendations of other standing committees. The program director and/or upper administration are responsible for actions regarding faculty and staff evaluation and budget-related resource issues.
The Core Faculty/Staff Committee conducts an annual retreat to analyze graduate outcomes and the program’s educational effectiveness. Retreat agendas are set by the program director to assure that the program meets the minimum standards for accreditation and to pursue the program’s goal of educational excellence. Core faculty are defined as those who are involved in the full scope of program operations, including admissions, teaching, committee work and student advising. The Medical Director is included in the core faculty if he/she is assigned to the PA Educational Program for more than 0.6 FTE.

- **Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) – chaired by the Academic Coordinator**
  The Curriculum Review Committee evaluates didactic and clinical courses, utilizing student evaluations, instructor observations and student performance as criteria. The committee makes course and/or curricular modifications as needed and reports those changes to the Core Faculty/Staff Committee.

  The CRC analyzes student course and instructor evaluations, student performance, preceptor surveys, exit surveys, graduate surveys, PANCE data, and graduate outcomes to monitor the curriculum for educational effectiveness. The committee utilizes national benchmarks for comparison with the program’s curricular content and sequence. The CRC includes the Core Faculty, the Program Director, and Medical Director. Adjunct faculty and clinical faculty attend when possible and their input is sought when pertinent to the issues.

- **Student Promotion Committee (SPC) – chaired by the Medical Director**
  The Student Promotion Committee reviews each student’s performance throughout each term to determine the student’s eligibility for progress to the next quarter. With input from the course chairs and other appropriate faculty, the committee makes decisions about students who must remediate, decelerate, or be withdrawn.

  At the end of the program, the SPC recommends students to the program director for graduation based on successful completion of the graduation and the summative evaluation requirements. The summative evaluation is in the form of the student’s individual portfolio.

  The SPC analyzes aggregate student data related to attrition, deceleration, remediation, and performance in didactic and clinical courses. The committee utilizes national/regional benchmarks and analyzes trends in student data in the context of admissions demographics and curricular changes.

- **Admissions Committee – co-chaired by the Program Director and the Academic Coordinator**
  The Admissions Committee is responsible for setting policy for the programs admissions process, including prerequisites, screening of applicants, the interview process, and student selection.
The Admission Committee reviews admissions policies and procedures, and assures the accuracy and consistency of admissions publications (web site, brochures). The committee reviews and evaluates admissions requirements, including prerequisite courses, to assure adequate applicant preparation for the program’s curriculum. The committee analyzes trends in the applicant pool and student enrollment, using national and/or regional benchmarks.

In addition to the Program Director and Academic Coordinator, the Admissions Committee consists of the Medical Director, Clinical Coordinator, and core faculty.

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE
The above standing committees form the governance structure of the program. Matters related to financial and personnel are reserved for the program director and/or upper level administration. The program director may convene an executive committee, consisting of the Medical Director, Academic Coordinator, and Clinical Coordinator as needed for general guidance or advice on strategic planning issues.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCEPTED STUDENTS
The program will provide each student with the Certified Background website link and a code to access their services for the Criminal background check, urine drug screen, and health history.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK
Prior to admission and prior to starting a clinical rotation with a contracted/affiliated hospital or healthcare facility, students are required to undergo a criminal background check to ensure patient safety and protection. Certified Background is the contracted company with the PA Program to complete the search and provide a summary report of the eligibility screenings. This is a requirement placed on the healthcare facilities by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). The Physician Assistant Educational Program has adopted the following policy for Criminal Background Checks (CBC):

1. The Physician Assistant Educational Program at Heritage University requires that all students undergo a CBC prior to admission. The student will assume the cost of the CBC prior to admission. No student will be allowed to participate in any classroom activities without proof of a CBC given to the PA Program Office.
2. PA Program requires that all students will undergo a second CBC prior to the commencement of clinical rotations. The student will assume the cost of the CBC prior to the clinical-year matriculation. The CBC will be performed at least three months prior to commencement of the clinical rotation with the CBC record on file with the PA Program Office.
3. The entity, Certified Background, is approved and licensed to perform background checks. The company is selected at the sole discretion of Heritage University.
4. The CBC search may include, but not be limited to, sources such as the following:
   ✓ Social Security Number Trace
✓ Residency History
✓ Washington State Patrol Criminal Background check
✓ U.S. County Criminal Records for all counties in the past seven years
✓ Nationwide Database Search (Criminal Records & Nationwide Sex Offender Registry)
✓ HHS/OIG list of excluded individuals, GSA list of Parties Excluded from Federal Programs Consumer report information related to character, general reputation and credit that may be subject to the Fair Credit Reporting Act
✓ Nationwide Healthcare Fraud & Abuse Registry (FACIS Level III)
✓ Anti-Terrorism, USA PATRIOT Act

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS
1. Heritage University will notify all newly admitted students of the requirement that they must have an approved Criminal Background Check (CBC) prior to matriculation. A student who is challenging any part of the CBC may enroll if he/she acknowledges that the challenge must be cleared prior to attending classes.

2. Heritage University will notify all students of the requirement that they must have an approved Criminal Background Check at least one month prior to commencement of the clinical rotation. Students will be referred to the CBC website to complete the directions. A summary report will be sent to PA Program office.

3. A fully detailed copy of the report will be delivered directly to the student with a copy to the PA Academic Coordinator with the student’s prior approval.

4. Any questionable or adverse information provided through the CBC will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee for further evaluation. An adverse or questionable report may result in the denial of admission or dismissal from the Physician Assistant Educational Program.

CHALLENGED RESULTS OF THE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK
1. Students who question the accuracy of the report should immediately send a brief written statement regarding the area they believe to be incorrect to the entity that performed the CBC.

2. All disputes pertaining to the CBC findings must be communicated in writing directly to the entity that conducted the CBC.

3. Re-verification will be made if the entity determines that reasonable grounds exist and that the request is not frivolous or irrelevant.

4. If parts of the report are deleted or changed because of re-verification, Heritage University and the student will receive a corrected report.

5. If the student does not challenge the questionable or adverse information from the entity that conducted the CBC and when the CBC findings are such that the student does not meet the healthcare site’s CBC requirement, the student will be referred by the PA Program Director to the Student Promotion Committee for further evaluation.

6. Any adverse decision by the Student Promotion Committee may have a final appeal through the Dean of Arts and Science, then the Provost, if needed.
Notification from Heritage University that a prospective student is denied enrollment or a currently enrolled student is denied participation in clinical rotations due to CBC findings will be provided by certified letter to the student from the PA Program Director explaining why the student cannot matriculate or continue in the program.

DUTY TO REPORT CRIMINAL CHARGES/DETERMINATIONS
Students have the responsibility to report criminal charges/determinations.

**Criminal charges:**
Any student of the Physician Assistant Educational Program who is charged with a crime (other than a minor traffic offense and/or local ordinance violation) shall report having been charged to the Program Director and Advisor within 3 days of becoming aware of such charge. The student shall report the crime(s) he/she has been charged with and provide documentation of the charges upon request. Within 3 days of receiving the notice from the student, the Program Director will make a determination to what action, if any, is immediately warranted.

**Criminal Determinations:**
Within three (3) days of the student receiving a determination of criminal charges (e.g. dismissal, plea, and/or sentencing) he/she will notify the Program Director and Advisor and provide a copy of the court documents supporting the decision. Within 3 days of receiving the documents from the student, the Program Director will make a determination to what action, if any, is immediately warranted.

URINE DRUG SCREEN
Prior to admission and prior to starting a clinical rotation with a contracted/affiliated hospital or healthcare facility, students are required to undergo a urine drug screen. **Certified Background** is the entity contracted with the Heritage University to complete the 10 Panel Urine Drug Screening. **This is a requirement placed on the healthcare facilities by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).** The Physician Assistant Educational Program has adopted the following Policy of Urine Drug Screens (UDS):

1. Heritage University PA Program requires that all students prior to admission undergo a UDS. The student will assume the cost of the UDS prior to admission. No student will be allowed to participate in any classroom activities without the submission of a UDS report to the program.
2. Heritage University PA Program requires that all students undergo a second UDS prior to the commencement of clinical rotations. The student will assume the cost of the UDS prior to the clinical-year matriculation. The UDS will be performed at least three months prior to commencement of the clinical rotation with the UDS record on file with the PA Program Director.
3. Heritage University PA Program, at its sole discretion and at the cost to the University, may require a random Urine Drug Screen at any time.
4. The entity, **Certified Background**, is approved and licensed to perform background checks. The company is selected at the sole discretion of Heritage University.

**URINE DRUG SCREEN PROCESS**

1. Heritage University PA Program will notify all newly admitted students of the requirement that they must have an approved Urine Drug Screen prior to matriculation. A student who is challenging any part of the UDS may enroll if he/she acknowledges that the challenge must be cleared prior to attending classes.

2. Students will be referred to **Certified Background** for the 10 Panel Urine Drug Screen. Students may petition to the PA Program Director to have an alternative site selection for the Urine Drug Screen for convenience or expense. However, the ultimate site approval is at the sole discretion of the Heritage University.

3. A fully detailed copy of the UDS will be delivered directly to student’s email profile account within the **Certified Background** system. The Program Coordinator will receive a copy of the results with the student’s prior approval.

4. Any questionable or adverse findings revealed through the UDS will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee for further evaluation. An adverse or questionable UDS may result in the denial of admission or dismissal from Heritage University.

**URINE DRUG SCREEN CHALLENGED RESULTS**

1. Students who question the accuracy of the report should immediately send a brief written statement regarding the area they believe to be incorrect to the private company that performed the UDS.

2. All disputes pertaining to the UDS findings must be communicated in writing directly to the entity that conducted the UDS.

3. Re-verification will be made if the entity determines that reasonable grounds exist and that the request is not frivolous or irrelevant.

4. If parts of the report are deleted or changed because of re-verification, Heritage University PA Program and the student will receive a corrected UDS report.

5. If the student does not challenge the questionable or adverse information from the entity that conducted the UDS and when the UDS findings are such that the student does not meet the Heritage University PA program standards, the student will be referred by the PA Program Director to the Student Promotion Committee for further evaluation.

6. Any adverse decision by the Student Promotion Committee may have a final appeal through the Dean of Arts and Science, then the Provost, if needed.

**MEDICAL HISTORY AND IMMUNIZATIONS**

Applicants accepted for admission are required to submit a medical history and physical examination form that has been completed and signed by a licensed health care professional prior to matriculation. The following immunizations\(^2\) must be current as of

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\(^2\) These requirements follow the CDC recommendations for health professionals.
June 1st the year the student is accepted and then kept current for the remainder of the program:

1. PPD testing yearly (chest radiography every three years if PPD is considered positive);
2. Hepatitis B immunization established by three reported dates of immunization or by documented testing of antibody titer or HBSAB titer
3. Hepatitis A immunization
4. Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis immunization once after the age of 19 then boost with Tetanus/Diphtheria (Td) every ten years
5. MMR immunization documentation showing two doses at recommended schedule or by documented antibody titer (negative titers need MMR, two-step vaccine 4 weeks apart, followed by another titer 6-8 weeks later with documentation of immunity)
6. Varicella Status by, positive titer, or two-step vaccine 4 weeks apart with repeated IgG Titer
7. Polio vaccination by OPV or IPV
8. Influenza immunization annually

The medical history and physical examination forms and the immunization records will be reviewed and approved/clarified by the Physician Assistant Program’s contracted account with Certified Background. The PA program faculty and staff will not have access to the medical history and physical examination forms except for the immunization records, which may be maintained and released with written permission from the student. (ARC-PA: A3.07, A3.21)

HEALTH INSURANCE

PA program students must present proof of personal health insurance at registration and maintain personal health insurance throughout the educational program. The student is solely responsible for his/her medical bills. The University assumes no responsibility to seek reductions or waivers.

HEALTH MAINTENANCE

Heritage University does not have a student health center at this time. Principle faculty, the program director, and the medical director cannot participate as routine health care providers for students. The Office of the Program Director may assist students in obtaining a health care provider during the educational period. (ARC-PA: A1.05)

TUITION AND FEES REFUNDS (ARC-PA A3.14g)

All requests for withdrawals must be made on an official add/drop form or online for refunds to be granted. Submittal must be made to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate day and approved before refund requests are granted. Forms must be submitted on the previous business day if the cut-off day is a non-business workday.

The tuition and fees refund shall be prorated as per PA program policy:
### ALL TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Withdraws</th>
<th>Percentage of Refund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to 10% of the total contact hours of the course</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to 20% of the total contact hours of the course</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to 25% of the total contact hours of the course</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 25% of the total contact hours of the course</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students must return all PA program materials upon notification of withdrawal.

No course, clerkship, or rotation will be credited toward promotion, graduation, or subsequent credit if a student has not paid the required tuition and fees, including any additional tuition incurred by repeating any portion of the regular program.

Refunds will be available to the student approximately four weeks after an official withdrawal form is submitted to and approved by the Registrar’s Office. An additional two weeks are required to process refund requests made by mail. Debts owed to the university must be paid in full before any tuition refund is issued. These debts include, but are not limited to, payments owed to the bookstore, the Emergency Loan Fund, and tuition and fees. First-time students on financial aid shall be accorded prorated refunds, per U.S. Department of Education regulations. All inquiries concerning the above policies should be directed to the Office of Admissions. For financial questions please contact Financial Aid and the Business Office.

### SAAAPA AND WAPA MEMBERSHIP

All students enrolled in the PA Program are encouraged to become student members of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA) and the Washington Academy of Physician Assistants (WAPA) or the academies of the State where they would like to practice as graduates. This membership is important to begin building networking opportunities and relationships with future colleagues.

### CURRICULUM OVERVIEW


The curriculum is consistent with the mission and goals of the program and is structured around the following competencies:

1. **Medical Knowledge**
   The PA graduate will recognize and explain health problems based upon current scientific knowledge or understanding. The graduate will develop a plan for intervention that uses scientific understanding for optimum results. The graduate will
be aware of his/her personal knowledge and experience and have an intellectual interest in general education and medical science. The graduate will actively set clear learning goals, pursue them, and continually apply the new knowledge.

2. **Interpersonal and Communication Skills**
The PA graduate will listen and communicate effectively with patients and staff. He/she will learn team and leadership skills and effectively communicate through accurate, up-to-date medical records. Graduates will demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that enable them to establish and maintain professional relationships with patient’s families and other members of the health care team.

3. **Patient Care**
The Physician Assistant Educational Program graduate will demonstrate the ability to effectively treat patients from diverse populations, providing them medical care that incorporates the education for the prevention of common health problems exhibited in individuals, families, and communities. In addition, they will demonstrate patient empathy and awareness of behavioral issues.

4. **Professionalism**
The PA graduate will uphold the principles of medical ethics, promote advocacy and patient welfare, collaborate with health professionals, exhibit lifelong learning, and show sensitivity to a diverse patient population. The graduate will be prompt and professional in appearance.

5. **Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**
The PA graduate will demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate their methods of clinical practice, integrate evidence-based medicine into patient care, show an understanding of research methods, and improve patient care practices.

6. **Systems-Based Practice**
The PA graduate will demonstrate an understanding of health delivery systems, provide effective and qualitative patient care within the system, and practice cost-effective medicine.
The following chart indicates the required coursework for the Master of Science, Physician Assistant degree.

### Curriculum Grid: 2015-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer term 2015</th>
<th>Cr</th>
<th>Fall semester 2015</th>
<th>Cr</th>
<th>Spring sem. 2016</th>
<th>Cr</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total hr</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Medicine I: PAM 500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Behavioral Med II: PAM 505</td>
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<td>Behavioral Med III: PAM 510</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>MRP II (online): PAM 520</td>
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<td>MRP III (online): PAM 525</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>PIPA II: PAM 535</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>PIPA III: PAM 540</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procedures &amp; Diagnostics I: PAM 550</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Procedures &amp; Diagnostics II: PAM 555</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spanish for Medical Professionals: SPAN 570</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intro to Primary Care &amp; Normal Patient: PAM 545</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Integrated Primary Care: PAM 560</td>
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<td>Integrated Primary Care: PAM 565</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>630</td>
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**TOTAL**  12  26  28  66  1014

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<th>Summer term 2015</th>
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<th>Fall term 2015</th>
<th>Cr</th>
<th>Spring term 2016</th>
<th>Cr</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total hr</th>
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<tr>
<td>Master’s Research Project IV (online): PAM 615</td>
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<td>MRP V (online): PAM 620</td>
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<td>MRP VI (online): PAM 625</td>
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<td>Community Based Clinical Experience I: PAM 600</td>
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<td>Com.-Based Clin. Exp. II: PAM 605</td>
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<td>Com.-Based Clin. Exp. III: PAM 610</td>
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<td>Elective Clinical Exp. I: PAM 635</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>

**Total**  13  21  20  54  2060

**Total credits for MSPA:** 120 (70 didactic and master’s project + 50 clinical credits representing approximately 2000 clinical hours)
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The following courses are a required component of the didactic education for the degree of Master of Science, Physician Assistant (MSPA)

Professional Issues for Physician Assistants I, II, III (PAM 530, PAM 535, PAM 540)
This course continues throughout the three terms of the didactic year. During the first term, the students will learn the necessary skills to search, interpret, and evaluate the medical literature in order to maintain a current and critical knowledge of new medical findings that are pertinent to their patients. Students will learn the basic principles of evidence-based medicine, including its application to individualized patient care. The second term will focus on the history of the PA profession; the health care team; professional organizations; cultural issues and their impact on health care policy; confidentiality, privilege and HIPAA; and personal ethics. The final term will continue with the discussion of ethics, including professional responsibility and a commitment to the patient’s welfare; health care delivery systems and policy; reimbursement; billing and coding; quality assurance and risk management; political and legal issues; and PA certification, licensing, and credentialing. (ARC-PA: B1.01, B1.03-B1.09, B1.11, B2.10-B1.17, B3.01, C3.01-C3.03, and C3.05).

Master’s Research Project I, II, III, IV, V, VI (PAM 515, PAM 520, PAM 525, PAM 615, PAM 620, PAM 625)
The Master’s Research Project continues throughout the full two year program and begins as an on-campus course where the students are introduced to research design, validity, reliability, and ethics as well as data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The course then moves into an online format where, during the next five terms, the students will incorporate independent study and formative feedback to move through to completion and presentation of their research projects. The applied projects are chosen by the students, approved by the PA Student Promotion Committee, and must be a health promotion, disease prevention issue that is pertinent for a specific patient population and health care team. (ARC-PA: B1.01-B1.09, B1.11, B2.09, B2.10, B2.16, B3.01, B3.02, C3.01-C3.05).

Introductory Spanish for Medical Professionals (Span 570)
This combination lecture and laboratory/skills course introduces essential medical vocabulary, practical reference information, and medical notes from a cross-cultural perspective. Basic language skills needed to conduct an interview with a Spanish speaking patient. Vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and pertinent cultural issues will be explored as well as techniques for eliciting information and sample interview questions. Guest lecture speakers from the Medical community will address a variety of practical issues. (ARC-PA: B1.01, B1.06, B1.08, B1.09, B1.11, B2.04, C3.01-C3.03, and C3.05).
Behavioral Medicine I, II, III
(PAM 500, PAM 505, PAM 510)
Behavioral Medicine will cover the knowledge, skills and sensitivity needed in order to intervene effectively for a variety of psychiatric, emotional, and social concerns which impact upon the health and well-being of patients. Students will gain skills in the evaluation, counseling, diagnosis, and management of patients with mental illness, issues of aging, and other psychosocial situations.  ARC-PA: B1.01-B1.09, B1.11, B2.08, B2.09, B2.13, B2.16, B3.01, C3.01-C3.03, and C3.05).

Introduction to Primary Care and the “Normal” Patient
(PAM 545)
This course will introduce the physician assistant student to primary care and the “normal” patient from the newborn to the geriatric patient, including the expectant mother from pregnancy diagnosis to the delivery and postpartum care. The student will learn what is “normal,” i.e. the general molecular chemistry of life, including genetics; growth and development; basic screening exams for adults, newborns, and children; principles of pharmacology, pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics, and how to take accurate and complete histories on all types of patients. Health promotion and disease prevention will be addressed as well as immunology, infectious diseases, and antibiotics.  (ARC-PA: B1.01-B1.06, B1.08, B1.09, B1.11, B2.02-B2.04, B2.06, B2.07, B2.12, B2.13, B3.01, C3.01-C3.03, and C3.05).

Integrated Primary Care I, II
(PAM 560, PAM 565)
Continuing through fall and spring terms, this course provides students with instruction in patient assessment of the most common clinical problems seen by primary care practitioners. This course includes a review of human anatomy and physiology, generation of differential diagnoses; ordering and interpreting appropriate diagnostic studies, such as radiography and electrocardiography; written documentation and oral presentation of patient data; and appropriate referral of patients. Using an organ systems approach, essential information is provided in regards to the diagnosis and management of the most common acute, emergent, and chronic clinical problems seen by primary care providers in their pediatric as well as adult patients. Management methods discussed will include medical, surgical, pharmacologic; and rehabilitative modalities. The students will be able to develop an understanding of major drug classifications, their mechanism of action, the major side effects, and commonly used drugs in each category. Information is presented using lectures, labs, online assignments, and small group activities then enhanced with case studies, standardized patient encounters, and simulation mannequin experiences.  (ARC-PA: B1.01-B1.09, B1.11, B2.02-B2.07, B2.13, B3.01, C3.01-C3.03, and C3.05)
Procedures & Diagnostics I, II
(PAM 550, PAM 555)
The Integrated Physical Diagnostics will provide instruction in: techniques of patient interviewing; performing physical exams across the ages; performing technical skills, including but not limited to suturing, casting, splinting, intravenous line insertion, and airway insertion, which will be presented in a lab or workshop environment. Observational experiences and case studies will be used to enhance learning. The course will allow the student to apply their knowledge by experiencing clinical situations with a simulation mannequin, standardized patient, or actual clinical patients. The subject sequence is organized around the Integrated Primary Care course. (ARC-PA: B1.01-B1.09, B1.11, B2.02-B2.07, B2.13, B3.01, C3.01-C3.03, and C3.05).

The following courses are a required component of the clinical education for the degree of Master of Science, Physician Assistant.

Community-Based Clinical Experience I, II, III
(PAM 600, PAM 605, PAM 610)
The clinical component of this educational program will be based in rural and/or underserved communities, primarily in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Alaska. The students will be based in a home community, a Clinical Learning Center, and will participate in supervised, integrated, clinical practice experiences in emergency medicine, family medicine, general internal medicine, general surgical/operative care, geriatrics, pediatrics, prenatal and women’s health care, and psychiatry and/or behavioral medicine. Students will rotate through outpatient, emergency, inpatient, and long-term care settings throughout the clinical year as they gain experience and meet the objectives of the course.

The Clinical Learning Centers will be in communities with critical access hospitals, which will have an active emergency room, essential specialists, and a strong family medicine and/or internal medicine base. Students will be required to live in the community as they rotate through the available specialties throughout the year, while maintaining a continuity presence in a family medicine clinic. Students may be required to attend short intensive rotations outside of their home community for specific required experiences. (ARC-PA Standards: B1.01, B3.01-B3.04, B3.06, B3.07, C3.01-C3.05, C4.01 and C4.02).

The following courses are an elective component of the clinical education for the degree of Master of Science, Physician Assistant.

Elective Clinical Experience I, II
(PAM 630, PAM 635)
During the clinical year, students may choose two elective clinical rotations, up to 320 hours combined. These rotations may or may not be in their home community. All elective rotations must have clear educational objectives and be approved by the Clinical Coordinator or, in his/her absence, the Program Director. (ARC-PA Standards: B1.01, B3.01-B3.04, B3.06, B3.07, C3.01-C3.05, C4.01 and C4.02).
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Competencies for the PA Profession
The purpose of this program is to train physician assistants who will provide high quality medical care in a compassionate and competent manner in a dynamic health care environment. Furthermore, this program has the duty and responsibility to the public to assure that its graduates are fully competent physician assistants who will follow the decree: “First, do no harm.” The curriculum goals are based upon the Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession document as composed by the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (now the Physician Assistant Education Association, PAEA), and the Accreditation Review Commission for Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

These competencies emphasize the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to recognize and treat acute, chronic, emergent or surgical conditions that are commonly found in primary care patients of all ages. The Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession, Appendix A outlines specific competencies in medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice.

The Physician Assistant Educational Program at Heritage graduates are expected to demonstrate these competencies by:

1. Gathering an accurate history, performing a competent physical exam, diagnosing physical and psychosocial health problems, and formulating a treatment plan for patients across the life span and in acute, chronic, emergent, and long-term settings. (Competencies: 1,2,3,4)
2. Accurately evaluating pertinent diagnostics such as ECGs, radiographs, and laboratory findings. (Competencies: 1,2,3)
3. Competently performing technical skills including but not limited to: casting, splinting, suturing, and venipuncture. (Competencies: 1,2)
4. Understanding the principles of scientific inquiry and research design, as well as the ability to apply these principles to critically read and interpret the literature leading to enhanced delivery of health care and life-long learning. (Competencies: 2,3)
5. Incorporating the basic principles of health promotion and disease prevention into programs that benefit the patient, the patient’s family, and the community. (Competencies: 1,2,3,4,5,6)
6. Demonstrating effective listening and communication skills with patients, peers, and supervisors. (Competencies: 1,2,4)
7. Accurately and expeditiously documenting patient information while maintaining patient/provider confidentiality. (Competencies: 1,2,4)
8. Demonstrating sensitivity to individual differences such as age, gender, culture, and disabilities. (Competencies: 1,4,5)
9. Integrating ethical behavior and professionalism into the practice of medicine including intellectual honesty and respect for self and others. (Competencies: 1,4,5)

10. Establishing personalized involvement in professional activities and organizations that advance the physician assistant profession and provide service to the community. (Competencies: 5,6)

11. Participating in a team and community-oriented approach to the delivery of health care utilizing appropriate modern technology for the benefit of the patient, the patient’s family, and the community. (Competencies: 1,2,3,4,5,6)

12. Establishing and maintaining an awareness of the health care system while advocating for quality patient care. (Competencies: 5,6)

**Additional graduation requirements**

A student who has fulfilled all the academic requirements will be granted the Master of Science, Physician Assistant (M.S.P.A.) degree provided the student:

- Has complied with all the curricular, legal, and financial requirements of the Department, such as:
  1. passing grade of 80% or better in each required course in the curriculum,
  2. the successful completion of the Summative Evaluation as documented in the student portfolio, and
  3. complete payment of all tuition, fees, and library charges;
- Has demonstrated suitability for the practice of medicine as evidenced by:
  - meeting the competencies for the PA profession, the assumption of responsibility for patient care, and acknowledges self-limitations (evidenced in portfolio);
- Has demonstrated ethical behavior and integrity during the didactic and clinical activities by adhering to the principles and values detailed in the *Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession*, Appendix B or accessed through the American Academy of Physician Assistants web site at: [https://www.aapa.org/workarea/downloadasset.aspx?id=815](https://www.aapa.org/workarea/downloadasset.aspx?id=815); and
- Has obtained approval from the PA faculty, Student Promotion Committee, Program Director, and the Heritage University Registrar’s Office.

**PROFESSIONALISM**

**PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR STANDARDS**

PA students must adhere to standards of professional behavior consistent with the principles of medical ethics and state and federal laws. Students are expected to develop and demonstrate the behaviors, attitudes, and attributes of a physician assistant.

The faculty evaluates the student’s professional behavior throughout the curriculum, including behavior in the classroom, interactions with peers, faculty and staff, participation in seminars, and conduct in clinical settings. The faculty provides constructive feedback regarding minor lapses in professional behavior, however if a
major concern arises, the student should expect a review by the Student Promotion Committee (SPC). After evaluation of the situation the SPC, the student may be absolved, placed on warning, or dismissed from the program for professional issues.

The Program expects the students to adhere to the Statement of Values of the Physician Assistant Profession as outlined in the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession (Appendix B)

Physician assistant students must:

- Hold as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings.
- Uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, non-malfeasance, and justice.
- Recognize and promote the value of diversity.
- Treat equally all persons who seek their care.
- Hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.
- Assess their personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve their medical practice.
- Actively seek to expand their knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.
- Work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.
- Use their knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.
- Respect their professional relationship with physicians.
- Share and expand knowledge within the profession.

Examples of Unprofessional Behaviors
Examples of student conduct which violate professional standards and will lead to disciplinary action by the University include but are not limited to:

- Intentionally interfering with classes, research, administration, patient care, movement of other people, or any school function
- Showing a lack of respect towards other students, patients, faculty, staff, administration, or other school personnel
- Being mentally or constitutionally unable to follow the directions provided by faculty, staff, administration, or other school personnel
- Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, attempting to pass examinations by improper means, or assisting another student in such an act or simply tolerating it in others
- Intentionally providing false information to the school or officers of the school, altering records, or refusing to comply with the directions of school officials
- Intentional damage or theft of any school property or property of any school employee or visitor
- Practicing or appearing to practice medicine without a license (such as engaging in clinical activity without the direct supervision of a licensed physician or physician assistant) or accepting any form of reimbursement, payment, or gift for performance of clinical duties
- Sexual or physical harassment of any other student, employee, or visitor to the school
• The use, distribution, sale, or possession of illicit drugs or non-prescribed substances,
• Any intentional action in violation of local, state, or federal law or being indicted by a
  local, state, or federal court system for a felony.
In addition to disciplinary action through the PA program, students are held to the
University standards of conduct. Please view the Heritage University Student Handbook

CLASS INTERACTIONS
As adult learners, the amount that the students learn is directly related to what they put in
to the experience. Self-motivation is key. Students have the potential to learn as much
from each other as they do from the lecturers, thus diversity in the class is strength.
Tolerance and respect for others are important components of professional behavior thus
the PA program expects its students to be respectful, courteous, and non-judgmental
when dealing with others, such as instructors, staff, patients, or peers.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

GRADES

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<th>GPA value</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>95-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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Grading policies for each individual course will be provided with the course syllabus;
however, 80% is the minimum acceptable passing grade for all courses in the PA
program. Below 80% will be considered failing. Incompletes may be made up; however,
no grade above 80% will be granted. Incompletes, under extenuating circumstances
beyond the student’s control, may be made up with 80% or better. Percentage grades will
be rounded to the next whole number, thus anything .50 or higher will be rounded to the
next highest whole number; anything lower than .50 will be rounded to the next lowest
number (i.e. 79.51% will be rounded to 80% but 79.49% will be rounded down to 79%
and thus a failing grade). Students must pass all courses before advancing to the next
term. (ARC-PA: A3.17.a, b, & c.)

Student Appeals: Grades³

Meeting with the faculty member: A student who seeks appeal of a course grade must first
speak with the specific faculty member(s) concerned. The involved faculty member(s)
will then discuss the situation with the student and make a determination.

Meeting with the Academic Coordinator: If the student disagrees with the faculty
member(s), he/she may appeal and discuss the situation with the Academic Coordinator.
After hearing from the student and the faculty member(s), the Academic Coordinator will
make an informed decision.

³ The appeal must be made within four weeks of receipt of the grade.
Clinical rotation grades: If a student seeks appeal of a clinical rotation grade, the student may first discuss the situation with their clinical advisor. The clinical advisor will then discuss the situation with the preceptor (if applicable) and the student and then make a determination. If the student disagrees with their clinical advisor, he/she may appeal and discuss the situation with the Clinical Coordinator. After hearing from the clinical advisor, preceptor (if appropriate), and the student, the Clinical Coordinator will make an informed decision.

Meeting with the Program Director: If the student still seeks appeal, he/she may request a meeting with the program director. After hearing and evaluating all the information the Program Director will then make a decision regarding the matter.

Grievance Procedure beyond the PA Program: Students who feel that an academic decision affecting them should be re-examined may present their case according to the Heritage University grievance process described on page 28 or in the Heritage University Student Handbook. (ARC-PA: A3.17.d)

ACADEMIC STATUS REPORT
Students may access their grade report from My Heritage within 7 days of each graded evaluation during a term and at the close of every academic term. The student will receive a letter of Academic Standing if they are placed on academic warning or conditional status.

1) Academic Warning: occurs automatically during a term when a student’s course grade is failing.

2) Conditional Status: occurs at the recommendation of the SPC (Student Promotion Committee) when a student’s cumulative grade average falls below 80%, they have failed multiple module exams, or at the close of any term when the student’s grade is below 80%. Conditional status will be in effect until the class or classes are successfully remediated.

Conditional status or dismissal may also be required by the University for any student who: a) fails to maintain ethical, moral, personal, or professional conduct, b) fails to abide by Heritage University policies, rules and regulations, or c) fails to fulfill legal or financial obligations.

Students on academic warning will receive an intense study plan at the discretion and permission of the course chair and the SPC. The SPC will regularly review the progress of students on academic warning and may recommend conditional status at any time.

Students who are on conditional status are not eligible for PA program sanctioned travel and cannot hold elected office until they are off conditional status. At the discretion of the
SPC, conditional status may include additional restrictions from activities the Committee deems detrimental to academic performance. Since academic grades are only one criterion for conditional status, the Student Promotion Committee may recommend conditional status at any time even though a student’s average grade is 80% or higher.

The records of all students on conditional status or academic warning will be reviewed following each significant testing period to evaluate the student’s potential for continuance. At the end of the academic term, the Student Promotion Committee may recommend that students with multiple Academic Warnings or Conditional Status designations be placed into one of three categories with possible restrictions and modification: (1) intense remediation or competency examinations, (2) repeating the academic year in full, or (3) dismissal from the program. (ARC-PA: A3.17.e)

ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT OR REMEDIATION

If a student is in academic difficulty, indicated by scores below 80% on performance exams, written assignments, quizzes, or exams, the course coordinator will submit a proposed program of Academic Enhancement to the Student Promotion Committee (SPC) with copies to the Program Director. This plan may include tutoring, online reviews, or other tools as deemed appropriate. Implementation of this proposal is the decision of the SPC. Once the plan has been accepted, it will be presented to the student. If the student is identified only after the failure of a course module, the Academic Enhancement plan will be implemented prior to retesting the information failed in the course module. In the case of clinical rotation failures, the Clinical Coordinator shall act as course coordinator.

Immediately at the end of each term, students who have failed a course module during that term will be retested. The grade recorded from the retest will be no greater than 80%. Students must pass all course modules with an 80% or better in order to pass the course. If the student fails a retest situation, and thus the course, the SPC may recommend one of the following:

1. Remediation: Upon recommendation of the Student Promotion Committee, failures may be removed by passing a remedial examination given on or before three days prior to the commencement of the next term. In all instances, both the original and remediated grade will be recorded on the student’s transcript. The grade recorded from the remediated course module can in no case be greater than 80%. Students who fail remediation of a course module are subject to dismissal. Even with a cumulative course grade above 80%, if one module is failed and not successfully remediated through tutoring and retesting, the student will fail the course.

2. Repeat Academic Year: The student may remediate by repeating an academic year in full. The recommendation is based on the sole discretion of the Student Promotion Committee but may be offered to a student with one or two course module failures or failure of a remediated module.
In this instance, the student must retake and pass all courses regardless of previous performance. Students repeating their first year who are on conditional status are considered to be “admitted with conditions.” Those conditions are that any failure of any subject would be grounds for dismissal and will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee for recommendations. Conditional status will be removed at the end of the year when all classes are successfully completed.

3. **Dismissal**: The student is dismissed from the PA program with no possibility of readmission. The recommendation is based on the sole discretion of the Student Promotion Committee but may occur when a student has failed several course modules, failed a remediated module or committed a serious violation of ethical or professional behavior. *(ARC-PA: A3.17.e & f)*

**STUDENT APPEALS OF SPC DECISION**

**Academic Enhancement, Repeat of Academic Year, or Dismissal**

*Academic Enhancement Plan*: A student who wishes to appeal the course coordinator’s or the Student Promotion Committee’s plan for Academic Enhancement should submit an alternative plan that is tailored for the specific course (including laboratory requirements, if any) in a timely manner. The appeal should detail the student’s plan of study, establish deadlines for course module completion, identify a qualified instructor, and include a means of evaluation. Adoption of the alternative plan is at the discretion of the Student Promotion Committee in consultation with the course coordinator. This written appeal should also include:

1. **Causative Factors**: The written justification must clearly state the compelling reasons or extenuating circumstances which directly contributed to the student’s academic or clinical problems. These factors should be substantive, immediate (having occurred during the academic year), and well documented. Letters, receipts, court documents, and medical reports are some common types of documents.

2. **Remedies and Solutions**: The student is obligated to specify in the written justification those measures that he/she has taken to correct the causative factors. The remedies should offer a reasonable assurance that the student will be successful in the future. All remedies should be detailed and well documented and state a time line for completion. In the written justification, the student should propose a solution to his/her dilemma which will allow the student to successfully continue his/her academic studies and professional development in the program. The student should also acknowledge the consequences of the failure to perform to the covenants of the proposal. More than one proposal may be suggested.

The Student Promotion Committee will review the written justification and then schedule a meeting with the student. Such meetings are private and confidential including, but not limited to, the names of participants, proceedings, discussion, minutes, and findings. The following are prohibited in all Student Promotion Committee meetings unless otherwise authorized in writing by the Program Director and Student Promotion Committee
Chairperson: (1) electronic recording of the meeting, except for official minutes; (2) legal counsel; and (3) uninvited individuals. All final decisions regarding the pathway of Academic Enhancement, repeat of academic year, or dismissal will be made at a separate Student Promotion Committee meeting in which the student is absent.

Repeat of Academic Year or Dismissal: If the student is not in agreement with the decision of the Student Promotion Committee pertaining to the student’s dismissal or repeating the academic year, he/she will have ten (10) calendar days to appeal the decision directly to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Dean may confer with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. The student will be considered enrolled in the PA program until the appeal is acted on. This appeal shall be written and causative/mitigating circumstances and remedies and solutions should also be included. (ARC-PA: A3.17.d)

PROMOTION

At the end of the academic year, the Student Promotion Committee (SPC) will evaluate student performance. This Committee reviews all transcripts, records, and reports to determine if the student:

1. Has fulfilled all academic requirements by passing all didactic courses with 80% or better and adheres to the principles and responsibilities of professionalism, as outlined by the program, by demonstrating a commitment to:
   - Professional competence
   - Honesty with patients
   - Patient confidentiality
   - Maintaining appropriate relations with patients
   - Scientific knowledge
   - Maintaining trust by managing conflicts of interest
   - Professional responsibilities

2. Has demonstrated ethical behavior and integrity during the educational activities by adhering to the principles and values detailed in the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession (Appendix B)

3. Has met the financial and legal requirements of the Program. The SPC certifies the student’s eligibility for promotion to the succeeding year or graduation from the program.

Eligibility for promotion to the next year to start clinical rotations is determined by the student’s successful completion of the appropriate academic, professional, and financial requirements of Heritage University. The SPC also considers reports concerning attendance, conduct, and potential professional attributes. Students with failures or incompletes are not eligible for promotion.

At a faculty meeting preceding commencement, the SPC certifies and reports to the faculty the names of those students eligible for graduation, contingent upon the
successful completion of all academic, professional, and financial requirements of the University. At that time, all students’ Graduation Applications will be signed by each student’s advisor and the program director, as the department chair, and submitted to the Registrar’s Office per Heritage University policy. (ARC-PA: A3.17.a-c)

ADVISING AND COUNSELING

Academic Advising
Each student is assigned advisors for the duration of the program. The student’s academic advisor will be a PA faculty member whose responsibility is to mentor the student regarding academic issues, thus will be assigned to the student for the full length of the program. The student’s clinical advisor will be a clinical faculty member whose responsibility is to help the student obtain clinical experiences in order to complete the clinical objectives of the program. The student is responsible for contacting their advisors to set up appointments. Students will be informed of how best to contact their advisors; by phone, email, or text messaging and meetings will be set up as needed. The Core Faculty will assign the advisors. At any time the student feels uncomfortable with the advisor they have been assigned, they are instructed to discuss the situation with the program director who will reassign them to another advisor.

HU Cares/Student Advocacy
The mission of the Heritage University Student Advocacy program is to provide outreach and support services to promote student retention. Students who need assistance can receive academic advisement and counseling services through a trained academic advisor, mentor, and/or counselor. The main priority of the HU CARES program is to advocate for students on campus and to assist, motivate and empower students for self-development and self-actualization. The HU CARES system is a planned institutional intervention strategy to promote student success and retention. Students who are experiencing personal issues impacting their academic performance should contact Student Affairs for assistance.

Heritage Counseling Services
Students who are currently enrolled at Heritage University who are experiencing personal issues impacting their academic performance can work with a licensed mental health counselor. These services are free and totally confidential. Students may contact the Northwest Employee Assistance Program at (509) 575-4313 to schedule an appointment.

Contact Information
On campus: Student Services Center
Phone: 509-865-0440 Fax: 509-865-8659
Email: studentaffairs@heritage.edu

Students are asked to schedule appointments at times which do not conflict with their classes. However, the student may request permission to meet with Student Assistance Program (SAP) counselors during school hours. If the student lives outside the service area, they will arrange for the student to be seen in the area in which they live.
The use of the SAP is confidential. No one at Heritage University or the PA program will know that a student or any members of their family are using the program. Only information specifically authorized by the student or family member through a signed release of information may be shared by anyone. (ARC-PA: A1.05, A3.09, A3.10)

POLICY ON STUDENT GRIEVANCES
(ARC-PA A3.17d, g)

Regarding an academic issue or faculty member
Students who feel that an academic decision affecting them should be re-examined may present their case according to the following grievance process. Students have a limit of one year from the time of the incident in which to file a complaint. These steps are followed until the concern is resolved:
1. The student is encouraged to confer with the instructor concerned.
2. If the student believes the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved, the student confers with the program director or department chair.
3. If the student believes the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved, the student confers with the Dean of the College Arts and Sciences to seek assistance in resolving the concern.
4. A student makes an appointment with the provost/vice president of Academic Affairs to seek assistance in resolving the concern.
5. The student and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs may request a hearing committee to review the matter.
6. The provost/vice president of Academic Affairs communicates the decision to the concerned student.

Regarding a staff member
Students are encouraged to provide constructive feedback by first sharing the concern directly with the staff member involved. If the matter is not considered resolved, the student may then approach the staff member’s supervisor. Students may contact the Office of Human Resources to determine the appropriate supervisor and contact information.

Regarding a harassment issue
Heritage University is committed to creating a safe learning and working environment. Harassment is defined as conduct which threatens, intimidates, alarms, or puts a person in fear of his or her safety. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcomed and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim. Harassing behavior may include, but is not limited to, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs and lewd propositions, assault, blocking movement, offensive touching and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Students experiencing harassment regarding a staff, faculty member, or third party vendor of Heritage University are encouraged to contact the Office of Human Resources as soon as possible. If the harassment involves another student, please contact the Office of Student Affairs to report the problem and seek assistance.
Regarding another student
Students are expected to communicate concerns in a direct and respectful manner. If it is not feasible to approach another student directly, then the student with the concern should contact the Office of Student Affairs for assistance with resolving the matter.

Other resources
If internal complaint processes have not resolved the issue, contact any of the following:

**GENERAL COMPLAINTS:**
Washington State Office of the Attorney General
1125 Washington Street SE
PO Box 40100
Olympia, WA 98504
(360) 753-6200
http://www.atg.wa.gov/contactus.aspx#By_phone

**Academic Complaints:**
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
8060 165th Avenue N.E. Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052
(425) 558-4224
(425) 376-0596 (fax)

**Physician Assistant Program:**
Accreditation Review Commission on Education For the Physician Assistant
12000 Findley Road, Suite 240
Johns Creek, GA 30097
Phone: (770) 476-1224
Fax: (770) 476-1738

**Non-discrimination**
The objectives of the Heritage University Equal Opportunity Program are to eliminate discrimination and, in conformity with state and federal law, and in keeping with the University’s mission, to develop and maintain a work force and a student body which reflect the communities of the regions that the university serves. Applications for employment and student admission are especially solicited from groups underrepresented in various levels of the work force and/or in the region's higher education student bodies. (ARC-PA: A3.15.a, A3.16)

As stated in the Heritage University Student Handbook:

"Non-discrimination
The objectives of the Heritage University Equal Opportunity Program are to eliminate discrimination and, in conformity with state and federal law, and in keeping with the university's mission, to develop and maintain a work force and a"
student body which reflect the communities of the regions that the university serves. Applications for employment and student admission are especially solicited from groups under-represented in various levels of the work force and/or in the region's higher education student bodies.”

STUDENT/PATIENT/FACULTY RELATIONSHIPS
PA program students are held to both the program and Heritage University standards of conduct, processes, and sanctions. The code is instituted for all Heritage University campuses and program locations.

The relationship between a student and faculty or patients shall always be kept on a professional basis. A student shall not date or become intimately involved with faculty or a patient. Conduct in such an unprofessional manner shall be considered improper behavior and will be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from Heritage University. (ARC-PA: B1.05, B2.16)

Heritage Student Policies and Procedures
All students admitted to the PA program and thus to Heritage University are required to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner.

Heritage University Student Handbook
The Heritage University Student Handbook provides detailed information on student policies and procedures; general information, such as, health and safety issues related to campus; and resources for students, faculty, advisors and staff. View the Student Handbook

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Heritage University’s mission is based on the principle of deep respect for the value of each student. The policy and procedures for student conduct were developed with the intent of providing clear expectations for behaviors that promotes a culture of respect. As an educational institution the intent of this policy is to focus on personal development while working within a safe and supportive atmosphere. All students are responsible for knowing the expectations outlined in the student handbook, as well as any additional programmatic standards (i.e. nursing or education). View the Student Rights and Responsibilities.

I. Code of Conduct

A. Respect for the Law
1. Public laws: Students and organizations must comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
2. Alcohol: Heritage University is an alcohol-free campus. Student organizations and activities must all be alcohol-free, whether held on or off campus. Students must not show up to class or for university-sponsored events or employment under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance not specifically prescribed to the individual student.
3. Smoking: Smoking is not permitted in any Heritage University buildings or within 25 feet of an entrance to a building.
4. Controlled substances: Unlawful use, sale, or possession of substances or paraphernalia is prohibited. Use of prescription medication not prescribed to an individual and/or providing medication to an individual to whom it is not prescribed is prohibited.
5. Disorderly conduct: Behavior that disrupts the academic, administrative or campus environment is prohibited. Conduct standards will be based on the generally accepted university community standards of decency and morality and the extent to which any infringement has on the rights of others in the community. Examples include, but are not limited to; fighting, obscene telephone calls or electronic messages, and excessive noise.

B. Respect for others
1. Threats and Endangerment: Students shall not endanger the safety, health, or life of themselves or others. All forms of abuse and harassment (physical, sexual, and emotional), including threats, intimidation, and coercion are prohibited; including those sent using an electronic format (such as cyber bullying).
2. Aiding and Abetting: Attempting or aiding the commission of any prohibited act shall be disciplined at the same level as a completed violation. While a lesser breach, conspiring to commit a violation will still be considered an infringement of the Code of Conduct.
3. University Employees: Students must comply with the direction of university employees and show due respect. Any form of aggressive, abusive, or non-compliant behavior is prohibited.
4. University Policies: Students and organizations must comply with all other university policies and rules. Such regulations include, but are not limited to: computer use, parking, and intramural sports.

C. Respect for Personal and Academic Integrity
1. Academic Honesty: Students shall refrain from all acts of dishonesty, including, but not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty.
2. Misrepresentation: Students shall not provide false information to university officials, faculty members, or office. Misrepresentation includes forgery or alteration of any university document or record.
3. Academic Program Expectations: Some academic and extra-curricular programs have additional expectations and requirements that, if not met, may result in simple intervention up to final dismissal from the program and/or the university.

D. Respect for Property
1. Theft: Actual or attempted theft of personal or university property is prohibited.
2. Property Damage: Actual or attempted damage of property of the university community or other personal or public property is prohibited.
3. University Facilities: Unauthorized use of or entry into any university facility, or unauthorized abuse of such building, premise, or facility is prohibited.
4. Technology Resources: Abuse of the computer and networking resources of Heritage University is prohibited. Violations in this category include, but are not limited to: 1) unauthorized access, transfer and editing of files; 2) unauthorized use of another
university affiliated member’s identification and password; 3) illegal downloading of media files or software; 4) use of computing facilities or networking systems in a way that violates Heritage University’s technology use policy.

The following applies to the use of social media related to Physician Assistant Education Program at Heritage University and the use of social networking sites that include, but are not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, and blogs. While we attempt to provide reasonable guidelines, as new opportunities and challenges emerge, these guidelines will evolve.

**Protect confidential and proprietary information.** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Heritage University PA students, employees, alumni or identifiable things you encounter in your clinical settings. All persons must follow the applicable federal requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA, as well as NAIA regulations. Adhere to all applicable institutional and legal privacy, confidentiality and property policies and laws.

**Your posting can impact the College and your future career.** Do not post anything that could negatively impact the University. The health care community is a well-connected Group and your comments about a certain hospital, doctor, preceptor or instructor are not private and can impact you and the University by association. Defamation of the University, the PA program and others is breaking the student code of conduct and appropriate punishment will apply.

**Use Heritage University properties only with permission.** NO user may establish social networking sites that use Heritage University logo/text treatment or other intellectual properties such as photography, video, artwork, and publications copyrighted to the University without authorization from the University. It is a violation of social networking site policies to represent an institution without authorization.

Heritage University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment where persons can work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of abusive or demeaning communication. Heritage University acknowledges the individual right of expression within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Disciplinary action will be taken against individuals found to have engaged in prohibited use of the Heritage University electronic communications resources. For additional information about policies and procedures pertaining to electronic communications, contact the Information Technology Department.

**E. Respect for the Judicial System**
1. Failure to Comply: Students must comply with the directions of those university officials involved in the judicial process. This includes responding to requests and completion of imposed sanctions.
2. Falsification: Students must not provide false or distorted information. Knowingly causing the commencement of judicial proceedings without just cause (fair and honest and based on reasonable grounds) is prohibited.
3. Interference: Attempting to influence others within the judicial process is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment, intimidation, or attempted influence of the members of the judicial proceedings.

4. Disruption: Students may not disrupt the orderly proceedings of judicial hearings or processes.

II. Disciplinary Procedures

A. As a learning process, rather than a criminal proceeding, Heritage University uses the preponderance of evidence standard for disciplinary proceedings. This means that a final determination is based on the concept of whether the accused is more likely than not to have committed the act. There is not a requirement of physical evidence nor does the alleged violation have to be witnessed.

Congruent with classroom participation, this process focuses on student learning and the development of rigorous critical reflection and self-advocacy skills. Therefore, it is not intended to include direct participation or intervention by parents or other external parties.

III. Authority

A. The Office of Student Affairs is responsible for the oversight of this policy. The vice president for student affairs may serve as the judicial officer, or delegate another appropriate official to serve in this capacity especially in cases where she/he is the investigating officer. Each member of the university community is responsible for communicating and enforcing behavior expectations and for reporting violations.

IV. Hearing Process

A. The typical hearing process is described as follows:
   1. Concern Raised. The student will be informed by a university judicial officer or designee that a concern has been raised and a response by the student is necessary. The judicial officer then conducts an initial review of the facts to determine how to proceed.
   2. Student Conduct Meeting. Many times, the matter can be resolved during a less formal student conduct meeting with the student. In most cases, the student conduct meeting serves the same purpose as a hearing.
   3. Within five (5) normal business days, a student conduct meeting will be held at the earliest mutually agreeable time for the student and judicial officer. The meeting is held with only the student and the judicial officer present. During the meeting the student will be informed of the concern and provided an opportunity to respond and discuss the matter. The student may also be advised of the opportunity to present additional evidence. At any time during the disciplinary process, the student may choose to accept responsibility for his or her involvement in the incident involving a code violation. This informal method is the preferred intervention for the university because it allows for resolution in a more productive and less adversarial manner.
   4. Within 10 normal business days of the student conduct meeting, if a student denies any involvement in the incident, or chooses not to accept any responsibility and subsequent...
disciplinary sanction, she/he must formally request, in writing, for the university to hold a student conduct hearing.

5. Student Conduct Hearing. Within five normal business days of a written, formal request for a student conduct hearing, such hearing will be scheduled for a student who denies any involvement in the incident, or chooses not to accept any responsibility and or respond to any subsequent disciplinary sanction imposed by judicial officer. The student will be notified in advance of the date, time, and location of the hearing. If the student chooses not to attend the hearing, it may be held in his or her absence. As a result of the student’s decision not to participate, any decisions made at the student conduct hearing are not eligible for appeal.

6. Student conduct hearings are a formal administrative hearing attended by a minimum of two university officials as designated by the chief judicial officer. A student participating in the student conduct hearing process will:
   a. Receive advance notice of the date, time, and place of the initial hearing in a manner determined appropriate by the judicial officer.
   b. Receive a statement of the alleged violation(s).
   c. Be informed of the privileges afforded the student. These include:
      i. Time to prepare a case and review related documentation
      ii. Have a support person present during the hearing. If the support person happens to be an attorney, he or she may not act as legal counsel. Support persons may not speak or participate directly in the hearing unless invited by the hearing officer.
      iii. Have an opportunity to present written information or witnesses with relevant information to present his/her side of the story.
      iv. The student will be informed of the hearing committee’s decision and any sanctions imposed within five normal business days following the student conduct hearing.
      v. Students who are considered to be victims of a violent crime, in which another student is accused and subjected to the student conduct hearing process, will, at the very least, be verbally notified of the outcome of the case.

V. Sanctions
A. Sanctions for disciplinary actions are used as a developmental and educational tool in an effort to redirect student behavior toward compliance with community expectations:
   1. If such redirection is feasible.
   2. To protect the university community.
   3. To allow the student the opportunity to heal damage done to the campus community or specific individuals.
   4. To allow students the opportunity to learn about the impact of their attitudes and behavior toward others.
   5. A student’s behavior/disciplinary history is cumulative it may warrant higher sanctions for similar or different types of violations.
   6. Representatives from the Office of Student Affairs may impose the following required actions and sanctions:
a. Warning: Notice to the student, either verbally or in writing, that he or she has failed to meet the university’s code of conduct. The warning will include the specific behavior of concern, an opportunity for the student to ask questions or serious sanctions.

b. Reprimand: Notice in writing censuring the student for failure to meet the university’s conduct standards. The written reprimand will be dated and signed and acknowledged as received by the student and placed in the student’s file.

c. Probation: In response to a serious, escalating, or repeated level of violation, the probation will be imposed for a specified period of time and will outline expected behavior and the repercussions of noncompliance.

d. Suspension: Suspension from the university involves exclusion from participation in academic and/or extra-curricular activities for a specified period of time. Written notification of suspension will be provided to the student. This action includes the following:

   i. The student will be withdrawn from all courses, at all university locations carried that semester;
   
   ii. The student will forfeit fees according to the normal refund schedule of the university;
   
   iii. The student will be restricted from visiting all university premises and locations (which may include a criminal trespass warning) except when engaged in official business approved by the university in writing.

   iv. Reinstatement from suspension: When a student has concluded the suspension period and completed any expected conditions for return, the student must submit a letter to the vice president for student affairs requesting reinstatement and provide evidence that he/she has satisfied the terms of the suspension. The student may only return after approval by the vice president of student affairs.

5) Dismissal: Dismissal is a permanent expulsion from the university; it may be ordered as a result of a very serious offense or for repeated offenses. In addition to forfeiting all tuition paid, the student suffers all losses as indicated in the suspension status above. Students in this status are not allowed to be readmitted to the university. The student will be restricted from visiting the university, which may include a criminal trespass order. In addition to or in lieu of the listed levels of sanction, the Office of Student Affairs may impose additional strategies for resolution of the concern such as:

6) Facilitated discussion: A neutral third party may be brought in to help with a conflict situation. With the intent that the parties involved can find a resolution, ground rules will be discussed and agreed upon by all parties. For this process to be successful, all involved parties must be willing to participate.

7) Positive actions: Positive actions are required activities that are intended to engage the student in a learning process related to the behavior of concern. This may include, but is not limited to, engaging in campus or community activities, participating in short courses, or writing a report.

8) Restorative actions: Are opportunities to repair or heal some of the damage to the university community inflicted through the student’s code violation behavior.
Assignments include, but are not limited to, writing a sincere letter of apology, restitution, fines, and non-paid work.

9) Loss of privileges: Restrictions on participation (including leadership and university events), eligibility for employment, internships, communication, financial aid, facility access, and student account/record holds are examples of the types of loss of privileges that may be evoked by the Office of Student Affairs.

VI. Appeals
A. A student found responsible by the student hearing committee may appeal the decision in writing to the vice president for student affairs.

VII. Records and Notification
A. While Heritage University does not place disciplinary records on student transcripts, discipline records do become part of students’ file and are subject to FERPA guidelines. In order to support and reinforce expectations for the student or to be warned of a potentially dangerous student, for those advisors, faculty and program staff who are determined to be in the need to know category of FERPA, may be notified at specific steps within the entire student discipline process.

OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Mission Statement
The mission of the Office of Student Affairs is to provide Heritage University students with the tools and resources to promote, support, and complement the academic mission of the university. (A1.05, A3.10)

The Office of Student Affairs housed the following departments and programs:

- Career Services
  The Career Services office exists to provide guidance, resources, and opportunities to students and alumni seeking to achieve their career goals relevant to their academic interests. We facilitate and support connections between employers, our students and alumni. Students can visit the Career Services office to receive assistance with resume and cover letters, placement files, mock interviews, and researching employment opportunities.

- HU CARES/Student Advocacy (See page 27)
- Counseling Services (See page 27)

- Students with Disabilities
  If a student declares a disability, but still meets the technical standards for matriculation to the PA program, appropriate and reasonable efforts will be made to meet that student’s accommodations while ensuring educational equivalency of course content and assessment methods. The Office of Student Affairs coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities or special needs. Trained staff works with each student on an individual basis. Students are
responsible for making a formal request for appropriate and reasonable accommodations. (A1.05, A3.10, B1.11, C3.05)

Contact Information
On campus: Student Services Center
Phone: 509-865-8515
Fax: 509-865-8659
Email: studentaffairs@heritage.edu

Student Life Department
The Student Life Department is dedicated to enriching the college experience for Heritage University students. Student clubs, Student Government Association, and all student events and activities are coordinated through the Student Life Department.

Student Government Association (SGA): All currently enrolled full-time students are members of the (SGA) and may participate in the election of representatives to its chief governing board, the Student Government Association. The responsibilities of the Student Government Association are to serve as the organized student voice to faculty and administration regarding students’ needs and opinions in matters of students’ life and welfare, and to plan extracurricular activities that enhance the educational and interpersonal experiences of students while they are at Heritage University.

Student Clubs: Heritage University values the importance of student participation in clubs and organizations and recognizes that they play an essential role in student and campus engagement. By joining a club or organization, students have the opportunity to meet new people with similar interests, learn new things, and participate in activities and events. Students who would like assistance in planning and financing student activities are encouraged to contact the Student Life Coordinator.

Intramural Sports: Participating in intramural Sports is another avenue for Heritage University students to get involved and collaborate with your peers. Students that are interested in participating in existing leagues within the Yakima and Lower Valley have the opportunity to create a Heritage University team and compete.

Contact Information
On Campus: Heritage Village – 3500
Phone: 509-865-0420 Ext. 3504
Email: macias_e@heritage.edu

Student Support Programs
There are an array of programs designed to support specific groups of students with specific academic and college enrichment. Students are encouraged to research the various programs and apply for assistance.
ONLINE RESOURCES – FINDING INFORMATION
This catalog serves as the primary resource for information, services, policies and procedures; however, there are several other places to obtain pertinent information and updates. A user ID and password will be provided to access information posted on both websites.

- **Typhon** is the online portal for Physician Assistant Program information during the didactic and clinical year.
- **MyHeritage** is the University website including grades, student accounts, and communications with PA faculty.
- All communication and important information will be routed to the student email account. Network access is permitted at any computer lab or laptop with internet connection.
- Contact the Help Desk at 509-865-8579 or [https://myheritage.heritage.edu](https://myheritage.heritage.edu) for technical assistance.

ACADEMIC SKILL DEVELOPMENT
Academic Skills Center available for students who would like help improving their study strategies or their test-taking skills. Help is available in the areas of note-taking, memorization techniques, determining appropriate study topics, using resource materials, studying for tests, reducing test anxiety, effectively using a tutor, studying in a small group, etc. The consultants will be either faculty or other students, depending on the help needed. (A1.05, A3.10)

TUTORING
Heritage University provides tutorial services for students who wish to improve their academic achievement. The tutoring program provides the student with the opportunity to be assigned an individual peer tutor at no cost. Students often form study groups and partners on their own. With the assistance and recommendations from the faculty, peer tutors and/or practicing physician assistants are identified and made available to students who need help. For more information on student support services, such as tutoring, contact your PA faculty advisor for assistance. (A1.05, A3.10)

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
Throughout the year, a variety of seminars/workshops may be offered to students. Students may be offered sessions on study strategies, test-taking, preparing for boards, becoming an effective tutor, etc. (A1.05, A3.10)

Admissions/Registration Office
Acts as the primary agent for the acceptance of applicants and has an admissions program that responds to student and University needs. The office is also responsible for all transcripts and academic records.
FINANCIAL AID
The purpose of the Office of Financial Aid at Heritage University is to provide counseling and assistance to students regarding securing funding to help meet the costs of education. Although the Office of Financial Aid assists students with funding for their education, it is the student’s primary responsibility to secure this financing. This means that such things as supplying personal documentation, supplying family documentation, and ensuring that a student qualifies for loans by having a favorable credit report are the student’s obligations. All documents requested must be received before financial aid will be processed. All disbursements will be made via direct deposit. (A1.05, A3.10)

Health professions education is expensive. During schooling, most students are required to live at a modest level. The primary obligation for financing education lies with the student and the student’s parents/spouse. The federal and private agencies that make funds available for borrowing do so with the understanding that a student must sacrifice in order to achieve their degree.

Students accepted by Heritage University and requiring financial aid must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with the appropriate federal processor to assess aid eligibility. The needs analysis system set by the federal government ensures equity of treatment among all applicants. The University uses this needs analysis system to determine the amount of need-based financial assistance, loan amounts, and scholarship awards for which a student is eligible.

Financial aid as awarded or borrowed under the federal or private programs cannot exceed the Heritage University standardized budget. Funding is available for a student’s direct and indirect educational costs while he or she receives an education, but the student must be frugal and a good money manager. Students must carefully monitor their budgets.

Loans
As a rule, most people believe it is easier to borrow money than pay it back. As a health care student, certain special loan programs may be available, the primary sources being the Stafford Loan Programs and the Graduate PLUS loan program.

A student may not be eligible for the full amount based on his/her federal needs analysis, the Heritage University standardized budget, or prior student loan indebtedness. The amount a student can borrow is based on the cost of his/her education and potential personal contributions, not on the student’s desire for capital.

The Subsidized Stafford Loan is a low-interest program, and the government pays the interest while the student borrower is in school. It is the loan of first choice. The Unsubsidized Stafford Loan accrues interest from disbursement date. Borrowers must consider the repayment implications and avoid excessive borrowing. Heritage University has a federally mandated obligation to keep a student’s indebtedness to a minimum. A student will frequently receive counseling through the Office of Financial Aid many times while in school about the nature of his or her debt and the projected payment schedule.
Borrowing money from these programs is a privilege, not a right; regulations controlling these programs change periodically. A loan is not a gift or grant; it must be repaid. Student loans are only to be used for related educational expenses and personal living expenses.

Default is the failure of a borrower to make an installment payment when due or to meet other terms of the promissory note. If this happens, it is reasonable to conclude that the borrower no longer intends to honor the obligation to repay. Defaulted loans are reported to national credit agencies, thus affecting credit ratings and future ability to borrow money. Over-borrowing can cause defaulting on a student loan. This is why educational debt management is essential. Heritage University encourages students to learn some basic budgeting techniques, how to cut costs, and how to live with less.

If a student’s loan goes into default, the University, the organization that holds the loan, the state, and the federal government can all take action to recover the money. The federal government and the loan agencies can deny a school’s participation in the student loan programs or charge a school or its students a higher origination fee if the school’s default rate is too high. The University will withhold the transcript of any individual if that individual is in arrears or in default under any loan or loan program, when such arrears or default adversely affects the University in any way.

Scholarships and Grants
The Office of Financial Aid will provide students with information on scholarship notices that are sent to the office. (A1.05, A3.10)

Library

Heritage University Library and Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences (PNWU) Medical Library
The Heritage University and the PNWU Medical Library integrates traditional resources with innovative programming for medical education and research.

Heritage University librarians and PNWU Medical Library staff members provide reference service, group and individual bibliographic instruction, database searches, and general computer assistance to faculty, staff, students, and to members of the general public seeking medical information.

The Heritage University Library and the PNWU Medical Library maintain a growing collection of up-to-date books, multimedia resources, and periodicals. The periodical collection emphasizes journals of interest to primary care practitioners and students preparing for careers in primary care. A variety of electronic databases, some with linked full-text journals and books, are available for use by medical library staff and patrons. The Heritage University Library participates in local, regional, and national library cooperatives to ensure timely access to materials through interlibrary loan (document delivery is free to Heritage University faculty, staff, and students).
CAMPUS SERVICES

BOOKSTORE
Heritage University Bookstore, located in the Gaye and Jim Piggott Commons Building, is owned and operated by Heritage University for the benefit of students, faculty, and staff. The Bookstore sells supplies, gifts, clothing, greeting cards, snacks and beverages. Students have the option of paying by cash, check, or credit or debit card. To order books online, go to heritage.edu, scroll over to “Current Students” or “Future Students,” and click “Bookstore.” This link connects to the bookstore web site, eCampus. To purchase books online, students can either charge it to their student account by using a financial aid credit or by paying with a major credit card. For more information, contact the Bookstore at (509) 865-8511 or at bookstore@heritage.edu.

DINING SERVICES
The Eagle’s Café, located in the Gaye and Jim Piggott Commons Building is owned and operated by Heritage University and is available Monday through Friday to all students, faculty, staff, and their guests.

HOUSING
Students must secure their own housing. Heritage University may provide a list of housing information to students in their search for appropriate, affordable housing.

CHILD CARE CENTER
Early Learning Center Heritage University offers an early learning program designed to offer experiences that enhance and enrich each child's cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. The HUELIC believes that good child care is good family care. However, our basic philosophy is one of freedom to learn, grow, and make good choices. We believe that children learn through play, and we have structured the environment to reflect that belief.

For more information, contact the Heritage University Early Learning Center at (509) 865-8630.

CAMPUS FACILITIES
The map of the Toppenish campus illustrates the locations of various offices, classrooms, and laboratories. View the campus map. Tours of Heritage University are provided to interested persons upon request.

Students of Heritage University, their families, and guests are welcome to use the facilities of the campus in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board’s policy. Procedures for using campus facilities for events are available through the Physical Plant Office.

PARKING
Students and guests are required to park in the main parking lot, located off Fort Road near the Student Services Center.
IDENTIFICATION BADGES
Heritage University identification badges must be worn or carried at all times while on campus or on approved rotations. These are nontransferable and must be surrendered upon termination of student status. Student I.D. cards ensures the safety and identity of the students, faculty, and staff. Students attending the main campus need to get a student ID card because it serves as a convenient and secure way to identify you when you attend campus events and classes. You will also use your ID card, when ordering books, working with the Business Office or as identification during possible emergency procedures. To obtain your student photo I.D. card or if you have questions visit the Heritage Village – 2800 or call 509-961-4674 x1401.

LOST AND FOUND
Everyone is responsible for the protection of his or her personal belongings while on campus. Missing articles, if found, will be turned in to the the Heritage Village – 2800.

INCLEMENT WEATHER
The Rave System is a notification students receive via email/text message sent by Heritage University Physical Plant Office the Heritage Village – 3400 in the event of school closures due to weather conditions and emergencies. If inclement weather prevents you from attending school on a day that Heritage University is open, you are responsible for making up any work or exams missed.

Contact Information:
Physical Plant Office
On campus: the Heritage Village – 2800
Phone: 509-865-8631 or 888-272-6190

GENERAL POLICIES

ATTENDANCE
Attendance at all lectures, labs, discussion groups, and other assigned functions is required and monitored. There must be an appropriate reason and documentation for any absence. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action. The determination of absence validity in the academic year is the responsibility of the Academic Coordinator; during the clinical year it is the responsibility of the Clinical Coordinator. Lack of attendance will be recorded in the student’s file.

Excused absences will be allowed on a case-by-case basis for such things that are emergent, personal, compassionate, professional, or health related. If the student must miss a class, they must send an email notification to the Course Coordinator responsible for that class. A verbal will be acceptable. All notifications need to be in writing. In all circumstances, the student is responsible for any coursework missed. Students requesting an extended leave of absence should discuss the situation with the Academic Coordinator, who may opt to take it to the Student Promotions Committee for final consideration. The student must discuss this with the Academic Coordinator at least 14 days in advance in order for the leave of absence to be considered as excused. In most
cases, the Program Director will be consulted regarding the request. Due to the fast pace in PA education, if a leave of absence is requested during the didactic year, it may be recommended that the student withdraw and return the following year.

**Illness**

It is paramount that the well-being of the student is considered in any illness. If a student is absent for more than two days per month, the Academic Coordinator must be notified, and the student may be asked to be seen by a licensed health care provider for documentation and for the well-being of the student. In the case of an illness in a clinical student, the Clinical Coordinator and the preceptor must be notified. The student should not hesitate whatsoever to report an illness since the welfare of the student and his/her peer/patient contacts are of prime importance.

**Professional Meetings/Conferences**

It is felt that participation in professional meetings can greatly enhance a student’s professional and personal growth. Participation is a privilege and honor. Students must document their attendance at these meetings. Students on conditional status may be denied the privilege to attend. All students must obtain approval to attend any professional meetings. This approval must be obtained from the Academic Coordinator during the student’s didactic year and the Clinical Coordinator during the clinical year.

**Classroom Conduct**

The goal of the Physician Assistant Educational Program at Heritage University is to foster a classroom environment that is stimulating for the learners but remains a “safe place” to discuss/share issues, learn to think critically, communicate effectively, and pursue knowledge on the pathway of their PA education. Behavior that inhibits learning or impedes the goal of the classroom environment will be considered disruptive and therefore subject to sanctions. These sanctions are intended to preserve the classroom as a place to pursue knowledge, exchange ideas, and share opinions in an atmosphere of tolerance.

Students have the responsibility of complying with behavioral standards and faculty have the professional responsibility to set reasonable limits on the expression of opinions while treating students with dignity, respect and understanding. Examples of improper behavior include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Use of cell phones during class
2. Surfing the internet or responding to emails during class lectures
3. Studying for exams during class lectures,
4. Arriving after a class, exams, or workshops have begun,
5. Refusal to comply with reasonable instructor directions,
6. Distractive talking or persistently speaking out of turn,
7. Audio or video recording of lectures/classroom discussion or the use of electronic equipment (computers) without the permission of the faculty,
8. Use of insulting language or gestures, and
9. Verbal, psychological, or physical threats, harassment, and/or physical violence.
DRESS
PA students will, at all times, be dressed appropriately with awareness to personal hygiene, cleanliness, professional demeanor, and professional dress. Visible body piercing and tattooing are not acceptable.

Professional apparel will be required for all official PA Program activities. Lab coats will be required for all workshops unless otherwise notified. “Office casual” is considered appropriate attire for the classroom and consists of:

- Slacks/skirts/dresses for females – no blue jeans, short skirts (shorter than mid-thigh), spandex wear, skin tight leggings, sweat pants/exercise wear
- Slacks for males – no blue jeans, spandex, skin tight leggings/bicycle wear, sweat pants/exercise wear
- Polo shirts/button-down shirts – ties not necessary
- Pull-over shirts/sweaters – no tank tops, T-shirts, bare midriff, offensive graphics (if in doubt, don’t wear it), or sweats
- Capri or walking shorts – no short-shorts, board shorts, un-hemmed cutoffs
- Clothing must be clean and in good repair without holes/ripped sleeves
- Shoes must be clean and in good repair – no “flip-flops” although sandals will be allowed in the classroom; closed toes when seeing patients - clinical sites may have further restrictions
- Hair should be clean and worn in a style that is not disruptive to general duties in clinic or to others in general; no caps or hats
- Jewelry is acceptable if business-like and doesn’t interfere with general duties in clinic; up to 3 earrings per ear are acceptable as long as they do not cause interference or distraction.

EMPLOYMENT
The curriculum content and time required for completion of the physician assistant education program is such that any outside employment by the student is strongly discouraged. PA students will not be required to work for the program (Accreditation Review Commission on Education of the Physician Assistant [ARC-PA] standard A3.04) or substitute for or function as instructional faculty (ARC-PA standard A3.05). During clinical experiences, PA students must not be used to substitute for clinical or administrative staff. (ARC-PA A3.04, A3.05, A3.06, A3.14h)

USE OF UNIVERSITY EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES & ASSETS
All business conducted on University property, using University equipment, supplies, or assets must be for approved University purposes. This includes such things as printing, copying, and/or distributing materials that are not for University approved purposes.

TRANSCRIPTS AND RECORDS
Permanent education records maintained by Heritage University are the responsibility of the Registrar’s Office. Transcripts of academic records will contain only information regarding academic status. In cases where disciplinary action leads to the student's ineligibility for re-enrollment (dismissal), disciplinary action will become a part of the
permanent academic record. Disciplinary records or information from such records will be made available to persons outside of Heritage University only on the formal written request of the student involved or as otherwise allowed by law or regulation.

Academic records and financial aid records will be used by Heritage University personnel who have legitimate responsibility for the student's personal welfare and when necessary to discharge their official duties. Except for the purpose of official audits, financial aid records will be made available to persons outside the University only upon the formal written request of the student (or graduate) involved or as otherwise allowed by law or regulation.

Student health records, except for immunization records and tuberculosis screening results, will be maintained by Heritage University as prescribed by professional ethics and federal and state laws. The immunization and tuberculosis screening records will be maintained by the program and released to clinic rotation sites as needed.

An official copy (signed and sealed) of a transcript of record will be transmitted directly to a legitimate educational institution, hospital, or governmental or non-governmental agency on written request of the student (graduate) involved.

Unofficial copies of a transcript of record are available to the student (graduate) from the My Heritage portal. A fee of $10 fee is charged for each requested official/unofficial transcript and $15 for same day requests. For more information on ordering transcripts, contact the Registrar’s Office in the Student Services Center, or call 509-865-8506.

Students who have not fulfilled their financial and other obligations to Heritage University shall not have transcripts or recommendations made available until such obligations are met.

If the University has knowledge that a student or graduate is in default on a federal, state, outside agency, or institutional loan or service obligation, the University will withhold all official transcripts, National Board scores, and letters of recommendation for internships, residencies, employment, staff privileges, specialty certification, and licensing. Students who have not received a diploma due to failure to satisfactorily fulfill their obligations to the University prior to the date of graduation and who have failed to do so following graduation shall not have the privilege of receiving transcripts, other records, or recommendations sent to any institution or entity until such debts are paid.

Questions or concerns regarding records and grades should be brought to the Academic Coordinator.

**RECORD RETENTION PROCEDURES**

The record retention procedures for the University include but are not limited to:

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4 The full policy is available in the Registrar Office.
1. Non-academic records of disciplinary actions will be maintained by the University as the responsibility of the Office of Student Affairs. These actions are maintained as part of the student’s permanent record.

2. In cases where disciplinary action leads to a student’s dismissal/ineligibility or re-enrollment, the record becomes a part of the permanent academic file and transcript.

3. Financial aid records will be maintained by the University for 3 years after the end of the award year in which the student last attended.

The Physician Assistant Educational Program retains student records in a secured location. These records pertain to program specific information regarding admission criteria, health screening and immunization compliance, student performance while enrolled in the PA program, remediation efforts and outcomes, documentation that the student has met program completion requirements, and summaries of formal disciplinary actions taken against a student, as mentioned above.

THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 is a federal law governing access to student education records. FERPA stipulates conditions for release of information from education records and affords students the opportunity to review and seek revision of those records. Heritage University and the Physician Assistant Educational Program accord all the rights provided by the law and reserve the right to use and release student education records under the conditions specified by the law.

*Education records*, as defined by FERPA, include admission, academic, financial aid, placement records, and other information directly related to students with the exception of:

- Criminal background information;
- Student health records that are created and used solely in connection with the provision of health care;
- Employment records that relate exclusively to individuals in their capacities as employees

FERPA regulations apply only to records held for institutional use concerning students who enroll at the University; they do not govern records of applicants who are denied admission or who choose not to attend the University. Nor do they govern records kept by a University official that are the sole possession of the maker and are not normally revealed to anyone else except a temporary substitute (e.g., temporary reminder notes).

FERPA stipulates that institutions may not disclose personally identifiable information contained in education records without a student’s written consent, except under conditions specified by FERPA. Information is considered personally identifiable if it contains a student’s name or the name of family members, a student’s local or family address, an identification number, or descriptions or data sufficient to identify an individual.
FERPA permits access to student education records for school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or other staff position (including those in law enforcement and health care); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or an individual or organization with whom the University has contracted to serve as its agent or to provide services in support of its operations (examples include attorneys, auditors, collection agents, and the National Student Clearinghouse). Student employees, students serving on official committees, and students serving in other positions in which they assist a University employee in performing her or his official tasks are also considered school officials. A school official has a legitimate educational interest in a student education record if the official needs to review the record in order to fulfill her or his professional responsibilities or official tasks.

With certain exceptions allowed by the law and listed below, no persons outside the University shall have access to, nor will the institution disclose any information from, a student’s education record without the written consent of the student. FERPA permits information to be released from education records without written consent of the student to the following officials and agencies:

- officials of other institutions to which students are applying to enroll
- persons or organizations providing financial aid
- individuals and organizations charged with oversight of the University, or of federal or state programs in which the University participates
- accrediting agencies
- parents of any student under the age of 21, regardless of the student’s dependency status, in cases where the student has violated laws or University rules governing alcohol or controlled substances
- persons as directed by a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided the University makes a reasonable attempt to notify the student in advance of compliance (unless directed by judicial authorities not to disclose the existence of an order or subpoena)
- persons in an emergency to protect the health or safety of students or other persons
- the Immigration and Naturalization Service under the terms and provisions of immigration law

With the exception of alcohol and drug violations of a minor student, Heritage University does not release information from student education records to parents without the written consent of students.

FERPA permits the University to release information concerning violent crimes and non-forcible sex offenses (statutory rape or incest) committed by its students. Victims of an alleged violent crime or non-forcible sex offense may be informed of the final results of University disciplinary hearings concerning the allegation. When a student is an alleged perpetrator of a violent crime or a non-forcible sex offense and the University concludes...
with respect to that allegation that the student has violated University rules, the University may release to the public the name of the student, the offense committed, and the sanction the University imposes against the student.

FERPA further allows student education records to be released to individuals or organizations performing research on behalf of, or in cooperation with, the University. When education records are released for research purposes, FERPA requires the University and its research partners to implement procedures to safeguard their confidentiality. In addition, records released for research must be returned or destroyed when the research is completed, and research findings may not be presented in a manner that makes it possible to identify confidential data from an individual’s education record. Heritage University will release information from student education records to outside researchers only under the conditions specified by FERPA and only to those that agree in writing to safeguard the confidential information contained therein.

At its discretion, The PA Program may publish or release directory information in accordance with the provisions of FERPA. Directory information includes student name, University and permanent home address and telephone number, e-mail address, a photograph, date of birth, dates of attendance, class, major fields of study, previous institutions attended, awards and honors (including honor roll), degrees conferred (including dates), and participation in officially recognized activities. Students may withhold directory information by giving written notification to the office of the Program Director within two weeks after the beginning of the semester. Requests for non-disclosure of directory information will be honored until graduation unless students submit a written request to have the block on their directory information removed. Students who wish to withhold directory information after they graduate, which would include their dates of attendance and degrees conferred, must submit another written request to the Program Director.

FERPA provides students with the right to inspect and review information contained in their education records, to challenge the content and accuracy of those records, to have a hearing if the outcome of the challenge is unsatisfactory, and to submit explanatory statements for inclusion in their files if they disagree with the decisions of the hearing panel. The Program Director has been designated by Heritage University to establish procedures by which students may review their education records.

Students wishing to review their education records should submit a written request, clearly specifying the records of interest, to the official responsible for maintaining those records. The Program Director will assist in identifying the appropriate official. The responsible official will then make arrangements for the student to inspect the records within 45 days of the request and will notify the student of the time and place of inspection. Students may have copies made of their records with certain exceptions (e.g., students may not have a copy of academic records for which a financial “hold” exists, or a transcript of an original or source document produced by another institution or by a person not employed by Heritage University). Copies will be made at the student’s expense at prevailing rates.
Only records covered by FERPA, as delineated in the above paragraph defining “education records,” will be made available for inspection. (However, students may have their health records reviewed by their own physicians.) Furthermore, the University is permitted or required to withhold from students the following sorts of records: financial information submitted by their parents, confidential letters of recommendation to which students have waived their rights of inspection, and education records containing information about more than one student. In the latter case, the institution will permit access only to the parts of education records that pertain to the inquiring student.

Students who believe their education records contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or held in violation of privacy rights or other rights, may ask the University to amend a record. In such cases, the student should write to the University official responsible for the record, identify the parts of the record the student believes should be changed, and indicate the reasons it should be changed. If University officials agree with the student’s request, the appropriate records will be amended. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the student will be notified and advised of her or his right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing. FERPA confers to the student the right to challenge grades only in cases where the grade has been misrecorded. However, Heritage University has other procedures for appealing grades (please Policy on Student Grievances listed above).

Students who believe their FERPA rights have been violated may also file complaints with The Family Policy Compliance Office, U. S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605 (http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco/).

BLOOD BORNE PATHOGEN

EXPOSURE and POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS
1. GENERAL: The Blood Borne Pathogen (BBP) policy includes 3 components:
   a. Education/prevention.
   b. Immediate post-mishap evaluation of exposure risk, as outlined by current Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC&P) guidance and recommendations.
   c. Appropriate follow-up. The goals of this policy are to insure the immediate cleansing of the exposure site, reporting of the incident, and when indicated, immediate appropriate post-exposure prophylactic treatment be started using CDC&P guidelines within two hours or less of the exposure and that appropriate laboratory work-up, counseling, and follow-up be provided.

2. EDUCATION/PREVENTION: All first- and second-year PA students will attend a two-hour block of instruction on HIV/AIDS and a one-hour block on Universal Precautions annually that will address CDC&P current relevant universal exposure
precautions, the post-exposure reporting process, prophylactic treatment of BBP and other transmitted disease as indicated. Prevention includes:
- good hand washing,
- wearing personal protective equipment (PPE)
- using safe injection practices
- using safe techniques to handle contaminated equipment or surfaces

3. BBP/HIV/AIDS EXPOSURE: All students with medical education related BBP/HIV/AIDS exposure through another person’s blood or body fluids—by injury caused by a sharp object or exposure to mucous membranes/skin—will take the following steps immediately:
   a. PERFORM BASIC FIRST AID: IMMEDIATELY clean the wound and skin with soap and running water. Flush any mucous membranes or eyes with copious amounts of water or normal saline for several minutes. Blood should be allowed to flow freely from the wound. Blood should not be squeezed or “milked” from the wound.
   b. IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY your Preceptor. Any PA students with medical education related BBP/HIV/AIDS exposure will be immediately released from his/her preceptorship/rotation to go to the nearest affiliated hospital Emergency Room (ER). If no affiliated hospital is in the area, go to the nearest hospital with an ER.
   c. NOTIFY the Program Director of the incident.
   d. The goals of the student reporting to the ER for BBP/HIV/AIDS exposure are:
      i. To help the student assess whether the exposure is low or high risk using the most current CDC&P guidelines.
      ii. To start post-exposure prophylactic medication within two hours if the incident is a high risk. High-risk exposure is typically defined as significant blood or bodily fluid exposure of a source person with any of the following: known HIV/AIDS and/or symptoms of AIDS, multiple blood transfusions 1978-1985, IV drug user, multiple sexual partners, or homosexual activity.
      iii. Counseling the student on medication side effects and clarifying the benefit/risk ratio of their use.
      iv. Check baseline labs: HIV/AIDS antibody testing, complete blood count, renal and hepatic chemistry profile, and hepatitis evaluation.
   e. The Program Director shall be a point of contact for any problem that may arise.
   f. The student shall report for follow-up to the previously identified physician who is the designated site clinical contact for BBP/HIV/AIDS exposure. This individual will be designated by the Chief of Staff or Director of Medical Education at each of the core areas and be identified to the student prior to starting a preceptorship/rotation. This physician shall, at a minimum, be responsible for:
      i. Insuring HIV/AIDS antibody testing is done at 12 weeks and 6 months and results checked.
      ii. Writing prescriptions for the 4-week drug regimen if needed.
iii. Repeating complete blood count and renal and hepatic chemistry profiles at two weeks.
iv. Monitoring potential pancreatic toxicity by ordering weekly complete blood counts and chemistry profiles.

4. High risk exposures with ensuing evaluation and treatment may interfere with a student’s educational activities. If this occurs, each case will be evaluated individually and arrangements made to allow the student to complete their education in a timely fashion.

5. Expenses related to the exposure or injury are the financial responsibility of the student. (ARC-PA: A3.08)

ENVIRONMENTAL/CHEMICAL HAZARDS
Students must be alert to any environmental or chemical hazards that might be encountered during their physician assistant education. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are required by law to be readily available where chemicals are used. MSDS information for any chemicals used in Heritage University practice exam rooms will be available in a clearly marked three-ring notebook in the reception area of the building. Similarly, Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences has a notebook with the MSDS sheets in the reception area in the Clinical Skills department.

Post-exposure care is dictated by the type of chemical and the type of exposure. The physician assistant faculty members are responsible for providing emergent care in the case of any exposure. It is imperative that the student notify the faculty supervising the activity immediately following an exposure and follow the MSDS instructions for treatment. High risk exposures with ensuing evaluation and treatment may interfere with a student’s educational activities. If this occurs, each case will be evaluated individually and arrangements made to allow the student to complete their education in a timely fashion. Expenses related to the exposure or injury are the financial responsibility of the student. (ARC-PA: A3.08)
Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession
Policy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (Originally adopted 2005; revised 2012)

Preamble

Between 2003-2004, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) led an effort with three other national PA organizations (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), and Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) -- formerly Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP)) to define PA competencies in response to similar efforts conducted within other health care professions and the growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice. The resultant document, Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession, provided a foundation from which physician assistant organizations and individual physician assistants could chart a course for advancing the competencies of the PA profession.

This document was updated in 2012 and then approved in its current form by the same four organizations.

Introduction

This document serves as a map for the individual PA, the physician-PA team, and organizations committed to promoting the development and maintenance of professional competencies among physician assistants. While some competencies will be acquired during formal PA education, others will be developed and mastered as physician assistants progress through their careers. The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and educational experiences requisite for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies.

The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Professional competencies for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice.

Patient-centered, physician assistant practice reflects a number of overarching themes. These include an unwavering commitment to patient safety, cultural competence, quality health care, lifelong learning, and professional growth. Furthermore, the profession’s dedication to the physician-physician assistant team benefits patients and the larger community.
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT COMPETENCIES

MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE
Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Physician assistants must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In addition, physician assistants are expected to demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. Physician assistants are expected to understand, evaluate, and apply the following to clinical scenarios:

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

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

- create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients
- use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information
- adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction
- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
- demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety
- accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes
PATIENT CARE
Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable. Physician assistants are expected to:

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

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

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

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

Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team

- locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients’ health
- apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
- utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education
- recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others

SYSTEMS-BASED PRACTICE

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which health care is delivered. Physician assistants must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost, while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient. PAs should work to improve the health care system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:

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

*Adopted 2012 by ARC-PA, NCCPA, and PAEA Adopted 2013 by AAPA*
Appendix: B

Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession

INTRODUCTION
The physician assistant profession has revised its code of ethics several times since the profession began. Although the fundamental principles underlying the ethical care of patients have not changed, the societal framework in which those principles are applied has. Economic pressures of the health care system, social pressures of church and state, technological advances, and changing patient demographics continually transform the landscape in which PAs practice.

Previous codes of the profession were brief lists of tenets for PAs to live by in their professional lives. This document departs from that format by attempting to describe ways in which those tenets apply. Each situation is unique. Individual PAs must use their best judgment in a given situation while considering the preferences of the patient and the supervising physician, clinical information, ethical concepts, and legal obligations.

Four main bioethical principles broadly guided the development of these guidelines: autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice.

Autonomy, strictly speaking, means self-rule. Patients have the right to make autonomous decisions and choices, and physician assistants should respect these decisions and choices.

Beneficence means that PAs should act in the patient’s best interest. In certain cases, respecting the patient’s autonomy and acting in their best interests may be difficult to balance.

Nonmaleficence means to do no harm, to impose no unnecessary or unacceptable burden upon the patient.

Justice means that patients in similar circumstances should receive similar care. Justice also applies to norms for the fair distribution of resources, risks, and costs.

Physician assistants are expected to behave both legally and morally. They should know and understand the laws governing their practice. Likewise, they should understand the ethical responsibilities of being a health care professional. Legal requirements and ethical expectations will not always be in agreement. Generally speaking, the law describes minimum standards of acceptable behavior, and ethical principles delineate the highest moral standards of behavior.

When faced with an ethical dilemma, PAs may find the guidance they need in this document. If not, they may wish to seek guidance elsewhere – possibly from a supervising physician, a hospital ethics committee, an ethicist, trusted colleagues, or
other AAPA policies. PAs should seek legal counsel when they are concerned about the potential legal consequences of their decisions.

The following sections discuss ethical conduct of PAs in their professional interactions with patients, physicians, colleagues, other health professionals, and the public. The "Statement of Values" within this document defines the fundamental values that the PA profession strives to uphold. These values provide the foundation upon which the guidelines rest. The guidelines were written with the understanding that no document can encompass all actual and potential ethical responsibilities, and PAs should not regard them as comprehensive.

**STATEMENT OF VALUES OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSION**

- Physician assistants hold as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings.
- Physician assistants uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice.
- Physician assistants recognize and promote the value of diversity.
- Physician assistants treat equally all persons who seek their care.
- Physician assistants hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.
- Physician assistants assess their personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve their medical practice.
- Physician assistants actively seek to expand their knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.
- Physician assistants work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.
- Physician assistants use their knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.
- Physician assistants respect their professional relationship with physicians.
- Physician assistants share and expand knowledge within the profession.

**THE PA AND THE PATIENT**

**PA Role and Responsibilities**

Physician assistant practice flows out of a unique relationship that involves the PA, the physician, and the patient. The individual patient–PA relationship is based on mutual respect and an agreement to work together regarding medical care. In addition, PAs practice medicine with physician supervision; therefore, the care that a PA provides is an extension of the care of the supervising physician. The patient–PA relationship is also a patient–PA–physician relationship.

The principal value of the physician assistant profession is to respect the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings. This concept is the foundation of the patient–PA relationship. Physician assistants have an ethical obligation to see that each of their patients receives appropriate care. PAs should be sensitive to the beliefs and expectations of the patient. PAs should recognize that each patient is unique and has an ethical right to self-determination.
Physician assistants are professionally and ethically committed to providing nondiscriminatory care to all patients. While PAs are not expected to ignore their own personal values, scientific or ethical standards, or the law, they should not allow their personal beliefs to restrict patient access to care. A PA has an ethical duty to offer each patient the full range of information on relevant options for their health care. If personal moral, religious, or ethical beliefs prevent a PA from offering the full range of treatments available or care the patient desires, the PA has an ethical duty to refer a patient to another qualified provider. That referral should not restrict a patient’s access to care. PAs are obligated to care for patients in emergency situations and to responsibly transfer patients if they cannot care for them.

Physician assistants should always act in the best interests of their patients and as advocates when necessary. PAs should actively resist policies that restrict free exchange of medical information. For example, a PA should not withhold information about treatment options simply because the option is not covered by insurance. PAs should inform patients of financial incentives to limit care, use resources in a fair and efficient way, and avoid arrangements or financial incentives that conflict with the patient’s best interests.

**The PA and Diversity**
The physician assistant should respect the culture, values, beliefs, and expectations of the patient.

**Nondiscrimination**
Physician assistants should not discriminate against classes or categories of patients in the delivery of needed health care. Such classes and categories include gender, color, creed, race, religion, age, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, nature of illness, disability, socioeconomic status, physical stature, body size, gender identity, marital status, or sexual orientation.

**Initiation and Discontinuation of Care**
In the absence of a preexisting patient–PA relationship, the physician assistant is under no ethical obligation to care for a person unless no other provider is available. A PA is morally bound to provide care in emergency situations and to arrange proper follow-up. PAs should keep in mind that contracts with health insurance plans might define a legal obligation to provide care to certain patients.

A physician assistant and supervising physician may discontinue their professional relationship with an established patient as long as proper procedures are followed. The PA and physician should provide the patient with adequate notice, offer to transfer records, and arrange for continuity of care if the patient has an ongoing medical condition. Discontinuation of the professional relationship should be undertaken only after a serious attempt has been made to clarify and understand the expectations and concerns of all involved parties.
If the patient decides to terminate the relationship, they are entitled to access appropriate information contained within their medical record.

**Informed Consent**

Physician assistants have a duty to protect and foster an individual patient’s free and informed choices. The doctrine of informed consent means that a PA provides adequate information that is comprehensible to a competent patient or patient surrogate. At a minimum, this should include the nature of the medical condition, the objectives of the proposed treatment, treatment options, possible outcomes, and the risks involved. PAs should be committed to the concept of shared decision making, which involves assisting patients in making decisions that account for medical, situational, and personal factors.

In caring for adolescents, the PA should understand all of the laws and regulations in his or her jurisdiction that are related to the ability of minors to consent to or refuse health care. Adolescents should be encouraged to involve their families in health care decision making. The PA should also understand consent laws pertaining to emancipated or mature minors. (See the section on **Confidentiality**.)

When the person giving consent is a patient’s surrogate, a family member, or other legally authorized representative, the PA should take reasonable care to assure that the decisions made are consistent with the patient’s best interests and personal preferences, if known. If the PA believes the surrogate’s choices do not reflect the patient’s wishes or best interests, the PA should work to resolve the conflict. This may require the use of additional resources, such as an ethics committee.

**Confidentiality**

Physician assistants should maintain confidentiality. By maintaining confidentiality, PAs respect patient privacy and help to prevent discrimination based on medical conditions. If patients are confident that their privacy is protected, they are more likely to seek medical care and more likely to discuss their problems candidly.

In cases of adolescent patients, family support is important but should be balanced with the patient’s need for confidentiality and the PA’s obligation to respect their emerging autonomy. Adolescents may not be of age to make independent decisions about their health, but providers should respect that they soon will be. To the extent they can, PAs should allow these emerging adults to participate as fully as possible in decisions about their care. It is important that PAs be familiar with and understand the laws and regulations in their jurisdictions that relate to the confidentiality rights of adolescent patients. (See the section on **Informed Consent**.)

Any communication about a patient conducted in a manner that violates confidentiality is unethical. Because written, electronic, and verbal information may be intercepted or overheard, the PA should always be aware of anyone who might be monitoring communication about a patient.
PAs should choose methods of storage and transmission of patient information that minimize the likelihood of data becoming available to unauthorized persons or organizations. Computerized record keeping and electronic data transmission present unique challenges that can make the maintenance of patient confidentiality difficult. PAs should advocate for policies and procedures that secure the confidentiality of patient information.

**The Patient and the Medical Record**

Physician assistants have an obligation to keep information in the patient’s medical record confidential. Information should be released only with the written permission of the patient or the patient’s legally authorized representative. Specific exceptions to this general rule may exist (e.g., workers compensation, communicable disease, HIV, knife/gunshot wounds, abuse, substance abuse). It is important that a PA be familiar with and understand the laws and regulations in his or her jurisdiction that relate to the release of information. For example, stringent legal restrictions on release of genetic test results and mental health records often exist.

Both ethically and legally, a patient has certain rights to know the information contained in his or her medical record. While the chart is legally the property of the practice or the institution, the information in the chart is the property of the patient. Most states have laws that provide patients access to their medical records. The PA should know the laws and facilitate patient access to the information.

**Disclosure**

A physician assistant should disclose to his or her supervising physician information about errors made in the course of caring for a patient. The supervising physician and PA should disclose the error to the patient if such information is significant to the patient’s interests and well being. Errors do not always constitute improper, negligent, or unethical behavior, but failure to disclose them may.

**Care of Family Members and Co-workers**

Treating oneself, co-workers, close friends, family members, or students whom the physician assistant supervises or teaches may be unethical or create conflicts of interest. For example, it might be ethically acceptable to treat one’s own child for a case of otitis media but it probably is not acceptable to treat one’s spouse for depression. PAs should be aware that their judgment might be less than objective in cases involving friends, family members, students, and colleagues and that providing “curbside” care might sway the individual from establishing an ongoing relationship with a provider. If it becomes necessary to treat a family member or close associate, a formal patient-provider relationship should be established, and the PA should consider transferring the patient’s care to another provider as soon as it is practical. If a close associate requests care, the PA may wish to assist by helping them find an appropriate provider.

There may be exceptions to this guideline, for example, when a PA runs an employee health center or works in occupational medicine. Even in those situations, the PA should
be sure they do not provide informal treatment, but provide appropriate medical care in a formally established patient-provider relationship.

**Genetic Testing**
Evaluating the risk of disease and performing diagnostic genetic tests raise significant ethical concerns. Physician assistants should be informed about the benefits and risks of genetic tests. Testing should be undertaken only after proper informed consent is obtained. If PAs order or conduct the tests, they should assure that appropriate pre- and post-test counseling is provided.

PAs should be sure that patients understands the potential consequences of undergoing genetic tests – from impact on patients themselves, possible implications for other family members, and potential use of the information by insurance companies or others who might have access to the information. Because of the potential for discrimination by insurers, employers, or others, PAs should be particularly aware of the need for confidentiality concerning genetic test results.

**Reproductive Decision Making**
Patients have a right to access the full range of reproductive health care services, including fertility treatments, contraception, sterilization, and abortion. Physician assistants have an ethical obligation to provide balanced and unbiased clinical information about reproductive health care.

When the PA's personal values conflict with providing full disclosure or providing certain services such as sterilization or abortion, the PA need not become involved in that aspect of the patient's care. By referring the patient to a qualified provider who is willing to discuss and facilitate all treatment options, the PA fulfills their ethical obligation to ensure the patient’s access to all legal options.

**End of Life**
Among the ethical principles that are fundamental to providing compassionate care at the end of life, the most essential is recognizing that dying is a personal experience and part of the life cycle.

Physician Assistants should provide patients with the opportunity to plan for end of life care. Advance directives, living wills, durable power of attorney, and organ donation should be discussed during routine patient visits.

PAs should assure terminally-ill patients that their dignity is a priority and that relief of physical and mental suffering is paramount. PAs should exhibit non-judgmental attitudes and should assure their terminally-ill patients that they will not be abandoned. To the extent possible, patient or surrogate preferences should be honored, using the most appropriate measures consistent with their choices, including alternative and non-traditional treatments. PAs should explain palliative and hospice care and facilitate patient access to those services. End of life care should
include assessment and management of psychological, social, and spiritual or religious needs.
While respecting patients’ wishes for particular treatments when possible, PAs also must weigh their ethical responsibility, in consultation with supervising physicians, to withhold futile treatments and to help patients understand such medical decisions.

PAs should involve the physician in all near-death planning. The PA should only withdraw life support with the supervising physician's agreement and in accordance with the policies of the health care institution.

THE PA AND INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONALISM

Conflict of Interest
Physician assistants should place service to patients before personal material gain and should avoid undue influence on their clinical judgment. Trust can be undermined by even the appearance of improper influence. Examples of excessive or undue influence on clinical judgment can take several forms. These may include financial incentives, pharmaceutical or other industry gifts, and business arrangements involving referrals. PAs should disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest to their patients.

Acceptance of gifts, trips, hospitality, or other items is discouraged. Before accepting a gift or financial arrangement, PAs might consider the guidelines of the Royal College of Physicians, “Would I be willing to have this arrangement generally known?” or of the American College of Physicians, “What would the public or my patients think of this arrangement?”

Professional Identity
Physician assistants should not misrepresent directly or indirectly, their skills, education, professional credentials, or identity. Physician assistants should uphold the dignity of the PA profession and accept its ethical values.

Competency
Physician assistants should commit themselves to providing competent medical care and extend to each patient the full measure of their professional ability as dedicated, empathetic health care providers. PAs should also strive to maintain and increase the quality of their health care knowledge, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence through individual study and continuing education.

Sexual Relationships
It is unethical for physician assistants to become sexually involved with patients. It also may be unethical for PAs to become sexually involved with former patients or key third parties. Key third parties are individuals who have influence over the patient. These might include spouses or partners, parents, guardians, or surrogates.

Such relationships generally are unethical because of the PA’s position of authority and the inherent imbalance of knowledge, expertise, and status. Issues such as dependence,
trust, transference, and inequalities of power may lead to increased vulnerability on the part of the current or former patients or key third parties.

**Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**

It is unethical for physician assistants to engage in or condone any form of gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is defined as any behavior, action, or policy that adversely affects an individual or group of individuals due to disparate treatment, disparate impact, or the creation of a hostile or intimidating work or learning environment. It is unethical for PAs to engage in or condone any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment,
- Accepting or rejecting such conduct affects or may be perceived to affect professional decisions concerning an individual,
- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education or professional position.

**THE PA AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS**

**Team Practice**

Physician assistants should be committed to working collegially with other members of the health care team to assure integrated, well-managed, and effective care of patients. PAs should strive to maintain a spirit of cooperation with other health care professionals, their organizations, and the general public.

**Illegal and Unethical Conduct**

Physician assistants should not participate in or conceal any activity that will bring discredit or dishonor to the PA profession. They should report illegal or unethical conduct by health care professionals to the appropriate authorities.

**Impairment**

Physician assistants have an ethical responsibility to protect patients and the public by identifying and assisting impaired colleagues. “Impaired” means being unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety because of physical or mental illness, loss of motor skills, or excessive use or abuse of drugs and alcohol.

PAs should be able to recognize impairment in physician supervisors, PAs, and other health care providers and should seek assistance from appropriate resources to encourage these individuals to obtain treatment.

**PA–Physician Relationship**

Supervision should include ongoing communication between the physician and the physician assistant regarding patient care. The PA should consult the supervising physician whenever it will safeguard or advance the welfare of the patient. This includes
seeking assistance in situations of conflict with a patient or another health care professional.

**Complementary and Alternative Medicine**
When a patient asks about an alternative therapy, the PA has an ethical obligation to gain a basic understanding of the alternative therapy being considered or being used and how the treatment will affect the patient. If the treatment would harm the patient, the PA should work diligently to dissuade the patient from using it, advise other treatment, and perhaps consider transferring the patient to another provider.

**THE PA AND THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

**Workplace Actions**
Physician assistants may face difficult personal decisions to withhold medical services when workplace actions (e.g., strikes, sick-outs, slowdowns, etc.) occur. The potential harm to patients should be carefully weighed against the potential improvements to working conditions and, ultimately, patient care that could result. In general, PAs should individually and collectively work to find alternatives to such actions in addressing workplace concerns.

**PAs as Educators**
All physician assistants have a responsibility to share knowledge and information with patients, other health professionals, students, and the public. The ethical duty to teach includes effective communication with patients so that they will have the information necessary to participate in their health care and wellness.

**PAs and Research**
The most important ethical principle in research is honesty. This includes assuring subjects’ informed consent, following treatment protocols, and accurately reporting findings. Fraud and dishonesty in research should be reported so that the appropriate authorities can take action.

Physician assistants involved in research must be aware of potential conflicts of interest. The patient's welfare takes precedence over the desired research outcome. Any conflict of interest should be disclosed.

In scientific writing, PAs should report information honestly and accurately. Sources of funding for the research must be included in the published reports.

Plagiarism is unethical. Incorporating the words of others, either verbatim or by paraphrasing, without appropriate attribution is unethical and may have legal consequences. When submitting a document for publication, any previous publication of any portion of the document must be fully disclosed.

**PAs as Expert Witnesses**
The physician assistant expert witness should testify to what he or she believes to be the truth. The PA’s review of medical facts should be thorough, fair, and impartial.
The PA expert witness should be fairly compensated for time spent preparing, appearing, and testifying. The PA should not accept a contingency fee based on the outcome of a case in which testimony is given or derive personal, financial, or professional favor in addition to compensation. Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession.

The PA and Society

Lawfulness
Physician assistants have the dual duty to respect the law and to work for positive change to laws that will enhance the health and well being of the community.

Executions
Physician assistants, as health care professionals, should not participate in executions because to do so would violate the ethical principle of beneficence.

Access to Care / Resource Allocation
Physician assistants have a responsibility to use health care resources in an appropriate and efficient manner so that all patients have access to needed health care. Resource allocation should be based on societal needs and policies, not the circumstances of an individual patient–PA encounter. PAs participating in policy decisions about resource allocation should consider medical need, cost-effectiveness, efficacy, and equitable distribution of benefits and burdens in society.

Community Well Being
Physician assistants should work for the health, well being, and the best interest of both the patient and the community. Sometimes there is a dynamic moral tension between the well being Of the community in general and the individual patient. Conflict between an individual patient’s best interest and the common good is not always easily resolved. In general, PAs should be committed to upholding and enhancing community values, be aware of the needs of the community, and use the knowledge and experience acquired as professionals to contribute to an improved community.

Conclusion
The American Academy of Physician Assistants recognizes its responsibility to aid the PA Profession as it strives to provide high quality, accessible health care. Physician assistants wrote these guidelines for themselves and other physician assistants. The ultimate goal is to honor patients and earn their trust while providing the best and most appropriate care possible. At the same time, PAs must understand their personal values and beliefs and recognize the ways in which those values and beliefs can impact the care they provide.
Acknowledgement of Student Handbook Form

I, ________________________, have read and understand the Physician Assistant Educational Program Student Handbook, including:

- Current contact/address information on page 3
- Duty to Report on page 11
- Housing referenced in section Community-Based Clinical Experience I, II, III, paragraph 2 on page 20

All questions and concerns regarding the student handbook have been asked and answered. The Physician Assistant Educational Program Student Handbook supersedes the Heritage University Student Handbook.

________________________________________
Print Name

________________________________________  ______________
Signature                                Date