

Policy - Academic Performance, Professionalism, and Progression

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Responsible Party: Program Director

Minimum Review Frequency: Annually

Approving Body: Principal Faculty

DPAS Associated Forms:

Academic Performance Summary Clinical Phase
Academic Intervention Form
Academic Performance Summary Didactic Phase
Adverse Action Dismissal
Adverse Action Probation
Advisement Session Topics/Timeline Form
Behavioral and Professional Evaluation Form
Commendation Form, Concern Form, Violation Form
Department Chair Academic Intervention Form
Documentation of Attainment of PLOs Form
Graduation Verification Checklist
Remediation Efforts and Outcomes of Didactic Coursework Form
Remediation Efforts and Outcomes of Clinical Coursework Form
Remediation Efforts and Outcomes of Formative Evaluation Form
Remediation Efforts and Outcomes of Summative Evaluation Form
Technical Standards Attestation

ARC-PA Associated Standards:

- **A3.11** - The program must define, publish and make readily available to faculty and students policies and procedures for processing student grievances and allegations of harassment.
- **A3.17** - The program must define, publish and make readily available to students upon admission academic performance and progression information to include:
 - a) any required academic standards
 - b) completion deadlines/requirements related to curricular components
 - c) requirements for progression in and completion of the program
 - d) policies and procedures for processing student grievances
 - e) policies and procedures for withdrawal and dismissal
 - f) policies and procedures for remediation and deceleration
 - g) policies and procedures for processing allegations of harassment
- **A3.19** - Student files kept by the program must include documentation:
 - c) of student performance while enrolled
 - d) of remediation efforts and outcomes

- e) of summaries of any formal academic/behavioral disciplinary action take against a student and
- f) that the student has met requirements for program completion
- o **C3.02** - The program *must* document student demonstration of defined professional behaviors.
- o **C3.03** - The program must monitor and document the progress of each student in a manner that promptly identifies deficiencies in knowledge or skills and establishes means for remediation.

Background and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear expectations on requirements and procedures related to academic performance, professionalism, and progression.

Definitions

Academic Intervention: The process of identifying at-risk students early to promote successful acquisition of the requisite knowledge to be successful.

Remediation: The process of addressing deficiencies in a student's knowledge and skills, such that the correction of these deficiencies is measurable and can be documented.

Deceleration: The loss of a student from an entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the Physician Assistant program.

Good Standing: Indicates a student who is not on academic or professionalism probation.

Leave of Absence: A period of time a student is granted to be away from his/her studies while maintaining the status of current student.

Withdrawal: A student-based decision that results in a student exit from the program. A student must reapply to the program to regain admission.

Dismissal: A program-based decision that results in a student exit from the program. A student must reapply to the program to regain admission.

Policy Statement

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Required Academic Standards

Attendance and participation requirements are outlined in the Student Attendance, Participation, and Inclement Weather policy.

Students enrolled in the High Point University Department of Physician Assistant Studies (DPAS) must maintain adherence to the program standard of academic performance and professionalism.

Requirements for Progression

Due to the sequential nature of the curriculum, students must successfully complete all courses for a given semester before becoming eligible to take courses in the subsequent semester. Students must successfully complete all courses in the didactic phase before they may progress into the clinical phase of the program.

Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences offered during the clinical phase of the program do not follow the semester calendar. Due to timing, as well as complexity of evaluative measures incorporated, student performance is assessed at the completion of each Supervised Clinical Practice Experience to determine progression to the next rotation.

At the conclusion of each semester, the Student Progress Committee reviews each student's academic and professional performance. Students must be recommended for progression by the Student Progress Committee to be eligible to take courses in the subsequent semester and continue their progression through the program. The Student Progress Committee does a more detailed evaluation of each student's professional behavior at the completion of the 2nd and 4th semester of the didactic phase of the program and routinely reviews student professionalism evaluations during SCPEs.. In the event a student is identified to be at risk for Academic/Professionalism probation or dismissal at any time during the MPAS program, including Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences, the Student Progress Committee may convene more frequently to determine appropriate academic/professionalism intervention.

In the event that a student is remediating a course or course component they may progress to the subsequent semester at the discretion of the Student Progress Committee.

Requirements for Graduation

To graduate from the PA Program and earn a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree, students must:

- Successfully complete all course work according to program defined academic standards.
- Achieve a minimum overall 3.0 G.P.A. (Grade Point Average)
- Successfully pass all components of the Formative Evaluations
- Demonstrate they have met all Program Learning Outcomes.
 - Successfully pass all components of the Summative Evaluation.
 - Successfully complete the Clinical Practice Passport.
- Submit a completed graduation application to the Office of Graduate Studies.
- Be in good academic standing. In the event that a student is on academic probation as he/she enters the final semester, he/she must still have the required overall G.P.A. of 3.0.
- Be in good professional standing. In the event that a student is on professionalism probation as he/she enters the final semester, he/she must successfully meet program-established conditions to successfully transition off professionalism probation prior to graduation.
- Complete all requirements for graduation within 5 years of the original date of matriculation.
- Have no incomplete grades
- Have no financial or library obligation with High Point University

Students should apply for graduation one term before all requirements for the MPAS degree are complete. The graduation application is available on the Norcross Graduate School website. To apply, the student should download and return the completed form to the Graduate School.

Formative Evaluations:

The program conducts Formative Evaluations at the conclusion of the didactic curriculum (End of Didactic Formative Evaluation) and midway through clinical curriculum (Clinical Formative Evaluation). The Formative Evaluations are designed to evaluate the student's progress in attainment of the HPU PA Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and readiness to undergo the Summative Evaluation (see Summative Evaluation description below). A minimum score of 60% is required for each of the components of the End of Didactic Formative Evaluations and minimum of 70% is required for each of the components of the Clinical Formative Evaluations in order to progress within the curriculum. The increased standards for passing the End of Didactic and Clinical Formative help guide and prepare the student for the minimum 80% passing score on the Summative Evaluation. Failure of any portion (below 60% on End of Didactic or below 70% on Clinical) of the Formative Evaluations must be remediated. Students are provided two opportunities to remediate components of the End of Didactic Formative Evaluation and two opportunities to remediate components of the Clinical Formative Evaluation. See Remediation section.

Summative Evaluation:

The program conducts a summative evaluation of each student within the final four months of the program. The summative evaluation is designed to evaluate the student's ability to demonstrate attainment of the HPU PA PLOs in alignment with measuring that the student has the knowledge, interpersonal skills, patient care skills, and professionalism required to enter clinical practice. A minimum score of 80% is required for each of the components in order to pass the exam and be a candidate for graduation. Failure in any portion of the end-of-program summative evaluation must be remediated. Students are provided two opportunities to remediate components of the summative evaluation. See Remediation section.

Required competencies for entrance into clinical practice; Clinical Practice Passport:

The program ensures sufficient exposure of patient encounters within supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) to enable students to meet the program's SCPE learning outcomes, preparing them for entry into professional practice. The program utilizes the Clinical Practice Passport for direct observation and assessment of student acquisition SCPE learning outcomes by preceptors over the course of the clinical year. Students who do not meet this requirement are referred to the Student Progress Committee to identify the most appropriate remedial approach. See Remediation section.

Course Director Role in Supporting Student Success

Course Directors play a key role in supporting student success by identifying at-risk students as early as possible during the semester. Students will not be allowed to remediate course assessments to improve their grade (see *Remediation* below). When students are deemed to be at risk, **academic interventions** should be initiated by the course director to promote student success and provide students the support they need to earn a final passing course grade. It is up to each individual course director to work with the student to determine how this may be best accomplished given the course objectives and outcomes and the individual student's strengths and weaknesses in learning course content. Course Directors are responsible for providing the initial contact with those students deemed to be at risk. It is then the responsibility of the student to schedule a meeting with the Course Director to discuss strategies for success. Failure to do so may be reflected in the student's professional behavior evaluation. In the spirit of self-directed learning, it is the responsibility of the student to implement the suggestions made by the course director in a way that best accommodates their learning style.

Process:

- Course Directors should ascertain all possible factors contributing to a low exam score (e.g., fund of knowledge, ineffective study strategies, test-taking errors, reading, comprehension, or attention issues, poor time management, personal problems, etc.).
- A signed **Academic Intervention Form** outlining proactive strategies for success will be submitted to the Medical Education Specialist for inclusion in the student's official file and for review at the next scheduled Student Progress Committee Meeting.

Any time a student receives two didactic course examination grades below standard (typically < 80%) during a semester, the following process will be followed:

- The Medical Education Specialist will notify the Student Advisor

- The Student Advisor will request a meeting with the student to discuss.
- The Medical Education Specialist will submit the student's name to the Student Progress Committee.

The Student Progress Committee meets periodically to discuss appropriate intervention based on input from the Student Advisor and Course Directors. Based on final determination and as a means to foster programmatic support, the student may be referred to meet with the Student Progress Committee, the Department Chair, or Department Chair Designee to ascertain all possible factors contributing to poor performance and provide appropriate strategies/interventions to promote student success.

Given the nature and complexity of educational activities on clinical rotations, a comprehensive, multifaceted process for evaluating student progress has been designed. The components each serve to assess different skills acquired by a student during clinical training. Therefore, Academic Intervention during the clinical year will occur on a case-by-case basis including, but not limited to, unsatisfactory marks on mid-rotation evaluations, professionalism issues, and/or score of < 2 on an end of rotation Clinical Performance Evaluation. In the event that an academic intervention is initiated during the clinical phase of the program, the Student Progress Committee is notified and follows a similar process of input and final determination as outlined above.

Required Academic Standards

To remain in good academic standing, normal academic progress in the didactic phase of the Physician Assistant Studies program requires all students to achieve a minimum 3.0 G.P.A. each semester. For courses offered as Pass/Fail during the didactic phase of the program, students must achieve a "P" or "HP" to remain in good academic standing.

To remain in good academic standing, normal academic progress in the clinical phase of the Physician Assistant Studies program requires all students to achieve a "P" or "HP" for every required clinical-year course, to include Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPE's), Masters Project, and Clinical Seminar.

Assessment and Minimum Grade Standards

90-100%	A
80-89.99%	B
70-79.99%	C
60-69.99%	D
<60%	F

Assessment and Minimum Grade Standards for P/F Courses (Except Clinical Decision Making)

93-100%	HP	(High Pass)
70- 92.99%	P	(Pass)
<70	NP	(Non-Pass)

Computation of Grade Point Average

Grade Point Average is the ratio expressed by the sum of the quality points divided by the sum of credits attempted. Pass/Fail grades are not a component of the Grade Point Average.

The Quality Point values of these grades are:

Grade	Quality Points per Credit Hour
A	4.0
B	3.0
C	2.0

D	1.0
F	0.0

Remediation

Student progress is monitored and documented in a manner that promptly identifies deficiencies in knowledge or skills and establishes means for remediation as described herein:

- A student receiving a “C” in a didactic course, NP grade on any graded component in a clinical rotation course, or an overall NP grade in a clinical rotation course will remediate the identified area(s) of deficiency. A student must also remediate any failed component of a Formative or Summative Evaluation. The specific remediation plan developed is at the discretion of the course director for didactic courses, Director of Clinical Education for clinical rotation course, and a designated faculty member for the Formative and Summative Evaluations, and may include but is not limited to:
 - Reading assignments.
 - Written completion of selected course learning objectives with reference citations.
 - Written response to selected exam items with reference citations.
 - Problem-based learning exercises focused on area(s) of weakness.
 - Written self-reflection exercise.
 - Individual faculty-led tutoring (especially skills related deficiencies)
 - Repeating the entire clinical rotation
- Students will be reassessed after completion of the outlined remediation plan with an emphasis on areas of poor performance. For didactic and clinical courses, the assessment activity may vary depending on the nature of deficiency and degree of remediation necessary. For the Formative and Summative Evaluations, the student must repeat the entire evaluation. A successful remediation plan will include:
 - Composition/nature of assessment and the student performance required for successful remediation of material.
 - Date in which assigned activities are due.
- The responsible course director or faculty member must document remediation efforts and outcomes and submit documentation to the Medical Education Specialist to be filed in the student’s official file.
- The course director must notify the Student Progress Committee of any student needing remediation. To ensure adequate rigor and consistency within the program, the Student Progress Committee must approve remediation plans and remediation reassessments prior to implementation.
- Unsuccessful remediation efforts will be forwarded to the Student Progress Committee for review. Successful remediation is a requirement to progress within the curriculum. The Committee will recommend appropriate courses of action, which may include dismissal from the program.

Formative Evaluations

A minimum score of 60% is required for each component of the End of Didactic Formative Evaluation and a minimum of 70% is required for each component of the Clinical Formative Evaluation in order to progress in the program curriculum. When a student does not pass a component of a Formative Evaluation, they meet with a principal faculty member to discuss their performance and develop a plan to be successful on the remediation evaluation. The remediation evaluation occurs roughly five weeks after the failed assessment to provide the student a reasonable timeframe to gain the deficient knowledge and/or skills. The remediation evaluation follows the same format for each component as the original evaluation.

Students are provided two opportunities to remediate components of each of the End of Didactic and Clinical Formative Evaluations. Unsuccessful remediation (failure of initial evaluation and two

remediation evaluations) render the student ineligible for progression and disenrolled from the program. Students have the right to appeal the decision. The appeals process is outlined in the Appeals Process Section under Student Grievances below. Students may also seek re-entry to the program by applying for admission during the next PA admissions cycle. In the event that a student is re-admitted into the program, the program faculty reserves the right to attach contingencies to the admittance.

Summative Evaluation

A minimum score of 80% is required for each component in order to pass the exam and be a candidate for graduation. When a student does not pass a component of the summative evaluation, they meet with a principal faculty member to discuss their performance and develop a plan to be successful on the remediation evaluation. The remediation evaluation occurs roughly five weeks after the failed assessment to provide the student a reasonable timeframe to gain the deficient knowledge and/or skills. The remediation evaluation follows the same format for each component as the original evaluation.

Students are provided two opportunities to remediate components of the summative evaluation. Unsuccessful remediation (failure of initial evaluation and two remediation evaluations) render the student ineligible for graduation and disenrolled from the program. Students have the right to appeal the decision. The appeals process is outlined in the Appeals Process Section under Student Grievances below. Students may also seek re-entry to the program by applying for admission during the next PA admissions cycle. In the event that a student is re-admitted into the program, the program faculty reserves the right to attach contingencies to the admittance.

Clinical Practice Passport

The program ensures sufficient exposure of patient encounters within supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) to enable students to meet the program's SCPE learning outcomes, preparing them for entry into professional practice. While benchmarks and meeting learning outcomes for each SCPE support acquisition of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), the program utilizes the Clinical Practice Passport to ensure that upon completion of all SCPEs, students have gained the necessary competencies for entry into clinical practice.

The Clinical Practice Passport document includes specific program expectations (PLOs) that are required for each student to meet and are individually evaluated to demonstrate student competence for entry into clinical practice. This provides a means for direct observation and assessment of student acquisition of program expectations by SCPE preceptors over the course of the clinical year. Students who do not meet this requirement are referred to the Student Progress Committee to identify the most appropriate remedial approach including repeating a SCPE. To complete this requirement, students may not repeat more than one semester, which is equivalent to three SCPEs.

Unsuccessful remediation effort will be reviewed by the Student Progress Committee with recommended course of action including a range of possible outcomes up to and including dismissal from the program. Students have the right to appeal the decision. The appeals process is outlined in the Appeals Process Section under Student Grievances below. Students may also seek re-entry to the program by applying for admission during the next PA admissions cycle. In the event that a student is re-admitted into the program, the program faculty reserves the right to attach contingencies to the admittance.

Professional Behaviors

Required Professional Behaviors

Students must display a professional attitude. Expectations include, but are not limited to:

- Adheres to institutional policies and procedures
- Admits errors and assumes responsibility

- Advocates for the individual patient
- Arrives on time for scheduled activities and appointments
- Conveys information honestly and tactfully
- Demonstrates sensitivity to power inequalities in professional relationships
- Fulfills responsibilities in a timely manner
- Maintains composure during difficult interactions
- Maintains thoroughness and attention to detail
- Modifies behavior based on feedback
- Requests help when needed
- Responds promptly to communication requests
- Acknowledges limits of one's own knowledge
- Responds receptively to diverse opinions and values
- Demonstrates humility
- Maintains the confidentiality of test material

Evaluation of Professional Behaviors

The Student Progress Committee evaluates students' professional behavior at the completion of the 2nd and 4th semester of the didactic phase of the program, and routinely evaluates student professionalism evaluations during SCPEs. During the formal evaluation the committee will meet and assess each student's professional behavior using the following criteria:

- Attendance/Punctuality: Consistently attends class and required events on a timely basis; Notifies instructor or course director for scheduled absences before occurrence or as soon as possible for unscheduled absences
- Class participation/Learning/Initiative: Participates actively and consistently in class discussions and assignments; Takes responsibility for getting notes, assignments etc. if a class is missed due to absence Takes responsibility and shows motivation for self-directed learning
- Writing Skills: Clear, concise write-ups with appropriate documentation, correct grammar, spelling and utilization of accurate medical concepts and terminology
- Verbal Skills: Speaks clearly, concisely and logically using appropriate medical terminology
- Dress/Attitude/Deportment: Consistently presents a professional demeanor in dress and attitude for class, labs and events; Maintains a positive attitude and accepts constructive feedback with maturity
- Interaction: Consistently demonstrates respect and sensitivity to fellow students, faculty and staff

This process will incorporate the following steps:

- Students complete a self-assessment prior to meeting with their advisor.
- Advisors will meet one on one with student advisees to provide feedback on Student Progress Committee and student self-assessments.
- If there are any areas of concern, the faculty member and the student can together address ways of improving those areas.
- If there are any problem areas identified, the student may be required to meet with both the advisor and Chair/Program Director or Assistant Program Director to discuss specific steps for improvement. Such steps may include, but are not limited to, referral to appropriate resources, developing a contract regarding behavioral modification, on-going advisory meetings and other means of assisting the student to improve problem areas.
- The form is reviewed with the student, signed and dated by both the Advisor and the student, and filed in the student's record.

The Student Progress Committee routinely reviews professionalism feedback from student performance during SCPEs from both preceptors and the Clinical Team. If there are any problem areas identified, the student may be required to meet with the committee or Chair/Program Director to discuss specific steps for improvement. Such steps may include, but are not limited to, referral to appropriate resources, developing a contract regarding behavioral modification, on-going advisory meetings and other means of

assisting the student to improve problem areas.

Ongoing Professionalism Evaluations

Behavioral concerns and praises observed throughout the program will be documented on a Professionalism Commendation Form, Professionalism Concern Form, or a Professionalism Violation Form. A Professionalism Commendation Form is used to acknowledge superior student professional behavior. A Professionalism Concern Form is used to identify and document concerns and patterns of professional behavior violations. These violations do not constitute immediate adverse action. A Professionalism Violation Form is used when the observed behavior constitutes a greater concern requiring a meeting of the Student Progress Committee to determine the need for immediate intervention.

Any time a Professionalism Form is issued the student must be notified. In the event that a Professionalism Concern or a Professionalism Violation is issued, the faculty member must meet with the student to discuss the identified behavioral concern at which time the student will be provided an opportunity to respond and provide their comments to the form. Once reviewed and completed, these forms will be placed in the student's file to inform the behavioral evaluation process by the Student Progress Committee.

Professionalism Examples

Professionalism Commendation Form:

- Evidence of a student donating their time to help another student without personal gain
- Professional praise from HPU faculty or staff outside of the PA program
- Student chosen for an award outside of the PA program for demonstrated professional behavior (local service award, state or national PA student award/scholarship)

Professionalism Concern Form:

- Tardiness or absence without appropriate notification/approval.
- Student verbal communication that indicates a lack of respect (use faculty member first name)
- Student use of unprofessional language (swearing)
- Student use of potentially discriminatory or demeaning language (speak ill of a patient, use of joke that could reasonably be considered demeaning or discriminatory)

Professionalism Violation Form:

- Evidence of cheating on an assignment or test
- Student intoxication or presumed intoxication from alcohol, prescription, or other drugs
- Student communication or interaction that is openly discriminatory, demeaning, or could reasonably be physically harmful to another

During the clinical phase, students are also assessed via preceptor evaluations and direct observation by faculty on clinical site visits.

Academic Dishonesty

It is the policy of the High Point University DPAS that any form of academic dishonesty by a PA student shall be dealt with by referral to the Student Progress Committee. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but **are not limited to**:

- Copying test answers or other assigned non-group work from classmates.
- Plagiarism of another's work.
- Recording or transmitting test questions or test materials.

- Accessing previous program exams and collaborating on graded assignments unless expressly permitted to do so.
- Specific examples of academic dishonesty related to each course are included in the Academic Honesty section of the individual syllabi.

Adverse Actions

Academic Probation

Students will be placed on Academic Probation in the following circumstances:

- When a student fails to achieve the required 3.0 semester G.P.A.
- When a student earns two final course grades of “C” during the didactic phase of the program.
- When a student earns one NP final SCPE grade during the clinical phase of the program.
- When a student earns two NP grades on End-of-Rotation examinations.
- When a student fails a remediation attempt of a Formative Evaluation.

Professionalism Probation

Students will be placed on Professionalism Probation following an unacceptable professionalism assessment by the Student Progress Committee, and confirmation by the Principal Faculty Committee, when they do not demonstrate acceptable professionalism behaviors as evidenced by one or more of the following:

- Receiving multiple Professionalism Concern Forms
- Documentation of multiple professionalism concerns on the student professionalism evaluation
- Severe Professionalism issue that does not rise to the level of dismissal (for example a Professionalism Violation that does not result in dismissal)
- Receiving an “Unacceptable” mark in the professionalism category of the Preceptor Evaluation of Student.

Procedure for regaining good standing following placement on Professionalism Probation:

- In order to return to good standing following placement on Professionalism Probation, students must refrain from demonstrating any of the professionalism deficiencies listed above during the probationary period. The probationary period will last from the time the student is placed on professionalism probation until the end of the following semester at which time the Student Progress Committee will conduct a formal professional evaluation.

Dismissal

Students will be dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program in the following circumstances:

- When a student earns one final course grade below 70% during the didactic phase of the program.
- When a student earns one NP grade during the didactic phase or one NP “non-SCPE” grade during the clinical phase.
- When a student fails to achieve a semester G.P.A. of 3.0 during any two semesters.
- When a student achieves a total of three final course grades of “C”.
- When a student achieves a final course grade of “C” or below once they have been on academic probation, regardless of the semester G.P.A. in which they receive the “C” grade.
- When a student earns two NP final SCPE grades during the clinical phase.
- When a student fails to meet post-acceptance requirements in the manner specified in the Admissions policy.
- When a student earns three NP grades on End-of-Rotation examinations.
- When a student fails to pass all components of a Formative or Summative Evaluation after the second remediation attempt.
- For conduct that would render them ineligible to participate in clinical rotations.
- When a student is unable to meet the minimum technical standards necessary to achieve the knowledge, skills, and competencies of an entry-level physician assistant.

- When it is no longer possible for the student to complete all program requirements for graduation within 5 years of their original date of matriculation.
- When the student exhibits behavior detrimental to their profession, including failure to demonstrate ethical and/or professional behavior and academic dishonesty.
- Students found to be cheating are subject to automatic dismissal.
- Any additional professional violations following placement on professionalism probation.

Students may be dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program in the following circumstances as determined by the Student Progress Committee:

- When a student has one unsuccessful remediation effort.
- When their behavior poses a threat to the standards of orderly operation, scholarship, and conduct.
- When they have violated principles related to academic integrity (that is not cheating) and plagiarism as outlined by High Point University Honor Code.
- When their behavior poses a threat to the mental or physical well-being of patients.
- For any gross violations of professional conduct as determined by the Student Progress Committee

Students dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program have the right to:

- Appeal the decision. (See the Appeals Process section under Student Grievances.)
- Seek re-entry by applying for admission during the normal admissions cycle. In the event that a student is admitted into the program, the program faculty reserves the right to attach contingencies to the admittance.

Conduct Violations and Harassment

The HPU Physician Assistant Studies Program adheres to the same policy adhered to by High Point University. This can be found in the High Point University Student Guide to Campus Life. This can be found at: <http://www.highpoint.edu/studentlife/studentguidetocampuslife/>

Student Grievances

Academic Grievances

The PA Program abides by High Point University policies related to Academic Grievance, as outlined in the *HPU Graduate Bulletin*. This can be found at: <http://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/bulletins/>

Appeals Process

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies recognizes due process and the rights of a student to appeal Program decisions/actions affecting student progress within the Program. Student appeals must be based upon the Program's failure to follow established policies or procedures. Any appeal must be based on evidence that a factual or procedural error was made or that some significant piece of information was overlooked. An appeal must be addressed in writing at each level of appeal and must be presented in the following prescribed sequence to the appropriate staff. An appeal does not guarantee a change in the decision.

1. All appeals must be submitted to the Program Director in writing within five working days of the Program action/decision being appealed.
2. Appeals will be reviewed during a meeting of the Principal Faculty Committee and a decision will be rendered to the student within five working days of receipt of the appeal. Students will be invited to attend the Principal Faculty Committee meeting at which the appeal is considered to present their case and respond to any questions the committee may have. As this meeting is a purely academic proceeding, no legal counsel will be allowed to attend or participate. The appellant student may, however, request participation by other students or non-program faculty with approval of the Program Director. Proceedings may not be recorded in any manner (audio, video, digital, etc.)
3. Students who wish to challenge the Program's appeal decision may initiate a subsequent appeal to the Dean of the School of Health Sciences. This appeal must be initiated within five working days of the Program's appeal decision and must be submitted in writing.

4. Students who wish to challenge the Dean of the School of Health Sciences appeal decision may initiate a subsequent appeal to Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs within 5 working days.
5. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will be considered final and become effective upon ratification by the President.

Deceleration

The High Point University PA curriculum is designed to be delivered on a full-time basis to students in a cohort. There is no formal academic deceleration plan or option to complete the curriculum on a part-time basis.

Leave of Absence

A student in good academic standing may request a leave of absence due to occurrence of such events as a medical problem, serious personal problem(s), or pregnancy.

Students requesting a leave of absence must apply in writing to the Program Director. In the event of a medical problem or pregnancy, the request should be accompanied by a letter from a healthcare provider describing the nature of the condition for which the leave is requested and the estimated length of time needed for recovery.

After consultation with the student, the Program Director will decide whether or not the leave is to be granted and the conditions under which the student may return to school. A student requesting a leave of absence must go through the following procedure:

1. Request in writing a leave of absence from the Program Director.
2. The student must personally meet with the Program Director to discuss the reason for the leave.
3. After consulting with the student, if it is determined that the leave of absence will be granted, the Program Director will assist the student through the official leave of absence procedure at the PA Program level. The Program Director will send an official letter to the student indicating that the leave of absence has been approved and specifying the terms of the leave. The terms of the leave of absence will be determined by the Program Director and reviewed with the student, including the following elements:
 - a. Implications for resuming the curriculum (course requirements and sequencing issues)
 - b. Duration of the leave (no longer than 12 months)
 - c. Method for demonstrating academic readiness upon return to the Program
 - d. Method for demonstrating ability to meet the technical standards upon return to the Program
 - e. Need to repeat criminal background check and/or urine drug screen prior to return (at the student's expense)
 - f. Curriculum or policy revisions to which the student will be subject upon return to the Program
 - g. Acknowledgment of the Norcross Graduate School requirement for readmission to the Graduate School as described in the "Skipped Term: Readmission" policy available in the Graduate Bulletin.
4. Upon receipt of the official letter from the Program Director, the student must provide the letter including the defined terms for the leave of absence, Program Director approval of the leave, and a note from his/her healthcare provider (if applicable) to the Graduate Operations Division of the Graduate School. The Graduate School then assists the student with completing University administrative leave of absence processes related to financial aid, student accounts, and registration status. If a student does not return from the leave of absence at the specified time, the

student will be administratively withdrawn from the program and will be responsible for all accrued fees and financial obligations.

If the leave is approved, the official start date of the leave of absence will be stipulated in the Program Director's approval letter. In the event the student is incapacitated and unable to initiate the request, the Program Director may facilitate this process. Any tuition reimbursement will be in accordance with the institutional refund policy. A Leave of Absence may result in a student graduating after the remainder of their cohort, not being able to participate in the graduation ceremony with their original cohort, and other program and university-related events.

Withdrawal

- Students are permitted to withdraw from the program at their discretion following the University-defined procedure.
- Withdrawal from an individual course will not allow a student to progress in the program as per the requirements for progression (see Requirements for Progression and Graduation section) and therefore constitutes withdrawal from the program.
- To officially withdraw from the University, a student must report to the Graduate Operations Division of the Norcross Graduate School. Students wishing to withdraw should also consult with the Office of Student Financial Planning to determine if stipulations associated with the financial aid package will lead to changes in the financial statement.

Approved By: Principal Faculty

Modified:

January 25, 2014

March 10, 2014

February 5, 2015

October 20, 2015

August 9, 2016

September 13, 2016

November 8, 2016

September 12, 2017

March 2018

July 2018 (inclusion Passport/summative remediation)

September 2018 (inclusion Formative Evaluations)

April 2019

Next Review: Spring 2020