This handbook has been developed to help you to understand the physician assistant program and its policies and procedures as well as to serve as a guide to student responsibilities. The Physician Assistant Program Student Handbook is intended to supplement the Franklin Pierce University Catalog and the College of Graduate & Professional Studies (CGPS) Student Code of Conduct.

MISSION AND GOALS

In addition to the Mission of Franklin Pierce University as expressed in the Franklin Pierce University Catalog, the Physician Assistant Program embraces those words and declares the following statement to be the Mission of the Physician Assistant Program:

The mission of the Franklin Pierce University Physician Assistant Program is to graduate competent and compassionate physician assistants who possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes to practice high quality, patient-oriented primary care in diverse environments with a focus on underserved communities.

The Goals of the Franklin Pierce University Physician Assistant Program are as follows:

1. To educate Physician Assistant students to practice patient-centered medicine; caring for the patient’s body, mind, and spirit.

2. To mentor students in the development of their professional role as a collaborative member of the health care team and in their personal journey to becoming reflective, ethical practitioners.

3. To graduate self-directed learners who engage in on-going, critical evaluation of medical evidence and the medical literature and apply this knowledge to their daily practice.

4. To recruit students from rural and underserved communities, particularly those from Vermont and central and northern New Hampshire, as well as those from underrepresented populations in medicine.

5. To return these students to rural and underserved communities for clinical training and practice.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF

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PROGRAM CURRICULUM BY TERM

Didactic Phase

PA Program Term 1

November – February 17 credits

ME512 Clinical Application of Basic Sciences I 4 cr.
ME516 Clinical Medicine I 6 cr.
ME504 Basics of Pharmacology I 2 cr.
ME508 Patient Care I 2 cr.
ME510 Behavioral Medicine 2 cr.
ME500 Introduction to Clinical Reasoning 1 cr.

PA Program Term 2

March – May 17 credits

ME520 Professional Seminar I 1 cr.
ME540 Clinical Application of Basic Sciences II 3 cr.
ME544 Clinical Medicine II 6 cr.
ME506 Basics of Pharmacology II 2 cr.
ME536 Patient Care II 2 cr.
ME524 Clinical Reasoning I 1 cr.
ME556 Understanding and Accessing the Medical Literature 2 cr.

PA Program Term 3

June – August 17 credits

ME552 Professional Seminar II 1 cr.
ME564 Clinical Application of Basic Sciences III 3 cr.
ME568 Clinical Medicine III 6 cr.
ME509 Basics of Pharmacology III 2 cr.
ME548 Clinical Reasoning II 1 cr.
ME532 Introduction to Epidemiology and Public Health 2 cr.
ME528 Patient Communication and Education 2 cr.
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<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ME572 Professional Seminar III</td>
<td>September - November</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME592 Clinical Medicine IV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME580 Clinical Reasoning III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME584 Evidence-based Medicine in Clinical</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1 cr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME588 Clinical Pharmacology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME560 Advanced Clinical Skills</td>
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<td>3 cr.</td>
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**Clinical Phase**

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<tr>
<td>ME576 Preparation for Clinical Education</td>
<td>December - February</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME631 Clinical Rotation 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME632 Clinical Rotation 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME645 Seminar I</td>
<td>March - May</td>
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<td>2 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME633 Clinical Rotation 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME634 Clinical Rotation 4</td>
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<td>5 cr.</td>
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<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>ME646 Seminar II</td>
<td>June - August</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME635 Clinical Rotation 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME636 Clinical Rotation 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 cr.</td>
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<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ME647 Seminar III</td>
<td>September - November</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME637 Clinical Rotation 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME638 Clinical Rotation 8</td>
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<td>5 cr.</td>
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**Professional Phase**

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<th>Program Term</th>
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<th>End Date</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>ME648 Seminar IV</td>
<td>December - February</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME692 Preparation for Clinical Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME619 Elective Clinical Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME690 Senior Seminar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 cr.</td>
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**Total credits over 9 terms = 126 credit hours earned**
CLINICAL EDUCATION

Clinical education is a vital component in the professional education of the Franklin Pierce physician assistant student. Accordingly, clinical education will be integrated throughout the curriculum at Franklin Pierce. Students will have the opportunity to shadow in the clinical setting during the didactic phase of the program in the form of a mentor program, pairing students with working physician assistants in the community.

In the second phase of the program, students will participate in eight core clinical rotations, including Family and Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Women’s Health, Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Psychiatry, and a primary care elective. Students will also have the opportunity for an additional elective rotation in a discipline of their own choosing, based on current availability of placements and the student’s overall progress in the program. Clinical experiences provide the students with exciting opportunities to apply skills they have learned in the classroom to real life settings and develop new skills under the guidance of an experienced clinical preceptor. It is the responsibility of the program to recruit and screen appropriate clinical placements for students. Students are not required to supply their own required clinical sites or preceptors. A separate Student Clinical Manual describes policies and procedures as they relate to the clinical experiences and will be reviewed with students during orientation to the clinical year.

TUITION AND FEES

The following are the current tuition and associated fees for the Physician Assistant Program at the time of publication of this handbook (12/12/2012):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition (per term)</td>
<td>$9,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment, lab coat, patches</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books (total for program)</td>
<td>$2,000 - $3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memberships (SAAAPA &amp; NH/VT)</td>
<td>$125 (recommended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>$400 per year and up*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACLS Certification (one-time fee)</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Background Check</td>
<td>$75 and up**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Fee (one-time fee)</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the clinical year, students must have reliable transportation and may be required to stay out of the area for up to 5 weeks at a time. Cost of transportation and housing for the clinical year is the responsibility of the student and will vary based on placement.

*All students must provide proof of health insurance coverage. If you are already covered under another plan, you do not need to purchase additional insurance. Maintenance of health requirements, including other requirements as determined by clinical sites, not covered by student’s health insurance (i.e., annual physical, immunizations and tests, urine drug screen, etc.) are the responsibility of the student.

**Costs vary based on the number of times you have moved in the past 7 years.

Technical Standards

The following technical standards establish the essential qualities necessary for students enrolling in the Physician Assistant Program. Students must possess these qualities in order to achieve the required level of competency stipulated for program advancement and graduation. Students must demonstrate these standards upon admission and continue to demonstrate them throughout their participation in the Franklin Pierce Physician Assistant Program. Failure to do so will be grounds for dismissal from the program.
Sensation

Students must possess sufficient visual, auditory and tactile sensation to receive appropriate information in the classroom, laboratory and other education settings. Sensation must be sufficient to receive verbal and non-verbal information while interviewing patients and to perform inspection, auscultation and palpation techniques during physical examination of patients.

Communication

Students must be able to communicate effectively with patients, family members and other clinicians. This includes expressive and receptive modes of verbal, non-verbal and written communication. Further, it includes the ability to accurately assess receptive communication in order to make appropriate and timely responses. Finally, it includes the ability to communicate with attention, empathy and sensitivity.

Motor Function

Students must have sufficient strength and coordination to perform the activities required of a Physician Assistant. These include performing a physical examination involving techniques in palpation and percussion and utilizing diagnostic instruments. Students must have sufficient stamina to sit and move within the classroom, laboratory, examination rooms, treatment rooms and operating rooms for extended periods of time. They must have sufficient coordination to move about patient care environments and sufficient dexterity to use common medical instruments.

Intellectual Capability

Clinical problem solving, a critical ability for Physician Assistants, encompasses abilities to accurately measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, learn and retain information and make decisions in a timely manner. Students must be able to:

- Independently access and interpret medical data;
- Identify significant findings from history, physical examination and laboratory data;
- Perform a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses and recommend treatment regimens; and
- Recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner.

Behavioral/Social Proficiency

Students must possess the ability to establish and maintain appropriate professional relationships. Factors included in this requirement are the abilities to prioritize competing demands, to function in stressful circumstances, to exercise good clinical judgment, to behave ethically, and to be compassionate, empathetic, responsible and tolerant toward patients and other healthcare professionals.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Professional Conduct

In addition to the Technical Standards outlined above, students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to abide by the American Academy of Physician Assistants’ Code of Ethics of the Physician Assistant Profession. (Appendix A)

Conduct (language, demeanor, attitude, dress, or behavior) unbecoming a health professional and a student at Franklin Pierce University will not be tolerated. Students who behave in an immature, irresponsible, or unethical
manner will be subject to disciplinary action. Students who behave unprofessionally, either inside and/or outside the classroom, can be charged with professional conduct violations and may be brought to the Student Affairs Committee for disciplinary action.

**What is Professionalism?**

At Franklin Pierce University, our goals are to produce healthcare providers who are clinically sound, providing the highest quality of care within their scope of practice, and who become well-respected professionals within the medical community. Physician Assistant students are objectively evaluated based on their clinical knowledge and skills using objective measures, such as written assignments, written and practical examinations, and clinical rotation evaluations. The student must also demonstrate the ability to work effectively within a professional environment with patients and other healthcare providers.

According to the ARC-PA Standards and Guidelines, professionalism is characterized as follows:

> “The role of the Physician Assistant demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills, and the capability to react to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. An attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient’s welfare are essential attributes of the graduate PA.”

Some examples of unprofessional behavior include:

- Verbal or physical aggression;
- Violation of program or institutional policies;
- Gossiping or bullying;
- Negative interactions with classmates, faculty, or staff;
- Difficulty functioning effectively in team or group activities;
- Cheating, lying, or otherwise misrepresenting oneself or the facts;
- Acts that reflect poor judgment and/or impulse control;
- Inability to handle stressful situations effectively; and
- Inability to meet professional deadlines (i.e., tardiness, late papers, etc.).

This list represents some behaviors that would be considered a violation of the professional and technical standards of the program. It is not meant to be exhaustive. A violation of professional behavior standards may occur as a demonstrated pattern of behavior that is deemed, through observation and interaction with faculty, staff, students, and/or community members, to be unprofessional or it may be a single, egregious act. Students who are not able to demonstrate the ability to adhere to the Technical Standards as outlined previously, those who exhibit a pattern of unprofessional behavior, or those who engage in a single, egregious act will be referred to the Student Affairs Committee for recommendations regarding disciplinary actions, including consideration of dismissal from the program.

Physician Assistant students must recognize that they are seen as clinicians, providing a service both to the physician supervisor as well as the patient. PA students must be aware that, even as students, they are viewed by both patients and medical providers as part of the larger medical community. As such, PA students are expected to display the same professionalism as their medical counterparts. It is critical, therefore, that professional development be assessed just as academic and clinical skills are measured during a student’s time in the program. Inability to meet professional standards may be referred to the Program Director and/or Student Affairs Committee for discussion, review, and potential action.
The following paragraphs review specific topics of importance as they relate to professionalism:

**Confidentiality**

HIPAA regulations stress confidentiality of all health records and the Program strictly adheres to these standards. Patient records are confidential. No patient information may be copied or shared with others except in professional exchanges. The disclosure of patient information without authorization will result in disciplinary action. Student records are confidential and are not shared without the consent of the student.

**Dress**

Students engaged in a professional study program will present themselves in a professional manner at all times. Classroom dress for the course must be neat, clean, and modest. Within these parameters, jeans, t-shirts, and shorts are allowed. Hats are not allowed in the classroom at any time except as a requirement of one’s religious affiliation. Fingernails should be clean, filed and short.

When participating in any professional clinical experience (such as visiting outside facilities or when patients come into the classroom), students will be required to wear short white lab coats over appropriate professional attire. In addition, students are required to wear official Franklin Pierce University nametags. Open toed shoes are not allowed in any clinical situation. Use of fragrance and excessive or facial jewelry is inappropriate for clinical practice. Tattoos must be completely covered. Students dressed inappropriately will not be permitted to participate in outside experiences or patient encounters.

**Electronic Devices**

All electronic communication or paging devices must be turned off during class, lab and clinical experiences. Students who may need to be contacted in case of emergency can do so by providing the program phone number. The program staff members are informed to interrupt class or contact the appropriate clinical facility to reach students in an emergency. Laptop use is encouraged for note-taking, but should not be used for purposes such as completing assignments or social networking during class time.

**Conviction of a Felony**

Conviction of a felony may result in the student’s inability to become licensed as a physician assistant. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the possible consequences of legal convictions. Many affiliation sites require criminal background checks. The responsibility for obtaining the necessary documentation rests solely with the student.

**Substance Abuse**

Abuse of alcohol and/or narcotic prescription medications, as well as use of illicit drugs are incompatible with the responsibilities of a professional health care provider entrusted with the safety and care of the general public. Students of the Franklin Pierce Physician Assistant Program are bound by the Substance Abuse Policies noted in the University Catalog as well as the College of Graduate & Professional Studies Student Code of Conduct.

**SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARRASSMENT**

Students are required to abide by the University policy on Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment as outlined in the current University catalog.
ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory for all classes, labs, and exams. Students who need time off to take care of personal matters are required to submit formal notification to all faculty and program staff for any and all absences. Students are allowed two days per term for personal use. Any missed time beyond these two days (or four half-days) will need to be either approved by your faculty advisor in advance or will require a written note from your health care provider. Requests for additional time off (beyond the allowed two days per term) must be kept to a minimum and may not automatically be approved for social events, volunteer activities, travel time, or conferences (for example). Attendance will be periodically monitored by faculty. An unexcused absence will be considered a violation of the standards of professionalism and may result in disciplinary action, such as failure of the course or dismissal from the program. Requested absences during written examinations are strongly discouraged and are contingent upon advanced approval by the faculty course coordinator. Absences will not be approved for practical examinations.

Tardiness Policy

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and to participate for the full duration of the class. Tardiness or distracting behavior (talking on the phone, text messaging, digging for papers, eating) is disruptive to classmates and instructors and can result in students missing important information. Periodic observation by faculty will be used to monitor for timely arrival to class and appropriate behavior in class. Episodes of tardiness will be counted as days missed per the attendance policy and addressed per the professional standards policy noted above.

If you do arrive late to class, it is requested that you check in with the Program Administrative Assistant and enter the classroom with minimal disruption. Consistently disruptive behavior will fall under the professional standards policy noted above.

Mentorship Policy

During the didactic phase of the program, students will be paired with a working PA in the clinical setting. The mentorship is a shadowing experience designed to expose the first-year student to the role of a physician assistant in clinical practice. It is not intended to offer students an opportunity to practice clinical skills or participate in hands-on patient care. In general, Friday afternoons are available for mentor experiences. Students should not miss lecture to attend a mentor experience. If a student’s mentor is not in clinic on Friday afternoons, the student must maintain good academic standing and have minimal personal absences to attend mentorship during regularly scheduled classes. As noted in the attendance policy, students must notify their faculty advisor in advance if they will be missing classes to attend a mentor experience. Students are expected to dress professionally, wear their program name tag, and arrive on time for all mentor experiences.

Clinical Rotation Attendance Policy

See the Student Clinical Rotation Manual

LAB POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Use of Equipment/Safety

Students are expected to behave responsibly when using equipment, following all manufacturers’ guidelines for intended use as well as any lab manual guidelines. Improper use of equipment may pose serious hazards to people and may result in damage to equipment. Anyone found improperly using equipment will be subject to disciplinary action.
Breakage
In the normal course of use equipment does fail or break. It is the responsibility of each student to report broken or malfunctioning equipment immediately to the course coordinator or Program Director.

Theft or Damage to Property
Theft or malicious destruction of property (or threat thereof) will not be tolerated. Students engaging in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action.

General Lab Experiences
- During physical examination lab, (Patient Care I), students are expected to wear shorts or loose pants and t-shirts allowing maximum exposure of the body and easy palpation. All students must present to physical examination lab, practical examinations, and clinical rotation experiences with neatly trimmed, short fingernails. Long fingernails pose a hazard when performing an appropriate physical examination.
- Skills lab aisles must be kept clear. Book bags, shoes, etc. are to be placed against the wall or in the lockers.
- No shoes are allowed on examination tables.
- All tables and equipment need to be wiped down with the cleaning solution provided after each use. Each student is responsible for wiping the table down following use.
- All equipment must be returned to designated storage space or location.
- Students have an obligation to inform the Program Director or individual instructors when physical or emotional conditions may put the students at risk during laboratory experiences. Students with infectious diseases must inform the Program Director to ensure that appropriate precautions are taken. When a student has a condition that may be exacerbated by or preclude participation in specific lab experiences, the student may be required to obtain a physician’s clearance in order to be excused from or participate fully in the lab.
- Students will be instructed by faculty on the proper handling, storage and disposal of any hazardous materials and/or bodily substances encountered in the laboratory.
- Students may use the facilities at 24 Airport Road from 7:45a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:45a.m. to 1p.m. on Friday. The building is NOT open on Saturday or Sunday, and students are not allowed in the building when faculty and/or staff are not present. If there are special needs to use the building at other times, accommodations may be made with advanced permission of the faculty or Program Director.
- Teaching models and skills practice material be made available for student practice purposes during unsupervised lab time with advanced permission of the course coordinator.

Dartmouth Medical School Cadaver Lab Policies
Our cadavers are the remains of generous people from New Hampshire and Vermont who willed their bodies to DMS for the purpose of education and research. As a student, you are privileged to have the opportunity to use this material. The cadavers are to be treated with the utmost respect. For this reason, and to maintain the integrity of the lab and in consideration of the several users of the facility, the following regulations will be observed in Sanborn Laboratory:

Bones and human tissue may not be removed from the laboratory under any circumstance. A single violation of this rule will result in termination of the program. Anatomical models should not be removed from the laboratory or anatomy study room.
Your anatomical donor entrusted you to care for and respect their body. It is essential to wrap the cadaver with wet cloths after each lab session to prevent drying of the tissue. A special wetting fluid with a mold inhibitor is provided for this purpose in the large carboys near the sinks; do not use tap water. Make sure you close the plastic body bag after each lab session.

It is very important to keep tissues from each body separate, so that the remains can be cremated and returned to the donor’s family. Do not remove the cadaver ID tag for any reason. Small bits of tissue must be kept in the tissue waste bucket under your table. Do not put anything other than human tissue in this bucket (NO paper towels).

The laboratory is to be kept neat at all times and you are expected to clean your area after each day’s lab session. This includes washing any instruments and returning them to the tray, storing tools and atlases under your table, and wiping up soiled areas on your dissection table or the floor. Never leave a sharp instrument in your cadaver bag, as the next student to reach into the bag could get cut. Note that proper trash disposal is as follows:

- Cadaver (tissue) waste – waste containers under your table
- Gloves, paper towels – gray trash containers
- Blades – red sharps disposal boxes or turquoise blade removal boxes

As professionals, you are expected to dress and act appropriately in the laboratory. Open-toed shoes, sandals, shorts and skirts are not permitted. All students must wear scrubs and eye protection (glasses or safety glasses, no contact lenses). Food and/or drinks, pets, and music are not allowed in the laboratory. Smoking is prohibited. The use of photographic or video equipment is not permitted unless approved by the Anatomy Department of Dartmouth Medical School.

The human anatomy laboratory is a Restricted Area. Only authorized persons are allowed to enter the lab (i.e. students enrolled in the course, faculty and anatomical staff). We do not allow visitors out of respect for our donors and to protect the integrity of our body donation program. Do not share the combinations to the anatomy lab or study room with anyone! All student activities within the laboratory are to have direct faculty supervision.

The anatomy study room (“bone room”) is a grease-free area. Do not wear aprons or gloves in this room. Bones, textbooks and human tissue may not be removed from the laboratory or the study room under any circumstance.

Students are not permitted in the laboratory area “off hours” (nights, weekends) and are only permitted in the laboratory area under direct faculty supervision.

Neither the Anatomy Department, nor Dartmouth Medical School, can be responsible for items that are brought to, or left in the laboratory.

All students must sign a waiver of liability and also sign a copy of these rules and regulations, acknowledging acceptance of these rules.

**Blood-borne pathogen exposure during clinical experiences**

All physician assistant students have been educated in universal precautions and OSHA regulations. All physician assistant students are expected to follow these guidelines when engaged in clinical experiences throughout the program. Despite careful attention to these guidelines, students may occasionally come in contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.
Students must become familiar with and follow the blood borne pathogen exposure protocols at the host site. If an incident occurs, it must be reported to the mentor or preceptor, as well as the student’s faculty advisor. Students should follow the host site protocol and be referred for evaluation. It is recommended that the student have serologic HIV/HBV testing as soon as possible after a blood/body fluid exposure and the opportunity for retesting in 3, 6, and 12 months following. The student’s health insurance may cover expenses for testing and any required treatment as a result of a blood-borne exposure. Any costs not covered by the student’s insurance are the responsibility of the student.

GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Emergency Procedures
Students will be instructed in emergency procedures during student orientation. Emergency procedures will be posted where appropriate.

Mailboxes
A mail slot identified for each student will be available beginning in January and extending for the duration of the student’s first 12 months on campus. It will be utilized for returning assignments and evaluations. After the student’s first year in the program, all communication will be mailed to the student’s address of record or held on campus and returned during Seminar courses.

Use of Phone/Messages
Students are allowed to use their personal cell phones or other electronic communication devices outside of the classroom and lab. Support staff will take phone messages on the program phone in emergency situations.

Change of Name, Address, Phone Number
All changes of personal information should be reported to the program’s support staff, as well as to the Registrar’s Office/Student Administrative Services and other appropriate University personnel. Failure to report this information may result in the student not receiving critical information. You must maintain your Franklin Pierce e-mail account and delete unwanted items regularly to avoid your mailbox becoming full. The Program and University will only utilize your Franklin Pierce e-mail address for e-mail communication.

Work Policy
In order to enhance student learning and assure student success in the Physician Assistant program, it is recommended that students not work while enrolled in the program. If a student chooses to work while enrolled in the program, work schedules cannot interfere with class attendance, academic performance, or clinical rotation schedules. Students are never required to work for the program in any capacity.

HEALTH INSURANCE AND SERVICES

Students are required to maintain health insurance for the duration of their enrollment in the Franklin Pierce University PA Program. In addition to the insurance offered through the University, information regarding low cost health insurance plans is available from the program. Your proof of insurance will be verified, along with compliance with all health requirements of the program through Certified Background. No health records will be maintained by the program.
The Program has made arrangements with the Dartmouth Hitchcock Family Medicine in Lebanon/Hanover to provide health care to students of the Franklin Pierce PA Program. Additionally, mental health counseling and referrals will be available through Dartmouth Hitchcock Family Medicine. Students are responsible for health-care costs, whether incidental or incurred as a result of course-related activities. Dartmouth Hitchcock Family Medicine will maintain all student health records. Certified Background will provide verification of compliance with health requirements as needed. The program will not maintain student health records and faculty are not allowed to participate in or provide health care to students.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

All students must have proof of the following prior to matriculation in the program:

1. A health examination within the past 12 months indicating that the student does not have any physical or mental health conditions that may affect their ability to provide medical care or put patients in danger.

2. Completed series of immunizations based on current CDC recommendations including but not limited to Diphtheria, Tetanus, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, and Varicella (chicken pox) or proof of immunity via titer. Proof of illness is not sufficient.

3. A two-step tuberculin skin test (PPD).

The Program has contracted with Certified Background to track and maintain all student records as required above. A health verification checklist will be mailed to you upon acceptance to the program and must be received by Certified Background prior to matriculation. Students will be required to repeat the physical examination and PPD annually based on when the initial service was rendered (not based upon date of matriculation), as well as keep other immunizations current. It is the responsibility of students to keep track of expiration dates. Failure to complete the required documentation can prevent or delay students from participating in the program and/or beginning clinical rotations. Only the verification checklist will be kept in the student’s locked file on campus. All medical records will be maintained by the office of the student’s primary care provider and/or the Dartmouth Hitchcock Family Medicine as the clinic of record for Franklin Pierce PA Student Health Services.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

In an effort to access the many benefits of professional memberships and to encourage students to be active in the national and regional professional organizations, students are strongly encouraged to become members in the following organizations:

National Membership

Students should initiate and maintain membership in the Student Association of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA) for the duration of their enrollment in the program.

Constituent Chapter Membership

Students should initiate and maintain a student membership in the Constituent Chapter of the AAPA in their state of residence for the duration of their matriculation in the program.
These memberships will allow the student to receive publications and job listings, have access to educational programs, become acquainted with how a professional organization works, and discover the many benefits of membership. Applications are available online. As responsible, involved professionals, students are encouraged to continue membership and participation in these organizations (AAPA and their state constituent chapter) after graduation.

SCHOOL CLOSING ANOUNCEMENTS

In the event of inclement weather or other circumstances that would necessitate the urgent cancellation of classes, students will find school closing announcements on the WMUR television website (www.wmur.com) or the Franklin Pierce website (www.franklinpierce.edu, click on Storm Alerts). The Franklin Pierce undergraduate campus is located in Rindge, and there are numerous satellite campuses around the state. When checking the websites, please be sure to note that the Physician Assistant Program will not hold classes when the Lebanon Center is closed. In the event of power outages, you may also check closing information by calling the Center's main number (603-298-5549). Center closings will be posted by 6 a.m.

Cancellations at the Lebanon Center do not automatically apply to clinical placements. Students participating in community clinical experiences (clinical rotations) are expected to use their best judgment in deciding whether or not to travel to their clinical site while respecting the expectations of clinical supervisors and preceptors. If a student feels it is unsafe to travel to a clinical site due to inclement weather, he/she should inform his/her clinical preceptor and faculty advisor immediately.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Students are assigned to a faculty advisor within the Physician Assistant Program. Students should meet with their advisor a minimum of once each term. Advisors may initiate meetings with individuals or groups of advisees as needed. In addition, students are encouraged to meet with faculty advisors to address professional and academic issues.

Faculty will communicate with each other regularly regarding student performance and progress. Students will receive regular feedback from these collaborative discussions through their academic advisor.

Assistance is available from the Rindge Campus Academic Services for writing, study, and test-taking skills.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The Physician Assistant Program at Franklin Pierce University is a graduate level professional education program. Students enrolled in the program must demonstrate achievement in academic and clinical competencies necessary for professional practice as a physician assistant and meet academic criteria consistent with graduate degree programs at the college level.

Physician assistant students must abide by all policies in the College of Graduate & Professional Studies Student Code of Conduct and all University policies regarding academic standing, academic integrity, honesty, plagiarism, and dishonesty as defined in the catalogue and noted in each course syllabus. Students should refer to these documents and this handbook for all policies related to academic standards. Additionally, physician assistant students must abide by the Code of Ethics of the Physician Assistant Profession. (Appendix A).
The policies below are in addition to the standards noted above as set by the current University catalog and the College of Graduate & Professional Studies Student Code of Conduct.

**Academic Honesty**

Franklin Pierce University requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. The Physician Assistant Program values and fosters a culture of academic integrity for all students enrolled in the program. Students are bound by the Code of Ethics of the Physician Assistant Profession, which is in place in each class and attaches responsibility to each student to uphold the highest standards for themselves and their classmates. Activities such as plagiarism and cheating are not acceptable, should not be condoned by any student, and will not be condoned by the University. Students involved in such activities are subject to serious disciplinary action, including suspension and dismissal. Students are bound by the Code of Ethics to report instances of known or suspected cheating or plagiarism to the course coordinator or their faculty advisor.

**Academic Dishonesty**

All known or suspected instances of academic dishonesty (which includes cheating, plagiarism, and/or deceit) must be reported to the course coordinator or faculty advisor. The faculty member will report the incident, in writing, to the Program Director who will convene a meeting of the Physician Assistant Student Affairs Committee (SAC). The SAC will review the written report and may ask to meet with involved faculty and student(s) before making a determination as to consequences, which may include a verbal warning, a letter of warning to be kept in the student’s program file and copied to the Program Director and Dean, or recommendation to the Program Director and Dean for probation, suspension, or dismissal from the program.

**Remediation Policy**

Examination grades will be finalized and released to students within one week of the administration of examinations. The course coordinator will determine if remediation will be offered for any particular exam. If remediation is offered, students will be eligible to take the remediation exam if their grade on the original exam is below 83%. Students will be allowed to remediate a maximum of four exams per term in the first two terms of the didactic year and three exams per term in the last two terms. Remediation examinations will be closed-book and in a format determined by the course coordinator. The student’s final grade for the examination will be an average of the two scores (the original exam score and the score on the remediation exam). If a student’s average score is lower than the original exam score, then the original score will be awarded as the final grade for that examination.

The opportunity to review exam performance is provided at the end of each online, multiple choice examination. Students are encouraged to use this time to identify areas of weakness in the content being tested. Students are allowed to make handwritten notes during these review sessions and to use these notes to prepare for any potential remediation.

Remediation of any practical examination will be offered rarely, under extenuating circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the course coordinator.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Near the end of each term, the program faculty and Director will meet to review and discuss each individual student’s progress. Concerns regarding student academic performance will be documented and referred to the students’ academic advisor and/or the PA Program Student Affairs Committee for follow up.
A passing grade for courses within the program is a C (73%) or better. Students must be aware that they are also held to the academic standards policy of the College of Graduate & Professional Studies which states that students must maintain a term and cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) or better and there are cumulative academic sanctions for grades below a B- (83%). Students who do not meet these criteria will be subject to action by the CGPS Academic Standards Committee as outlined above.

Any student placed on Academic Probation is required to meet with his or her academic advisor and develop a Learning Contract to address academic deficiencies. A student will be considered to have attained satisfactory academic progress when the student receives consistent course grades of B- or better and maintains a cumulative and term GPA of 3.0.

A student who is placed on Academic Probation or Deferred Suspension during the clinical year cannot progress to the next clinical placement until they have successfully remediated any and all deficiencies. The ability to remediate a clinical rotation is at the discretion of the program. Only one remedial rotation will be allowed. Failure to remediate a failed rotation will automatically result in the student being referred to the Dean for Academic Suspension. Additionally, students with a history of academic probation or deferred suspension during the academic year will be referred for academic dismissal from the program if they fail to maintain the academic standards of the College of Graduate & Professional Studies as outlined above.

Part-time Enrollment, Deceleration, and Academic Suspension

The design of the curriculum within the Physician Assistant Program does not allow for students to decelerate or attend part-time. Knowledge and skills build throughout the didactic phase and are reinforced in the clinical phase. Students who cannot continue on a full time basis or who are placed on Academic Suspension may be considered for readmission on a case-by-case basis and may be required to repeat some or all of the coursework completed at the time of withdrawal or suspension.

Summative Evaluation

All students must pass the written and practical Summative Evaluation administered during Term 9 prior to graduation. Any remediation of the Summative Evaluation is subject to the Remediation Policy above.

Graduation Procedure

Degrees are conferred for the PA program in March. The Physician Assistant Program faculty will recommend students for graduation based on completion of all requirements of the program. In order to participate in the May Commencement Ceremony, all students:

- Must submit a completed Request to Graduate form (RTG) that has been approved by their academic advisor(s) to the Registrar by December 1st, and must have that RTG approved by the Registrar;
- Must not have participated in any previous Franklin Pierce University Commencement ceremony for this degree; and
- Must have already completed program requirements in the previous June, September, January or March term.

Course Evaluations

At the end of each course, students are required to complete a course and faculty or preceptor evaluation online. Student evaluations are critically important for maintaining a dynamic, quality curriculum. In addition, students may be requested to provide input regarding specific modules within a course.
EXTENUATING & EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Students are encouraged to speak with their faculty advisor or the Program Director, when they are experiencing extenuating and/or exceptional circumstances that may impact their success and/or continuance in the PA Program. Such circumstances may include but are not limited to financial problems, personal physical or emotional health issues, and family crises. Special considerations due to extenuating circumstances may be brought to the Student Affairs Committee for referral and recommendations.

This is a student-centered program. We are committed to providing students with support and appropriate resources to assist in times of need. Please do not let these issues linger or get in the way of you achieving your goals.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are referred to the current University Catalog for policies related to requesting and receiving appropriate accommodations.

COMMITTEES IN THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

The following committees have been established to facilitate the development, operation and evaluation of the program:

- Admissions Committee;
- Curriculum Committee; and
- Student Affairs Committee.

Admissions Committee

I. PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Admissions Committees charge is to select highly qualified applicants for admission to the Franklin Pierce University Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program.

II. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Physician Assistant Admission Committee is made up of the Director, faculty members, and practicing physician assistants from the community.

III. ADMISSIONS PROCESS

An initial review is conducted by program staff to ensure that the applicant meets the minimum criteria. Applicants are ranked based on the program’s admissions criteria, including the “Additional Criteria for Admissions.” Applicants who are favorably reviewed are invited for an in-person interview with members of the Committee. Once the interview is completed, the interview team will present the student to the entire Committee and make a recommendation based on a review of the portfolio and interview. Students will be notified of their status within one week of the interview. Once all seats are filled, those who were recommended for admission, but for whom space was not available, will be placed on a wait list and will be ranked as determined from their portfolio and interview scores.
Curriculum Committee

I. PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Physician Assistant Curriculum Committee oversees the development, implementation, evaluation and modification of the program curriculum. Major curricular modifications will undergo the process of review and recommendation by the CGPS Curriculum Committee and final approval by the Dean prior to implementation by the program. The PA Program Curriculum Committee assures on-going compliance with the Accreditation Standards of the ARC-PA as they relate to curriculum.

II. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Medical Director of the PA Program will serve as chairperson of the committee. All faculty may serve on the committee. Advisory members may be invited to attend meetings and may include adjunct lecturers and clinical preceptors, members of the program’s Advisory Committee, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of the College of Graduate & Professional Studies, and students.

Student Affairs Committee

I. PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Student Affairs Committee reviews student issues of academic performance, academic dishonesty, professional misconduct, or special circumstances and make recommendations to the Program Director for disciplinary action or referral to the College’s Academic Standards Committee or the Dean of the College of Graduate & Professional Studies for further consideration and recommendations.

II. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

This Committee will be comprised of the Medical Director, one faculty member from another CGPS discipline and one PA Program faculty member who is not the student’s advisor and is not associated with the incident.
Appendix A

Code of Ethics of the Physician Assistant Profession

The American Academy of Physician Assistants recognizes its responsibility to aid the profession in maintaining high standards in the provision of quality and accessible health care services. The following principles delineate the standards governing the conduct of physician assistants in their professional interactions with patients, colleagues, other health professionals and the general public. Realizing that no code can encompass all ethical responsibilities of the physician assistant, this enumeration of obligations in the Code of Ethics is not comprehensive and does not constitute a denial of the existence of other obligations, equally imperative, though not specifically mentioned.

Physician Assistants shall be committed to providing competent medical care, assuming as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare and dignity of all humans.

Physician Assistants shall extend to each patient the full measure of their ability as dedicated, empathetic health care providers and shall assume responsibility for the skillful and proficient transactions of their professional duties.

Physician Assistants shall deliver needed health care services to health consumers without regard to sex, age, race, creed, socio-economic and political status.

Physician Assistants shall adhere to all state and federal laws governing informed consent concerning the patient's health care.

Physician Assistants shall seek consultation with their supervising physician, other health providers, or qualified professionals having special skills, knowledge or experience whenever the welfare of the patient will be safe-guarded or advanced by such consultation. Supervision should include ongoing communication between the physician and the physician assistant regarding the care of all patients.

Physician Assistants shall take personal responsibility for being familiar with and adhering to all federal/state laws applicable to the practice of their profession.

Physician Assistants shall provide only those services for which they are qualified via education and/or experiences and by pertinent legal regulatory process.

Physician Assistants shall not misrepresent in any manner, either directly or indirectly, their skills, training, professional credentials, identity or services.

Physician Assistants shall uphold the doctrine of confidentiality regarding privilege patient information, unless required to release such information by law or such information becomes necessary to protect the welfare of the patient or the community.

Physician Assistants shall strive to maintain and increase the quality of individual health care service through individual study and continuing education.

Physician Assistants shall have the duty to respect the law, to uphold the dignity of the physician assistant profession and to accept its ethical principles. The physician assistant shall not participate in or conceal any activity that will
bring discredit or dishonor to the physician assistant profession and shall expose, without fear or favor, any illegal or unethical conduct in the medical profession.

Physician Assistants, ever cognizant of the needs of the community, shall use the knowledge and experience acquired as professionals to contribute to an improved community.

Physician Assistants shall place service before material gain and must carefully guard against conflicts of professional interest.

Physician Assistants shall strive to maintain a spirit of cooperation with their professional organizations and the general public.