



PLAZA COLLEGE
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM

Student Handbook

Class of 2029

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Subject to Revision at Any Time

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PREFACE

This edition of the Physician Assistant Studies Program Student Handbook is intended to provide general guidance to students regarding the organization and policies of Plaza College, the School of Graduate Studies, and the Physician Assistant Studies Program. This handbook is supplementary and does not supersede the policies of the Plaza College Student Handbook, located at <https://plazacollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Student-Handbook-May-2026-LATEST-FINAL-1.pdf>.

This handbook does not constitute a complete or legally binding statement of rights and responsibilities. Policies and procedures, as well as instructor assignments and curriculum, are subject to change. All information contained in this Student Handbook is subject to change at any time without prior notice. If a substantial change is made, the PA Program will notify all currently matriculated students who may be affected in writing via college-issued email.

All academic policies apply in all settings, whether instruction is provided in person, remotely, or in a hybrid format combining in-person and remote learning.

The Plaza College Physician Assistant Studies Program faculty and staff are here to assist any student with further clarification and/or questions. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented herein, the PA Program is not responsible for typographical errors.

Physician Assistant Studies Program Policies

- The Plaza College Physician Assistant Studies Program policies apply to all students and principal faculty regardless of location.

- The PA Program Student Handbook and policies are available on the Program's website under the "Program Handbooks and Policies" dropdown at <https://plazacollege.edu/academics/physician-assistant-program/>.

- The Plaza College Physician Assistant Studies Program ensures that students are fully informed of all program policies and practices.
 - a. During the PA Program Orientation for all new students, the student handbooks are reviewed, and students learn where to access both the Plaza College and the PA Program Handbooks, as well as the location of all program-specific policies and procedures.
 - b. Selected policies are also available on the PA Program website for prospective and enrolled students at <https://plazacollege.edu/academics/physician-assistant-program/> under the "Program Handbooks and Policies" dropdown.
 - c. Students must sign an acknowledgment confirming receipt, understanding, and compliance with all program and institutional policies and procedures. Signed acknowledgment forms are kept in each student's program file.
 - d. Updates to policies and practices are shared (or notification of an update sent) electronically via Plaza College-issued email and posted in updated handbooks and policies on The Plaza College Physician Assistant Studies Program website.
 - e. Major changes are communicated in person, when possible, followed by an email notification to students' Plaza College accounts.

Program Mission

The mission of the Plaza College Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program is to educate and develop highly competent, compassionate, culturally sensitive physician assistants who excel at the practice of medicine.

In alignment with Plaza College's mission the PA program is committed to the personal and professional advancement of our students through an inclusive, supportive, and dynamic learning experience that promotes the education, health, and success of the communities that our students and the institution support and serve.

Program Goals

1. Admit qualified applicants who will successfully meet the criteria for progression and completion of the program.
 - Foster a culture that values professional and community engagement.
 - Deliver a curriculum that graduates entry-level, practice-ready PAs.
 - Graduate physician assistants who will help address the healthcare needs of New York City and adjacent communities (the 5 boroughs of NYC, Long Island, Westchester, the surrounding cities of New Jersey and Connecticut).

Physician Assistant Program Graduate Competencies

The Plaza College PA Program graduate competencies represent the student performance requirements for graduation from the Plaza College Physician Assistant (PA) Program. These competencies include medical knowledge and clinical reasoning, interpersonal skills, communication skills, clinical and technical skills, and professional behaviors.

These program-defined competencies were informed by the “Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession” as developed jointly by the National Commission on Accreditation of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), the Accreditation Review Commission for Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), as well as the PAEA “Core Competencies for New Physician Graduates. These documents provide guidance regarding the expected knowledge, skills and abilities expected of a “practice-ready” PA program graduate.

- **Medical Knowledge for Practice**

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to apply comprehensive knowledge of biomedical and clinical sciences to acute, chronic, urgent, and emergent patient-centered care of all patients across the lifespan.

Competency:

- 1.1: Demonstrate critical thinking in making patient care decisions.
- 1.2: Discern among acute, chronic, urgent, and emergent disease states and conditions.
- 1.3: Apply principles of basic and clinical sciences to the care of patients.
- 1.4: Select, interpret, and apply diagnostic studies to inform clinical decision-making related to patient care.

Assessment (Summative):

A1.1 – 1.4: multiple-choice medical knowledge examination (PAEA EOC Exam).

A1.1-4: OSCE (oral presentation of patient) with Rubric.

- **Interpersonal and Communication Skills**

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to demonstrate the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, patient-identified family or proxies, and other health professionals and members of the patient care team.

Competency:

- 2.1: Utilize effective communication skills to provide information to and elicit information from patients and other members of the health care team.
- 2.2: Accurately and adequately document medical information in a uniform, concise, clear, and legally competent manner.

Assessment (Summative):

A2.1: OSCE (SP interview and oral presentation of patient) with Rubric.

A2.2: Assessment OSCE Write-up (H & P with assessment and plan) with Rubric.

- **Clinical and Technical Skills**

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to demonstrate the clinical reasoning and technical skills required to provide patient and setting-specific, age-appropriate assessment, evaluation, and care of all patients.

Competency:

- 3.1: Elicit a detailed and accurate history and perform an appropriate physical examination on a patient.
- 3.2: Develop treatment and management plans for medical problems, including written medical orders.
- 3.3: Perform medical procedures, including injections, immunizations, suturing, wound care, intravenous catheterization, phlebotomy, arterial blood gas sampling, urinary catheter insertion, splint and casting applications.

Assessment (Summative):

A3.1, A3.2: OSCE (SP interview and oral presentation of patient) with Rubric.

A3.1, A3.2: OSCE Write-up (H &P with assessment and plan) with Rubric.

A3.2, A3.2a: multiple-choice medical knowledge examination (PAEA EOC Exam).

A3.4: Technical Skills Practical Examination

- **Professionalism Behaviors**

4.1 Interprofessional Collaboration

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to demonstrate the ability to engage with a variety of other healthcare professionals in ways that optimize safe, effective, patient- and population-centered care.

Competency:

4.1.1: Recognize when referrals are needed and make them to the appropriate health care provider.

4.1.2: Communicate effectively with other professionals, striving to improve patient outcomes.

Assessment (Summative):

A4.1.1, 4.1.2: OSCE (oral presentation of patient) with Rubric.

4.2 Professionalism and Ethics

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to demonstrate integrity and a commitment to practicing medicine in ethically and legally appropriate ways, while emphasizing professional maturity and accountability in delivering safe, high-quality, patient-centered, and population-centered care.

Competency:

4.2.1: Demonstrates self-reflection and commitment to ongoing learning and development, including being receptive to formative feedback.

4.2.2: Demonstrate professionalism and respect for the PA Profession and patients by wearing appropriate professional clothing, a clearly visible identifier or name tag, washing hands or utilizing hand sanitizer as appropriate, preserving patient modesty, asking permission of patients before initiating an examination, always maintaining a

professional and polite tone and manner with patients, colleagues, and co-workers, and demonstrating compassion for patients.

Assessment (Summative):

4.2.1, 4.2.2: OSCE (SP interview and oral presentation of patient) with Rubric.

4.3 Practice-Based Learning

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to demonstrate the ability to learn and implement quality improvement practices by engaging in critical analysis of their own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and practice improvement.

Competency:

4.3.1: Demonstrate self-awareness to identify strengths, address weaknesses, and recognize limits in knowledge and expertise.

Assessment (Summative):

4.3.1: OSCE (oral presentation of patient) with Rubric.

- **Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Ability**

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to demonstrate the clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities required to provide patient care in an age-appropriate, setting-specific manner, including conducting an assessment, developing a differential diagnosis, and designing an appropriate plan of care for all patients.

Competency:

5.1: Demonstrate the ability to apply clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities to develop appropriate and complete diagnostic evaluation plans.

5.2: Demonstrate the ability to gather and synthesize patient information to formulate a differential diagnosis.

Assessment (Summative):

A5.1, A5.2: OSCE (SP interview and oral presentation of patient) with Rubric.

A5.1, A5.2: multiple-choice medical knowledge examination (PAEA EOC Exam).

- **Society and Population Health**

Graduates of the Plaza College PA Program will be able to recognize and understand the influences on the patient and their care, including the individual, their family, population, culture, environment, health policy, and the effects therein on health, delivery of care, and health outcomes, and integrate knowledge of these determinants of health into patient care decisions.

Competency:

6.1: Describe the impact of social and cultural influences on health, disease, healthcare-related behaviors, and compliance.

6.2 Describe the influence of genetic, socioeconomic, environmental, and other determinants on the health of the individual and community.

Assessment (Summative):

A6.1, A6.2: Summative Research Paper with Rubric.

Course Sequencing

	Course #	Course Title	Semester Credits
Semester 1 (Didactic)	PA501	Anatomy & Radiology	6
	PA502	Physiology	4
	PA503	Medical Interviewing	3
	PA504	Introduction to the PA Profession	3
	PA505	Epidemiology & Public Health	2
	PA506	Surgery I: Introduction to Surgery & Skills	3
	PA507	Clinical Pathology	3
		<i>Subtotal</i>	24
Semester 2 (Didactic)	PA508	Essential Principles of Medicine I	6
	PA509	Surgery II: Surgery & Skills	3
	PA510	Physical Diagnosis I	4
	PA511	Clinical Pharmacology	4
	PA512	Behavioral & Mental Health	3
	PA513	Research I: Introduction to Research	2
		<i>Subtotal</i>	22
Semester 3 (Didactic)	PA514	Essential Principles of Medicine II	6
	PA515	Surgery III: Surgical Specialties & Skills	3
	PA516	Physical Diagnosis II	4
	PA517	Emergency Medicine	3
	PA518	Geriatrics	2
	PA519	Pediatrics	2
	PA520	Women's Health	2
	PA521	Research II	2
		<i>Subtotal</i>	24
Semester 4 (Clinical)*	PA5501	Internal Medicine SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
	PA5502	Surgery SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
	PA5503	Internal Med. II: Geriatrics SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
		<i>Subtotal</i>	15
Semester 5 (Clinical)*	PA5504	Behavioral & Mental Health SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
	PA5505	Pediatrics SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
	PA5506	Emergency Medicine SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
		<i>Subtotal</i>	15

Semester 6	PA5507	Women's Health SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
(Clinical)*	PA5508	Family Medicine SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
	PA5509	Elective SCPE (Clinical Rotation)	5
	PA5510	Orientation to Practice: Capstone & Competencies	2
	PA5511	Research III	2
<i>Subtotal</i>			19
<i>Total Program Requirements (Semester Credits)</i>			119

*Clinical rotation courses may occur in any sequence

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE DESCRIPTION	Lecture Credits	Lab Credits	Clinical Credits
PA501	Anatomy & Radiology	4	4	
The Anatomy and Radiology course is designed to provide the physician assistant student with a comprehensive and clinically relevant foundation in human gross anatomy and the basics of radiographic imaging, in preparation for clinical practice. This course incorporates didactic lectures and virtual dissection laboratory sessions, with atlases and visual aids made available. The material will be presented in a regional approach, emphasizing relationships of structures, normal variants, and their correlation to pathology and clinical applications. This course is intended to expand on prior undergraduate anatomy prerequisite coursework.				
PA502	Physiology	4		
The Physiology course is designed to provide the physician assistant student with a comprehensive overview of human physiology and normal physiologic function, the genetic and molecular mechanisms of health and disease, as well as the etiology, pathogenesis, and disease symptoms in an integrated morphological, biochemical, pathophysiological, molecular, and functional perspective that will be emphasized from a clinical perspective. This course expands on prior undergraduate physiology prerequisite coursework in preparation for PA508 and PA514, Essentials of Clinical Medicine I & II, where the pathophysiology of specific diseases and conditions will be discussed.				
PA503	Medical Interviewing	3	1	
The Medical Interviewing course introduces the physician assistant student to the skills needed for successful medical interviewing and developing a professional relationship with the patient. The course will include instruction in interpersonal and communication skills that enable effective information exchange and collaboration with patients, their families, and other health professionals. Course materials and readings will explore the relationship and interaction between the PA and the patient. The student will learn and practice various techniques for eliciting an accurate medical history from patients across the lifespan (infant, children, adolescents, adults and the elderly) in a variety of clinical settings, with an introduction to and development of “Cultural Competency” with considerations of the techniques for providing care for all patients including those with disabilities, special health care needs, and those individuals of diverse ethnicities, races, religious beliefs, spirituality, sexual orientation and gender identities (social aspects of disease and health). The course will emphasize patient confidentiality, and HIPAA training is required. This course will also introduce and review medical terminology. Students will practice applying the concepts and techniques of conducting a medical interview in standardized patient encounters during the course, and will be required to do so for patient encounters in subsequent semester courses (PA510 Physical Diagnosis I and PA516 Physical Diagnosis II) and clinical rotations. This course is a prerequisite for PA510 Physical Diagnosis I.				
PA504	Introduction to the PA Profession	3		

Introduction to the Physician Assistant Profession introduces students to the history, organization of healthcare in the United States, and the PA's role within healthcare delivery systems and interprofessional teams, emphasizing the roles and responsibilities of healthcare providers and effective communication and collaboration across disciplines to support team-based, patient-centered care. In alignment with the Plaza College PA Program mission to develop competent, compassionate, and culturally sensitive clinicians, students examine laws, regulations, licensure, certification, and policy governing practice while learning documentation of care in medical records, coding, billing, and reimbursement. The course integrates systems-based practice, quality improvement processes, patient safety, medical error prevention, and risk management, while fostering professionalism, ethical decision-making, academic integrity, intellectual honesty, respect for patients, and cultural humility. Students also explore professional advocacy, the role of professional organizations, emerging trends in healthcare, and strategies for provider and student wellness, impairment recognition, burnout prevention, and resilience necessary for a sustainable career in collaborative medical practice.

Additional topics include health promotion and general disease prevention (discussed in the focused individual disease states in PA508-Essential Principles of Medicine I, PA514-Essential Principles of Medicine II, PA519-Pediatrics, and PA520-Women's Health).

PA505	Epidemiology & Public Health	2		
The Epidemiology and Public Health course introduces the physician assistant student to the history and principles of public health and the public health system (public health practice), including healthcare disparities, the social determinants of health, patient advocacy, and the maintenance of population health. The Epidemiology and Public Health course will introduce the basic principles of epidemiology and health-related research, including Disease surveillance and reporting, and the application of the scientific method to the study of disease in populations. The epidemiological method for studying a problem involving the description of the frequency and determinants of a disease in a defined population, the evaluation of factors that may cause a disease, experimental studies of the effects of modifying risk factors on the subsequent frequency of a disease and disease prevention, and the development of public health interventions. The course will cover the basics of biostatistics and research, including framing research questions, interpreting and understanding the limitations of basic biostatistical methods, sampling methods for data collection, and using common databases to access medical literature. The course will also discuss the limitations of medical research. After completing the course, the student should be able to apply these fundamentals to evaluate medical research, including assessing data validity and methodologically critiquing current research as it relates to the practice of medicine. This course will prepare students for PA513: Introduction to Research.				
PA506	Surgery I: Introduction to Surgery & Skills	2	3	
The Introduction to Surgery and Skills course will introduce the physician assistant student to the basic concepts of surgical patient care, including pre-operative, intra-operative, and post-operative care considerations commonly encountered in surgical settings. Included in this course are the basic concepts of surgical patient care, including, but not limited to, sterile technique, sterile fields, surgical instrumentation, fluid and electrolyte management, and radiology principles. A brief introduction to anesthesia is provided, including the use of general anesthesia and the potential need for intensive post-operative patient management. This course will include didactic discussions and lectures, demonstrations, and skills labs to facilitate PA students' ability to properly put on and remove surgical gowns and sterile gloves. Students will also be instructed and allotted supervised time to practice performing technical procedures, including phlebotomy, venipuncture, intravenous fluid administration, and injections.				

PA507	Clinical Pathology	3		
The Clinical Pathology course introduces the physician assistant student to the natural history, etiology, pathogenesis (gross and microscopic), genetic basis, and clinical findings associated with commonly observed disease states. Instruction is presented mainly in a lecture format with visual aids. Emphasis is placed on commonly encountered disorders and includes an introduction to pathophysiology in preparation for PA508 and PA514, Essentials of Clinical Medicine I & II, where the pathophysiology of specific diseases and conditions will be discussed.				
PA508	Essential Principles of Medicine I	6		
The Essential Principles of Medicine I course is the first in a series of two clinical medicine courses designed to prepare the physician assistant student for their clinical role. The course will discuss the pathophysiology of commonly encountered disease states and conditions in clinical practice using a systems-based approach, and will study disorders in a clinical context, including lab/diagnostic medicine, genetics, microbiology, and pathophysiology. The course introduces Dermatology, Pulmonology, Cardiology/Vascular, Gastroenterology, Otolaryngology, Infectious Diseases, and Endocrinology. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including lectures, self-directed learning, and problem-based scenarios.				
PA509	Surgery II: Surgery & Skills II	2	3	
Surgery II: Surgery and Skills II course builds on the physician assistant student's knowledge of surgical principles first introduced in PA506: Introduction to Surgery and Skills I. This course will highlight medical and surgical approaches to the investigation of common diagnoses encountered in general surgery. Students will develop a core knowledge base of commonly encountered general surgery conditions and the indications/contraindications for diagnostic testing and interventions. Recognition of common complications and their prevention will be emphasized. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including didactic discussions and lectures, self-directed learning, faculty-facilitated demonstrations, and problem-focused case-based scenarios. Students will also be instructed and allotted supervised time to practice performing technical procedures, including wound care, wound closure, suturing, and arterial blood gas sampling. Students will also allot supervised time to practice performing technical procedures taught in the Surgery I course.				
PA510	Physical Diagnosis I	3	3	
The Physical Diagnosis I course is the first of two courses introducing the physician assistant student to patient assessment. The students will learn how to perform and document a medical interview and physical assessment of selected body systems, with an emphasis on developing the physical diagnosis skills to perform a comprehensive history and physical examination. This course will use an organ system approach with a combined lecture and laboratory format, including didactic discussions, self-directed learning, demonstrations, and faculty-facilitated interactions between students and standardized patients to form the foundation for correlating pathologic findings with underlying diseases.				
PA511	Clinical Pharmacology	4		

The Clinical Pharmacology course will introduce the physician assistant student to the pharmacological foundation for clinical practice. General and specific concepts of medical pharmacology, including, but not limited to, drugs by class, mechanism of action, indications and contraindications, adverse reactions, and drug interactions, as well as Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics in the context of clinical therapeutics, will be discussed. Concepts of medication ordering, prescription writing, and the importance of patient education will be introduced.				
PA512	Behavioral & Mental Health	3		
The Behavioral and Mental Health course introduces the physician assistant student to basic psychiatric and mental health conditions commonly observed in clinical practice. Students will learn to conduct a psychiatric interview and classify disorders according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). Discussion of interviewing techniques and counseling skills, including methods of listening and communication, patient education, the psychosocial history, coping mechanisms, asking difficult questions, chemical dependency, substance abuse disorders, death and dying, and other chronic conditions, will be discussed.				
PA513	Research I: Introduction to Research	2		
The Introduction to Research course will introduce the physician assistant student to research methodology, including applying and interpreting basic biostatistics methods, framing research questions, types of sampling methods, and the limits of medical research. The importance of ethics in research, academic integrity, intellectual honesty, and professional conduct will be discussed. Foundation skills to access common databases and the educated interpretation of that medical literature will be developed. This course incorporates didactic discussions, lectures, and self-directed learning.				
PA514	Essential Principles of Medicine II	6		
The Essential Principles of Medicine II course builds on the physician assistant student's knowledge presented in PA508 Essential Principles of Medicine I, with an emphasis on developing independent critical reasoning skills to apply in their clinical role. The course emphasizes diseases common in the patient care setting, as well as developing a differential diagnosis and management plan. The course introduces Neurology, Oncology, Rheumatology, Hematology, Nephrology (including acid-base disorders), Ophthalmology, Musculoskeletal Diseases, and Allergy & Immunology. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including lectures, self-directed learning, and problem-based scenarios.				
PA515	Surgery III: Surgical Specialties & Skills	2	3	
Surgery III: Surgical Specialties & Skills is the third course in a three-course sequence that broadens the physician assistant student's foundation of surgical knowledge. It builds on the student's proficiency in surgical concepts presented in PA506 Surgery I & PA509 Surgery II, while expanding surgical knowledge for didactic PA students through correlations with prior surgical courses, including indications for surgical and surgical specialty consultation and care of patients across the lifespan. Students will develop an understanding of the indications for surgical care and intervention, including common presentations of disease or injury requiring surgical referral and focused care, as well as common bedside and surgical procedures as indicated. The disciplines of ENT, Cardiothoracic, Neurosurgery, Trauma, Plastic Surgery, Orthopedics, Transplant Surgery, and Urology patient care will be introduced. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including didactic discussions and lectures, self-directed learning, and demonstrations. Students will also be instructed and allotted supervised time to practice performing technical procedures, including splinting, casting, foley catheter, and nasogastric tube placements. Students will also be allotted supervised time to practice performing technical procedures presented in the Surgery I and Surgery II courses.				

PA516	Physical Diagnosis II	3	3	
The Physical Diagnosis II Course is the second in a two-course sequence that broadens the physician assistant student foundation in physical examination and builds upon skills learned in PA510 Physical Diagnosis I. This course will use an organ-system approach with a combined lecture and laboratory format, including didactic discussions, self-directed learning, demonstrations, and faculty-facilitated interactions between students and standardized patients to build the foundation for correlating pathologic findings with underlying diseases.				
PA517	Emergency Medicine	3	1	
The Emergency Medicine course expands on concepts introduced in the Essentials of Medicine I and II courses (PA508 and PA514) and the Surgery I, II, and III courses (PA506, PA509, and PA515), with an emphasis on the urgent and emergent medical and surgical care of common presenting complaints seen in emergency medicine settings, their diagnosis and treatment are addressed with focus on recognition of and appropriate early intervention of the treatment of injuries, life-threatening illnesses, and emergencies across the lifespan. Introduction to the concept of telemedicine and its applications will be discussed. Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS), and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) training are curricular components of this course and are required for successful completion. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including didactic discussions and lectures, self-directed learning, simulation training, skills demonstrations, and faculty-facilitated skills practice.				
PA518	Geriatrics	2		
The Geriatrics Course introduces the physician assistant student to this specialized field of medicine, focusing on the unique health needs and challenges of older adults. Emphasis will be on diagnosing, preventing, and treating commonly encountered acute and chronic diseases, as well as on initiatives to improve overall well-being, quality of life, and patient-centered care. Rehabilitation, palliative care, and end-of-life care will be introduced. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including didactic discussions, lectures, and self-directed learning.				
PA519	Pediatrics	2		
The Pediatrics course will introduce the physician assistant student to this specified field of medicine, focusing on the unique health and development needs of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. The course will focus on well-child care, including immunizations, screening programs, nutrition, developmental disabilities, behavioral problems, and modification, including basic counseling and the development of coping mechanisms, with the goals of adherence to treatment plans and the prevention of disease. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including didactic discussions, lectures, and self-directed learning.				
PA520	Women's Health	2		
The Women's Health course introduces the physician assistant student to this specialized field of medicine, focusing on the unique health needs and challenges of women through the reproductive and post-menopausal years, and provides the foundation needed to practice women's health. Topics will include reproductive health, pregnancy and obstetrics (prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal care), breast health, mental and sexual health, and identification of disease states and their management unique to the female patient, including screening, prevention, and health promotion. Common gynecological procedures and labor and delivery will be discussed. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including didactic discussions, lectures, and self-directed learning.				
PA521	Research II	2		

The Research II course will build on the concepts presented in PA513 Research I: Introduction to Research. The course will enhance the physician assistant student's understanding of specific research methods, critical analysis, and the ability to review clinical medical literature for application in patient care. Topics include understanding scientific methods, conducting literature reviews, designing research studies, and analyzing data. Students will learn to design, plan, and implement a research project, apply ethical research practices, and synthesize information from various sources. Students will begin to develop a research study that will culminate in PA5511: Research III. This course incorporates a variety of learning techniques, including didactic discussions, lectures, and self-directed learning.

PA5501	Internal Medicine I SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This clinical rotation gives the physician assistant student an opportunity to gain practical clinical experience in the inpatient internal medicine setting. The student will learn, understand, and practice the care of adults and the aging population under the supervision of a licensed internal medicine provider. Topics include medical history review, physical examination, diagnostic testing, developing a differential, and management, as well as the importance of functioning on a multidisciplinary team.				
PA5502	Surgery SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This clinical rotation provides the physician assistant student with practical clinical exposure to patients with commonly encountered surgical disorders. Students will work as members of the surgical team and be involved in all aspects of surgical care, including appropriate pre-operative evaluation and diagnosis, intra-operative surgical assisting, and post-operative assessment and management of surgical patients. The student will learn, understand, and practice the care of surgical patients under the supervision of a licensed surgical care provider.				
PA5503	Internal Medicine II: Geriatrics SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This clinical rotation gives the physician assistant student an opportunity to gain practical clinical experience and learn, understand, and practice care specific to the geriatric and elderly population. Students will work as members of the patient care team and be involved in all aspects of care, including appropriate evaluation, diagnosis, assessment, management, and follow-up of the elderly patient. The student will learn, understand, and practice caring for geriatric patients under the supervision of a licensed geriatric care provider.				
PA5504	Behavioral & Mental Health SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This clinical rotation provides the physician assistant student with practical clinical experience caring for patients with mental and behavioral health disorders. The student will actively function as an integral member of the psychiatric healthcare team, performing psychological interviews and evaluating acute and chronic psychological problems while under the direct supervision of a licensed behavioral and mental health care provider.				
PA5505	Pediatrics SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This clinical rotation provides the physician assistant student with practical clinical experience caring for pediatric patients, including infants, children, and adolescents, in an outpatient setting. The student will actively function as an integral member of the healthcare team while under the direct supervision of a licensed pediatric care provider. The student will have exposure to well-child development and the assessment, diagnosis, and management of illnesses in the pediatric population.				

PA5506	Emergency Medicine SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This clinical rotation provides the physician assistant student with practical clinical experience in triage, evaluation, and patient care in an emergency room setting. It is designed to augment, strengthen, and refine the student's knowledge and skills learned in the didactic phase. The student will learn, understand, and practice urgent and emergent patient care under the supervision of a licensed emergency medicine provider.				
PA5507	Women's Health SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This clinical rotation provides the physician assistant student with practical clinical experience in inpatient, outpatient, and surgical settings, including non-urgent, urgent, emergent, and surgical management of gynecologic, obstetric, and prenatal issues. The student will learn, understand, and practice women's health care under the supervision of a licensed women's health care provider.				
PA5508	Family Medicine SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
This core clinical rotation exposes students to the principles and practice of family medicine. This supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE) enables students to assess patients across the lifespan, with an emphasis on caring for acutely and chronically ill patients and providing preventive care in an outpatient primary care medical setting. By actively assessing, diagnosing, and managing family medicine patients, students will develop the clinical acumen needed to address complex healthcare needs across the lifespan and provide care as an entry-level physician assistant upon graduation. The student will learn, understand, and practice family medicine under the supervision of a licensed family medicine provider.				
PA5509	Elective SCPE (Clinical Rotation)			5
The purpose of this clinical rotation is to provide the physician assistant student with practical exposure to patients in the clinical setting selected by the student (based on existing and available sites and specialties), and is designed to augment, strengthen, and refine the student's knowledge and skills relevant to the elective rotation, with a supervising licensed provider focused in the corresponding clinical setting.				
PA5510	Orientation to Practice: Capstone & Competencies	2		
1. Summative Evaluation Components - 2. Mandatory Board Review Components (topics, etc. and practice questions, test-taking strategies, etc.) - 3. Any pieces of B2.17 not covered in introduction course: Coding & Billing, Credentialing, NYS Licensure, PANCE/NCCPA Cert (Maureen Regan?)				
PA5511	Research III	2		
The course will culminate in a research paper and a presentation with an oral defense in Research 3, the final course in the series.				

Grade/Progression Requirements

Program Retention Criteria:

Students must receive no less than a 78% (C+) overall as a final grade in any course to successfully pass the course. For the Essential Principles of Medicine I and II courses (PA508 and PA514), students must also successfully pass each module with a minimum of 78% (C+) in order to successfully pass the course.

Failure of any portion of a course (didactic, lab, or clinical) will result in failure of the entire course. Due to prerequisite requirements from future courses, all courses must be successfully passed in order to progress toward graduation.

If student fails the course, please refer to the current *Student Handbook* for guidelines. Details regarding grading and the remediation process are located in the syllabus of each course.

In the event a course is failed, then successfully remediated, the course is then considered remediated (passed) and the maximum grade for the course will then be a 78% (C+). No more than two (2) courses during the didactic year or two (2) SCPE courses may be remediated. If at any time a 3rd didactic or 3rd SCPE course is failed for any reason, the student may not attempt remediation, and will immediately be referred to the Professionalism and Progression Committee, as per policy in the Student Handbook, for consideration for dismissal from the PA Program.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, PA students must complete all didactic, laboratory, and clinical competency evaluations, requirements, and assignments successfully with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B). Students must also demonstrate the expected competency via successfully completing a comprehensive, multi-modal summative evaluation within the final 4 months of the PA Program.

Clinical Placement Sites

Clinical site placements and assignments are not negotiable. Students are obligated to adhere to the applicable policies and procedures of the clinical agencies to which they are assigned. Students are required to know and comply with all policies and procedures.

The clinical coordinator is responsible for arranging clinical placements for students. Students will be required to travel up to 50 miles each way for a clinical site. *Plaza College Physician Assistant Program students who decline to proceed to an assigned clinical rotation site will be deemed to have voluntarily withdrawn from the program.*

Students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors.

Students are not permitted to contact a clinical site or a preceptor about or to solicit a clinical placement.

Students are permitted to begin a clinical placement after the Clinical Coordinator ensures that the student has successfully completed the health clearance process, required background checks, mandatory training, and passed the clinical calculation examination by the stated deadline.

Students will not be considered for a clinical placement until they have satisfied all prerequisites. If a student does not submit all requisite documents required for a clinical placement by the deadline, the clinical placement may not be granted, which may result in a cancellation of the clinical placement or a delayed start to the clinical rotation, both of which can result in a delayed completion of the PA Program.

Employment Background Checks

Potential employers may conduct a criminal and/or personal background check. Institutions that accept our students for potential employment may conduct a criminal and/or personal background check. Students with criminal records that include felonies or misdemeanors (including those that are drug-related) or personal background issues such as bankruptcy might not be accepted by employers following completion of the program. Some employers may require candidates to submit to a drug test. Employment decisions are outside the control of Plaza College.

Uniform

- Plaza College-issued student ID are to be worn at all times, above the waist and clearly visible, while on campus or on SCPE clinical rotation sites.
- Plaza College-issued scrubs or business-casual clothing and short white coat, issued by Plaza College, must be worn at all times while on campus.
- Clean sneakers or business dress shoes should be worn. No open-toed or unprofessional footwear is permitted.
- While at a clinical site, students must comply with the dress code of the clinical setting.
- Jewelry should be kept to a minimum (watch with a second hand, wedding band, and one pair of post earrings per ear are allowed. No dangling earrings are permitted). No additional rings, earrings, necklaces, or bracelets are permitted. If you arrive at clinical with more than the minimum requirements, you will be required to remove them at your own risk.

Personal Hygiene

- All students are expected to be well-groomed and non-offensive to others. Obvious, detectable odors (perfume, smoke, body odor) are not acceptable. Vaping is not permitted.
- Piercings (unless nose piercing is part of your culture) must be removed.
- All hair and facial hair should be neat, clean and trimmed. Shoulder-length hair should be tied up off the collar and pulled back from the face. ***Hair must be a natural shade.*** Please note: Facial hair may interfere with the proper fit of the N-95 respirator mask, which is a requirement for clinical rotations.

- Fingernails must be well-groomed, short (not longer than the fingertips), and clean. Only clear nail polish may be worn. No artificial nails, tips, gels, or extensions are permitted.
- Make-up should be minimal. No lipstick, gloss or tinted lip balm is permitted.
- All visible tattoos must be covered.
- False eyelashes are not permitted.
- Hats, headscarves, and bandanas are not permitted except for religious head coverings.

Drug/Alcohol Policy

All students are expected to perform all classroom activities safely and efficiently, without the use of drugs, alcohol, or prescription medications. Plaza College is a drug-free campus and is in compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. Any student found to be non-compliant with the standards outlined in the Plaza College Student Handbook may face disciplinary action.

Medical Insurance

Students will be working in a clinical environment and may be exposed to infectious and communicable diseases. Students will also be handling sharp instruments and will be exposed to biohazardous materials. **Students are required to carry their own health insurance coverage in the event of needing medical care during their clinical practice. Students must be able to provide proof of current health insurance coverage at any time while a PA student at Plaza College.** In the event of becoming ill or contracting an infectious disease, including, but not limited to Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B, and HIV (AIDS), the student is responsible for all medical costs associated with treatment and recovery from the condition.

Physician Assistant Studies Program Academic Standards

Grade/Progression Requirements

Program Retention Criteria:

Students must receive no less than a 78% (C+) overall as a final grade in any course to successfully pass the course. For the Essential Principles of Medicine I and II courses (PA508 and PA514), students must also successfully pass each module with a minimum of 78% (C+) in order to successfully pass the course.

Failure of any portion of a course (didactic, lab, or clinical) will result in failure of the entire course. Due to prerequisite requirements from future courses, all courses must be successfully passed in order to progress toward graduation.

If student fails the course, please refer to the current *Student Handbook* for guidelines. Details regarding grading and the remediation process are located in the syllabus of each course.

In the event a course is failed, then successfully remediated, the course is then considered remediated (passed) and the maximum grade for the course will then be a 78% (C+). No more than two (2) courses during the didactic year or two (2) SCPE courses may be remediated. If at any time a 3rd didactic or 3rd SCPE course is failed for any reason, the student may not attempt remediation, and will immediately be referred to the Professionalism and Progression Committee, as per policy in the Student Handbook, for consideration for dismissal from the PA Program.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, PA students must complete all didactic, laboratory, and clinical competency evaluations, requirements, and assignments successfully with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B). Students must also demonstrate the expected competency via successfully completing a comprehensive, multi-modal summative evaluation within the final 4 months of the PA Program.

Clinical Placement Sites

Clinical site placements and assignments are not negotiable. Students are obligated to adhere to the applicable policies and procedures of the clinical agencies to which they are assigned. Students are required to know and comply with all policies and procedures.

The clinical coordinator is responsible for arranging clinical placements for students. Students will be required to travel up to 50 miles each way for a clinical site. *Plaza College Physician Assistant Program students who decline to proceed to an assigned clinical rotation site will be deemed to have voluntarily withdrawn from the program.*

Grade and Progression Requirements

Plaza College Physician Assistant Program Grade Scale			
Grade	Point	Numerical Equivalent	Progress
A	4.0	95-100	Superior
A-	3.7	90-94	Excellent
B+	3.3	86-89	Very Good
B	3.0	82-85	Good
B-	2.7	80-81	Above Average
C+	2.5	78-79	Average
C	2.0	72-77	Failure
C-	1.7	69-71	Failure
D	1.0	65-68	Failure
F	0.0	Below 65 (0-64)	Failure
AW	0.0		Administrative Withdrawal
I	0.0		Incomplete
IP	0.0		In Progress
<i>The following grades are not computed in the grade point average:</i>			
P			Pass
W			Withdrawal
NC			Audit

All Grades are rounded from 2 decimal places to whole #%, for example:

a 92.49 would round to 92%

a 92.50 or 92.51 would round to 93%

Program Retention Criteria

- Students must receive no less than a 78% (C+) overall as a final grade in any course to successfully pass the course.
 - For the Essential Principles of Medicine I and II courses (PA508 and PA514), students must also successfully pass each module with a minimum of 78% (C+) to successfully pass the course.

- Failure of any portion of a course (didactic, lab, or clinical) will result in the failure of the entire course. Due to prerequisite requirements from future courses, all courses must be successfully passed to progress toward graduation.
 - In the event a course is failed, then successfully remediated, the course is then considered remediated (passed) and the maximum grade for the course will then be a 78% (C+).
 - No more than two (2) courses during the didactic year or two (2) SCPE courses may be remediated. If at any time a 3rd didactic or 3rd SCPE course is failed for any reason, the student may not attempt remediation and will immediately be referred to the Professionalism and Progression Committee, as per policy in the PA Student Handbook, for consideration for dismissal from the PA Program.
- Details regarding grading and successful course completion are located in the syllabus of each course.

Graduate School Satisfactory Standards of Academic Progress (SAP): Quantitative Standard

Students are expected to earn a 3.0 cumulative GPA. If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.0, they will be dismissed. Students whose cumulative GPA falls between 2.00-2.99 will be placed on GRAD SAP Warning and will continue to be eligible for Title IV funding. Such students must achieve the required cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the end of the following semester in order to continue their eligibility for Title IV aid.

Students may only attempt a class twice.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, PA students must complete all didactic, laboratory, and clinical competency evaluations, requirements, and assignments successfully with a minimum cumulative GPA of a 3.0 (B). Students must also demonstrate the expected competency via successfully completing a comprehensive, multi-modal summative evaluation within the final 4 months of the PA Program.

PA Program Completion, Progress, Remediation, Deceleration, Withdrawal, and Dismissal

Program Retention Criteria

- Students must receive no less than a 78% (C+) overall as a final grade in any course to successfully pass the course.
 - For the Essential Principles of Medicine I and II courses (PA508 and PA514), students must also successfully pass each module with a minimum of 78% (C+) to successfully pass the course.
- Failure of any portion of a course (didactic, lab, or clinical) will result in the failure of the entire course. Due to prerequisite requirements from future courses, all courses must be successfully passed to progress toward graduation.
 - In the event a course is failed, then successfully remediated, the course is then considered remediated (passed) and the maximum grade for the course will then be a 78% (C+).
 - No more than two (2) courses during the didactic year or two (2) SCPE courses may be remediated. If at any time a 3rd didactic or 3rd SCPE course is failed for any reason, the student may not attempt remediation and will immediately be referred to the Professionalism and Progression Committee, as per policy in the Student Handbook for dismissal from the PA Program **As per the Dismissal Policy below.**
- Details regarding grading and successful course completion are located in the syllabus of each course.
 - Successful completion of a course includes, but is not limited to, coursework, maintaining professionalism, attendance, punctuality, and other criteria as stated in each course syllabus.

PA Program Satisfactory Standards for Academic Progress (SAP)

- Students are expected to earn a 3.0 cumulative GPA. If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 they will be dismissed. Students whose cumulative GPA falls between 2.00 and 2.99 will be placed on GRAD SAP Warning and will continue to be eligible for Title IV funding. Such students must achieve the required cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the end of the following semester in order to continue their eligibility for Title IV aid.
- Students may only attempt a class twice.

Graduation Requirements

- To complete the PA program and graduate, PA students must complete all didactic, laboratory, and clinical competency evaluations, requirements, and assignments successfully with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B).
- To complete the PA program and graduate, students must also demonstrate the expected competencies via successfully completing a comprehensive, multi-modal, summative evaluation within the final 4 months of the PA Program.
 - This summative evaluation will verify that each student meets all program-defined competencies required to enter clinical practice, including:
 - Medical knowledge for practice
 - Interpersonal and communication skills
 - Clinical and technical skills
 - Professional behaviors
 - Clinical reasoning and problem-solving ability
 - Society and population health
 - Details regarding the summative evaluation process are located in the PA Program Student Handbook.

Remediation

- Remediation is defined as the process for addressing deficiencies in a student's knowledge and skills.
- Details regarding remediation for each course are in the course syllabus.
- Remediation in any of its forms (including at-academic-risk improvement plans, remedial assignments, re-examination/re-testing, or course repetition) is an option that may be offered to an individual student at the discretion of the PA Program faculty and Program Director, based on the student's academic record and consideration of circumstances related to the completion of the course.

Didactic (Pre-Clinical) Year Remediations

- During the didactic year, a student who fails a course or module will be offered the opportunity to remediate (unless this failure is the 3rd course or 3rd Essential Principles of Medicine module whereby the below **Dismissal** policy will apply).
- Remediation is coordinated by the student's academic advisor, the course director, or the Director of Didactic Education.
- Remediation will consist of, but is not limited to:
 - Remedial academic assignments.
 - Remedial skills review and practice.
 - Re-assessment (written examinations, practical examinations, or other).
 - Other remedial tasks as assigned.
- In the 2 Essential Principles of Medicine courses, I and II, failure to achieve a passing score in a module will require successful remediation of that module with a repeat assessment after remedial activities.
 - Remediation and re-assessment of a failed module must be completed within 14 days of notification to the student of the failed module.
 - Instructions for remediation will be given at the time a student is notified of a failed module. The student will be required to pass (with a 78% or greater) a remediation assessment.

- Once the remediation assessment has been passed, the grade will be adjusted to 78%.
 - Failure to successfully remediate the assessment with a score of 78% or greater will result in a failing grade for the module (the original grade will stand).
 - This remediation failure will necessitate a cumulative remediation of the course.
 - If the student fails the cumulative remediation exam, this is grounds for dismissal, and the student will be referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression.
 - A student cannot successfully remediate more than two (2) modules in one course.
 - Failure of the 3rd module in a course is grounds for prompt dismissal, and the student is referred to the Committee on Professionalism and Progression.
- At the end of the didactic year, students must pass a 2-component Summative Didactic Assessment to progress to the clinical year:
 1. Summative didactic multiple-choice examination.
 2. Summative end-of-didactic OSCE.
- If a student fails either component of the Summative Didactic Assessment, they will be offered an appropriate remediation plan and re-assessment.
 - Failure of the re-assessment is grounds for prompt dismissal, and the student is referred to the Committee on Professionalism and Progression.
- Remedial work, including re-examination, for courses in which a student has not received a passing grade of 78% or more will ordinarily be offered at times which do not conflict with regularly scheduled academic activities.
- Remedial work and any re-examination needed in didactic year courses will routinely be scheduled within 3 weeks of the end of the semester, and it may require completion within the first week of the subsequent semester.
- A course failure in the third semester must be remediated prior to the beginning of the clinical rotations.
 - Students in the didactic year who successfully remediate a course will be given a maximum grade of 78%.

- Students who do not successfully remediate will retain their original failing grade for the course.
- A failing grade for a remediated course is considered unsatisfactory performance and grounds for dismissal and is referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression.
- In the event a student is referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression, the committee will determine whether a student may continue in the PA Program. If the Committee for Professionalism and Progression determines that a student does not meet academic standards, including suitability to practice medicine, the Committee may recommend that the student be dismissed and may no longer participate in any educational activities of the Plaza College PA Program.
 - The Committee may also recommend deceleration and allow the student to return to the PA Program. The conditions of return will be specified when the decision is communicated to the student.

Clinical Year Remediations

- During the clinical year, if a student fails a course (rotation), achieving less than 78% overall course grade, the student must remediate by repeating the entire course (rotation), routinely (subject to availability of clinical placement) at the end of the clinical year.
 - Successful completion of the repeated (remediated) rotation as defined in the course syllabus and PA Program Student Handbook must be achieved before the student will receive a certificate of completion or degree.
 - The student is responsible for the completion of all assignments related to the repeated rotation.
 - If the failure is the 3rd failure of the clinical year, the student will be referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression.
- A student cannot successfully remediate more than 2 courses (rotations).
 - Failure of a 3rd course (rotation) is grounds for dismissal, and the student is referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression.
- If a student fails the preceptor evaluation, receiving less than 78%, the student fails the course (rotation) and must remediate by repeating the entire course (rotation).

- If a student fails an end-of-rotation assessment (end-of-rotation examination or clinical topic paper if assigned), receiving less than 78%, they must:
 - Complete the assigned remediation assignments.
 - Take and pass (78% or more) a remedial end-of-rotation examination (or submit a revised, updated or new clinical topic paper assignment) within 14 days of notification, to pass the rotation, which will result in a maximum value of 78% for the assessment.
 - If the student fails the remediation examination, they fail the rotation and must repeat the entire course (rotation).
 - A student may not remediate more than 2 end-of-rotation assessments (end-of-rotation examinations or clinical topic paper). Failure of the 3rd assessment is grounds for dismissal, and the student is referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression.
- A student in the clinical year who successfully remediates a course (rotation) will be given a maximum grade of 78%.
 - Students who do not successfully remediate will retain their original failing grade for the course (rotation).
 - A failing grade for a remediated course is considered unsatisfactory performance and grounds for dismissal and is referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression.
- The student's academic advisor and the Director of Clinical Education will coordinate clinical year remediations.
- Remediation can consist of, but is not limited to:
 - Remedial academic assignments.
 - Re-assessment (written examinations, practical examinations, clinical topic papers, or other).
 - Other remedial tasks as assigned.
 - Repeat of the course (rotation).
- Instructions for remediation will be given at the time a student is notified of a failed course (rotation).

- In the event a student is referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression, the committee will determine whether a student may continue in the PA Program. If the Committee for Professionalism and Progression determines that a student does not meet academic standards, including suitability to practice medicine, the Committee may recommend that the student be dismissed and may no longer participate in any educational activities of the Plaza College PA Program.

Summative Evaluation

- During the final semester of the clinical year (within the last 4 months of the program), students must pass a multiple-component Summative Evaluation to demonstrate competency and readiness to graduate. Failure to pass a component will necessitate remediation, which could result in delayed graduation.
- This evaluation includes the following components:
 - A medical knowledge multiple-choice examination.
 - This is the PAEA end-of-curriculum examination, a standardized 300-question examination. A score of 1400 or greater is considered passing, out of a possible 1800.
 - If a student scores below 1400, the student will be provided with a remediation plan and must take and pass the PAEA EOC reassessment (no earlier than 60 days after the 1st attempt).
 - Passing the medical knowledge examination is a program completion and graduation requirement.
 - A technical skills practical examination.
 - Students must be prepared to demonstrate competency in specified skills.
 - Students will be required to demonstrate competency in 2 of the specified skills, defined as 78% or higher for both demonstrated skills.
 - If the student scores less than 78% on any of the skills, they will be provided with a remediation plan. They must then retest and demonstrate competency in any skills being remediated and reassessed.

- Passing the technical skills practical examination is a program completion and graduation requirement.
- A summative Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).
 - Students are evaluated by faculty on their encounter with the Standardized Patient, written documentation, and an oral presentation.
 - Students must reach the minimum score in each section and receive a total score of 78% or higher on each section (See the PA Program Student Handbook for the sections).
 - If a student does not reach the minimum score of 78% for one or more sections, they will be assigned remedial activities appropriate to the section(s) failed.
 - If the total score for the OSCE case is less than 78%, the student will be required to repeat the OSCE assessment after completing the assigned remedial activities.
 - Passing the OSCE is a program completion and graduation requirement.
- A written research essay.
 - Students are required to write and submit a research essay demonstrating comprehension of the impact of environment, culture, and society on health.
 - Students must reach a score of 78% or higher (See rubric in the PA Program Student Handbook).
 - If the total score for the essay is less than 78%, the student will be provided feedback, a remediation plan, and a deadline for submitting a revised essay.
 - Passing the written research essay is a program completion and graduation requirement.

Deceleration

- Deceleration is defined as the loss of a student from their entering cohort who remains matriculated in the Physician Assistant program.
- Deceleration may result from the following reasons:
 - If a student fails the remediation of a course (if approved or recommended by the Committee on Promotions and Graduation).
 - If the student takes a leave of absence for personal reasons (must be approved by the Program Director), for example, medical, personal, or financial reasons. See below for leave of absence information.
- **Students may only attempt a class twice.**

Withdrawal from Courses

- A student wishing to withdraw from a course must submit written notification to the PA Program Director, who will then notify the Academic Dean.
- A student withdrawing from a course after the start of the semester must have permission from the PA Program Director and the Office of the Academic Dean.
 - A grade of "W" may be given to a student withdrawing from a course with the permission of the PA Program Director and Academic Dean.
- The Plaza College PA program curriculum is a “lock-step” curriculum. Therefore, if a student withdraws from a course during the didactic year, **they must wait until the following year to resume studies with the subsequent cohort.**
- **Students may only attempt a class twice.**

Withdrawal from College

- A student wishing to withdraw from Plaza College must submit written notification to the PA Program Director, who will then notify the Academic Dean.
- A student requesting to withdraw from the college must meet, in person, with the appropriate officials from Student Services, Financial Services, and the Loan Department to complete a Change of Status Form.

Dismissal

- Students are referred to the Plaza College PA Program Committee for Professionalism and Progression and are subject to dismissal from the program for the following reasons:
 - 3 Didactic Course failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure).
 - 3 Clinical Course (SCPE) failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure).
 - 3 EOR Exam Failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure).
 - 3 Essential Principles of Medicine Module Failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure).
 - Failed remediation of any of the Summative Evaluation components. Failed remediation of any of the Summative Evaluation components (no remediation allowed after the 2nd failure of any component).
- In the event a student is referred to the Plaza College PA Program Committee for Professionalism and Progression, the committee will determine whether a student may continue in the PA Program. Suppose the Committee for Professionalism and Progression determines a student does not meet academic standards, including suitability to practice medicine. In that case, the Committee may recommend that the student be dismissed and may no longer participate in any educational activities of the Plaza College PA Program.
 - The Committee may also recommend deceleration and allow the student to return to the PA Program. The conditions of return will be specified when the decision is communicated to the student.
- All recommendations by the Plaza College PA Program Committee for Professionalism and Progression are reviewed by the PA Program Director, the Academic Dean, and the Provost before any action is implemented.

Leaves of Absence

- A Leave of Absence (LOA) is defined as an approved specified period of time in which a student is excused from courses (didactic or clinical) and they will be allowed to return to the PA Program without requiring re-application to the Plaza College PA Program.
- A student may request and be granted an LOA from the PA Program if the following conditions are met:

- The student must be in good academic standing as judged by the Committee for Professionalism and Progression.
- A student must write a formal, detailed letter to the PA Program Director, detailing the request for the LOA. The Program Director will forward this letter to the Academic Dean and Provost for consideration.
 - The request, if deemed appropriate, will then be presented to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression for consideration.
 - A LOA is approved by the Committee for Professionalism and Progression on the recommendation of the PA Program Director, Academic Dean, and Provost.
- The LOA must be for a legitimate, stated reason, such as personal, financial, or medical.
- An approved LOA is only for the requested and approved period of time, and cannot be extended without the student repeating the formal procedure outlined above. Extensions of an LOA are not automatic.
 - A student who determines that they will not be returning at the time scheduled for a leave to end should consult with the Program Director as early as possible before the scheduled return date. This will enable a student to determine whether an extension of the leave of absence can be granted or if alternative arrangements are necessary.
- If conditions have been set for a student's eligibility to return from a leave, the student should demonstrate, in a timely fashion, to the Program Director and Plaza College that they have satisfied the re-matriculation requirements.
 - If a student has not satisfied the criteria to return, if any, and has not received an extension in writing, they will be deemed to have withdrawn. No further action will be necessary to finalize the withdrawal.
- If a student does not return to full-time status at the end of the approved time period for the LOA, and has not received written approval for continuation of their leave of absence status, that student will be considered to have withdrawn from the Plaza College PA Program. No further action will be necessary to finalize the withdrawal.
 - Under certain circumstances, a student who wishes to return from a leave may have to satisfy previously set conditions for readmission.

- The Plaza College PA program curriculum is a “lock-step” curriculum. Therefore, if a student takes a leave of absence during the didactic year, they must wait until the following year to resume studies with the subsequent cohort.
- In the clinical year of the program, depending upon the length of the leave of absence, program completion and graduation may be delayed, which may result in a delayed ability to take the PANCE and obtain state licensure to practice.
- The leave of absence does not relieve the student of the obligation to comply with the policies and procedures of the Plaza College PA Program, including, but not limited to, those standards governing course remediation and repetition, completion of academic work, and time frames for completion of the PA Program curriculum.
- Taking a leave of absence also may have implications for student loan deferment/repayment status, health coverage, or financial aid eligibility. Before applying for a leave of absence, students should consult with the Office of Financial Aid to discuss their individual circumstances.
- A student requesting an LOA is required to complete a Change of Status form in Student Services.
- A student must contact Student Services when returning from an LOA.

PA Program Policy for Student Academic Advising and Early Identification of “At-Risk” Students

Academic Advising

- Each student in the PA Program is assigned an academic advisor from among the principal faculty of the PA Program.
 - This academic advisor will remain the same for the student’s entire education in the PA Program (in the event an advisor is not available for unforeseen circumstances or for an extended period of time, an alternate or interim advisor will be assigned by the Program Director).
 - If a student has any concerns regarding interactions with their academic advisor, they should contact the Program Director.
 - A list of academic advisors is provided, in writing, during the first week of didactic classes at the latest (students may be emailed by their advisors before the start of the first semester to introduce themselves).
- Students are encouraged to be in contact with their advisor throughout their education at the PA Program with any concerns.
- Students are required to meet with their academic advisor at a minimum of every 5 weeks, or 3 times per 15-week semester, every semester.
 - These meetings will be scheduled by the advisor or a designee, and are mandatory.
- Students are also required to meet with their advisor (as per the guidelines below) after failing an exam or scoring between 80-84% on an exam to determine the need for academic support.
- After every semester, any student scoring less than 85% in a course is required to meet with their advisor to determine the need for academic support.

Early Identification of “At-Risk” Students

- *Definition of “At-Risk”:* Students with a pattern of poor academic or professional performance (See Professionalism Section in the PA Program Student Handbook) could be considered “at risk” for dismissal from the PA program.
- Students are considered at “academic risk” in the following circumstances and must meet with their academic advisor to develop a remediation plan:

Didactic

- Any 2 Individual Course Exams in the same course 80-84%.
- Fails any individual exam (77% or less) in a course.
- 3 or more individual exams are failed in the same semester.
- 2 Essential Principles of Medicine I or II (individually) modules are failed and remediated (a maximum of 2 module remediations are allowed per Essential Principles of Medicine course).
- Failure to remediate an Essential Principles of Medicine module.
- Course grade less than 85%.
- 1 or 2 Courses are failed and successfully remediated.

Clinical

- Any 2 End-of-Rotation (EOR) exam scores 80-84%.
- 2 or more EOR exam failures.
- Preceptor evaluation 80-85%.
- Concerns on the mid-rotation feedback from preceptor(s).
- 1 or more courses (SCPE) remediation is failed and remediation failed.
- Course (SCPE) Grade less than 85%.
- 1 or 2 (SCPE) Courses are failed and remediated.

Summative Evaluation

- If a student fails the medical knowledge exam component.
 - If a student fails a technical skills exam component.
 - If a student fails the summative (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) OSCE.
 - If a student fails the written research essay component.
- *Policy During Didactic Year*
 - Throughout each course and after each course is completed, the course directors and the Director of Didactic Education (or a designated faculty member) will review every student's performance and progression.
 - If any of the following are noted, the student's academic advisor and the Program Director will be notified by the Director of Didactic Education, and the student **must** have a meeting with their advisor, the appropriate course director, or the Director of Didactic Education (student will be notified whom to meet with) to discuss their performance:
 - Any missing or unsatisfactory coursework or assignments.
 - Any examination grades of 81% or below.
 - Any failed examinations.
 - Overall course average of 82% or below.
 - After all components of the course are completed and evaluated, if the final course average is 82% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor, the course director, or the Director of Didactic Education to discuss their performance and recommend any additional resources that are needed at this time.
 - If the course average is below 78%, the student will have failed to pass that course.
 - After all components of the course are completed and evaluated, if the final course average is 77% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor, the course director, or the Director of Didactic Education to discuss their performance and develop a plan for remediation and re-assessment.
 - For the Essential Principles of Medicine I and II courses (PA508 and PA514), students must also successfully pass **each module** with a minimum of 78% (C+) to successfully pass the course.

- if a completed module's final grade is 77% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor, the course director, or the Director of Didactic Education to discuss their performance and develop a plan for remediation and re-assessment of that module.
 - No course or module remediation may be attempted more than once (meaning that if a remediation and re-assessment attempt is not successful, the failure is upheld).
 - Details regarding grading and successful course completion are located in the syllabus of each course.
 - Details regarding remediation are located in the syllabus for each course and the "PA Program Completion, Progress, Remediation, Deceleration, Withdrawal, and Dismissal" Policy Document.
-
- *Policy During Clinical Year*
 1. At the completion of each rotation, the Director of Clinical Education or a designated faculty member will review the preceptor's evaluation of student performance within 30 days of the completion of the rotation, or as soon as the evaluation is completed, whichever occurs first.
 - a. If any of the following are noted, the student's academic advisor will be notified, and the student must have a meeting with their advisor or the Director of Clinical Education to discuss the evaluation and the rotation:
 - i. Any "Below Average" or "Unsatisfactory" entries
 - ii. 2 or more "Average" entries
 - iii. Concerning comments
 - iv. Evaluation Average of 85% or less
 - b. The Director of Clinical Education will review the End-of-Rotation Examination Grade within 2-3 business days of completion.
 - i. If the End-of-Rotation Examination is below 78%, the student will have failed to pass that component of the rotation, and as per the Clinical Year Guidelines and syllabus, will be required to review their performance report of the initial exam, then take and pass a remediation examination.

- ii. If the End-of-Rotation Examination is 78-82%, the student's academic advisor will be notified, and the student will be required to meet with their advisor to discuss their performance and recommend any additional resources that are needed at this time.
- 2. After all components of each rotation are completed and evaluated, if the final course average is 82% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor or the Director of Clinical Education to discuss their performance and recommend any additional resources that are needed at this time. The Program Director will be notified by the Director of Clinical Education.
- Students are referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression and are subject to dismissal from the program or possible deceleration for the following reasons:
 - 3 Didactic Course failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having previously successfully remediated 2 failed didactic courses).
 - 3 Clinical Course (SCPE) failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having previously successfully remediated 2 failed clinical courses).
 - 3 EOR Exam Failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having successfully remediated 2 failed EOR examinations).
 - 3 Essential Principles of Medicine Module Failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having successfully remediated 2 failed modules).
 - Failed remediation of any of the Summative Evaluation components (no remediation allowed after the 2nd failure of any component, meaning that only one remediation attempt is allowed for any component, but all components are remediable one time).

PA Program Policy for Student Academic Advising and Early Identification of “At-Risk” Students

Academic Advising

- Each student in the PA Program is assigned an academic advisor from among the principal faculty of the PA Program.
 - a. This academic advisor will remain the same for the student’s entire education in the PA Program (in the event an advisor is not available for unforeseen circumstances or for an extended period of time, an alternate or interim advisor will be assigned by the Program Director).
 - i. If a student has any concerns regarding interactions with their academic advisor, they should contact the Program Director.
 - b. A list of academic advisors is provided, in writing, during the first week of didactic classes at the latest (students may be emailed by their advisors before the start of the first semester to introduce themselves).
- Students are encouraged to be in contact with their advisor throughout their education at the PA Program with any concerns.
- Students are required to meet with their academic advisor at a minimum of every 5 weeks, or 3 times per 15-week semester, every semester.
 - a. These meetings will be scheduled by the advisor or a designee, and are mandatory.
- Students are also required to meet with their advisor (as per the guidelines below) after failing an exam or scoring between 80-84% on an exam to determine the need for academic support.
- After every semester, any student scoring less than 85% in a course is required to meet with their advisor to determine the need for academic support.

Early Identification of “At-Risk” Students

- *Definition of “At-Risk”*: Students with a pattern of poor academic or professional performance (See Professionalism Section in the PA Program Student Handbook) could be considered “at risk” for dismissal from the PA program.
- Students are considered at “academic risk” in the following circumstances and must meet with their academic advisor to develop a remediation plan:

Didactic

- Any 2 Individual Course Exams in the same course 80-84%.
- Fails any individual exam (77% or less) in a course.
- 3 or more individual exams are failed in the same semester.
- 2 Essential Principles of Medicine I or II (individually) modules are failed and remediated (a maximum of 2 module remediations are allowed per Essential Principles of Medicine course).
- Failure to remediate an Essential Principles of Medicine module.
- Course grade less than 85%.
- 1 or 2 Courses are failed and successfully remediated.
-

Clinical

- Any 2 End-of-Rotation (EOR) exam scores 80-84%.
- 2 or more EOR exam failures.
- Preceptor evaluation 80-85%.
- Concerns on the mid-rotation feedback from preceptor(s).
- 1 or more courses (SCPE) remediation is failed and remediation failed.
- Course (SCPE) Grade less than 85%.
- 1 or 2 (SCPE) Courses are failed and remediated.
-

Summative Evaluation

- If a student fails the medical knowledge exam component.
- If a student fails a technical skills exam component.

- If a student fails the summative (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) OSCE.
- If a student fails the written research essay component.
- *Policy During Didactic Year*
 - a. Throughout each course and after each course is completed, the course directors and the Director of Didactic Education (or a designated faculty member) will review every student's performance and progression.
 - b. If any of the following are noted, the student's academic advisor and the Program Director will be notified by the Director of Didactic Education, and the student **must** have a meeting with their advisor, the appropriate course director, or the Director of Didactic Education (student will be notified whom to meet with) to discuss their performance:
 - i. Any missing or unsatisfactory coursework or assignments.
 - ii. Any examination grades of 81% or below.
 - iii. Any failed examinations.
 - iv. Overall course average of 82% or below.
 - 1. After all components of the course are completed and evaluated, if the final course average is 82% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor, the course director, or the Director of Didactic Education to discuss their performance and recommend any additional resources that are needed at this time.
 - v. If the course average is below 78%, the student will have failed to pass that course.
 - 1. After all components of the course are completed and evaluated, if the final course average is 77% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor, the course director, or the Director of Didactic Education to discuss their performance and develop a plan for remediation and re-assessment.
 - 2. For the Essential Principles of Medicine I and II courses (PA508 and PA514), students must also successfully pass **each module** with a minimum of 78% (C+) to successfully pass the course.

- a. if a completed module's final grade is 77% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor, the course director, or the Director of Didactic Education to discuss their performance and develop a plan for remediation and re-assessment of that module.
 - c. No course or module remediation may be attempted more than once (meaning that if a remediation and re-assessment attempt is not successful, the failure is upheld).
 - d. Details regarding grading and successful course completion are located in the syllabus of each course.
 - e. Details regarding remediation are located in the syllabus for each course and the "PA Program Completion, Progress, Remediation, Deceleration, Withdrawal, and Dismissal" Policy Document.
- *Policy During Clinical Year*
- At the completion of each rotation, the Director of Clinical Education or a designated faculty member will review the preceptor's evaluation of student performance within 30 days of the completion of the rotation, or as soon as the evaluation is completed, whichever occurs first.
 - a. If any of the following are noted, the student's academic advisor will be notified, and the student must have a meeting with their advisor or the Director of Clinical Education to discuss the evaluation and the rotation:
 - i. Any "Below Average" or "Unsatisfactory" entries
 - ii. 2 or more "Average" entries
 - iii. Concerning comments
 - iv. Evaluation Average of 85% or less
 - b. The Director of Clinical Education will review the End-of-Rotation Examination Grade within 2-3 business days of completion.
 - i. If the End-of-Rotation Examination is below 78%, the student will have failed to pass that component of the rotation, and as per the Clinical Year Guidelines and syllabus, will be required to review their performance report of the initial exam, then take and pass a remediation examination.

- ii. If the End-of-Rotation Examination is 78-82%, the student's academic advisor will be notified, and the student will be required to meet with their advisor to discuss their performance and recommend any additional resources that are needed at this time.
- After all components of each rotation are completed and evaluated, if the final course average is 82% or less, the student will be required to meet with their advisor or the Director of Clinical Education to discuss their performance and recommend any additional resources that are needed at this time. The Program Director will be notified by the Director of Clinical Education.
- Students are referred to the Committee for Professionalism and Progression and are subject to dismissal from the program or possible deceleration for the following reasons:
 - a. 3 Didactic Course failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having previously successfully remediated 2 failed didactic courses).
 - b. 3 Clinical Course (SCPE) failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having previously successfully remediated 2 failed clinical courses).
 - c. 3 EOR Exam Failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having successfully remediated 2 failed EOR examinations).
 - d. 3 Essential Principles of Medicine Module Failures (no remediation allowed after 3rd failure, in the setting of having successfully remediated 2 failed modules).
 - e. Failed remediation of any of the Summative Evaluation components (no remediation allowed after the 2nd failure of any component, meaning that only one remediation attempt is allowed for any component, but all components are remediable one time).

Policy for Student Employment While Enrolled in the PA Program

- Physician Assistant Students are **not** required to work for the PA Program.
- Students are strongly encouraged not to attempt to work while attending the PA Program. If a student intends to be employed while enrolled in the PA Program, this will require approval by the PA Program Director and college leadership.
 - Students must notify the PA Program and Plaza College Leadership:
 - Before matriculation, if working and intending to continue.
 - Immediately if employment is intended.
 - **No** special accommodation or schedule adjustments will be made to accommodate employment.

Policy for Student Employment While Enrolled in the PA Program

- Physician Assistant Students are **not** required to work for the PA Program.
- Physician Assistant Students will **not** be utilized as instructional, clinical, or administrative staff.

- Students are strongly encouraged not to attempt to work while attending the PA Program.

If a student intends to be employed while enrolled in the PA Program, this will require approval by the PA Program Director and college leadership.

- a. Students must notify the PA Program and Plaza College Leadership:
 - i. Before matriculation, if working and intending to continue.
 - ii. Immediately if employment is intended.
- b. **No** special accommodation or schedule adjustments will be made to accommodate employment.

Physician Assistant Studies Program Policies

This policy is available on the program's website for prospective students in the Informational Packet for Admissions Applicants Physician Assistant Studies Program, page 26, located here

<https://plazacollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Informational-Packet-for-Admissions-Applicants-Physician-Assistant-Studies.pdf>, and states;

“Students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. Students are not permitted to contact a clinical site or a preceptor about or to solicit a clinical Placement”

Policy for PA Student Identification while on Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs) / Clinical Rotations

Student Identification

Students must clearly display Plaza College photo IDs and wear their white lab coats with the PA program badge unless clinical site policies specifically prohibit their use (such as in the operating room). Students must correct any misconceptions about their role and always identify themselves as “PA students.”

Physician Assistant Studies Program Policies for Required Health Screening and Immunizations

- The Plaza College Physician Assistant Studies Program publishes the policy on the required health screenings and immunizations (based on the current CDC immunization guidelines for healthcare personnel as a minimum, with clinical site additional requirements as-needed) in the Informational Packet for Admissions Applicants Physician Assistant Studies Program, starting on page 8, located here <https://plazacollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Informational-Packet-for-Admissions-Applicants-Physician-Assistant-Studies.pdf>.
- All related policies and requirements are also communicated to students during the admissions and enrollment processes.
 - a. Prospective students are informed of immunization expectations during applicant interview sessions and through information posted on the program's website.
 - b. Enrolled students receive detailed information during New Student Orientation and again during orientation before starting Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs).
 - c. At each orientation, students must sign an attestation acknowledging they have received and understand all immunization policies and requirements.
 - d. All students are also notified that they must remain compliant with all health clearances in addition to the requirements of all PA Program students at Plaza College.
- Students who do not meet immunization requirements are not allowed to matriculate into the didactic phase or to commence any clinical rotation.
- The policy includes:
 - a. Certification of Medical Examination and Medication Disclosure – Applicants must provide evidence of current medical examination within six (6) months of matriculation via the Certification of Medical Examination form provided.
 - b. The student must have all immunizations up to date as directed by the program director,
 - c. along with disclosing any debilitating diseases or conditions that may affect the educational experience of the student while participating in the Plaza College Physician Assistant Studies Program or affect their professional life upon graduation.
 - d. MMR: Submit one of the following requirements:
 - i. a) Vaccination series: Two vaccinations at least 28 days apart OR;
 - ii. b) serological proof of immunity: positive (+) IgG titers for mumps/rubeola; measles and rubella
 - e. Varicella (Chicken Pox): Submit one of the following requirements:

- i. a) vaccination series: two vaccinations at least 28 days apart OR;
 - ii. b) serological proof of immunity: positive (+) IgG titers for varicella.
- f. Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (TDaP): submit one of the following requirements:
 - i. a) documentation of a TDaP booster within the past ten years OR;
 - ii. b) evidence of one dose of TDaP and a TD booster within the past ten years
- g. TB Skin Test: Students are required to submit proof of the absence of active Tuberculosis (TB).
 - i. Tuberculosis screening with either initial 2-step tuberculin skin test and annual testing OR yearly Quantiferon gold blood test. If positive, clinical follow up has been documented and clearance established by personal physician or health department.
 - ii. Students with newly converted positive PPD's, regardless of BCG status, must have a follow-up chest x- ray and submit the radiology report. Students must be on documented prophylaxis drug treatment, as required by the Department of Health, in order to attend clinical. Repeat chest x-ray for positive PPD is required every 5 years.
- h. Hepatitis B: Submit one of the following requirements:
 - i. a) documentation of Immunization: a series of three vaccines over six months followed by a post-series surface antibody titer at least 4-8 weeks after the last vaccine is given; or
 - ii. b) Hepatitis B Declination
 - iii. Waiver: Although not recommended, students may have the option to decline Hepatitis B.
- i. COVID-19: Students are required to submit proof of immunization. There are no exemptions.
- j. Further, the student must disclose any and all medications that are taken at the time of application, and if any current prescription medications indicate change or if there are any additions/subtractions they are mandated to alert the admissions committee immediately.

Physician Assistant Studies Program Health and Safety Policies

Health and Safety Policies

The PA Program includes many potentially dangerous exposures to infectious diseases. Although the staff and faculty of Plaza College and its clinical rotation partners will provide as much protection and guidance as possible, neither the College, its staff, nor faculty can accept any responsibility or financial liability for injury, illness, or exposure of any student in this program.

Incident Reporting

Any and all incidents that occur at any time during classroom, lab, simulation, or clinical rotation training must be reported as soon as possible to the faculty and to PA Program administration.

On-Campus Incidents or Accidents:

Should a personal injury occur in the classroom, on campus, in simulation, or lab settings, faculty will complete and review an incident report that the student will be required to sign. A copy of the report will be placed in the student's file.

Incidents and Accidents Occurring at Clinical Sites:

Any accident or injury at a clinical site must be reported as soon as possible to the PA Program Director of Clinical Education and the PA Program Director. Students must also follow any policies the clinical site facility has regarding incident reporting. If you are injured at a clinical site, you may have the opportunity to be treated at that site. The clinical site is under no obligation, and the Plaza College PA Program is prohibited from treating you. For this reason, students are required to maintain independent health insurance coverage. Students are advised to carry their health insurance cards at all times. Health insurance should be billed for these services.

Contact with some bodily fluids, needle sticks, and penetrating injuries poses the risk of infection by blood-borne pathogens. Students should clean the wound with soap and water and report such injury immediately to their faculty instructor, clinical preceptor, the PA Program Director of Clinical Education, and the PA Program Director. A medical evaluation should occur shortly after the incident. In some cases, treatment or prophylaxis for HIV infection may be indicated. If prophylaxis against HIV is indicated, it should be started, ideally, within two (2) hours of the exposure, although some begin prophylaxis as long as 48 hours after exposure. Program faculty will help direct you to the nearest Emergency Department if the clinical site where the incident occurred is unable to evaluate the incident. Furthermore, if a significant event occurs, a Plaza College Incident Report must be completed and submitted to the college within 48 hours of the occurrence. Students are required to submit a written account of the incident to the PA Program Director of Clinical Education.

Prevention:

- All PA Program students will receive training on preventing needlesticks, preventing bloodborne pathogen transmission, and practices to prevent the transmission and contracting of infectious diseases. This will include proper use of personal protective equipment and methods for donning and doffing that equipment.

All PA Program students should consistently follow standard precautions to reduce the risk of infectious disease transmission and occupational exposure to blood and body fluids. Perform appropriate hand hygiene before and after every patient encounter, use personal protective equipment (PPE) based on the anticipated exposure, and handle blood, body fluids, contaminated materials, and sharps safely. Never recap, bend, break, or manipulate used needles unless specifically required for a procedure and an approved safety technique is used; activate needle-safety devices when available and immediately dispose of used needles and other sharps in an approved sharps container. Maintain all required immunizations and follow applicable infection-control and exposure-prevention policies.

Physician Assistant Studies Program Student and Care Policies

- **Faculty Care of Students is Prohibited:**
 - a. The PA Program Director, the PA Program Medical Director, and all Principal and didactic Instructional Faculty are prohibited from providing or participating in providing health care to any currently enrolled PA Program students, except in emergency situations.
 - i. If a student requires urgent medical attention while on campus, all PA Program staff should promptly call 911 and notify the college administration.
 - ii. Any students requiring first aid or care should immediately be directed to the Office of Student Services.
 - iii. Under no circumstances should the PA Program Director, the PA Program Medical Director, and any Principal and didactic Instructional Faculty participate in the delivery of healthcare for students in any setting off-campus as well, except in emergency situations.
- **Students having any Issues or In Need of Care:**
 - a. If any Plaza College PA Program Faculty, Administrator or Staff member notes a student who appears to be in crisis, in need of assistance, or asks for assistance with any personal issues that may impact their progress in the PA Program:
 - i. The PA student should be immediately referred to the Office of Student Services, who will guide the student regarding the next steps.

See the Plaza College Student Handbook, page 15.

Student Grievance and Mistreatment Procedures

General Grievance Procedures

If at any point a student believes they have not been treated fairly, harassed, mistreated, or discriminated against, or that a mistake has been made as a condition of enrollment, they must first attempt to resolve the situation informally through discussion with the Program Director. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of informal discussions, they are free to use the following formal procedure:

All grievances must be submitted in writing to the Provost within five business days of the occurrence. Within five business days, the Provost must notify all parties involved of the nature of the grievance and schedule an informal hearing. At the informal hearing with the Provost, the griever presents their case. Following the hearing, the Provost will render a decision and take appropriate action. If the grievance is not resolved at the informal hearing, a formal hearing before an ad hoc committee composed of faculty, students, and administrators will be held within ten business days. The committee shall make and retain a record of the hearing and notify all the parties of the decision within five business days. This decision must be reached by at least a two-thirds majority.

Confidential grievance reports may be made by using the anonymous form on the “Consumer Information” page of the college’s website.

Grade-Related Grievance Procedures

If a student believes that there is a credible basis to assert that an examination, written assignment, or grade awarded does not reflect the student's objective course performance:

1. The student must first seek the guidance of the Course Director before filing an appeal in writing for a formal Grade Review.
 - a. This must be done *within 14 calendar days* of the posting of the grade.
2. If a discussion with the Course Director (or designee if unavailable) does not resolve the issue, the student must present the concerns *in writing* to the Program Director, for a request for a formal Grade Review or evaluation *no later than 21 calendar days* following the posting of the grade.
 - a. Grades may *not* be appealed after this 21-day deadline has passed.
3. The student should set forth the reasons for his or her request for review of the grade.
4. In consultation with the faculty involved, the Program Director, or his/her representative, has discretion to request documents and relevant information that would be needed to conduct a full and fair assessment of the evaluation or grade under review.
5. The Program Director shall determine a final resolution and communicate this to the student and to the appropriate Course Director within 14 calendar days of the request for course evaluation/grade review.
 - a. The decision of the Program Director shall be considered final and is not subject to further appeal.

Grievance Procedures for Possible Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or Title IX Violations

If a student's complaint stems from a possible violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, please use the following procedure:

Plaza College has adopted an internal grievance procedure for the timely and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Civil Rights regulations, implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), Section 504 states, in part, that "no otherwise qualified handicapped individual... shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance..." Title IX prohibits discrimination, exclusion, denial, limitation, or separation based on gender against students and employees of educational institutions.

Complaints should be addressed to:

Dean Kalli Koutsoutis
118-33 Queens Blvd
Forest Hills, NY 11375
(718) 779-1430

1. A complaint should be filed in writing, contain the name and address of the person filing it, and briefly describe the alleged violation of the regulations within ten business days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation.
2. An investigation, as may be appropriate, shall follow a filing of a complaint. The investigation shall be conducted by the Provost. These rules outline informal but



thorough investigations, affording all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to a complaint.

3. A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Provost and a copy forwarded to the complainant no later than ten business days after its filing.
4. The Section 504 and Title IX coordinator shall maintain the files and records of Plaza College relating to the complaints filed.
5. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where they are dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within five business days to the president of the College.
6. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed thereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a Section 504 or Title IX complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Utilization of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
7. These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of interested persons, to meet appropriate due process standards, and to assure that Plaza College complies with Section 504 and Title IX implementing regulations.

Technical Standards for Physician Assistant Students

The Plaza College Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program is committed to the admission and matriculation of candidates who possess the necessary capabilities and skills to meet the demands of physician assistant education, as well as those needed to practice medicine in a broad variety of clinical situations to render a wide spectrum of patient care. Candidates must also possess the stamina, both physical and emotional, to function competently in educational and practice settings that potentially involve stressful situations and physically demanding workloads. These standards reflect what has been determined as reasonable expectations for physician assistant (PA) students and graduate PAs in performing common and important functions, keeping in mind the safety and welfare of patients. All candidate and students must meet, in order to matriculate, and must continuously meet throughout their time as a PA student, the following technical standards in order to successfully complete the program; any change in the ability of an applicant or student to meet these standards will be evaluated and if it is determined that a candidate or a student does not meet any of the standards may be denied matriculation or dismissed from the program.

All applicants and physician assistant students must possess the following abilities and skills:

- **Observation– A candidate must possess:**
 - Vision, hearing, and touch, or the functional equivalent.
 - The ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, equilibrium, and movement
 - The ability to observe demonstrations, exercises, and patients accurately at a distance and close at hand
 - The ability to note verbal and non-verbal signals
- **Communication – A candidate must be able to:**
 - Communicate effectively in a professional manner with patients, families, caregivers, faculty and colleagues
 - Elicit and transmit patient information in oral and written English to all members of the healthcare team
 - Accurately describe changes in mood, activity and posture sufficiently to complete curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients
 - Write or type appropriate medical documents according to protocol in a thorough and timely manner
 - Sharing and receiving patient information in written and oral English
- **Motor Function – A candidate must be able to:**
 - Perform the basic and advanced clinical procedures that are requirements of the PA program curriculum
 - Execute motor movements required to provide and/or direct the provision of general care and emergency treatment of patients, including but not limited to obtaining vital signs, performing physician examinations and performing diagnostic maneuvers

- Carry out treatment maneuvers, which may include lifting, transferring of patients and assisting during ambulation while assuring their own safety as well as the safety of the patient
- Coordinate the use of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and prolonged standing or sitting
- Elicit information from patients while conducting diagnostic and therapeutic procedures including but not limited to palpation, auscultation, percussion, and movement of limbs
- **Critical Thinking Ability – A candidate must be able to:**
 - Calculate, reason, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data in a consistent and accurate manner
 - Independently access and interpret medical histories or files
 - Identify significant findings from history, physical examinations, and laboratory data to provide a reasonable explanation for likely diagnoses, prescribed medications and therapy
 - Recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner and be able to ascertain the relationship between this retained information and its application in clinical practice
 - Incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and the medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans
- **Behavioral and Social Skills – A candidate must be able to:**
 - Demonstrate the maturity and emotional stability required for full use of their intellectual abilities
 - Exercise good judgment and professionalism in both the educational and clinical settings
 - Be honest, self-assess and reflect on one's own mistakes, respond constructively to feedback and assume responsibility for maintaining professional behavior
 - Promptly complete responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients under potentially stressful circumstances, emergency situations, and extended hours
 - Develop empathic, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, families, caregivers, faculty and colleagues
 - Adapt to changing environments and to learn in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine including managing unforeseen clinical challenges
 - Respond to supervision appropriately and act within the scope of practice, when indicated
- **Additional Requirements:**
 - Candidates must meet the skills required for certification in American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS).
 - Candidates must be able to perform a head-to-toe, comprehensive examination:
 - a. On a patient of any gender.

- b. Including genital-urinary and rectal examination.
 - c. Within the allotted time without accommodation.
- In-person participation and assessment are required; remote coursework or clinical instruction is not permitted.

ADA Compliance

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended in 2008, defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The college will not discriminate against such individuals who are otherwise qualified but will expect that minimum technical standards be met by all applicants and students as set forth herein.

More information about Plaza College's policies and procedures for students with disabilities can be found at <https://plazacollege.edu/about/consumer-information/>

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program Handbook Acknowledgment

All students should familiarize themselves with this handbook because it contains important information and guidelines. Students must read, understand, and follow all policies and procedures printed in the handbook. The application of these policies and procedures will not be waived due to negligence or contradictory information received from other sources. As a complement to the College's Catalog and Student Handbook, this handbook provides additional information and guidelines. Entry into the Plaza College Physician Assistant Studies Program establishes a contract governed by the policies and procedures outlined in this manual.

RECEIPT FOR PROGRAM FILES

I have received and take responsibility for reading the document entitled:

**PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM
Student Handbook
Class of 2029**

I accept the terms and conditions of the policies of the Physician Assistant Studies Program contained in this Handbook.

PRINT NAME_____

SIGNATURE_____

DATE