

Physician Assistant (PA) Program Student Policies and Procedures

George Fox University

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Required Academic Standards to Maintain Enrollment and Progress in the Curriculum

Cumulative GPA

A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required to graduate from the program. Any student who fails to achieve the required 3.0 per semester GPA will automatically be placed on probation (see remediation and probation section of this handbook). Students with a cumulative GPA below 3.0 at the end of the didactic phase of the program will not be able to progress to the clinical phase of the program and will be discussed at the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee.

Didactic grades are given as A, B, C and F. SCPE course grades are given as pass or fail.

Didactic Course Grade Breakdown

Didactic Course Grade (%)	
90 – 100	A (4.0)
80 – 89	B (3.0)
73 – 79	C (2.0)
00 – 72	F (0.0)

SCPE Course Grade Breakdown

SCPE Course Grade (%)
80% and above
73 – 79
00 – 72

Course Completion Requirement: Regardless of penalties, students are still required to complete all assigned coursework to fulfill the course requirements. Failure to complete any component of the coursework, even if graded at 0%, may result in a grade of “Incomplete” for the course, at the discretion of the Course Director.

Extensions due to exceptional circumstances (e.g., illness or emergencies) may be granted at the instructor’s discretion. Requests for extensions must be made before the original due date, and proper documentation may be required.

Advancing to the Clinical Phase of the Program

To advance to the SCPE (clinical) year, the student must:

- Pass each of the three components of the End of Didactic Year Assessment with a minimum grade of 73% or higher in each. The End of Didactic Year Assessment is held during Finals Week of Fall I semester.
- When repeat assessment is required (< 73%), it will be scheduled within the first 3 weeks of the following semester (Spring IIA).
- When a student fails the second attempt, they will be discussed at the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee and be subject to deceleration or dismissal from the program.
- It is important to note that the need for a repeat assessment may require students to delay the start of their clinical rotations.
- Students are not allowed to progress to the clinical phase if they are on probation. They will be discussed at the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for possible dismissal from the program.
- Students with a cumulative GPA below 3.0 at the end of the didactic phase of the program will not be able to progress to the clinical phase of the program and will be discussed at the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee.
- Note: If students are on probation at the end of the didactic year, they may not receive their SCPE rotation schedule at the same time as the rest of their cohort.
- Successful passing of the end of didactic year summative written exam, OSCE, physical exam, and skills exam.
- Successful completion of the Transition to Clinical Rotation course, which will include HIPAA and OSHA refresher training.
- Successful completion of any necessary immunizations and if required by the clinical site a urine drug screen and background check. Any associated fees will be incurred directly by the student.

- Proof of updated immunizations as needed (based on CDC recommendations for health care providers)
- Successful completion of Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers course with current certification.
- Signed Health Information Release form by student allowing GFU's PA Program to maintain and release the following information to clinical rotation sites:
 - Immunizations status
 - TB screening status (two step)
 - Drug screening results
 - Criminal background check
 - BLS/ACLS certification
- Proof of Health Insurance coverage.
- Proof of Professional Liability Insurance: This is provided by George Fox University and will cover students while completing official PA program course related requirements. This will not cover students while employed or working external to the clinical rotation sites.

The program conducts and documents a summative evaluation of each student within the final four months of the program as outlined in the Summative course syllabus. The summative evaluation is used to verify that each student is prepared to enter clinical practice as evidenced by successful assessment of each student's ability to meet the Program's Graduate Competencies. To pass the Summative Assessment course and graduate from the program, the student must pass each of the three components of the summative evaluation and the professionalism rubric with a minimum grade of 73% (OSCE, Skills Testing, Professionalism) and 1450 (Written examination) or higher. When repeat assessment is required (< 73% or < 1450), an opportunity for remediation is available to the student before the repeat assessment. When a student fails the second attempt, they are discussed at a meeting of the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for consideration of dismissal. It is important to note that the need for a repeat assessment may result in delay of graduation for those students. Any additional costs for a delay in graduation (i.e. tuition, university fees) is the responsibility of the student. In addition, if a student's summative professionalism score is below 73%, the student is referred to the Program Director and the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for consideration of remediation or dismissal from the program. A final summative evaluation course grade of 73% or better is required to graduate from the program.

Student Progress During SCPE Rotations

As defined in each SCPE course syllabus, students are required to complete specific rotation course requirements including logging of ALL clinical practice experiences and online submission of any other assignments. Refer to the SCPE syllabus for further detail regarding expectations for student logging. The Director of Clinical Education will be responsible for monitoring student submission/completion of these requirements and progress toward achieving the program-defined SCPE experiences and technical skills competencies as outlined in the syllabus. As a result, if determined by the Director of Clinical Education, a PA student's clinical year rotation schedule might be adjusted to ensure they are meeting the SCPE learning outcomes. This may include replacing an elective rotation with a repeat of a core rotation if needed.

Requirements and Deadlines for Completion of the Program

George Fox University will confer the credential and/or academic degree that documents satisfactory completion of the MMSc PA Program. To do this, GFU will maintain good standing with regional accreditation mandates necessary to confer graduates with a Master of Medical Science degree

To graduate from the MMSc PA Program and earn a Master of Medical Science degree, students must meet the following:

- Successfully complete all course work according to program defined academic standards (cannot have any incomplete or outstanding grades). This is reviewed with the PA Program Advisor at the beginning of Fall II and can be done via Zoom or email if necessary.
- Achieve a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA
- Successfully pass all components of the summative evaluation/course
- Demonstrate they have met all graduate competencies and learning outcomes
- Be in good professional and/or academic standing
- Apply for graduation through the Registrar's Office:
 - Log into my.georgefox.edu
 - Click on the Academic Records tile
 - Click the Application for Graduation link
 - Complete the form
- Have no financial or library obligation with George Fox University.

Policy and Procedures for Remediation

During the program, evidence of information mastery is monitored with written, oral and practical assessments and students are encouraged to contact relevant faculty – at any time – to improve their mastery of the material. This process allows faculty to promptly identify deficiencies in knowledge or skills and establishes means for remediation as described below. Course Directors are available to facilitate remediation when needed. In the event that a Course Director is not available, or subject material is better handled by another faculty member, the Director of Didactic or Clinical Education may assign the role to another faculty member.

Didactic Remediation

Each examination is analyzed for item validity, and students are permitted to submit written feedback to examination questions as outlined in this handbook. Individual assignments and exam grades are NOT rounded up/down but are recorded to the hundredths. Unless otherwise noted in the course syllabus, there are no “extra-credit” options for improving an assessment score. The following bullet points outline the remediation processes related to the didactic phase. Any assessment grade below 73% requires remediation and/or repeat assessment and the following guidelines apply:

- Students must meet with Course Director and possibly their Faculty Advisor
- If a student has or exceeds three failed assessments in any course or two failed assessments in the same course in the Spring 1A and Spring 1B or has or exceeds two failed assessments in any courses in Summer I and Fall I they will be discussed at the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for probation, or dismissal.

- If a student needs to remediate or undergo a repeat assessment, they will be contacted by the Course Director by the end of the Block Testing Week or Finals Testing Week. Remediation must be completed by the end of the first week of the following block or semester.
- The remediation process follows four steps which include:
 - Step One: Meeting with Course Director where the following is reviewed
 - Report and review of assessment performance, which details areas where knowledge gaps exist
 - Step Two: The Course Director develops a remediation plan of study or a repeat assessment, which may include, but is not limited to:
 - Reading assignments
 - Review of lecture materials
 - Individual focused faculty led tutoring (especially when related to skills deficiencies)
 - Oral question answer session
 - Written exam
 - Written paper
 - Written responses to selected examination questions
 - Step Three: The Course Director evaluates the student's proficiency once Step Two is completed to determine if remediation or repeat assessment has been successful.
 - Step Four: The Course Director completes the Remediation Form. These forms are kept in the student's file.
- Assessment grades will not increase or be modified after the remediation or repeat assessment is completed
- The student gets one attempt to successfully pass the remediation or repeat assessment. If the student does not pass the remediation or repeat assessment, they are referred to the PA Program Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for discussion.

Clinical Phase Remediation

Clinical rotation grades consist of End-of-Rotation examinations (EORs), logging of patient cases, professionalism, and preceptor evaluations. As previously described, the passing score for the EOR exams will be determined using the student's z-score. For all other evaluation processes, 73% is considered the minimal passing score per SCPE graded item. The process for students who receive a "Below Expectations" or "Unsatisfactory" rating on an individual evaluation item within the preceptor evaluation is outlined in the SCPE syllabi. Individual assignments and exam grades will NOT be rounded up/down. The four step remediation or repeat assessment process, during the clinical phase, mirrors that of the didactic phase with the following exceptions:

- One failed repeat end of rotation exam in the same SCPE course, one incidence of failed professionalism (<73%) on the preceptor evaluation or one line item at "Below Expectations" or "Unsatisfactory" on professionalism section of preceptor evaluation, or one SCPE course grade of 73% to 79% are considered to have not passed the SCPE course and will be referred to the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for possible repeat of the SCPE course, probation, or dismissal from the program.

- Failed items must be remediated or reassessed by the end of week two (2) of the next rotation. If the remediation or reassessment timeline needs to be altered, the Director of Clinical Education will make this decision and a grade of incomplete in the applicable clinical rotation course is given until the items are successfully remediated or reassessed. This converts to a non-passing grade and may result in program dismissal if the remediation timeline is not met.
- Non-passing items on the last clinical rotation may result in delay of graduation. Any additional costs related to delayed graduation are the responsibility of the student.

The four step process of remediation or repeat assessment in the Clinical Phase includes:

- Step One: Meeting with Course Director where the following is reviewed
 - PAEA End of Rotation exam scores
 - Patient logging
 - Professionalism
 - Preceptor Evaluation
- Step Two: The Course Director develops a remediation plan of study or a repeat assessment, which may include, but is not limited to:
 - Reading assignments
 - Review of lecture materials
 - Individual focused faculty led tutoring (especially when related to skills deficiencies)
 - Oral question answer session
 - Written exam
 - Written paper
 - Written responses to selected examination questions
 - SCPE experiences
- Step Three: The Course Director evaluates the student's proficiency to determine if remediation or repeat assessment is completed.
- Step Four: The Course Director completes the Remediation Form. These forms are kept in the student's file.
- Assessment grades will not increase or be modified after the remediation or repeat assessment is completed
- The student gets one attempt to successfully pass the remediation or repeat assessment. If the student does not pass the remediation or repeat assessment, they are referred to the PA Program Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for discussion.

Professionalism Remediation

According to GFU's Academic Honesty policy ([GFU Academic Honesty](#)):

Academic Integrity

It is assumed that all students at George Fox University will endeavor to be honest and of high integrity in all matters pertaining to university life. A lack of respect and integrity is evidenced by cheating, fabricating, plagiarizing, misuse of keys and facilities, removing books and other property not one's own, defacing and altering property, and disrupting classes. ***Cheating*** is defined as intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. It is assumed that whatever work is submitted is the student's own

work and is new work for that course. ***Fabrication*** is defined as intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise or form.

Plagiarism is defined as representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. One who facilitates any of the above is equally responsible with the primary violator. Penalties may include restitution, a ***failing grade*** on an individual paper or exam, loss of campus position or employment, a ***failing grade for the course, disciplinary probation or dismissal***.

Use of AI:

Absent a clear statement from a course director, the use of or consultation with generative AI shall be treated analogously to assistance from another person or disallowed resource (and thus would be forbidden under the same circumstances as any other form of academic dishonesty). In particular, using generative AI tools to substantially complete an assignment, paper, exam, or any other course element is not permitted. The types of materials that would fall under the category of “AI tools” for this purpose include, but are not limited to, things like ChatGPT, Bard, Claude, GitHub, Copy.ai, Rephrase.ai, and many more, as well as the text-generative aspects of popular tools such as (but again, not limited to) Grammarly, i.e., GrammarlyGO. Students should acknowledge the use of generative AI (other than incidental use) and default to disclosing such assistance when in doubt.

Professionalism

Professionalism will be a graded component of each course during the didactic phase of the curriculum. Along with course grading of professionalism, the Progress and Professionalism Committee may meet to determine if students have passed professionalism if warranted. The Progress and Professionalism Committee may recommend additional assessment, remediations or place a student on probation or dismiss a student who has been presented by the faculty or Course Director with concerns.

Disciplinary action for academic or behavioral misconduct is initiated by the Course Director or appropriate faculty member. At first, the Course Director or appropriate faculty member assesses the gravity of the case of academic or behavioral transgression and recommends, to the Program Director, a professionalism remediation plan to any student involved. In addition, ***any ‘unsatisfactory’ professionalism*** rating on an evaluation form requires probation, meeting with the Program Director, and review by the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee. Any ‘poor’ or ‘below expectations’ rating or professionalism grade <73% requires remediation. Finally, a course specific final professionalism grade < 73% may result in course failure and dismissal. Penalties and/or remediation that may be applied to individual cases include one or more of the following:

- Conversation and counsel
- Written reprimand
- Requirement to redo work in question
- Requirement to submit additional work
- Lowering of grade on work in question
- Assigning the grade of F to work in question
- Recommendation for more severe punishment, up to and including probation or dismissal from the program and University.

As outlined above, the faculty member involved discusses the offense and the penalty or remediation imposed with the PA Program Director. In some instances, the faculty member or Program Director will request that the action be reviewed by the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for discussion and possible additional assessments, remediation, and/or probation or dismissal.

Policy and Procedures for Deceleration

The GFU MMSc PA program's curriculum is delivered on a full-time basis to students in a cohort. Deceleration may occur at the discretion of the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee. Deceleration may include but is not limited to the following:

- Repeating the entire program or a phase of the program
- Repeat a semester or multiple semesters of the program
- Repeat a specific course or courses
- Complete an Independent Study course

Deceleration may occur with or without an approved formal Leave of Absence (LOA). A student may request a LOA through George Fox University for a variety of reasons. Information on a LOA can be found at the university [Registrar's Office](#). If the student has a formal LOA, the plan of coursework upon return from the LOA is outlined in the student's LOA plan. Students who request and have an approved LOA from George Fox University may be required, due to course availability, to resume studies with the subsequent cohort. Any changes to the student's requirements and deadlines for progression in and completion of the program that result from a LOA and having to decelerate to the subsequent cohort will be documented as part of the student's LOA plan. In some instances, a student who has previously attended the program and did not complete the program or have an approved LOA must reapply. In this case, the admissions application will be treated in the same manner as all other applications. Decelerations and LOA's may delay graduation. Any additional costs related to deceleration and LOA's are the responsibility of the student.

Policy and Procedures for Withdrawal

Refunds for students who drop or withdraw from classes, on or after the first day of the session, will receive a removal of tuition per the GFU policy that can be found at the following link: ([GFU Charge Removal Policy](#)). *Please note: withdrawing from any MMSc PA course constitutes withdrawal from the PA Program with no guarantee of readmittance.*

Policy and Procedures for Dismissal

Dismissal – Didactic

During the didactic phase, any student who has the following academic performance and/or grade/s will be subject to dismissal from the program:

- Unsuccessfully progressing out of probation status after the subsequent semester they were placed on probation (including resolving professionalism concerns)
- One course grade below 73%
- Two consecutive semester/s with a cumulative GPA below 3.0

- Any egregious professionalism concern (i.e. violation of the law, patient safety, public safety)

Dismissal – SCPE Courses

During the clinical phase, any student who has the following academic performance and/or grade/s will be subject to dismissal from the program:

- Unsuccessfully progressing out of probation status after the subsequent semester they were placed on probation (including resolving professionalism concerns)
- Three incidences of end of rotation examinations scoring <73% on any SCPE course
- Two repeat end of rotation exam scoring <73% on any SCPE course
- Two incidences of no logging of patient cases by the due date
- Two incidences of professionalism scoring <73% on the preceptor evaluation or one line item at “Below Expectations” or “Unsatisfactory” on professionalism section of preceptor evaluation in separate SCPE preceptor evaluations
- Two SCPE course grades < 79%
- Two semesters with a cumulative GPA below 3.0
- Any egregious professionalism concern (i.e. violation of the law, patient safety, public safety)

Probation or Dismissal – Professionalism

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Disciplinary action for academic or behavioral misconduct is initiated by the Course Director or appropriate faculty member. At first, the Course Director or appropriate faculty member assesses the gravity of the case of academic or behavioral transgression and recommends, to the Program Director, a professionalism remediation plan to any student involved. In addition, **any ‘unsatisfactory’ professionalism** rating on an evaluation form requires probation, meeting with the Program Director, and review by the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee. Any ‘poor’ or ‘below expectations’ rating or professionalism grade <73% requires remediation. Finally, a course specific final professionalism grade < 73% may result in course failure and dismissal. Penalties and/or remediation that may be applied to individual cases include one or more of the following:

- Conversation and counsel
- Written reprimand
- Requirement to redo work in question
- Requirement to submit additional work
- Lowering of grade on work in question
- Assigning the grade of F to work in question
- Recommendation for more severe punishment, up to and including probation or dismissal from the program and University.

As outlined above, the faculty member involved discusses the offense and the penalty or remediation imposed with the PA Program Director. In some instances, the faculty member or Program Director will request that the action be reviewed by the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee for discussion and possible additional assessments, remediation, and/or probation or dismissal.

Professionalism will be assessed in the didactic phase via the Professionalism Evaluation found in each course syllabi and at the end of this handbook. In the clinical phase, professionalism is assessed within the Preceptor Evaluation and will be used to calculate the students SCPE professionalism course score. Course Directors, faculty, and advisors will also give input for student professionalism concerns to the Academic Progress and Professionalism Committee as outlined above during both the didactic and clinical phase of the program.

Policy and Procedures for Student Grievances

Students in the MMSc PA program who feel they have grounds for an appeal or a ***grievance*** related to the MMSc PA program’s policies and procedures may appeal directly to the involved faculty member, their Faculty Advisor, Program Director, or appropriate Committee (committee will depend on the grievance being addressed). If the decision rendered by the Program’s

Committee does not resolve the complaint, the student may proceed to the next level of appeal which occurs with the PA Program's Executive Committee. If the student disagrees with the Executive Committee decision, they can appeal to the Associate Provost for the Division of Health and Behavioral Sciences, asking them to review all documentation and render a decision. Note: If the ***grievance*** is with the MMSc PA Program Director, the student can bypass the initial ***grievance*** process and submit a written appeal directly to the Associate Provost for the Division of Health and Behavioral Sciences. If desired, the student can file their grievances to the University. Information on this process can be found at [GFU Complaint Procedures](#)

George Fox methods of reporting for (1) sexual harassment, (2) domestic violence, (3) dating violence, (4) stalking, (5) sexual exploitation, (6) harassment and discrimination, (7) bias-related incidents, and (8) hate crimes can be found at [GFU Harassment and Discrimination Policies](#). To summarize, MMSc PA students with these concerns would file the complaint with the title IX coordinator and others as appropriate. Contacts for title IX coordinators can be found at [GFU Title IX](#).

George Fox methods of reporting sexual assault can be found at [GFU Sexual Assault Reporting](#). The site states, "complainants may use confidential on-campus or off-campus resources or file a report with Student Life. Individuals wishing to receive confidential help and support can use any of the confidential options listed below. University personnel are prepared to journey with the student to provide support, as well as assist the student in all aspects of reporting, up to and including the incident being investigated and the respondent confronted." Multiple reporting resources are located on this site.

Policy and Procedures for Student Appeals

All students have the right to appeal adverse academic outcomes, up to and including dismissal from the MMSc PA program. Appeals must be presented in writing to the Associate Provost for the Division of Health and Behavioral Sciences within two weeks of the adverse outcome. At the discretion of the Associate Provost, an appeals committee will be assigned to review the appeal. Students have the right to present evidence that is germane to the adverse outcome. A fellow classmate may represent students. However, legal counsel is not permitted. The appeals committee will render its decision to the Associate Provost, who may sustain or overrule. The Associate Provost will notify the student of the outcome. Once the Associate Provost gives notice, the decision is final.

Policy for Student Employment While Enrolled in the Program

While enrolled in the PA program at GFU, students assume the role of a learner. The PA program strongly discourages students from being employed while enrolled and does not make exceptions or alterations to required course work, scheduling, or rotation assignments for individual students due to employment. Employment status while in the program may not be used to excuse absence from scheduled learning activities, justify poor performance, or be considered as a mitigating factor when assessing students' academic and professional progress.

Students Do Not Work for The PA Program

The GFU MMSc PA Program does not permit its students to work (paid or voluntary) for the Program

Students Do Not Substitute as Faculty

GFU MMSc PA students do not substitute for or function as instructional faculty or fulfill staffing duties that would otherwise be performed by program faculty or staff (paid or volunteer).

- Students with specific prior knowledge, experiences, and skills may assist faculty (provided faculty approval and oversight) and share that knowledge and skill set during didactic and laboratory sessions.
- Students may not be the primary instructor or instructor of record for any component of the program curriculum.
- Students may not participate in the primary assessment of other students, except as indicated in the student reflection or peer review activities.

Students Do Not Work at Clinical Rotation Sites

During supervised clinical experiences, students may not substitute for clinical or administrative staff and must ensure all services provided to patients are directly supervised (A3.05b). Students may not accept compensation for any services provided during supervised clinical experiences unless specifically approved by the Director of Clinical Education (DCE), (e.g. housing).

Policy for Student Travel to Required Rotation Sites

Students may be required to attend rotations at sites outside of the Newberg and the Portland metro area and will be responsible for all expenses related to such assignments. Students are responsible for all SCPE expenses to include housing, meals, transportation, parking, and so on.