



**Samford
University.**

**PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
STUDIES PROGRAM**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK
2023-2024**

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Welcome



*Paul Harrelson PA-C
Chair/Program Director*

Welcome to Samford University, the School of Health Professions and the Department of Physician Assistant Studies. Our department is committed to providing you with a quality educational experience thus preparing you for clinical practice. Graduates will be well-trained physician assistants and taught the necessary skills and medical knowledge to be successful both personally and professionally. We are honored to have you at Samford University.

Disclaimer for Students

Students are expected to know regulations and policies that are published from time to time in the catalog and student handbook. Keeping abreast of the school calendar, critical deadlines and all university mail received in one's university mailbox and/or electronic mail is also the student's responsibility. Samford University reserves the right to change the policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and information in this handbook at any time. Changes become effective at the time the proper authorities so determine and the changes apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. This handbook is a general information publication only, and it is not intended to, nor does it contain all regulations relating to students. This student handbook is not a contract and may not be deemed or construed as part of any contract between Samford University and any student or student representative. Samford University is an equal opportunity institution that complies with applicable law prohibiting discrimination in its educational and employment policies and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or services. Inquiries concerning Samford's nondiscrimination policy or applicable civil rights laws may be directed to the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs, Samford Hall Room 200, Birmingham, AL 35229, (205) 726-2811. The Samford University Physician Assistant studies program policies apply to all students, and if applicable principal faculty and the program director regardless of location.

General Information

Introduction to Samford University

Samford University was chartered in 1841 as Howard College in Marion, Alabama, about 80 miles southwest of Birmingham. Located in Birmingham since 1887, the school is Alabama's largest private university and the state's only private doctoral/research university as classified by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education.

Today, the institution includes the School of the Arts, Howard College of Arts and Sciences, Brock School of Business, Beeson School of Divinity, Orlean Bullard Beeson School of Education, Cumberland School of Law, and the College of Health Sciences with Moffett and Sanders School of Nursing, McWhorter School of Pharmacy, the School of Public Health and the School of Health Professions. Samford is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate's, bachelor's, master's, educational specialist's, and doctor's degrees.

It holds accreditation by numerous special accrediting groups. Samford University has a close relationship to the Alabama Baptist State Convention, which has been generous in its financial support. Every student enrolled at Samford—undergraduate and graduate, full- or part-time—benefits from the Christian charity and generosity of Alabama Baptists.

Samford Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Vision of Samford University

Anchored in Christian understanding, Samford University will be a diverse community, stressing vigorous learning and personal faith, in the Baptist tradition. Within that commonality, the community will be innovative in teaching, learning and research; sensitive to global issues; aggressive in self-assessment and continuous improvement. Faithful to its mission, Samford will be known and acknowledged worldwide by holding to its core values. The world will be better for it.

Samford University Mission Statement

The mission of Samford University is to nurture persons in their development of intellect, creativity, faith, and personhood. As a Christian university, the community fosters academic, career, and ethical competency, while encouraging social and civic responsibility, and service to others.

Samford Core Values

The Samford community values lifelong:

- I. Belief in God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord
- II. Engagement with the life and teachings of Jesus
- III. Learning and responsible freedom of inquiry
- IV. Personal empowerment, accountability, and responsibility
- V. Vocational success and civic engagement
- VI. Spiritual growth and cultivation of physical well-being
- VII. Integrity, honesty, and justice
- VIII. Appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions
- IX. Stewardship of all resources
- X. Service to God, to family, to one another and to the community. College of Health Sciences

The College of Health Sciences (CHS) approved by the Board of Trustees in 2013, is a new and innovative initiative for Samford University. The college includes four schools: Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing, McWhorter School of Pharmacy, School of Health Professions, and School of Public Health. The college will offer multiple degree programs and majors within the health sciences with an interprofessional education focus that reflects today's team approach to health care delivery and professional practice. College faculty and students have special opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Vision of the College of Health Sciences

The College of Health Sciences is an educational leader that prepares graduates to live out a vocational call to serve individuals, populations and organizations. Our graduates are distinguished by their ability to integrate emerging technologies with practice wisdom, demonstrate leadership, work collaboratively and care for the whole person.

Mission of the College of Health Sciences

The mission of the College of Health Sciences is to prepare graduates in an interprofessional, Christ-centered learning community to promote and improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities. The College of Health Sciences emphasizes healing the body, nurturing the mind, and inspiring the spirit through rigorous academics, local and global service and innovative scholarship.

The College of Health Sciences Core Values

- I. Christian Ethos
- II. Interprofessional Collaboration
- III. Innovation
- IV. Excellence
- V. Lifelong Learning
- VI. Servant Leadership
- VII. Diversity
- VIII. Advocacy.

School of Health Professions

Mission School of Health Professions

Our mission is to prepare leaders in a Christian environment who promote health, wellness, and quality of life through excellence in professionalism, scholarship and service.

Physician Assistant Studies

Vision of the Physician Assistant Studies Program

The vision of the program is to prepare graduates to provide compassionate and competent medical care to a diverse community. Students will be prepared both academically and professionally to enter the workforce and provide medical care.

Mission of the Physician Assistant Studies Program

Anchored in Christian understanding, the mission of the Samford University Physician Assistant program is to nurture and develop students both spiritually and academically to provide empathetic, compassionate medical care and service to the community.

For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, declares the LORD.

- Jeremiah 30:17

Introduction to the Physician Assistant Studies Program

Program Information

As health care demands across the country have increased, so has the demand for health care providers. The College of Health Sciences, recognizing this increased need for providers, began to explore the addition of a physician assistant studies program to better serve the medical community. Through the vision of Samford University, the Dean of the School of Health Professions, and the Vice Provost of the College of Health Sciences, the Physician Assistant Studies program began development in the fall of 2017. The program matriculated the first class in the fall of 2019. The program is 27 months in length including both the didactic and clinical phases of the program. It is the goal of the university and faculty, that students are provided with the education and clinical experiences to become leaders in their perspective medical fields. The first-year students will undergo a rigorous didactic curriculum. After completing the first year, students will enter the clinical phase of the program where they will complete 12 four-week rotations in a medical specialty. After successful completion of both the didactic phase and clinical phase of the program students will be eligible for graduation, enabling them to sit for the PANCE examination (Physician Assistant National Certification Examination), which is administered by the NCCPA. We look forward to watching you grow into competent and confident medical providers and welcome you to Samford.

Program Faculty

Paul Harrelson MPAS, PA-C Program Director

Leslie Sawyer M.D., Medical Director

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Mark Caulkins M.D., DPT

Program Competencies

The Physician Assistant Studies program has developed learning objectives and competencies expected of our graduates. The program considered the following areas in determining the content of the curriculum: The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) Blueprint, Competencies for the Physician Assistant developed by NCCPA, ARC-PA, AAPA, and PAEA, ARC-PA guidelines, the clinical experiences of the faculty, as well as input from the medical director.

The Physician Assistant Studies program has developed learning objectives and competencies that all graduates are expected to successfully compete at the end of the students' formal education. The areas addressed are medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, and professionalism. While numerous competencies will be acquired during formal PA education, others will be developed and mastered as physician assistants progress through their careers. The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and educational experiences requisite for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies. The following areas were used in developing the learning objectives and competencies of the program.

Introduction

This document defines the specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that physician assistants (PA) in all clinical specialties and settings in the United States should be able to demonstrate throughout their careers. This set of competencies is designed to serve as a roadmap for the individual PA, for teams of clinicians, for health care systems, and other organizations committed to promoting the development and maintenance of professional competencies among PAs. While some competencies are acquired during the PA education program, others are developed and mastered as PA's progress through their careers.

The PA professional competencies include seven competency domains that capture the breadth and complexity of modern PA practice. These are: (1) knowledge for practice, (2) interpersonal and communication skills, (3) person-centered care, (4) interprofessional collaboration, (5) professionalism and ethics, (6) practice-based learning and quality improvement, and (7) society and population health. The PA competencies reflect the well-documented need for medical practice to focus on surveillance, patient education, prevention, and population health.

These revised competencies reflect the growing autonomy of PA decision-making within a team-based framework and the need for additional skills in leadership and advocacy.

As PAs develop greater competency throughout their careers, they determine their level of understanding and confidence in addressing patients' health needs, identify knowledge and skills that they need to develop, and then work to acquire further knowledge and skills in these areas. This is a lifelong process that requires discipline, self-evaluation, and commitment to learning throughout a PA's professional career.

Background

The PA competencies were originally developed in response to the growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice and reflected similar efforts conducted by other health care professions. In 2005, a collaborative effort among four national PA organizations produced the first Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession. These organizations are the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, the American Academy of PAs, and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA, formerly the Association of Physician Assistant Programs). The same four organizations updated and approved this document in 2012.

Methods

This version of the *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession* was developed by the Cross- Org Competencies Review Task Force, which included two representatives from each of the four national PA organizations. The task force was charged with reviewing the professional competencies as part of a periodic five-year review process, as well as to “ensure alignment with the *Core Competencies for New PA Graduates*,” which were developed by the Physician Assistant Education Association in 2018 to provide a framework for accredited PA programs to standardize practice readiness for new graduates.

The Cross-Org Competencies Review Task Force began by developing the following set of guiding principles that underpinned this work:

1. PAs should pursue self- and professional development throughout their careers.
2. The competencies must be relevant to all PAs, regardless of specialty or patient care setting.
3. Professional competencies are ultimately about patient care.
4. The body of knowledge produced in the past should be respected, while recognizing the changing healthcare environment.
5. The good of the profession must always take precedence over self-interest.

The task force reviewed competency frameworks from several other health professions. The result is a single document that builds on the *Core Competencies for New PA Graduates* and extends through the lifespan of a PA’s career.

The competencies were drawn from three sources: the previous [Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession](#), PAEA’s [Core Competencies for New PA Graduates](#), and the Englander et al article [Toward a Common Taxonomy of Competency Domains for the Health Professions and Competencies for Physicians](#) which drew from the competencies of several health professions.¹ The task force elected not to reference the source of each competency since most of these competencies were foundational to the work of multiple health professions and are in the public domain. The task force acknowledges the work of the many groups that have gone before them in seeking to capture the essential competencies of health professions.

1. Englander R, Cameron T, Ballard AJ, Dodge J, Bull J, Aschenbrener CA. Toward a common taxonomy of competency domains for the health professions and competencies for physicians. Academic Medicine. 2013 Aug 1;88(8):1088-94.

Competencies

1. Knowledge for Practice

Demonstrate knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care. PAs should be able to:

- 1.1 Demonstrate investigative and critical thinking in clinical situations.
- 1.2 Access and interpret current and credible sources of medical information.
- 1.3 Apply principles of epidemiology to identify health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources, and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for individuals and populations.
- 1.4 Discern among acute, chronic, and emergent disease states.
- 1.5 Apply principles of clinical sciences to diagnose disease and utilize therapeutic decision-making, clinical problem-solving, and other evidence-based practice skills.
- 1.6 Adhere to standards of care, and to relevant laws, policies, and regulations that govern the delivery of care in the United States.
- 1.7 Consider cost-effectiveness when allocating resources for individual patient or population-based care.
- 1.8 Work effectively and efficiently in various health care delivery settings and systems relevant to the PA's clinical specialty.
- 1.9 Identify and address social determinants that affect access to care and deliver high quality care in a value-based system.
- 1.10 Participate in surveillance of community resources to determine if they are adequate to sustain and improve health.
- 1.11 Utilize technological advancements that decrease costs, improve quality, and increase access to health care.

2. Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals. PAs should be able to:

- 2.1 Establish meaningful therapeutic relationships with patients and families to ensure that patients' values and preferences are addressed and that needs and goals are met to deliver person-centered care.
- 2.2 Provide effective, equitable, understandable, respectful, quality, and culturally competent care that is responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs.
- 2.3 Communicate effectively to elicit and provide information.
- 2.4 Accurately and adequately document medical information for clinical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.

- 2.5 Demonstrate sensitivity, honesty, and compassion in all conversations, including challenging discussions about death, end of life, adverse events, bad news, disclosure of errors, and other sensitive topics.
- 2.6 Demonstrate emotional resilience, stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity.
- 2.7 Understand emotions, behaviors, and responses of others, which allows for effective interpersonal interactions.
- 2.8 Recognize communication barriers and provide solutions.

3. Person-centered Care

Provide person-centered care that includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management and health care that is evidence-based, supports patient safety, and advances health equity. PAs should be able to:

- 3.1 Gather accurate and essential information about patients through history-taking, physical examination, and diagnostic testing.
- 3.2 Elicit and acknowledge the story of the individual and apply the context of the individual's life to their care, such as environmental and cultural influences.
- 3.3 Interpret data based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and clinical judgment to make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions.
- 3.4 Develop, implement, and monitor effectiveness of patient management plans.
- 3.5 Maintain proficiency to perform safely all medical, diagnostic, and surgical procedures considered essential for the practice specialty.
- 3.6 Counsel, educate, and empower patients and their families to participate in their care and enable shared decision-making.
- 3.7 Refer patients appropriately, ensure continuity of care throughout transitions between providers or settings, and follow up on patient progress and outcomes.
- 3.8 Provide health care services to patients, families, and communities to prevent health problems and to maintain health.

4. Interprofessional Collaboration

Demonstrate the ability to engage with a variety of other health care professionals in a manner that optimizes safe, effective, patient- and population-centered care. PAs should be able to:

- 4.1 Work effectively with other health professionals to provide collaborative, patient-centered care while maintaining a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, ethical integrity, and trust.
- 4.2 Communicate effectively with colleagues and other professionals to establish and enhance interprofessional teams.
- 4.3 Engage the abilities of available health professionals and associated resources to complement the PA's professional expertise and develop optimal strategies to enhance patient care.

- 4.4 Collaborate with other professionals to integrate clinical care and public health interventions.
- 4.5 Recognize when to refer patients to other disciplines to ensure that patients receive optimal care at the right time and appropriate level.

5. Professionalism and Ethics

Demonstrate a commitment to practicing medicine in ethically and legally appropriate ways and emphasizing professional maturity and accountability for delivering safe and quality care to patients and populations. PAs should be able to:

- 5.1 Adhere to standards of care in the role of the PA in the health care team.
- 5.2 Demonstrate compassion, integrity, and respect for others.
- 5.3 Demonstrate responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest.
- 5.4 Show accountability to patients, society, and the PA profession.
- 5.5 Demonstrate cultural humility and responsiveness to a diverse patient population, including diversity in sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, and abilities.
- 5.6 Show commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of care, confidentiality, patient autonomy, informed consent, business practices, and compliance with relevant laws, policies, and regulations.
- 5.7 Demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning and education of students and other health care professionals.
- 5.8 Demonstrate commitment to personal wellness and self-care that supports the provision of quality patient care.
- 5.9 Exercise good judgment and fiscal responsibility when utilizing resources.
- 5.10 Demonstrate flexibility and professional civility when adapting to change.
- 5.11 Implement leadership practices and principles.
- 5.12 Demonstrate effective advocacy for the PA profession in the workplace and in policymaking processes.

6. Practice-based Learning and Quality Improvement

Demonstrate the ability to learn and implement quality improvement practices by engaging in critical analysis of one's own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and practice improvement. PAs should be able to:

- 6.1 Exhibit self-awareness to identify strengths, address deficiencies, and recognize limits in knowledge and expertise.
- 6.2 Identify, analyze, and adopt new knowledge, guidelines, standards, technologies, products, or services that have been demonstrated to improve outcomes.
- 6.3 Identify improvement goals and perform learning activities that address gaps in knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- 6.4 Use practice performance data and metrics to identify areas for improvement.
- 6.5 Develop a professional and organizational capacity for ongoing quality improvement.

- 6.6 Analyze the use and allocation of resources to ensure the practice of cost-effective health care while maintaining quality of care.
- 6.7 Understand how practice decisions impact the finances of their organizations, while keeping the patient's needs foremost.
- 6.8 Advocate for administrative systems that capture the productivity and value of PA practice.

7. Society and Population Health

Recognize and understand the influences of the ecosystem of person, family, population, environment, and policy on the health of patients and integrate knowledge of these determinants of health into patient care decisions. PAs should be able to:

- 7.1 Apply principles of social-behavioral sciences by assessing the impact of psychosocial and cultural influences on health, disease, care seeking, and compliance.
- 7.2 Recognize the influence of genetic, socioeconomic, environmental, and other determinants on the health of the individual and community.
- 7.3 Improve the health of patient populations.
- 7.4 Demonstrate accountability, responsibility, and leadership for removing.

The expected competencies for physician assistants can be found at the following link: <https://paeonline.org/wp-content/uploads/imported-files/competencies-for-the-pa-profession-060520.pdf>

Program Goals

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies has adopted the following objectives to support excellence and innovation with academic and clinical programming. The program goals are consistent with ARC-PA standards for entry into professional practice.

1. Matriculate highly qualified applicants who will successfully complete the demanding Master of Science Degree in Physician Assistant Studies Program.
2. Prepare physician assistant students with depth of knowledge, clinical reasoning/critical thinking skills, documentation skills, and appropriate professional behavior for the clinical practice of medicine.
3. Prepare graduates to deliver culturally sensitive, socially equitable, patient-centered, evidence-based care as members of the inter-professional team.
4. Prepare graduates with communication skills necessary to work successfully in team-based health care environment.
5. Encourage professional involvement in leadership and service.

Program Learning Objectives

Upon graduation, the students will be expected to:

1. Identify normal and abnormal anatomy of the human body and the spatial relationships of organs and organs systems.
2. Recognize normal and abnormal physiology of the human body and its relationship to disease and or disease processes.

3. Interpret common uses of clinical laboratory studies as well as their limitations and use in the prevention of disease processes.
4. Discuss the history of the physician assistant profession as well as the regulations and legal limitations on physician assistant practice.
5. Apply ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding care, confidentiality, patient autonomy, informed consent, business practices, and compliance with relevant medical laws, policies, and regulations.
6. Reflect on personal and professional limitations in providing care.
7. Demonstrate understanding of health care policy, billing and coding, and risk management.
8. Perform and document a comprehensive and focused history and physical examination and recognize normal and abnormal findings.
9. Apply principles of epidemiology to identify health problems, risk factors, treatment strategies, resources, and disease prevention/health promotion efforts for individuals and populations.
10. Apply principles of clinical sciences to diagnose disease and utilize therapeutic decision making, clinical problem-solving and other evidence-based practice skills including the etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical conditions.
11. Apply the knowledge of indications, contraindications, and side effects of pharmacologic agents when choosing a treatment regimen.
12. Apply principles of diagnostic modalities to evaluate health conditions with consideration to risks, indications, contraindications, and appropriate utilization of healthcare resources.
13. Interpret normal and abnormal findings of electrocardiograph, and make clinical decisions based on this evaluation.
14. Demonstrate an understanding of the common surgical procedures utilized in the treatment of surgical disease processes.
15. Apply principles of pathophysiology in relation to various diseases and health conditions.
16. Interpret research to evaluate medical knowledge, guidelines, standards, technologies, products, or services that have been demonstrated to improve outcomes.
17. Demonstrate proficiency to safely perform clinical procedures considered essential for entry into physician assistant practice.
18. Interpret data based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence and clinical judgment to make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic clinical interventions.
19. Demonstrate an understanding of behavioral health conditions and the treatment modalities including behavioral modifications.
20. Work effectively with other health professionals to provide collaborative, patient-centered care while maintaining a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, ethical integrity, and trust.
21. Utilize medical knowledge to develop treatment plans for emergent, acute, chronic or ongoing conditions including pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches, surgery, counseling, therapeutic procedures and/or rehabilitative therapies.

22. Evaluate patients across the life span and in a variety of health care delivery settings including emergency medicine, family practice, internal medicine, women's health, pediatric surgery, and behavioral health.
23. Demonstrate professional behavior that encompasses the principles of honesty, integrity, empathy and respect, advocacy, self-awareness, and personal accountability to provide patient centered care.
24. Discuss the healthy behaviors of the physician assistant to prevent burn out, addiction and or dependency.
25. Demonstrate cultural humility and responsiveness to diverse patient populations, including diversity in sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, and abilities.

Essential Functions, Technical Standards of Physician Assistants

The Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies is an intense and rigorous program that requires knowledge in all fields of medicine and the basic skills needed within these fields to practice effectively. The objective of this program is to prepare graduates to enter a variety of employment settings and to render care to a diverse patient population. Students must exhibit both the mental and cognitive capabilities to complete the program including all its didactic and clinical components. Students are expected to graduate in good standing and successfully complete the board examination obtaining licensure. Samford University will provide the necessary accommodations to prepare our students from both the didactic and technical aspects, preparing them for their future careers as physician assistants.

Physical Requirements

Candidates must meet certain physical requirements for acceptance and completion of the program. The Program has the ethical responsibility to assure that patients will be provided with safe and appropriate medical care. Patient safety is a major consideration in determining the physical, cognitive and emotional capabilities of students both through admission and matriculation through the program. All students must possess those intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities necessary to achieve levels of competence in the full curriculum required by the faculty. A student's intention to practice in a narrow area of clinical medicine will not alter the technical and didactic requirements needed to successfully graduate. All students will be required to demonstrate competency in both the didactic and technical curriculum to complete the program.

Motor Skills

The skills needed to practice as a physician assistant are numerous. Graduates will have training in many of these skills to prepare them for the clinical year and future careers. Once properly oriented, students must be able to observe and participate in demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences. The students should have sufficient postural and neuromuscular control, sensory function, and coordination to perform appropriate physical examinations using accepted techniques. Students will be able to use

equipment and materials accurately, safely, and efficiently during the assessment and treatment of patients. The motor skills required from students include but are not limited to dissection of cadavers, examination of gross specimens in gross anatomy and pathology laboratories, preparation of microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues. Observation of gross and microscopic structures necessitates the functional use of the senses of vision and touch and is enhanced by the functional sense of smell. After reasonable training and experience, the candidate must be capable of performing a complete physical examination, including observation, palpation, percussion, and auscultation. The candidate must be capable of using instruments such as, but not limited to: a stethoscope, an ophthalmoscope, an otoscope, and a sphygmomanometer. Again, students will need to demonstrate motor skills needed to perform each of these tasks. The candidate must also possess the motor skills needed to perform numerous clinical procedures such as, but not limited to, the following: pelvic examination, digital rectal examination, lumbar punctures, central venous lines, suturing, drawing blood from veins and arteries and giving intravenous injections, basic cardiopulmonary life support, and simple obstetrical procedures. The student must be capable of performing basic laboratory tests, using a calculator and a computer, reading, and interpreting an EKG, and interpreting common imaging tests. The student must be able to move in the clinical setting to act quickly in emergencies. At the conclusion of the didactic phase, the student should demonstrate proficiency in the skills described above. By the conclusion of the clinical clerkships, the student should achieve full competence in the skills described above including the ability to synthesize and organize these skills.

Communication

A student must be able to communicate with patients, families, and the health care team. From eliciting patient histories to preventative care, clear and concise communication is essential in-patient care. Students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds; this includes, but is not limited to, the ability to establish rapport with patients and communicate judgments and treatment at a level consistent with competent professional practice.

Sensory and Observational Skills

Students must be able to observe classroom demonstrations and participate in technical procedures as required by the curriculum. They must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance, as well as, close at hand and be able to obtain a medical history directly from the patient, while observing the patient's medical condition. This observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing, and other sensory modalities to elicit accurate patient information, make diagnoses, and perceive both verbal and non-verbal communication.

Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Skills

Students will demonstrate the skills and ability to critically think. These skills include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Both problem solving and critical thinking are required, and these skills are essential to clinical practice. Students must exhibit the mental capacity to assimilate, analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts and problem solving to formulate assessment and therapeutic judgments and to be able to distinguish deviations from the norm.

Behavior and Professionalism

Students must possess key components needed to be a physician assistant. Empathy, integrity, work ethic, motivation, and interpersonal skills will be assessed during the admission process and throughout the program. Students must possess the emotional well-being required for the full use of their intellectual abilities; the exercise of sound judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities, attendant to the diagnosis, and care of patients; and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Students must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively when stressed. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainty inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.

Physician Assistant Studies Academic Information**Accreditation-ARC-PA**

Our Accrediting body is ARC-PA, or the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant. Samford, as a newly founded program, is currently seeking provisional accreditation.

Accreditation – Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding accreditation-provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students. The program’s accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at: <http://www.arc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Accreditation-History-Samford-University.pdf>

The provisional accreditation process begins with a thorough review of the planning, organization, and proposed content of a program that is in the advanced planning stages, but not yet operational. The provisional accreditation pathway is the only entry way for proposed new programs into the accreditation process.

The ARC-PA accredits only qualified PA programs offered by or located within institutions chartered by and physically located within, the United States and where students are

geographically located within the United States for their education. A single institution must be clearly identified as the sponsor of the program. Sponsoring institutions applying for provisional accreditation of a new PA program must be authorized under applicable law to provide a program of post-secondary education. They must be accredited by, and in good standing with, a recognized regional accrediting agency and must be authorized by that agency to confer upon graduates of the PA program a graduate degree.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

Samford University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist, and doctorate degrees. Degree-granting institutions also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Samford University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

Academic plan of study and Degree Conferred

The students will undergo 27 months of study during the physician assistant program. The first year will be mostly didactic followed by the clinical service year. Graduates will receive a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies and will be eligible to apply for certification examination after graduation sponsored by the NCCPA, or National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. Please refer to the curriculum map listed below for the program curriculum.

Curriculum

Fall I

PAST 501 Gross Anatomy	4
PAST 502 Fundamentals of Physiology	4
PAST 503 Clinical Laboratory Diagnostics	2
PAST 504 Foundations of the PA Profession	1
PAST 505 Biomedical Ethics/Genetics	2
PAST 506 Health Care Policy and Care Management/Risk Management	2
	15

Spring I

PAST 507 Patient Assessment I	3
PAST 508 Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine I	4
PAST 509 Clinical Therapeutics I	3
PAST 510 Evaluating Electrocardiography/Diagnostic Imaging	2
PAST 511 Fundamentals of Surgery I	3
PAST 512 Pathophysiology	3
	18

Summer I

PAST 513 Patient Assessment II	3
PAST 514 Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine II	4
PAST 515 Clinical Therapeutics II	3
PAST 516 Fundamentals of Clinical Research/Literature Evaluation	3
PAST 517 Fundamentals of Surgery II	3
PAST 518 Advanced Practice Procedures I	2
	18

Fall II

PAST 519 Patient Assessment III-Clinical Decision Making	2
PAST 520 Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine III	4
PAST 521 Clinical Therapeutics III - Practical Application	2
PAST 522 Advanced practice procedures II	2
PAST 523 Behavioral Science	3
PAST 524 Pre-Clinical Seminar	1
PAST 525 Advanced Medical Simulation	2
	16

Spring II

PAST 601 Clinical service I	4
PAST 602 Clinical Service II	4
PAST 603 Clinical Service III	4
PAST 604 Clinical Service IV	4
	16

Summer II

PAST 605 Clinical service V	4
PAST 606 Clinical service VI	4
PAST 607 Clinical service VII	4
PAST 608 Clinical service VIII	4
	16

Fall III

PAST 609 Clinical service IX	4
PAST 610 Clinical service X	4
PAST 611 Clinical service XI	4
PAST 612 Clinical service XII	4
PAST 613 Summative Review	2
	18
	Total 117

Course Descriptions

PAST 501 Gross Anatomy: This course content will be delivered by lectures and student dissection of cadavers. The students will be examining the normal structure of the human body, the embryologic basis of adult anatomy, the relationship between the human body structure and function. Students are expected to become skilled at proper dissection techniques, identification of anatomical structures, and to become proficient at recognition of structural arrangements and structural relationships. Students can further their knowledge of anatomy by using computer-assisted technology, which is available online.

PAST 502 Fundamentals of Physiology: Within this course, students will be introduced to the physiological principles and regulatory processes that underlie the normal function of the human body. This course will be taught utilizing classroom lectures, small group assignments, as well as online media to enhance learning. Through this, the student will develop an understanding of the physiologic responses to changes in normal state of homeostasis and of pathophysiologic alterations that occur in disease. Topics include the physiology of the neuromuscular, cardiovascular, pulmonary, renal, digestive, endocrine and reproductive systems,

PAST 503 Clinical Laboratory Diagnostics: An introduction to laboratory diagnostics with an emphasis on pathology, microbiology, hematology, and clinical chemistry. This course utilizes different formats including lectures, practical learning in a clinical laboratory, cost effective diagnostic algorithms and problem-based case scenarios.

PAST 504 Foundations of the PA Profession: Foundation of the PA profession presents and discusses the clinical practice, role, and responsibilities of physician assistants in a team based medical practice. To prepare the students for the PA profession, discussion and lectures will be held regarding appropriate professional behavior and practices, cultural and social awareness, as well as basic concepts for quality healthcare delivery. This course will also examine the future of physician assistants and examine the diversity among health care teams and the physician

assistant's role within them. Along with this, students will examine the PA oath and the core ethics that provide the foundation of our profession. In addition, it will also address acceptable practices for physician assistants and the legal limitations that govern physician assistant practice. This course will be delivered in a lecture style format with small group and large group discussions as well as reading assignments outside of the classroom.

PAST 505 Biomedical Ethics/Genetics: The Bio-ethics component of this course is designed to expose the student to legal and ethical dilemmas faced in medical practice. The course presents an approach that facilitate critical thinking through the complex ethical issues that they will encounter in profession practice. In addition, representative opinions are offered. The format will include assigned readings, reflection and application papers, and classroom discussions. Topics include patient autonomy, veracity, truth telling and confidentiality, death and dying in the terminally ill, informed consent, decision making capacity, cultural and religious considerations, euthanasia and physician assisted suicide, genetic screening and stem cell use, and the use of humans in clinical research. Students will develop the ability to recognize and critically evaluate ethical issues as they arise in their professional practice.

The second part of this course is devoted to introducing the foundations of human genetics. By introducing the students to the ethical considerations in genetic testing, we will transition into human genetics and the genome. Topics include normal transmission of dominant and recessive genetic traits, sex-linked/autosomal-linked inheritance, common genetic defects and diseases, inheritance patterns and probabilities, genetic mapping, common risk factors in inherited/acquired.

PAST 506 Health Care Policy and Case Management/Risk Management: This course is an overview of health care management and policy and its applications. This course will provide first year physician assistant students with an introduction to the legal, political, and professional issues affecting physician assistant practice. This includes malpractice and risk management.

PAST 507 Patient Assessment I: This is the first course in a three-part series in history and physical examination. An essential and basic skill of physician assistants is the ability to fully evaluate a patient's health status. An accurate medical history and thorough physical examination provides the foundation and basis of such an evaluation. The goal of this course is to provide the physician assistant student with the necessary skills to elicit a comprehensive medical history, perform a complete physical examination, and systematically report his/her findings. A variety of teaching formats will be utilized in delivering the course content, enabling the student with the necessary skills to:

1. Recognize and describe normal and common abnormal clinical conditions
2. Develop the proper techniques for performing a comprehensive physical examination
3. Organize relevant data gathered during history taking and physical assessment, and arranging this in the correct form within the history and physical documentation

PAST 508 Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine I: This is the first class of a three-course series on instruction of clinical medicine. This course prepares students for clinical rotations by providing medical lectures dealing diseases and the pathology associated with them including recognition,

diagnosis, and treatment. The course series will expand on information presented in earlier courses, and addresses clinical diseases associated with the Dermatological, Ophthalmologic, Musculoskeletal, Cardiac, Pulmonary, Gastrointestinal, & Neurological systems. Additionally, a brief basic radiology section is included dealing with the principles of radiology, the basic interpretation of chest, abdomen films, as well as basic neurological and musculoskeletal imaging to enhance the students understanding of the diagnostic modalities utilized to diagnose and treat disease processes.

PAST 509 Clinical Therapeutics I: Clinical therapeutics is a three-course series that serves as an introduction to pharmacology with an emphasis on pathology, physiology, pharmacokinetic, pharmacodynamics and pharmacotherapeutic information of a specific drug or drug class will be emphasized. This course utilizes different formats including lecture, podcasts, cost effective diagnostic algorithms, case-based studies and problem-based case scenarios. As the first two courses will examine the pharmacokinetics behind drug classes and medications, the final course will look at the clinical uses of the medications including: dosing, common and trade names for medications, routes of administration, as well as cost and drug allergies.

PAST 510 Evaluating Electrocardiography/Diagnostic Imaging: This course is designed to develop the student's ability to order, interpret, analyze, and evaluate 12 lead electrocardiograms and well as radiologic imaging. The development of these skills are essential to PA providing medical care. Emphasis will be placed on ischemic heart disease, heart blocks, atrial flutter and atrial fibrillation, arrhythmias and multiple other cardiac abnormalities and its appearance on electrocardiogram.

This course will also address the basic interpretation of radiologic studies including common fractures, effusions and fat pad signs, dislocations, and teach the students the basic techniques used to evaluate both CT and MRI. Students will learn to select, interpret, and evaluate these diagnostic studies to guide their treatment.

PAST 511 Fundamentals of Surgery I: This is the first class in two-part course that will delivered by didactic instruction, instructional videos, and case-based studies that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of surgical disease. This course evaluates the signs and symptoms associated with surgical disease processes, the preoperative evaluation of surgical patients, intraoperative surgical care as well as post-operative management involved in their care. This series will systematically evaluate the multiple surgical procedures including procedures in; general surgery, urology, cardiovascular surgery, neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, trauma and trauma surgery, thoracic surgery, transplant surgery and other core surgical areas providing the students with a solid surgical foundation and the ability to recognize and treat surgical disease processes.

PAST 512 Pathophysiology: This is an introductory pathophysiology course that will enable the students to identify and describe the pathologic processes involved in common medical disorders and diseases. It will focus on the pathologic basis for disease and the recognition of it. It will provide the foundation that the physician assistant student will need as the further their education in clinical medicine.

PAST 513 Patient Assessment II: This is the second course in a three-part series in history and physical examination. We will continue to expand our assessment skills and learn new body systems and exam techniques. An essential and basic skill of physician assistants is the ability to fully evaluate a patient's health status. An accurate medical history and thorough physical examination provides the foundation and basis of such an evaluation. The goal of this course is to provide the physician assistant student with the necessary skills to elicit a comprehensive medical history, perform a complete physical examination, and systematically report his/her findings. A variety of teaching formats will be utilized in delivering the course content, enabling the student with the necessary skills to:

1. Recognize and describe normal and common abnormal clinical conditions
2. Develop the proper techniques for performing a comprehensive physical examination
3. Organize relevant data gathered during history taking and physical assessment, and arranging this in the correct form within the history and physical documentation

PAST 514 Fundamentals of Clinical Medicine II: This is the second course of a three-course series on instruction of clinical medicine. This course prepares students for clinical rotations by providing medical lectures dealing diseases and the pathology associated with them including recognition, diagnosis, and treatment. The course series will expand on information presented in earlier courses, and addresses clinical diseases associated with the Dermatological, Ophthalmologic, Musculoskeletal, Cardiac, Pulmonary, Gastrointestinal, & Neurological systems. Additionally, a brief basic radiology section is included dealing with the principles of radiology, the basic interpretation of chest, abdomen films, as well as basic neurological and musculoskeletal imaging to enhance the students understanding of the diagnostic modalities utilized to diagnose and treat disease processes.

PAST 515 Clinical Therapeutics II: Clinical therapeutics II is a continuation from the first course and is part two of a three course series that serves as an introduction to pharmacology with an emphasis on pathology, physiology, pharmacokinetic, pharmacodynamics and pharmacotherapeutic information of a specific drug or drug class will be emphasized. This course utilizes different formats including lecture, podcasts, cost effective diagnostic algorithms, case-based studies and problem-based case scenarios. As the first two courses will examine the pharmacokinetics behind drug classes and medications, the final course will look at the clinical uses of the medications including: dosing, common and trade names for medications, routes of administration, as well as cost and drug allergies.

PAST 516 Fundamentals of Clinical Research/Literature Evaluation: This course is designed to prepare students to critically evaluate medical literature and use as basis for making medical decisions. It will focus on the examination of medical studies, looking at statistics, confounders, and biases within the study that can and often will affect their clinical practice. This class will be presented in a lecture format with small group discussion and assignments, as well as independent media research and reading assignments.

PAST 517 Fundamentals of Surgery II: This is the second class in two-part course that will delivered by didactic instruction, instructional videos, and case-based studies that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of surgical disease. This course evaluates the signs and symptoms associated with surgical disease processes, the preoperative evaluation of surgical patients, intraoperative surgical care as well as post-operative management involved in their care. This series will systematically evaluate the multiple surgical procedures including procedures in; general surgery, urology, cardiovascular surgery, neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, trauma and trauma surgery, thoracic surgery, transplant surgery and other core surgical areas providing the students with a solid surgical foundation and the ability to recognize and treat surgical disease processes.

PAST 518 Advanced Procedures I: This is the first course in a two-part series designed to introduce the student to the technical skills and knowledge required to perform in the operating room and also perform various medical procedures. The course will consist of lectures and practical/technical laboratories and will lay the foundation for the subsequent course. This course begins by teaching the students surgical instrumentation and its uses within the operating room. Emphasis is placed on learning surgical technique including, first assisting, scrubbing, suturing, and wound care. Students will learn this in a live vivisection pig lag performing advanced surgical procedures with faculty instruction.

PAST 519 Patient Assessment III-Clinical Decision Making: This is the third course in a three-part series in history and physical examination. We will continue to expand our assessment skills and will begin to look at the application of these skills in forming working differential diagnoses, ordering and interpreting lab data and imaging, and forming treatment plans. This course will examine common pathologic conditions and focus on critical thinking and making an appropriate diagnosis. This course will also contain instruction in the study of medical ethical considerations, the care of the geriatric patients, difficult patient encounters and cultural considerations to patient care to develop a well-rounded culturally competent provider.

PAST 520 Clinical Medicine III: This is the third course of a three-course series on instruction of clinical medicine. This course prepares students for clinical rotations by providing medical lectures dealing diseases and the pathology associated with them including recognition, diagnosis, and treatment. The course series will expand on information presented in earlier courses, and addresses clinical diseases associated with the Dermatological, Ophthalmologic, Musculoskeletal, Cardiac, Pulmonary, Gastrointestinal, & Neurological systems. Additionally, a brief basic radiology section is included dealing with the principles of radiology, the basic interpretation of chest, abdomen films, as well as basic neurological and musculoskeletal imaging to enhance the students understanding of the diagnostic modalities utilized to diagnose and treat disease processes.

PAST 521 Clinical Therapeutics III-Practical application: Clinical therapeutics III is a continuation from the first and second course and is part three of a three course series that serves as an introduction to pharmacology with an emphasis on pathology, physiology,

pharmacokinetic, pharmacodynamics and pharmacotherapeutic information of a specific drug or drug class will be emphasized. This course utilizes different formats including lecture, podcasts, cost effective diagnostic algorithms, case-based studies and problem-based case scenarios. As the first two courses will examine the pharmacokinetics behind drug classes and medications, the final course will look at the clinical uses of the medications including: dosing, common and trade names for medications, routes of administration, as well as cost and drug allergies. This course will have emphasis on the clinical uses, dosing and indications of the medications learned within the first two courses. This will we mostly presents as case studies with an interactive educational environment.

PAST 522 Advance Practice Procedures II: The course is designed to help the 1st year Physician Assistant student's transition into the 2nd year clinical rotations by exposing them to the operating room environment, the clinic as well as the development of clinical skills that will prepare them for the clinical setting. These will be essential to their clinical year and their professional practice. In this course the students will be divided into three cohorts, with each cohort rotating within the semester to the operating room, medical clinic, and one month of training in advanced techniques. Each cohort will rotate within these areas in four-week cycles.

Cohort A. In the first portion of this course, the student will be assigned to a specific hospital where they will be given daily assignments through the operating room supervisor. These assignments will include exposure to operating room etiquette, first and second assisting on a variety of surgical procedures, exposure to aseptic technique, and an increasing awareness of surgical conscience. This course is designed to acclimate students to the operating room and make them feel more comfortable when they begin clinical rotations. The hours the student will be responsible for are 6:00am to 11:30am, depending on the OR start times at each hospital and the student will be required to spend 80 hours in the operating room during the 4-week rotation. The hospitals through which students will rotate are St. Vincent's Medical Center, St. Vincent's East, Trinity Medical Center, Baptist Medical Center Princeton, Gadsden Medical Center, Baptist Medical Center Shelby, Huntsville, Cancer Center of America and other local hospitals. There will be a hospital orientation prior to the beginning of the class with the faculty.

Cohort B. In the second portion of this course students will develop advanced clinical skills and techniques over a four-week block that will be imperative for their clinical their and practice. This includes central venous lines, arterial lines, intravenous lines, naso-gastric tubes, arterial lines, ultrasound and its uses in invasive procedures, intubation, and draining skin lesions and abscesses. Students will perform these procedures under faculty supervision with a focus on sterile technique, as well as overall technique and understanding of the procedure.

Cohort C. In the third portion of this course students will be assigned to a physician assistant within the clinical setting enabling them to gain valuable experience before transitioning into the clinical year. Students will be performing history and physical exams, ordering tests, interpreting tests and building differential diagnoses.

PAST 523 Behavioral Health: This course is designed to provide an overview of the field of behavioral medicine appropriate to a PA. The student will be able to relate the etiology, epidemiology, clinical presentation, diagnostic features, prognosis, appropriate differential diagnoses, screening, prevention, acute, chronic and end-of-life (as appropriate) treatment plans, and referral in relation to behavioral medicine patients and their associated disorders. This course will also cover rehabilitation, adherence to treatment plans, behavior modification, basics of counseling, culturally competent care, human sexuality as well as the response to stress and illness.

PAST 524 Pre-Clinical Seminar: The course is designed to bridge the gap from the didactic year to the clinical year. The student will spend time in an assigned clinical site with a clinical year student. This will allow the student to gain insight of the professional behavior required during the clinical year. *PAST 525 Advanced Medical Simulation:* Laboratory simulated clinical experience to provide supervised practice in clinical skills, practical procedures, teamwork, patient management, and decision making in preparation for the student's clinical year (1 semester credit), meeting once a week for 2 hours. This course will be an interactive team-based learning environment where students will focus on patient assessment, diagnoses, invasive procedures, and treatment. This will include ACLS, BLS, intubation, and multiple other advanced practice techniques.

PAST 601-612 Clinical Service I – XII: During the clinical phase, students complete 12 four-week rotations 7 mandatory-- Pediatric Medicine, Women's Health, Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine, Family Practice, Behavioral Health, General Surgery and 5 electives. The clinical phase provides the student with the experience necessary to diagnose, treat, and manage a broad spectrum of medical and surgical conditions. Students will learn the importance of working in interprofessional teams with physicians, physician assistants, nurses, and various other members of the health care team.

PAST 613 Summative Review: This course is designed to provide end of program review course. This is to prepare the student for Physician Assistant national certifying examination (PANCE). Also, there will be the ARC-PA required objective structured clinical examination (OSCE), programmatic summative examination and a 350 question PANCE style practice examination. This is the culmination of the student's clinical year. Students will need to demonstrate the mastery of the clinical year goals.

Graduation Requirements

The Samford Physician Assistant Studies program students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to graduate from the program. The following criteria must be met to be eligible for graduation:

1. Demonstrate professionalism throughout the didactic and clinical phases of training.
2. Satisfactorily complete the Summative Examinations and OSCE.
3. Satisfactorily complete all required courses of study both didactic and clinical year.
4. Complete all evaluation instruments required by the program.
5. Be recommended for conferral of the master's degree by the University Faculty Senate

6. Settle all financial accounts with the University.
7. Complete all graduation clearance requirements as instructed by the Office of the Registrar.

Academic and Professional Requirements

Professional Conduct and Behaviors

Samford University Code of Values

Preamble

We as the Samford community affirm the value of a peaceful and purposeful community, founded on the moral and ethical integrity of students and faculty. We commit ourselves to the values on which Samford University was founded. Worth of the Individual
We value the intrinsic worth of every individual in the community. Our respect for other individuals includes an appreciation of cultural backgrounds different from our own, an understanding of different attitudes and opinions, and an awareness of the consequences of our actions on the broader community.

Self-Discipline

We value personal responsibility and recognize the individual's need for physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional wholeness. We value the full development of every student in terms of a confident and constructive self-image, of a commitment to self-discipline and of responsible self-expression.

Integrity

We value a campus community that encourages personal growth and academic development in an atmosphere of positive Christian influence. We affirm the necessity of academic standards of conduct that allow students and faculty to live and study together. We value the fair and efficient administration of these standards of conduct.

Respect for Property and the Environment

We value the rights and privileges of owning and using property, both personal and university, and the benefits of preservation and maintenance of property and of our natural resources. In our stewardship of property, we recognize the accountability of our actions to the future of the Samford community.

Respect for Community Authority

We value our privileges and responsibilities as members of the university community and as citizens of the community beyond the campus. We value the community standards of conduct expressed in our system of laws and value the fair administration of those laws, including university, municipal, state and federal laws.

The following link is provided for further information on the core values of Samford University:
<https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>

PA Code of Ethics and Professional Behavior

The PA Code of Ethics and Professional Behavior

Physician assistants are specially trained to extend the health care capabilities of doctors. They work under the direct supervision of a physician. PAs are trained to order and interpret tests, examine patients, treat minor injuries, counsel patients, and prescribe medication. PAs do not work alone but as part of a team. Although they work under the supervision of licensed physicians, physician assistants perform many of the same tasks as their supervisors. They examine patients, order lab tests, write prescriptions and offer a preliminary diagnosis. The American Academy of Physician Assistants, or AAPA, is a professional organization for physician assistants. Along with other activities, the AAPA maintains a code of ethics for physician assistants, which has been adopted in full or used as the framework for other statements of ethical duties established by universities, state physician-assistant associations and other groups. The code is divided roughly into four categories.

Patient Independence

Physician assistants must respect the autonomy of their patients. Patients are entitled to make their own decisions regarding their health care, and physician assistants must respect their choices. This may include finding another medical provider, in which case physician assistants should allow patients appropriate access to their medical records. A patient needs information to make proper decisions, so physician assistants ethically ensure that patients receive all information related to their conditions and that they understand the diagnosis, treatment options, prognosis and risks.

Goodwill

Physician assistants must always act in the patient's best interests. All actions must be directed toward healing their patients, not causing unnecessary suffering. They have an obligation to provide patients with the best care possible, which may involve continuing education, keeping abreast of new technology, and remaining current on new medications or treatment options, recognizing their own limitations, and seeking help from other health care providers when needed.

Fair Treatment

All patients are entitled to fair treatment. Physician Assistants students cannot discriminate against patients due to race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, age, illness, economic status, religion, or political affiliation. Each patient is entitled to receive similar care under similar conditions. If physician assistants cannot treat a patient due to religious or ethical conflicts, such as providing contraceptives, they have an obligation to refer the patient to a medical provider who can assist. Fair treatment also means that physician assistants respect and safeguard patients' privacy, maintaining confidentiality and releasing health information only to those authorized to receive such information.

Nonmaleficence

Nonmaleficence means that physician assistants cannot act with bad intentions. They must follow the creed, "First, do no harm." Physician assistants must not impose needless burdens or pain on their patients. Nor can they refuse to treat a patient who needs immediate emergency care. Physician assistants cannot misrepresent their credentials, training or skills, through either omission or direct statements. They must obey the law and not offer services that are forbidden or that exceed the scope of their training and experience. Physician assistants should not treat patients if a conflict of interest exists. They are required to place patient care ahead of personal gain.

Dress Code

Guidelines for professional attire require consideration for patients, visitors, and coworkers, as well as personal safety. Therefore, our students are expected to promote a professional image by following these guidelines:

Substance Abuse and Drug Screening Policy

Statement of Purpose

The intent of the Substance Abuse Policy is twofold: to identify students who are chemically impaired and to help them return to a competent and safe level of practice. Emphasis is on deterrence, education, and reintegration. All aspects of the policy are conducted in good faith and with compassion, dignity, and confidentiality. The CHS recognizes its responsibility to provide a healthy environment within which students may learn and prepare themselves to become members of the PA profession. The CHS is committed to protecting the safety, health, and welfare of its faculty, staff, and students and those who meet it's faculty, staff, and students during scheduled learning experiences. The CHS strictly prohibits the illicit use, possession, sale, conveyance, distribution and/or manufacturing of illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances in any amount and/or in any manner and the abuse of nonprescription and prescription drugs. Students in the Physician Assistant Studies program who test non-negative for illegal, controlled, or abuse-potential substances and who cannot produce a valid and current prescription with valid dosage for the drug, is at risk of being in violation of the Samford Drug Abuse Policy found in the Samford University Student Handbook.

The Substance Abuse Policy of Samford University is found in its entirety in the student manual. (<https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>)

Drug testing procedures

When to Test

1. The Physician Assistant Studies program requires the student to submit to drug testing under any or all the following circumstances:
2. Before starting the Program.
3. Before starting the clinical year.
4. Testing as required by the clinical sites of the program,
5. For cause (see Testing for Cause Statement)

6. Part of a substance abuse recovery program.

Failure to comply

Failure to comply with random drug testing at the specified time without administrative permission will result in suspension from clinical attendance until testing is complete.

Cost

The student will be responsible for paying the cost for the urine drug screen. This cost will be placed on the student's e-bill.

Facility

The Physician Assistant program will utilize an external company to collect and analyze the urine drug screen.

Sample Collection

The collection techniques will adhere to the guidelines in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation 49 CFR Part 40 following chain of custody protocol. ESS will collect urine samples at the discretion of the Dean of The School of Health Professions or program director.

Substances

Substance-related disorders are listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth edition, (DSM-IV). Substances of abuse are grouped into eleven classes: alcohol, amphetamines or similarly acting sympathomimetics, caffeine, cannabis, cocaine, hallucinogens, inhalants, nicotine, opioids, phencyclidine (PCP) or similarly acting aryl cyclohexylamines and sedatives, hypnotics, or anxiolytics. Testing may include any of these drug categories. The School of Health Professions shall have the authority to change the panel of tests without notice to include other substances as suggested by local and national reports or circumstances.

Non-negative Results.

If a non-negative result is obtained, the urine sample will be sent to a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) certified laboratory. If the specimen results are non-negative after the screening process at the laboratory the urine samples will be sent for Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (GCMS) confirmation. All positive results will be reported to the Medical Review Officer (MRO). After review by the (MRO), positive results will then be reported to the appropriate dean and/or program director. All non-negative urine samples will be frozen in a secure and locked freezer compartment at the (SAMHSA) laboratory.

Testing for Cause

Any student, who demonstrates behavioral changes suspected to be related to the use of drugs, including but not limited to alcohol, will be subjected to testing. The decision to drug test for cause will be drawn from those facts in light of the experience of the

observers and may be based on: observable phenomena such as direct observation of drug use and/or physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug, erratic behavior, slurred speech, staggered gait, flushed face, dilated/pinpoint pupils, wide mood swings, absenteeism, tardiness, and deterioration of work performance, a report of drug use provided by reliable and credible sources which have been independently corroborated, information that a student has caused or contributed to an accident that resulted in injury requiring treatment by a licensed health care professional, evidence of involvement in the use, possession, sale, solicitation or transfer of drugs while on a clinical site premise, conviction by a court, or being found guilty of a drug, alcohol or controlled substance in another legitimate jurisdiction.

Testing for cause will be conducted using the following procedure:

1. The faculty member will have another faculty member or health professional at the practice site to confirm suspicious behavior.
2. The student will be asked to leave the area and go with a faculty member and a witness to discuss the situation in a location ensuring privacy and confidentiality. The discussion will be documented, and the decision to drug test will be made after conferring with the appropriate associate dean and/or department chair.
3. If warranted, the student will submit appropriate laboratory specimens in accordance with the Substance Abuse Policy and clinical site policies.
4. The student will be suspended from all clinical activities until the case has been reviewed by the appropriate personnel or committee designated by the dean of the School of Health Professions.
5. If the lab test is negative for substances classified in the Diagnostic and/or Clinical Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V), the student will be allowed to return to class and clinical activities without penalty. Arrangements to make up missed work must be initiated by the student on the first day back to class or clinical (whichever comes first).
6. If any part of the lab test is non-negative for substances classified in the Diagnostic and/or Clinical Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V), the student is in violation of the School of Health Professions, Physician Assistant Studies, and Samford University Drug and Alcohol Policy. As provided in this policy in the section entitled, “Non-negative Drug Screen, Sanctions, Treatment, Referral, Re-application, Opportunity for a Re-Test”, violations will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion of the student (Samford University Student Handbook).
7. Confidentiality will be maintained.
8. Failure to comply with “for cause” drug testing will result in immediate administrative withdrawal and a course grade of “F”.

Confidentiality

All testing information, interviews, reports, statements, and test results specifically related to the individual are confidential. Drug test results will be sent to the dean and/or

department chair in the School of Health Profession and Physician Assistant Studies program. Records will be maintained in a locked cabinet within the PA program as defined by ARC-PA.

Pursuant to the Family Educational Responsibility and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232g) Samford University may disclose, to a parent or legal guardian of a student, information regarding any violation of a Federal, State or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, regardless of whether that information is contained in the student's education records, if (A) the student is under the age of 21; and (B) the institution determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to such use or abuse.

Non-Negative Drug Screen, Sanctions, Treatment, Referral and Re-application, Opportunity for a Re-Test: A non-negative drug screen will result in three different actions.

1. *The Physician Assistant Studies program*

Hospitals and clinics cannot afford to compromise patient safety, health, and welfare. Therefore, if a student tests non-negative on a drug screen, he or she will be released from the rotation immediately. Hospitals and clinics will not allow a student who tests non-negative on a drug screen to continue their training or service in their organization. Hospitals or clinics may require an additional drug screen prior to the start of their clinical service at that facility.

Violations of the Samford University Drug and Alcohol Policy will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions by the School of Health professions up to and including expulsion of the student. ("Drug and Alcohol Policy" as printed in the Samford University Student Handbook). To ensure patient safety at clinical sites, a non-negative drug screen will be considered evidence of drug use/abuse by the student.

A non-negative drug screen of any of the following substances will result in immediate dismissal from the Physician Assistant Studies program: amphetamines or similarly acting sympathomimetics, cannabis, cocaine, hallucinogens, inhalants, phencyclidine (PCP) or similarly acting aryl cyclohexylamines. Action taken under the Drug and Alcohol Policy will be independent of action taken, if any, through the Student Values Process. Dismissal from the Physician Assistant Studies program is not automatically a dismissal from Samford University. The student will be ineligible to receive a letter of good standing from the Dean of the School of Health Professions.

2. *Samford University*

Violations of the Samford University Code of Values will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion of the student, ("Code of Values" as printed in the Samford University Student Handbook). Results of a non-negative drug screen will be referred by the dean of School of Health Professions and for Student Services and Values Advocacy. Action taken through the Student Values Process will be independent of action taken, if any, under the Substance Abuse Policy of the Physician Assistant Studies program.

3. *Referral to a Substance Abuse Treatment Program*

A student with a non-negative drug screen will be referred to a Substance Abuse Treatment Program. Any infraction of the drug policy will be reviewed by the Student Success Committee, the program director, and the Dean of the School of Health Professions to determine the action plan. This may be, but not limited to, expulsion from program, completing a substance abuse treatment program and possible re-starting the program the next fall if during the didactic year or repeating the missed clinical rotations during the clinical year. However, the program reserves the right to dismiss the student, not allowing continuation or readmission into the program.

Refer to the Samford University Student Manual for further details:

<https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>

Retesting request

If a test result is non-negative, the student may request a re-test of the original urine sample. A student who desires to have the original sample re-tested must file a written request with the dean of the School of Health Professions within three (3) business days following notification of a positive drug test result. The student will be responsible for all costs of the re-test. If the retest is negative the student will be reinstated.

Incidence of Recurrence

When a non-negative test for substance abuse is found in a student that has been re-admitted to the Physician Assistant Studies program, they will be ineligible to return. Furthermore, the student will be ineligible to receive a letter of good standing from the dean of School of Health Professions or the program director at the Physician Assistant Studies program.

Student Release Form

As a condition of progression, each student will sign the following “Substance Abuse Policy Release Form” agreeing to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure.

Smoking Policy

Effective March 1, 2013, the smoking policy of Samford University states:

To protect and promote the health and welfare of its faculty, staff, and students, Samford University is committed to promoting an environment conducive to health promotion by limiting smoking areas on its campus. In so doing, the following guideline applies to all university owned, leased, and operated facilities and vehicles. Samford University has designated “Smoking Areas” outside university facilities. Smoking is prohibited in all other interior and exterior areas of campus.

Students violating the smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action as stipulated in the Student Handbook. Designated smoking areas are indicated below and can be identified by a pad

and smoking urn that will be in place for ashes. Designated smoking areas (smoking areas are identified by signage and smoking urn).

Background Check

Samford students entering the Physician Assistant Studies program are required to undergo a background check using the school's approved vendor, at the time of program admission, and prior to placement in a clinical rotation. Instructions for requesting background checks and appropriate consent forms are provided to students by the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

Course Attendance

Student class attendance in the Physician Assistant Studies program is mandatory, and only pre-approved absences will be considered. Penalties for an unexcused absence will be a ZERO on any missed assignments or examination and a 2% reduction in the overall point total for the student at the end of the term for any missed classes that are determined to be unexcused. No exceptions to this will be made. If a student unexpectedly misses an examination or class and it is determined to be an excused absence, they will be allowed to take a revised examination.

Note: This exam will differ in structure and format from the original examination.

Note: Two unexcused late arrivals will result in an unexcused absence and the 2% deduction on the final semester grade will be enforced.

Personal Day: Students are allowed two personal days during the didactic year that may be used at the student's discretion. Approval must be obtained by emailing the course director(s) and admin assistant prior to the date requested. Personal day approval is up to the discretion of the course director. Personal days may not be used on test days or other required programmatic events. Unapproved personal days will be considered unexcused and would then be subject to the above-mentioned policy including but not limited to reduction in course grade and/or receive a score of a ZERO on any missed assignments or examination.

Students are expected to attend and be prepared for classes, laboratory, and clinical experiences. Your learning will be greatly enhanced by the proper preparation for the class and course objectives that day. Specific dates and attendance requirements are established by each course and are indicated in the course syllabus. Each student will be responsible for adhering to these policies. Even for unexpected absences, the student should contact the course instructor via email or phone. The student remains responsible for any material covered, assignments or testing missed. Please note, that the Physician Assistant Studies program has a fast-paced and rigorous curriculum. Excused absences do not include family events, weddings, vacations, or other personal engagements. Class work is typically Monday-Friday from 8:00-5:00p, with breaks between classes. We encourage you to use these breaks in class time to handle personal issues.

Extenuating circumstances that require extended periods of absence, such as illness, personal circumstances, maternity, etc. will be considered and handled on a case-by-case basis by the program director. Patterns of excessive absences, in classes or clinical, are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program. It is expected that students will respond to all messages in a timely manner.

Online Attendance

When applicable, students who are registered in web-enhanced or online courses are expected to complete all required coursework through electronic forums. Students are expected to participate in all class discussions. In the event of extenuating circumstances, students should notify the professor prior to class and secure arrangement for any make-up work. Failure to do so may affect the course grade. Online class attendance will be assessed by completion of all course assignments by the published due date and time.

Leave of Absence

Students must write a letter requesting a leave of absence for any semester in which they do not intend to enroll or if the student should choose to withdraw from Samford University, with intent to return. Leave of absence requests should be directed to the attention of the program director and the Dean of the School of Health Professions. Students who wish to drop all courses for a semester should formally withdraw from the Office of Student Records. Students who take a leave of absence or withdraw from the program may reapply to continue their course of study the following year. Additional remedial courses may be required on a case-by-case basis prior to readmission. Determination for readmission will be made by the Physician Assistant Studies faculty and Dean of the School of Health Professions. This is further addressed in the Samford student handbook at <https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>

Pregnancy Policy and Guidelines

All students are encouraged to inform the program director immediately in writing once pregnancy has been confirmed. If students choose not to inform the program of their pregnancy, the program will not consider them pregnant and cannot exercise options that could protect the fetus. For students who voluntarily disclose pregnancy the program director will discuss factors to be considered in cases of pregnancy with the student based on acceptable professional guidelines. A student is offered three alternatives after the consultation with the program director:

1. Immediate withdrawal in good standing from the program. The student will be allowed readmission.
2. Continuation in the program after being given specific instruction regarding safety practices, safety monitoring, and specific clinical and laboratory assignments.
3. Continuation in the program with additional safety monitoring but without modification of assignments.

The student must be able to progress in her educational experiences, both clinical and academic. If the student cannot, she will be strongly advised to withdraw as in alternative number one.

If there are any questions regarding any aspect of the above statements, please call the program director.

Academic Calendar

All dates that are related to registration, payments of tuition and fees, drop or withdrawal dates, school holidays and available on the Samford University academic calendar at <https://www.samford.edu/events/academic-calendar>

The University Observes the Following Holidays

New Year's Day • Martin Luther King Jr, Day • Easter Monday • Memorial Day • Juneteenth • Independence Day • Labor Day • Thanksgiving Day/Friday After • Christmas Day. Additional days off at holiday seasons, are decided upon by the administration on a year-to-year basis. These days and the conditions under which they are given are announced as each season approaches and may vary. The program may opt to not follow the above-mentioned dates as holidays during the didactic year.

During the clinical year, the Samford University Physician Assistant Studies program does not follow the Samford University Academic calendar. The clinical year calendar will be listed in the clinical year section of this manual.

Advanced Placement

The Physician Assistant Studies program will not accept advanced credit or advanced placement for previous course(s) completed.

Format and Policies for Writing Assignments

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies uses the American Medical Association (AMA) citation style in agreement with all major physician assistant journals. Reference: Iverson I, Flanagan A, Fontanarosa PB, et al. American Medical Association Manual of Style. 10th ed. New York: Oxford University Press; 2007.

Academic Progression, Academic Good Standing, Remediation, Dismissal

GPA Requirements

Students within the Physician Assistant Studies program must maintain a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA throughout the program. When a student's grade point average drops below the required 3.0 GPA, the student will be placed on academic probation. This probation period allows the student one semester to raise their overall cumulative GPA to the 3.0 required by the program. Once the student is placed on academic probation, the student will be counseled by their faculty advisor and Student Success Committee. These groups will discuss the student's study habits, clinical performance and review the

students' performance in the program. If the student is unable to achieve the 3.0 cumulative GPA required in the probationary semester, they have failed to demonstrate the necessary medical knowledge and competency to continue and will subsequently be dismissed from the program.

Students will only be allowed this probationary status one time. If the students overall cumulative GPA drops below the 3.0 requirement a second time at any point during the didactic or clinical year, they will be dismissed from the program.

Academic Remediation during the didactic year

Academic Remediation during the didactic year:

The purpose of the remediation is to assure the students gain the knowledge and competency needed to succeed in clinical practice.

Remediation of individual course examinations:

Students that make less than an 80% score on any examination have not demonstrated the satisfactory competency required by the program. The student must meet with the course instructor to review the material/test and discuss methods of improvement on future examinations. Students that score less than 70% on any course examination must remediate the examination. The course instructor will design the remediation. The remediation must be submitted to the course instructor by the due date. If the remediation is not submitted, the student may be dismissed from the program.,

Remediation of final course grade:

Students will have two opportunities within the didactic year to remediate a final course grade of 70-79%. If a third final course grade of < 80% is made within the didactic year, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Students that make between a 70-79% final course grade, in a course have not demonstrated the satisfactory competency required by the program. If a student's final course grade is between 70-79%, they will undergo remediation by the program. This may include but is not limited to; readings, exams, OSCE's, clinical hours with faculty, and or presentations. To be successfully remediated, the student must complete all assignments in their entirety by the required due date. A failure to complete the remediation plan will lead to dismissal of the student. Remediation will be determined based on the student's deficiencies. **Note, the original grade will not be replaced as this is the grade the student earned.** The purpose of this remediation is to assure the students gain the knowledge and competency needed to succeed in clinical practice. Students will have two opportunities within the didactic year to remediate a final course grade of 70-79%. If a third final course grade of 70-79% is made within the didactic year, the student will be dismissed form the program.

- a. First final course grade 70-79% meets with advisor, and Student Success Committee, remediation plan assigned.

- b. Second final course grade 70-79%, meets with advisor and Student Success Committee, remediation plan assigned.
- c. Third final course grade 70-79% will be dismissed from the program.
- d. Any final course grade less than 70% in the didactic year demonstrates severe academic deficiencies and lack of competency. This is a failing grade and the students will be dismissed from the program.
- e. If a student disagrees with the decision of the dismissal from the program, the student may appeal in writing to the Dean of the School of Health Professions within 72 hours of notification of the dismissal.

Note: any student that fails to complete the remediation plan assigned will be dismissed from the program.

Remediation During the Clinical year

Students are expected to obtain a grade of 80% or greater during the clinical service courses within the clinical year.

- a. First rotation grade 70-79% - meet with DCE
- b. Second rotation grade 70-79% - meet with Student Success Committee and DCE, remediation plan assigned to improve areas of weakness, must repeat rotation.
- c. Third rotation grade 70-79% - student will be dismissed from the program.
- d. A student scoring less than 70% within a clinical service rotation will fail the rotation. They will then be required to repeat this rotation at the end of the clinical year. A student failing a second clinical service rotation for any reason has demonstrated continuous deficits in competency and will be dismissed from the program.

Clinical Rotation Remediation

Any student scoring a two or less (2/5), on any aspect academic or professionalism component of the preceptor evaluation will be reviewed by the director of clinical education, and the preceptor. This would represent a significant lack of knowledge, skills and or professionalism. The director of clinical education will then meet with the student and devise a remediation plan addressing the area of deficiency.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal from a course or from your program is an official process and should be discussed with your academic advisor and / or program director. Most programs in the School are full-time and the curricula specifically sequenced. Withdrawal from a course may risk your wait time to register for the class again. You might have to wait for a full year before resuming enrollment in the program. Withdrawals are made through the Samford registration system. Notice of program withdrawal should be given in writing to the program director. Check the Academic Calendar for deadline. Withdrawal from any course will lead to dismissal from the program. Withdrawals are made through the

Samford registration system. Notice of program withdrawal should be given in writing to the program director. Check the Academic Calendar for deadline.

*The program does not offer deceleration in either the didactic or clinical year.

Academic Integrity

A degree from Samford University is evidence of achievement in scholarship and citizenship. Activities and attitudes should be consistent with high academic standards and Christian commitment and should be in keeping with the philosophy and mission of the University. At Samford, academic integrity is expected of every community member in all endeavors and includes a commitment to honesty, fairness, trustworthiness, and respect.

The University Statement on Academic Dishonesty is as follows: students, upon enrollment, enter into a voluntary association with Samford University. They must be willing to observe high standards of intellectual integrity, respect knowledge, and practice academic honesty. Those who cheat on an examination or class assignment are not only academically dishonest, but also are deficient in the scholarly maturity necessary for college study. Those who engage in academic dishonesty are subject to severe punishment. The more dependent, the more inevitable becomes ultimate failure, often accompanied by public disgrace. Any act to obtain an unfair academic advantage is considered dishonest.

I. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

Academic integrity violations are acts of academic misconduct. The term academic integrity violation includes, but is not limited to, the following acts:

1. Offering for course credit as one's own work, in whole or in part, the work of another.
2. Plagiarism, that is, incorporating into one's work offered for course credit passages taken either word for word or in substance from a work of another, unless the student credits the original author and identifies the original author's work with quotation marks, footnotes, or another appropriate written explanation.
3. Offering for course credit one's own work, but work that one has previously offered for course credit in another course, unless one secures permission to do so prior to submission from the instructor in whose course the work is being offered.
4. Obtaining an unauthorized copy of a test or assignment in advance of its scheduled administration.
5. Taking an examination for another student or knowingly permitting another person to take an examination for oneself.
6. Giving, receiving, or obtaining information pertaining to an examination during an examination period, unless such action is authorized by the instructor giving the examination.
7. Divulging the contents of an essay or objective examination to a student who has not taken the exam.
8. Taking, keeping, misplacing, or tampering with the property of Samford University, a faculty member, or another student, if one knows or should reasonably know that one would, by such conduct, obtain an unfair academic advantage. This section is intended to include, but not be limited to, material in a university library.
9. Failing to follow the instructions of a professor in completing an assignment or examination, if one knows or should reasonably know that one would, by such conduct, obtain an unfair academic advantage.
10. Witnessing conduct which one knows or should reasonably know is dishonorable and failing to report it.
11. Altering or falsifying academic or student record documents such as transcripts, change of grade forms, University excuses, and add/drop forms.
12. Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an examination, assignment, project, or other academic assignment.
13. Making a false report of academic dishonesty.
14. Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, analyses, or other studies, presenting the results of research or studies not actually performed, or manipulating or altering data to achieve a desired result, including the failure to report or suppression of conflicting or unwanted data.

II. PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

In all instances of suspected academic integrity violations or academic misconduct, the faculty will decide whether an assignment or course grade adjustment, up to a grade of failure due to a violation of academic integrity (FX) for the course, is appropriate.

The University Registrar serves as the Academic Integrity Officer (AIO).

A. Faculty Actions Based on a Suspected Academic Integrity Violation

1. The faculty member suspects that a student violated academic integrity as defined in Section I.
2. If the faculty member is resolved in the belief that academic dishonesty occurred, the faculty member must address the issue with the student within 15 University working days after discovering the alleged violation. Based on the situation, the faculty member should consider having a witness at the meeting with the student. Once a faculty member has charged a student with academic dishonesty, the student may not withdraw from or change status in the course until the matter is resolved.
3. The faculty member is encouraged to consult with his or her department chair and or dean and may disclose information necessary for the chair and/or dean to provide guidance as a school official with a legitimate educational interest. The faculty member may also consult with colleagues about the suspected academic integrity violation. All such communications shall comply with FERPA. Faculty members may also consult with the AIO regarding a suspected violation.
4. If, after further review, the faculty member is satisfied that no academic dishonesty occurred, no report is filed. At that point, the allegations are dismissed, and the matter is closed.
5. If, after further review, the faculty member continues to believe that academic dishonesty occurred, the faculty member will submit an assignment and/or course grade adjustment. The sanction imposed by the faculty member may be no more severe than an FX grade in the course.
 - a) The student is notified of the assignment and/or course grade adjustment and the option to appeal per the grade appeal process.
 - b) The AIO is notified for tracking purposes and possible follow up. If the faculty member believes that sanctions in addition to a changed assignment and/or course grade are warranted, the matter must be forwarded to the AIO for Academic Council review within 15 University working days of discovering the violation.
6. The faculty member and/or the department chair should retain all documents related to the academic integrity violation for at least five years following the date of the violation.

Faculty members are required to report all instances of academic dishonesty to the AIO. The AIO is responsible for creating a repository for all academic integrity violations and maintaining documents related to academic integrity violation.

B. Matters Directed to the Academic Council

The Academic Council will adjudicate the following matters in instances of academic dishonesty involving undergraduate students:

1. Instances when it is the student's second or greater academic integrity offense.
2. Instances where a faculty member requests Academic Council review for consideration of sanctions in addition to a grade and/or assignment adjustment due to the seriousness of an academic integrity offense.

The AIO will determine whether a matter is the student's first academic dishonesty infraction. In all instances where it is the student's second or greater offense of academic dishonesty, the infraction is automatically referred to the Academic Council to determine if additional sanctions are warranted. A matter may also be directed to the Academic Council for review if the faculty member believes that the academic integrity violation warrants additional sanctions.

C. The Academic Council deliberation process will proceed as follows:

The AIO will compile forms and documents related to all student integrity violations and submit them to the Academic Council.

- 1) The Academic Council Chair will assemble a Hearing Panel and convene a hearing.
- 2) The Chair may, when necessary, request assistance from legal counsel and other University departments, as appropriate.
- 3) The Hearing Panel may confer with the AIO for consistencies in sanctioning.
- 4) The Hearing Panel will deliberate and impose sanctions by majority vote. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to probation, suspension, or expulsion.
- 5) The Hearing Panel will notify the AIO of the decision.
 - a. In the case of a Hearing Panel decision of no additional sanctions, the AIO will notify the student and the faculty.
 - b. In the case of a Hearing Panel decision imposing additional sanctions, the AIO will notify the student, the faculty, and the dean(s) of the appropriate school(s).
- 6) Expeditious deliberation by the Hearing Panel is an important priority. The Hearing Panel must convene and make their deliberations within 20 University working days after receipt of the matter by the AIO. In any of these cases, if there are not 20 University working days remaining in the semester, the matter must be handled at the start of the next semester.

III. THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

A. Composition

The Academic Council is composed of a faculty member from each of the University's schools which provides undergraduate studies (*Howard College of Arts & Sciences, Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing, Brock School of Business, Orlean Bullard Beason School of Education & Professional Studies and School of the Arts*) and the University Library. The Council also includes five undergraduate students, one from each school. The faculty-to-student ratio for each hearing is three faculty members and two students.

Faculty members must be full-time faculty with at least three years of instructional or library experience at Samford University. Each student member must have a cumulative grade point

average of 3.0 or higher at the time of the appointment and during service. The student members shall be appointed annually by the deans of the participating schools. Faculty members shall be appointed for three-year terms by their respective deans. A chair shall be selected each year by the faculty members of the Academic Council, although a chair may carry over from year to year.

B. Duties

The Academic Council:

1. Determines through the process of a hearing whether an accused student has consistently or severely violated matters of academic integrity.
2. Imposes sanctions for students who have consistently or severely violated matters of academic integrity.
3. Completes the Hearing Panel Decision Template and notifies the AIO of the outcome of matters referred to the Council.

C. Jurisdiction

The Academic Council has exclusive jurisdiction over all academic integrity matters brought before them.

IV. ACADEMIC COUNCIL HEARINGS

A. Members for a Hearing

A hearing is convened with a Hearing Panel comprised of three faculty and two student members of the Academic Council. The hearing will not be affected by a member of the Hearing Panel disqualifying himself or herself after a hearing has begun.

B. Recusal

A member of the Hearing Panel shall recuse himself or herself if he or she believes that, in reaching a decision as to whether or not an accused student has consistently or severely violated academic integrity, he or she cannot act on the weight of the evidence without bias or prejudice. The Hearing Panel may, by majority vote, recuse one of its members from sitting on a hearing if that would best serve the interests of the Academic Council and the University.

V. SANCTIONS

A. Sanctions Imposed by the Faculty Member

If the faculty member finds a student guilty of academic dishonesty the possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, failure/grade penalty on the assignment or test, rewriting the assignment or test, and failure/grade penalty in the course. If a faculty member believes that it is appropriate for a student to be placed on probation, suspended, or expelled for the academic integrity violation, the faculty member must refer the matter to the Academic Council. Faculty must refer matters to the AIO for Academic Council review within 15 University working days of discovering the violation.

B. Sanctions Imposed by the Academic Council

If the Hearing Panel determines that the accused student has severely or consistently violated academic integrity, it may impose sanctions against the student. Whenever sanctions are imposed, the format in section VIII will be used. Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to probation, suspension, and expulsion as defined below.

1. Probation
A process or period that may include restrictions or required activities such as community service, educational classes, and/or prohibition from participating in co-curricular activities.
2. Suspension
Termination of student status at the University for a specified period of time.
3. Expulsion
Termination of student status at the University permanently or for an indefinite period of time.

VI. APPEAL OF SANCTIONS

Any grade may be appealed through the grade appeals process as outlined in the University catalogue.

If the student wishes to dispute the sanction(s) imposed by the Academic Council, he or she may appeal the sanction decision in writing to the AIO within five University working days of the date he or she receives notice of the Hearing Panel decision. In such a situation, the AIO, in discussion with the Provost and Executive Vice President, may review the record of the hearing, and the student's academic and disciplinary records, and based upon this review, decide to:

1. Allow the sanction(s) to stand.
2. Modify the sanction(s) or impose a different sanction(s).
3. Suspend the sanction(s).

For issues regarding the same academic integrity incident, the AIO and Provost will consider a grade appeal and an appeal of the Academic Council's decision on additional sanctions at the same time. The decision of the AIO and Provost as to the appropriateness of the sanction(s) is final.

VII. ACADEMIC COUNCIL CONFIDENTIALITY

The proceedings of the Academic Council and Hearing Panel are confidential and are subject to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and its implementing regulations.

Management of Student Misconduct

The Physician Assistant program at Samford University has established the following framework that is designed to foster learning and create a peaceful and purposeful community, founded on the moral and ethical integrity of students, staff, and the faculty. The Samford PA program has committed itself to the Christian values on which Samford University was founded. Students will also comply with the guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA profession. The guidelines are found at: <https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf>

Depending on the type of infraction, program faculty will work through a disciplinary guideline process to ensure that there is a fair process based upon the severity of the infraction(s). When an infraction of professional conduct occurs, the Student Success Committee determines the severity and the subsequent sanction. The goal of this process is to provide instructional discipline/feedback of a student's performance and promote professional behavior, while also documenting the steps taken by the program faculty.

Possible sanctions may include but are not limited to:

- Oral warning (documented in student file)
- Written warning
- Behavior contract/conditions
 - Behavior contracts/conditions may be required anytime during a semester and may result in a probationary status. The PA Program Director, in consultation with the DCE, will determine the level of the concern and the consequence and/or remedy to return to good standing in the program.
- Delay in completion of the program
- Repeating didactic and/or clinical course(s)
- Suspension from didactic and/or clinical course(s)
- Dismissal from program

The general disciplinary progression is below:

Oral Warning

Typically, the first step of the disciplinary progression is an oral warning issued to the student. This warning may be issued by any member of the faculty including, but not limited to: the program director, academic or clinical coordinator, or course faculty. This warning is most commonly issued for attendance infractions, poor academic or clinical performance, or other types of minor actions occurring for the first time. The Samford PA program will keep a record of the warning in the student's file and become an official document of Samford University and the student record. Following the oral warning, the Student Success Committee will determine if additional sanctions are necessary.

Written Warning

A writing warning may be issues by any member of the faculty, but not limited to: the program director, academic or clinical coordinator, or course faculty. Based on the recommendation of the Student Success Committee, a written warning may be issued for any minor infraction occurring after the first oral warning or a written warning may be issued in place of an oral warning for a first-time major infraction. Written warnings will

be sent to the student and the student must sign and return the as proof of reading and acknowledgment. If a prior oral warning has been issued this will be referenced in the written warning. Signed copies of written warnings will become part of the student's official Samford student record. If there is a refusal to sign a written warning, then the unsigned copy will be placed into the student record.

Suspension

Any continuance of infractions or a serious offense may result in student suspension from the Samford PA program. Based on the recommendation of the Student Success Committee, a suspension may occur after the first issuance of a written warning for any offense or as the first step if the infraction is of a severe nature. Any student who is arrested on a felony charge, if not immediately dismissed, may be suspended pending the resolution of the case. Any suspension notice will be given directly to the student in writing by the program and will be added to the student's permanent record. An administrative suspension will be enforced when there is a potential for regular performance or safety would be compromised or when the Program staff and faculty need time to collect data necessary for determining the exact disciplinary action that should be enforced.

Dismissal

Any continued poor or substandard performance, misconduct, and/or other serious infractions or behavioral issues that arise after previous disciplinary steps have been taken may result in the dismissal of the student from the Samford PA program. Dismissal may occur immediately after review of a violation by the Student Success Committee. The Program Director and the Department Chair must approve any recommendation for student dismissal. Any dismissal will only occur after a careful review of the case by the Student Success Committee, the Program Director and Department Chair.

Appeals

If a student disagrees with the decision of the Student Success Committee or the Program Director, the student may appeal in writing to the Dean of the School of Health Professions within 72 hours of notification of the sanction.

Records

All records of any disciplinary action will be contained within the student's files within the program.

Didactic Evaluation and Grading Policy

Students are expected to arrive on time to class and be prepared for the coursework presented that day. Any material(s) assigned by program or clinical faculty as preparatory is the responsibility of the student. Specific assignments are established by each course faculty. Evaluation of didactic performance is by academic achievement in the classroom and/or assigned work from faculty that culminates in a course grade.

Students are expected to complete and turn in assignments within the prescribed time frame. Students are expected to discuss any delinquency in turning in assignments with the appropriate course faculty and decide for a subsequent deadline if an extension is granted.

In each course, the instructor will announce the grading criteria and publish it in the course syllabus. The following guideline relating to the “I” (incomplete) grade or deferred credit supplements the Samford guideline.

The following grade scale will be used by the Physician Assistant Studies Program

A:	90-100%	B+:	87-89.9%
B:	80-86.9%	C+:	77-79.9%
C:	70-76.9%	F:	<70%

Incomplete of Deferred Credits

The awarding of an “I” (incomplete) grade by faculty is not done lightly. An “I” will be given only when an emergency or unexpected event prohibits the student from meeting course objectives in a timely manner. A student receiving a grade of “I” (incomplete) must arrange with the instructor to complete the course requirements as soon as possible, and in order to progress within the program the student must arrange to complete the requirements prior to the final day of registration for the next term. A grade of “I” not changed by the instructor by the beginning of the next regular term will automatically convert to an “F.”

Grievance Policy

If a student has concerns or questions regarding an examination or assignment, he/she must request an appointment with the course coordinator in writing within seven (7) days of posting of the examination or assignment grade. Students should follow the complaint process as outlined in the current Samford University Student Handbook. <https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>

Course Management System

Canvas is the Web-based learning management system used at Samford University to enhance class communication, organization, and presentation by providing customizable website templates for courses offered. It is designed to provide tools for building online resources for use with face-to face-instruction, hybrid classes, or to support classes offered completely online. The degree to which the system is used in each course varies. Students may access Canvas at <http://canvas.samford.edu>.

Technology, Social Media and Electronic Devices

Technology is an essential and integral aspect of a web-enhanced or online course. The student must have access to a computer and stable connection to the Internet on a regular basis. A high-speed internet connection, such as a cable modem or DSL line is preferred. The student will need access to Word, PowerPoint, and an Excel software program. As web-enhanced/online lectures contain an audio component, the student will additionally need the capability to access audio through speakers.

The Technology Service Help Desk is available by phone 205-726-2662 or email at support@samford.edu. The most recent information concerning computer requirements, training, access, hardware, and software options is available at:

<http://www.samford.edu/departments/technology-services/>

Student use of cell phones, messaging devices and other technology and/or electronic devices (for example, but not limited to: recording devices, music players, PDAs, computers) is prohibited in classes unless specifically permitted by the instructor, and at public events (for example, but not limited to: concerts, convocations, theatre productions, lectures) unless specifically permitted by the event sponsor.

Social Media

Social media can serve as useful communication tools. However, health professions students should use the forums judiciously. Any use of social media with patient information, images, or identifying information is strictly prohibited and a HIPPA violation.

No postings regarding academic or clinical experiences may be placed on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram by students. Additionally, please be aware of your own personal postings as your potential employers are now using social media sites as ways to screen applicants for jobs. Be careful what you allow others to see on your social media site.

Electronic Mail

Every Samford student is assigned an email account. Students are required to read their Samford email every day and to maintain an email mailbox that is not “full”, to accept incoming emails. The PA program does not use personal email accounts to communicate with enrolled students.

Graduation/NCCPA Certification

After successful completion of both the didactic phase and clinical phase of the program students will be eligible for graduation, enabling them to sit for the PANCE examination, of Physician Assistant National Certification Examination.

Student and Patient Confidentiality

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The rights of the FERPA heretofore assigned to parents are now transferred to their college students. These rights are:

1. Eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student's educational records maintained by the school. The student must contact the dean of academic services and registrar office to make an appointment to view their academic record.

2. Eligible students have the right to request that a school correct record believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school refuses to change the records, the eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still refuses the correction, the eligible student has the right to place a statement in the records commenting on the contested information in the records.
3. Generally, Samford University must have written permission from the eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties: school employees who have a need to know, other schools to which a student is transferring, parents when a student over 18 is still a dependent, certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions, appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student, organizations doing certain studies for the school, accrediting organizations, individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas, persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies, state and local authorities to whom disclosure is required by state laws adopted before November 19, 1974. Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory type" information, such as a student's name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number. Samford University has designated the following as directory information: student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, enrollment status, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight, and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, honors, degrees and awards received, most recent previous school attended, and photograph. An eligible student who does not wish for this information to be released without prior written consent must notify in writing the Office of the Dean of Academic Services and Registrar by the last day to Drop/Add without financial penalty in a semester or term. The link is provided here for further information <https://www.samford.edu/departments/registrar/ferpa>

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Students have an obligation to protect and keep confidential all patient data/information whether printed, written, spoken, or electronically produced, and to access this information for appropriate and authorized purposes such as patient care and records processing. Patient information must be accessed, maintained, and released in a confidential manner. Any violation of the confidentiality of patient information or unauthorized access may result in disciplinary or corrective action up to and including immediate dismissal from the Physician Assistant Studies program for student misconduct. Per HIPAA guidelines, a release of information form must be completed before any information is mailed, faxed or given to any party, including the patient or his/her caregiver. Students are not to discuss patient names, addresses and medical or financial information with any individuals other than those who are directly involved with care of the patient. This includes any public forum such as the classroom, clinical conferences, and seminars either on or off-campus. Patients must sign consent forms before they can be video- taped, audio-taped, or observed by any other party.

- To remain in compliance with the federal Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations and respect the confidentiality of patient information, Physician Assistant Studies students may not remove any patient protected health information (PHI) including patient health records and photos from the clinical site.
- Unauthorized disclosure of patient information may violate state or federal laws (including HIPAA), and unauthorized release of information may result in dismissal from school and legal action taken against the student.
- Please note: HIPAA rules and regulations also apply to individuals, including students, faculty, and clinicians, who volunteer to serve as demonstration subjects.
- No photos/video of any patient or patient records. Please avoid having pictures taken of you during clinical experiences unless the photographer is authorized by the facility to take pictures. No information related to patients, or your clinical experiences may be posted on social media sites including pictures, status updates, or comments.

Course Evaluations

At the end of each course students are encouraged to complete an assessment of the professor and the course. This information is used to improve the course and learning experience for the student. This will be discussed by the course instructor. The academic coordinator and the Student Success Committee will follow the students' academic progression throughout the program, as well as the course evaluations from each student. Students will also evaluate the clinical service rotations as well as the preceptor at the completion of the rotation. The director of clinical education will review these evaluations in an effort to maintain and improve the clinical service experience for the student.

Exit and Graduate Surveys

Are to be completed prior to graduation and 6 months after graduation. This feedback from students is essential to the program as we continue to evaluate teaching methods and instruction for improvement.

Samford Student Services

Student Identification

All students within the clinical year will be required to wear their Samford University Physician Assistant Studies student badge as well their white coat with their names and student status listed on them. Patients will be notified of their student status and may refuse care.

A standard name badge using the official bell tower logo is available for all university employees and representatives. All employees are encouraged to wear name badges at all times, but especially at official university functions so guests can identify those connected with the university. Please go the following link for more information:

<https://www.samford.edu/departments/marketing/name-badges>

Academic Support

The Samford Academic success center will offer a variety of academic services for all students free of charge. This might include individual consultations discussing study strategies and time management skills. For more information go to:

<https://www.samford.edu/departments/academic-success-center/>

Books and Supplies

The Samford bookstore is owned and operated by the university and all proceeds from the bookstore operation go back to fund Samford University. Please check the website for store hours. The bookstore carries all accurate and required materials for courses that have been requested by faculty as well as supplies.

Library Services

Serving the entire campus community, the Samford University Library combines the Harwell Goodwin Davis Library and the Frank W. and Clara C. Hudnall Library. The University Library is home to the Marla Haas Cortis Missionary Biography Collection, the Alabama Men's Hall of Fame, and the Hellenic Scholars' Library. There are more than half a million volumes available through the online catalog. In addition to the book and periodical collections, the library houses a government document collection, a special collection and a multimedia collection. A computer laboratory, computer classroom, individual and group study rooms, multimedia viewing and listening rooms, meeting rooms, and a patron lounge area are available (<http://library.samford.edu/about/maps.html>) for patron use. Librarians provide research education to classes and one-to-one assistance at the Ask Us desk and online at <http://samford.libanswers.com/>

Technology Support Services

The technology help center can assist you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week 205-726-2662 or support@samford.edu. www.samford.edu/departments/technology-services/

Public Safety and Emergency Management General Policy

As stated on their website, "the mission of the Samford University Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management is to protect the life and property of all people of the Samford University community. Our goal is to enhance the quality of life of the university by providing a safe and secure campus through professional service and proactive crime prevention. To create an environment where students, faculty and staff can conduct their daily business without the threat of physical or psychological harm. These responsibilities are to be met with the integrity and demeanor consistent with the Christian values of the university.

We hope to promote an atmosphere of safety, peace and tranquility enabling the university community to focus on providing and attaining an education of the highest quality."

To provide the best possible emergency services to Samford's community, the Department of Public Safety maintains a close working relationship with the Homewood Police Department and

the Homewood Fire and Rescue Service. Public safety officers have the shortest response time to any location on campus and are the first responders to incidents on campus. If fire or emergency medical services are needed, public safety officers will respond to the scene and direct appropriate service units to the exact location of an incident on campus.

Patrol and dispatch services are provided 24 hours a day, with immediate access to municipal emergency services. The Department of Public Safety's radio communications dispatchers cover telephones and two-way radios on a 24-hour basis to give information, respond to emergencies and contact other agencies. Officers and dispatchers can immediately contact the city of Homewood's fire department, Emergency Medical Service and police department by the Department of Public Safety's radio system.

The Department of Public Safety monitors the National Weather Service radio network. A campus-wide alerting system notifies the campus community of threatening weather conditions. For further information visit the website at: <https://www.samford.edu/departments/public-safety/> Samford University maintains an Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management (PSEM) as a proprietary function of the university with jurisdiction to enforce the rules and regulations of the university-on-university property, as well as the laws of the U.S. government and the state of Alabama. The PSEM office is staffed 24 hours a day to provide immediate availability for emergency response, security and traffic patrols, monitoring people on campus and other services relevant to the campus community.

The PSEM office is located on the second floor of the University Center, Room 202. Members of the department maintain a close working relationship with local, state and federal law enforcement authorities and other emergency service agencies on matters related to campus safety and security. Any incidents involving suspected criminal activity or violations of university rules and regulations related to the safety and security of people or property should be reported to the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management.

The department maintains records of incidents that have occurred on campus, and such statistical data is available in public safety's annual report. The ultimate responsibility for personal safety rests with each individual. Individuals should be aware of their surroundings and potential risks to personal safety; exercise caution and take reasonable actions to protect themselves; walk with friends in lighted areas at night; keep residence halls secure; lock room doors; do not prop open outer doors; know building evacuation procedures; know how to contact proper authorities; how to drive defensively; and report suspicious activities to the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management.

A safety escort service is available for all students during the day or night. Escorts are provided to any destination on campus. The escort service is provided for safety-related reasons only. Because there is safety in numbers, groups of three or more students are encouraged to walk to their destination. The escort is given by either foot or vehicular patrol. An escort may be

requested by calling 205-726-2020 or stopping by the PSEM office located in University Center 202.

Access to the campus is always subject to control. During regular business hours, vehicles may access the campus through the main entrance or the southwest gate. Except for special events, the front gate is closed at 10 p.m., and controlled access is established at the southwest entrance from 10 p.m. until 6 a.m. People entering or departing the campus are subject to security checks for valid identification, campus destination or other relevant information. Academic and administrative buildings are open during regular business hours. After closing hours, buildings are patrolled regularly to maintain security of property in the buildings, to prevent unauthorized entry and to assure proper operation of facility equipment. After-hours access to the buildings must be authorized by appropriate university officials. Routine patrols and periodic building inspections are performed to assure the security of facilities. When deficiencies are discovered, the appropriate department is notified as soon as possible.

All clinical sites must provide a safe environment of our students. All clinical sites are evaluated for any safety concerns during the initial site visit by the director of clinical education. At clinical site hospitals, each facility has their own security department. The clinical site security departments are responsible for providing a secure, safe work environment for employees and our students. Sites are evaluated by the director of clinical education for ongoing safety. If the site cannot provide a safe environment for the student, the site will not be utilized. Students will be provided information during their university and program orientation regarding general safety. Students will be able to make comments on the security and safety of a clinical site at the conclusion of the rotation. If for any reason the student does not feel safe during the clinical service rotation at any point they will contact the director of clinical education.

Emergency Services/Closing of the University

Inclement Weather/RAVE

Inclement weather or other events beyond the control of the university that might cause risk or danger to students, faculty, and staff may occasionally result in changes to normal university operations, including cancellation of classes or events; the calendar schedule may be adjusted. Recorded announcements of weather related, or other closings of the university can be heard by calling the SAM-INFO message system at **205-726- 4636**. In addition, the Office of Communication notifies local radio and television stations of campus closings. In case of emergency, the RAVE alert system is activated.

RAVE is the primary method of communication used by Samford University during a campus emergency. If you have not registered for RAVE alerts, please use the link provided below and go to the My Contact Information box on your Portal homepage to update your RAVE Emergency Alert Information. <https://connect.samford.edu/group/mycampus/student>

Samford University utilizes Samford Alert for desktop, laptop, tablet, and mobile devices to provide students with information, procedures, and links about what to do in the event of a

variety of emergency situations that could occur on our campus. If you do not already have the Samford Alert app on your mobile device, laptop, desktop, or tablet, please click on this link <https://connect.samford.edu/group/mycampus/student> and go to the In Case of Emergency box on your Portal homepage for instructions on downloading the App. Once you have downloaded the App, please take time to review the information provided, it is important that you know what to do in the case of a campus emergency.

Active Shooter Training

This link is provided for students and faculty in the event of an active shooter.

<https://www.samford.edu/employee/training-and-orientation>

During the clinical year, each facility or hospital will have policies and procedures for active shooter situations. Please review these and familiarize yourself with the processes while on clinical rotations.

Nondiscrimination Statement/Harassment/Sexual Misconduct

Samford University complies with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination, including applicable provisions of and amendments to Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Executive Order 11246, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or services. Inquiries and concerns regarding this policy may be directed to the vice president for business affairs or general counsel, Office of Business and Financial Affairs, 200 Samford Hall, Birmingham, AL 35229, 205-726-2811. This notice is available in alternative formats upon request.

Samford University is a Christian institution of higher education that has a moral commitment to the worth and dignity of all individuals. Samford's policy of opposition to sexual harassment and sexual assault is not only a legal responsibility and practical utility but stems from the University's profound commitment to Christian and moral values as expressed in its mission and purpose. For more information go to: <https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf> (Pages 89-103).

Inquiries and concerns regarding this discrimination policy may be directed to the Assistant Vice President and General Counsel, Office of Business Affairs, 200 Samford Hall, Birmingham, AL 35229, (205) 726-4172. This notice is available in alternative formats upon request.

Student Health and Immunizations

In partnership with Med Help, Samford University health services provides outpatient health-care services to students attending the university. Staffed by a full-time medical provider, the clinic provides primary medical services, including acute care for illness and injuries, health

maintenance and management of stable, chronic conditions. Located on the east side of F. Page Seibert Hall, the clinic is equipped with radiology and an on-site CLIA waived lab. Hours of operation are Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m.–3 p.m. The number for University Health Services is 205-726-2835. Students may also utilize MedHelp five (5) locations in Birmingham after hours and on weekends.

<https://medhelpclinics.com/locations>

Student Immunization policy: The Samford Physician Assistant program follows the vaccination recommendations from Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for healthcare professionals as well as Alabama specific guidelines. The program also follows the Samford University vaccination policy which requires the following vaccinations: MMR, Varicella, Tdap, Influenza, and Hepatitis B. Please see the following link for additional information in the Student Resource drawer.

<https://www.samford.edu/healthprofessions/master-of-science-in-physician-assistant-studies#resources>.

The program’s principal faculty, program director or medical director will not provide any medical care for a Samford University physician assistant studies student.

CARE Team

Samford’s mission begins with a commitment to “nurture persons”, which includes paying attention to the academic, mental, emotional, and spiritual concerns of students and responding to those concerns with compassion and support. One of the distinctive characteristics of our campus culture is the thoughtful and thorough efforts made to identify students that need help, to connect them with the right resources and to invest in their long-term healing and success.

The CARE Team (Communicate, Assess, Resource, and Educate) is a group of faculty and staff members from across campus that exists to help students of concern remain successful in and out of the classroom. The CARE Team connects students that are experiencing unusual stress or challenges with a variety of resources to help address their concerns. These resources include, but are not limited to: University Counseling Services, Academic Success Center, Disability Resources, Public Safety, Residence Life, Title IX Officer, Student Involvement and Office of Spiritual Life. For more information go to: <https://www.samford.edu/departments/values-advocacy/care-team-form>

Counseling Services

Students will have access to counseling services. Counseling Services & Wellness Programs (C&WP) is in Dwight Beeson Hall (DBH) room 203. Counseling Services & Wellness Programs is open for appointments Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with some flexibility. For more information go to: <https://www.samford.edu/departments/counseling/>

Disability Support Services

Disability Resources serves as the central campus resource for students with disabilities. Working in partnership with faculty, staff and administration, the goal of Disability Resources is to promote an accessible and inclusive environment for all students. Disability Resources works individually with each student to determine appropriate accommodations to ensure access to programs, activities and services.

For more information go to: <https://www.samford.edu/departments/disability-resources/>

Dining Services

Samford University has various dining options including:

The Samford Cafeteria is located on the 2nd floor of the Ralph W. Beeson Student Center.

Einstein Bros. Bagels located on the 1st floor of the University Library.

The Food Court (Samford Grille, Chick-fil-a, Sandellas, Simply to Go, Boar's Head Deli, Bulldog Brew) located on the 1st floor of the University Center.

The Smoothie Center located on the 2nd floor of the Hanna Center.

Freshens Fresh Food Studio located in the atrium of the College of Health Sciences.

For more information go to: <https://www.samford.edu/departments/dining/>

Transportation Services

Transportation Services coordinates parking enforcement, permitting and shuttle services for Samford University. For more information go to:

<https://www.samford.edu/departments/transportation/>

Parking

Vehicles must display a Samford University parking decal if parked on campus. Decals may be obtained for a nominal fee from the transportation services located in the University Center across from the HUB. You may also obtain a decal online through Samford's website at www.samford.edu/ts.

Student Information

Registration

The CHS Office of Student Services and Enrollment Management will register the student each semester and will send an email to their Samford email account indicating when the process is completed.

Financial Services

Information regarding financial aid and financial services can be found at the following link:

<https://www.samford.edu/departments/financial-services>

Employment During the Program

The physician assistant studies program is a rigorous and challenging curriculum. The didactic and clinical year will require long hours in the classroom and in the clinic. Working part-time or full time is discouraged in the didactic year and prohibited during the clinical year.

Students are not required to work for the program. Students may not, by position or responsibility, be employed or function as instructional faculty or substitute for clinical or administrative staff during clinical rotations.

Relationship Violence

An anonymous form can be used to report any act of relationship violence.

www.samford.edu/departments/values-advocacy/report-relationship-violence

Medical Insurance for Students

Students are required to carry health insurance while enrolled at Samford. Students in the College of Health Sciences are required to provide proof of current personal health insurance coverage. There is a charge for this coverage. To have the charge removed from his/her Samford account, a student must provide proof of insurance by completing the insurance waiver at <http://www.firststudent.com/schools/>. Without the waiver, the charge will remain on the student account and the student will be covered with health insurance from August to July of next year.

Samford Physician Assistant study students are financially responsible for all related medical costs of exposure to infectious or environmental hazard and other injuries/accidents related to any clinical activity. This is to include laboratory testing, and preventive and treatment of any diseases acquired by exposure to infectious or environmental hazard during a clinical activity.

Universal Precautions

Students are responsible for following OSHA Guidelines for universal precautions at clinical rotation sites, including the use of protective gloves, eyewear, and clothing, the proper use and disposal of sharps, regular handwashing/hand sanitation, and other precautionary measures. These guidelines will be presented in the PA Professional Issues didactic modules and pre-clinical training activities prior to starting clinical rotations.

Any documented allergies to latex products should be reported to the preceptor and the director of clinical education. Each student is responsible for supplying any latex-free products they may need, if they are not otherwise available at a given clinical site.

Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens Guidelines

Samford University Physician Assistant Studies (PA) is a program housed within the College of Health Sciences. Samford Physician Assistant studies program adopted the BBP guidelines.

Purpose: To outline the expected behavior to be followed by all Physician Assistant Studies (PA) students who have received an accidental exposure incident while in an educational setting to decrease risk of infection with hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

An **exposure incident** is a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin (dermatitis, abrasions, chafing, hangnail, etc.), or parental contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) that results from the performance of a PA student's duties.

Annual training on safety precautions and post-exposure expected behaviors will be conducted. Training will be provided during the first semester of the program. All students (new and returning) are required to participate in this training. PA students are required to receive or show proof of hepatitis B immunization (e.g. titers). PA students are also required to show proof of personal health insurance upon admission to the PA program. This insurance will be needed for coverage of laboratory testing and medications (if necessary) in the event of an exposure incident.

Safety expected behaviors and universal precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) will be employed by Samford PA Studies program to minimize exposure incidents, including (but are not limited to):

1. Wash hands frequently.
2. Wear gloves if there is a possibility of contact with another person's body fluids.
3. After the removal of gloves or after exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials, wash hands with antibacterial soap.
4. Wear gloves once and discard; do not attempt to wash and reuse.
5. Clothing or supplies contaminated with body fluids should be placed in doubled plastic bags, tied, and discarded.
6. Used needles and sharp/instruments must be discarded in a Biohazard Infectious Waste Sharps Container.
7. Equipment and devices that touch intact mucous membranes but do not penetrate a patient's body surface should be sterilized when possible or undergo high-level disinfection if they cannot be sterilized before being used for each patient.
8. Instruments and other reusable equipment used in performing invasive procedures must be appropriately disinfected and sterilized.
9. Training on proper expected behaviors for finger testing and required equipment is mandatory.
10. Recapping needles or lancets must not be attempted.
11. If a safety lancet is not available, the PA student should ask the source individual to conduct the test on themselves, if possible.
12. Sharps or lancets must not be passed to others or accepted from others.

Clinical Year Information

The Clinical Service courses will allow students to gain clinical experience in diverse clinical rotations that are fundamental to clinical practice. Students will complete twelve, one-month rotations during the clinical year. These rotations will include seven required rotations and five elective rotations.

The seven ARC-PA required clinical rotations are as follows:

- i. Pediatric Medicine
- ii. Women's Health
- iii. Emergency Medicine
- iv. Internal Medicine
- v. Family Practice
- vi. Behavioral Health
- vii. General Surgery

The remaining five rotations are selected by the students to further enhance their clinical experience and prepare for clinical practice. Students will complete four, one-month rotations each semester and these are listed below.

Spring	PAST 601, 602, 603, 604
Summer	PAST 605, 606, 607, 608
Fall	PAST 609, 610, 611, 612

Clinical Service Syllabi and Objectives

The clinical service syllabi include the information and expectations of the program for each clinical service. The information below will be applicable for all the clinical service rotations. Specific learning objectives and content are based on the NCCPA blueprint. The specific learning objectives are listed below and related to the individual medical specialty areas. Students will be responsible for these learning objectives in each clinical service to prepare them for clinical practice and the PANCE. Please refer to the specific learning objectives prior to beginning each clinical service. The following link is provided for the NCCPA blueprint and task areas: <https://www.nccpa.net/ExamsContentBlueprint>

Clinical Service Overview

Each clinical service rotation will be a 4 week, 4-credit hour course. The rotation is designed to provide the student with learning experiences within the designated medical specialty. The student should be engaged in all aspects of the clinical service. The clinical service rotation will enhance the student's learning experience in a systematic approach in the evaluation of common medical and surgical conditions related to the medical subspecialty.

Purpose

The student will apply knowledge and principles learned in the didactic phase of the program to interview, examine, evaluate, diagnose, prevent, and treat disease processes encountered within the specific rotation.

Required Textbook

Specific textbooks will be recommended for each specific clinical service. These will be used as a resource during the clinical service rotations.

Required Clinical Hours

A minimum of 160 hours must be worked. This may vary based on rotation. For specific instructions on the required clinical hours please refer to the clinical service syllabi for the specific rotation.

Rotation Assignment

The physician assistant program has worked to establish quality clinical preceptors and clinical service sites. The program will continue to monitor each program to ensure the students are experiencing an optimal learning experience. The program and the director of clinical education will assign students to clinical sites for clinical service rotations. Students are not required to solicit any clinical service rotations. **DO NOT** attempt to make changes on your own.

Director of Clinical Education

The director of clinical education, or DCE, oversees the clinical year and will be the contact person. Students should report any issues within the clinical year to the DCE.

Educational Objectives

The Samford University PA Program has general educational objectives and specific rotational objectives for the clinical phase of your PA education. You will need to refer to those objectives while on rotations to guide your clinical experiences as well as your selection of reading and study materials. Your preceptor will also receive a set of these objectives. Please notify the director of clinical education if you find the objectives are not being met. You will need to work with your preceptor to meet these objectives.

The program has a mission to help meet the need for qualified health care providers. Broad-based knowledge and skills in medicine and surgery which are a critical component of the program. The goal of each clinical service is to foster interest and understanding of the unique characteristics of the specific clinical service. The student will participate in and develop proficiencies in a broad spectrum of primary and specialty care. Students will build cognitive and clinical skills throughout the rotation.

Your review of the objectives should provide a valuable insight into what the program views as the capabilities of the physician assistant student. Obviously, variations will occur among students, but each student should generally be prepared to meet all the objectives and program expectations.

The following rotational objectives are provided for the use of the student and the preceptor. They are intended as guidelines. It must be appreciated that on any given rotation, some of the objectives will not be met due to circumstances beyond the student or preceptor's control. The student is expected to attend all pertinent teaching conferences and assume responsibility for patient care in the office and hospital setting, under the physician/preceptor supervision.

These competencies and objectives were developed by the program using competencies from PAEA, AAPA, ARC-PA, and NCCPA to address medical knowledge and skills, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, and professionalism. These competencies can be found at:

<https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PA-Competencies-updated.pdf>

Clinical Year Prerequisites

1. The student must complete the didactic year in good standing.
2. Students that enter the clinical year in a probationary status will have one additional semester within the clinical year to achieve the 3.0 GPA required.
3. Incomplete grades must be resolved prior to entering the clinical year, and students receiving less than a 3.0 GPA entering the clinical year will be on academic probation. The details are listed within the academic good standing portion of this manual.
4. All students must be enrolled in a comprehensive health insurance program.
5. Students must maintain malpractice insurance throughout the clinical year.
6. All students must have completion of all required immunizations and testing. Samford University does not require students to be COVID vaccinated. Most hospital facilities require COVID vaccinations. If a student does not want to have the COVID vaccination, they may request an exemption from each facility that they will be rotating. The facility will determine if the exemption will be granted. If the exemption is not granted, this may delay the student's graduation date. Each student is provided with a form that must be signed acknowledging they are aware of the request for exemption.
7. Must have a current BLS and ACLS certification that does not expire until after graduation.
8. All students will complete credentialing paperwork for all facilities that they will be attending during the clinical year.
9. All students must have a completed university registration.

Educational Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

Course Objectives:

Instructional objectives and outcomes will be tailored to each clinical rotation and discussed in "Instructional Objectives" document. Based on the published "Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession," the learning outcomes we hope to cultivate are components of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, and professionalism. As a result of completing the clinical year, the students should be able to:

Knowledge for Practice

- Demonstrate investigative and critical thinking in clinical situations
- Discern among acute, chronic, and emergency disease states.
- Apply principles of clinical sciences to diagnose disease and utilize therapeutic decision making, clinical problem solving and other evidence-based practice skills
- Determine the appropriate diagnostic studies to work-up a patient's symptoms and arrive at a diagnosis
- Recognize the underlying pathophysiology associated with the various diseases and conditions
- Devise a treatment, including pharmacology, for various disease and conditions
- Identify interventions for prevention of disease and promote health maintenance with appropriate screening methods
- Incorporate history and physical findings, clinical data obtained to provide effective, efficient patient care
- Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide effective, efficient patient care

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

- Communicate effectively to elicit and provide information
- Demonstrate emotional resilience, stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity.
- Accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes
- Demonstrate compassion and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families
- Recognize and address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others

Patient Centered Care

- Gather accurate and essential information about patients through history-taking, physical examination, and diagnostic testing
- Elicit and acknowledge the story of the individual and apply the context of the individual's life to their care, such as environmental and cultural influences.
- Interpret data based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and clinical judgement to make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions.
- Perform medical and surgical procedures essential to their area of practice
- Recognize normal and abnormal health states
- Discern among acute, chronic, and emerging disease states
- Elicit and understand the history of individual patients and apply the context of their lives (including environmental influences, cultural norms, socioeconomic factors, and beliefs) when determining health vs ill patients

Interprofessional Collaboration

- Work Effectively with other health professionals to provide collaborative, patient centered care while maintaining a climate of mutual respect, dignity, diversity, ethical integrity, and trust.

Professionalism

- Develop professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers
- Commit to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
- Display sensitivity and responsiveness to patient's culture, age, gender, and abilities
- Demonstrate self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative

Student Tasks During the Clinical Year

Students may be responsible for multiple tasks within the clinical year including but not limited to:

Student tasks during the Clinical Year

Students will be responsible for multiple tasks within the clinical year including:

1. Obtaining patient histories and performing physical examinations
2. Care for patients across the age spectrum
 - a. Newborn
 - b. Infant
 - c. Child
 - d. Adolescent
 - e. Adult
 - f. Geriatric
3. Care of acute, emergent, preventative, and chronic medical conditions
4. Pre-operative, intra-operative, and post-operative patient care
5. Working within the inter-professional team
6. Mental health of patients including mental status examination
7. Gynecologic, obstetric, and pre-natal care

Students will be responsible for the following technical procedures during the clinical year including but not limited to:

1. Intravenous lines
2. Arterial lines
3. Nasogastric tubes
4. Foley catheters both male and female placement
5. Suturing techniques for wound closures
 - a. Running subcuticular
 - b. Running subcutaneous
 - c. Vertical mattress
 - d. Horizontal mattress
 - e. Simple interrupted
 - f. Dermal glues

6. One and two hand tying
7. Surgical first and second assisting as well as surgical techniques and sterility
8. Injections and infiltrating local anesthetic, intramuscular and subcutaneous
9. Draining and packing abscesses
10. Pelvic examinations including pap smear

Information for Preceptors

During their clinical year, students must be given opportunities to practice the clinical skills they will be expected to utilize as professionals. These skills are vast and include patient interviewing, physical examination of patients, communication with patients and colleagues, performing clinical skills and procedures interpretation of diagnostic studies and clinical data, and demonstration of professional behaviors. Students are expected to apply and practice their skills so that they may become more useful members of the healthcare team, both as lifelong learners and as future healthcare professionals.

A clinical preceptor serves as a guide in facilitating a student's patient encounters, helping the student gain clinical experiences that are relevant to the practice of medicine and appropriate for the student's achievement/experience level. As the student's patient care responsibilities are progressively advanced, he/she should be able to manage all elements of a patient encounter, from the initial chief complaint to discussing final treatment planning with the preceptor. All students should be given guidance up-front on how the preceptor and/or practice system would like patient encounters to occur or be documented, and preceptors should keep in mind that students just starting out their clinical rotations may need additional supervision before they feel comfortable enough working more autonomously.

The Samford Physician Assistant student must never be used as a substitute for medical staff or a licensed medical provider in any clinical setting. Students should not be allowed to evaluate, diagnose, treat, or discharge patients without the direct involvement and supervision of the clinical preceptor.

Preceptor Responsibilities

1. Provide an orientation to each student about guidelines of the rotation – to enhance student performance preceptors should orient the students to the tasks and expectations within the rotation.
2. Arrange for an orientation of any facility that the student will be rotating.
3. Preceptor must provide students will adequate patient encounters.
4. Make all learning experiences meaningful for students.
5. Orient the student of expectation of the rotation.
6. Provide students with patient responsibilities.
7. Student must be directly supervised by the preceptor during their clinical experience.
8. Guide students in patient interviewing and physical examination skill and technical skills, communication with patients and colleagues, interpretation of diagnostic studies and

clinical data, patient assessment and plan and demonstration of behaviors consistent with professionalism.

9. Provide ongoing construction feedback during the rotation.
10. Avoid placing students in a position that will exceed their level of training.
11. Students must not be used in replacement of staff or another provider.
12. Notify the director of clinical education of any concerns regarding student deficiency or unprofessional behavior.
13. Complete a mid and final evaluation of student's performance.

Clinical Year- Site Approval

1. Students will not solicit for any clinical service sites. The program will provide all clinical service sites.
2. Clinical year rotation selection will occur in the fall semester prior to the January clinical year.
3. The director of clinical education will have an informational meeting to explain the rules of clinical rotation assignment prior to the assignment of rotations.
4. The program will assign all clinical rotation clinical sites for each student.
5. The student will have a "wish list" for elective rotations. Each student will be able to rank order elective clinical specialties and rank order clinical sites within the specialties.
6. Once the initial clinical schedule is completed, the students will be given the opportunity to make 2 changes to their schedule. The changes must be submitted in writing to the director of clinical education within 3 days of the initial schedule presented to the students.
7. The director of clinical education will do their best to accommodate the changes. The Program reserves the right to deny any rotation change for any reason.
8. Once the final schedule is approved it will not be changed, it is final.
9. The program reserves the right to make administrative changes.

Clinical Year Student Guidelines

1. Students should contact the preceptor by phone or email approximately one week before the beginning of the rotation.
2. The student is responsible to meet with the preceptor to discuss the requirements and objectives of the rotation during the first week of the rotation.
3. The student will follow to the same schedule as the preceptor. Usually, work will be from 40-60 hours per week. This will be dependent on the type of rotation. Please contact the director of clinical education regarding any schedule questions.
4. If a student incurs an accidental body fluid exposure, the student should immediately notify the Preceptor and the director of clinical education. Once the mandatory notifications are complete, the student should follow Samford University Physician Assistant Studies program body fluid exposure procedures.
5. All absences must be reported to the preceptor and director of clinical education as soon as the student determines that they will not be present at their clinical site. If the student

- does not report the absence, this will constitute an unapproved absence. Please refer to unapproved absence policy.
6. All students should be involved in patient care by the end of the first week of the rotation. If you are not engaged, please notify the director of clinical education to discuss.
 7. Students must track all patient care interaction for completion of competencies.
 8. The mid rotation evaluation form should be completed by the preceptor. This form allows for dialogue with the preceptor regarding the student's performance, up to this point and if the student was prepared for the rotation. It provides guidance for the student on areas that need to be improved. The final rotation evaluation is required before grades will be submitted. Please remind the preceptor during your last week to complete the evaluation form.
 9. Students must spend additional time studying outside the clinical rotation time. The students should spend approximately 2-3 hours per day reading and studying.
 10. Objectives and required goals and competencies are listed for each individual rotation. Students should complete these objectives to the best of their ability
 11. Appropriate preceptors are a licensed Physician, Physician Assistant or Certified Nurse practitioner. Medical residents may provide some instruction but should not be responsible for the student's education. Students must work under the direction of the preceptor and should not make any independent patient decisions without consulting with their preceptor.
 12. Students are prohibited from working during the clinical year.
 13. No monetary compensation will be paid to any Samford Physician Assistant Studies student for work completed as a student.
 14. Samford Physician Assistant Studies students should never represent themselves as a certified physician assistant. The student must always identify himself or herself as a Physician Assistant Studies student.
 15. Under no circumstance should a Samford Physician Assistant Studies student sign a prescription or order a prescription into the electronic medical records.
 16. A Samford University Physician Assistant Studies program student should never be utilized to substitute for a clinical assistant or administrative assistant while at a clinical rotation site.
 17. Students should not participate in off duty socialization with any Preceptor or staff member. Also, a student should not cultivate any type of romantic relationship with a Preceptor, staff person or patient. This will be considered unethical behavior and may result in dismissal from the program. Students should always follow Samford University Code of Conduct while representing the Samford University Physician Assistant Studies program.
 18. During the emergency medicine rotation, the Program is prescriptive in the hours worked. The student obligation is to work at minimum, 24 hours of weeknight shifts (11p-7a or 7p-7a), 24hours of weekend night shifts (Friday, Sat., Sun.) and 48 hours of evening shifts (3-11p). If the student does not complete the required shifts, an Incomplete ("I") will be given until they are completed. Each student is required to submit his or her

schedule to the director of clinical education by the first Friday of the Emergency Room rotation.

19. It is within the student's rights to refuse an order that the student perceives as detrimental to patient care. If the student refuses an order from their preceptor, the student should immediately contact the director of clinical education for instructions.
20. Students should refrain from utilizing their cell phones while on clinical rotation.
21. Students must not post information on social media regarding any clinical experience. If any social media posting is discovered, they may be ground for immediate dismissal from the program without the possibility of readmission.
22. Students must wear their Samford issued identification badge at all times as well as their program issued white coat while on all rotations.
23. Students are to exhibit the professional behaviors by Samford University and the Physician Assistant program.

Student Responsibilities in the Clinical Year

1. PA students on clinical rotation must work under the direct supervision of a licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner, who is supervised by a licensed physician.
2. Students will deliver health care services to patients without regard to their race, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, medical condition, socioeconomic status, religious or political beliefs, or any status protected by law or executive order.
3. Students shall perform only those procedures authorized by the Samford Physician Assistant program, clinical site, and preceptor-under direct supervision. Students must adhere to all rules and regulations of the PA Program and the clinical sites.
4. The preceptor must countersign all chart entries and written orders immediately. Students must follow the clinical site rules regarding chart entries.
5. Students shall not exhibit any behavior that may jeopardize the health and safety of patients, staff, faculty, or fellow students.

For any questions or concerns while on rotations contact the director of clinical education.

Clinical Year Professional Behavior

Students are guests of each rotation site and should create a positive impression of themselves, the program, and the physician assistant profession. Professional behavior is required by all students in the clinical setting. Student interactions should be courteous and respectful to all persons. All student evaluation forms contain "Professional Manner" objectives that must be met to successfully complete the rotation. Included are objectives in truthfulness, punctuality, dependability, proper patient rapport, good professional relations, and awareness of professional limitations. If a student is removed from a rotation by either the program or a request from a preceptor due to professionalism concerns, the student must appear before the director of clinical education and program director. All professionalism violations will be evaluated on a case-by-

case basis. Should the program director and director of clinical education feel that the violations are egregious in nature then the student may be dismissed immediately.

No alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs are to be consumed during working hours or while on call. If a student is found intoxicated during working or call hours, they may be dismissed from the program. Students are reminded that the use of illicit drugs is a violation of university policy and will be addressed by university officials.

Employment

Due to the time intensive and variable nature of the clinical year employment is prohibited.

Clinical Attire

Appropriate attire is required for ALL clinical service rotations and courses. Students should always wear Samford University PA Program identification. Business casual attire is required unless the clinical preceptor recommends scrubs. Please review Student handbook for Dress Code Policy.

Clinical Year Assessments, Grading and Evaluations

- a. Preceptor evaluation of the student
- b. End of rotation (EOR) examinations
- c. End of rotation OSCE
- d. History and physical examination
- e. Intra-operative and post-operative note
- f. Patient tracking data
- g. ROSH mock EOR exam
- h. ROSH board review questions
- i. Summative final OSCE
- j. Summative exam
- k. Student evaluation of preceptor and clinical site

Grade determination will be based on the following scale:

A: 90-100 %	B+: 87-89.9%
B: 80-86.9 %	C+: 77-79.9%
C: 70-76.9 %	F: <70%

Student Clinical Performance Evaluation

Students will undergo assessments within each of their clinical rotations. At the end of the rotation, the preceptor will complete the Student Clinical Performance Evaluation form specific to that clinical rotation. At the conclusion of your rotation, the student should arrange an exit interview to review their performance during the rotation. The student will also evaluate the preceptor and the clinical experience.

These are calculated and used in the overall determination of the final grade during the rotation. These evaluations will address the knowledge, competencies, and professional behavior of the student. Students may ask for more than one final evaluation if they work with multiple preceptors during the rotation. If more than one evaluation is received, all evaluations will be graded, and the evaluations will be averaged to create the final grade for the rotation. The preceptor evaluation for student's clinical performance can be found within the appendices located at the end of the handbook.

Mid-rotation Student Clinical Performance Evaluation

It is recommended that the student should meet with their preceptor to perform a Mid-rotation Evaluation utilizing the final evaluation form as a guide. The purpose of the mid-rotation evaluation is to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement during the rotation.

Failure of Student Clinical Performance Evaluation

Failure of the Student Clinical Performance Evaluation is defined as any mark the "Unsatisfactory" section of professionalism or a score of less than 70% on the evaluation. In the event of a failure, the student will meet and discuss the evaluation with the director of clinical education. Due to the variability and potential seriousness of unprofessional behavior all situations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Should it be determined that the preceptor evaluation stands then the student will fail the rotation. The student will have the opportunity to repeat the rotation. This would delay their graduation date. Per remediation policy only one rotation may be repeated during the clinical year.

End of Rotation Exams (EOR's)

An End of Rotation (EOR) examination must be taken on the final day of the rotation for each of the required clinical rotations. Attendance for all EOR examinations is mandatory. If a student misses an EOR, they will receive a zero for their grade. The only excused absence is for an emergency/illness. If the reason is an illness, the student must present a signed excuse from their medical provider. The student must contact the DCE as soon as the decision is made that they will not take the test. The DCE will determine if this will be an excused absence.

If a student arrives late for an examination, he/she will still be required to complete the entire examination in the remaining time of the originally scheduled timeframe given. A student who arrives late to an examination will not be permitted to take the exam if any other students have already finished the exam and left the testing room. Failure to take the exam will result in a grade of zero on that exam.

During the examination, students are not permitted to ask the proctor any questions. Students should write any concerns with specific test questions on the assigned material provided by the instructor. Students will clear their desk of everything once the exam is started (only exception being a drink on the desk). Talking is not allowed during exams and other papers or electronic media may not be accessed during the exams. No bathroom breaks are allowed during the EOR test.

The end of rotation (EOR) examination score will be compared to the average score of a reference population of test takers from all PA education programs on items in each content area on the EOR. The student performance will range from 300-500. A passing score will be based on the national performance of test takers and determined by the program utilizing a Z-score. If a student does not make a passing score as determined by the program, they will be allowed to re-take the EOR examination. A second failing score will constitute failing the rotation and would require the student to repeat the rotation.

EOR Failure Policy

If a student does not make a passing score as determined by the program, they will meet with the director of clinical education to review their “keyword feedback”. The student will then be assigned an individualized remediation plan to facilitate understanding of areas of concern(s). Once this assignment is complete, the student will re-take the EOR examination. If the student passes the retake examination, they will progress through the clinical year. If the student fails the retake examination then they will fail the rotation. This would require the student to repeat the rotation at the end of the clinical year. This will delay their graduation. If a student fails the rotation for a second time, then they will be dismissed from the program. Additionally, the student may only repeat one rotation in this manner. The student may be subject to additional fees to purchase “re-take” examinations.

History and Physical Exam

Student will submit a history and physical examination on all rotations. These will be submitted in Canvas on the second Sunday of the rotation by midnight. There will be specific parameters of the history physical discussed for each rotation. Late H&Ps will not be accepted. An 80% is required for passing. Scores less than 80% will be addressed by the director of clinical education and the student will be required to repeat the assignment utilizing the feedback given.

Patient Tracking Data

All students are expected to play a direct role in patient care throughout the clinical phase of their education. The program has established goals for patient encounters throughout the clinical year as well as goals for patient acuity level, care setting, age, surgical settings, and specific types of patient encounters. Patient data tracking will be input using the EXXAT tracking software. If the student feels that they will be unable to reach the expected goals during the clinical year and/or rotation, then they should discuss the discrepancy with the director of clinical education.

Rotational Competency Assessments

The Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) for the required rotation will be completed on the last Friday of the rotation. Each student will have 15 minutes to complete the OSCE.

Failure of Objective Structured Clinical Experience (OSCE)

Failure of the OSCE is defined as a score of less than 80% on the score sheet. Should the student receive a failing score they should meet with the faculty member that observed their encounter for feedback and remediation. The student will be re-assessed at a later time with a different case. A second failure of an OSCE will result in 5% reduction in overall score and additional remediation plan as outlined by the program.

Technical Skill Competency Evaluation

Technical Skills Competency Evaluations will be completed during elective rotations throughout the clinical year. The students will demonstrate correct techniques, in multiple medical procedures used to treat and diagnose patients.

Failure of Technical Skill Competency Evaluation

Failure of a Technical Skill Competency Evaluation is defined as a student receive “Unsatisfactory” in any area on the competency assessment. Should the student receive and unsatisfactory then they will be remediated by the faculty member observing them. A second failure of any technical skill evaluation will result in 5% reduction in overall score and additional remediation plan as outlined by the program. The student will be re-assessed at a later time.

Remediation Policy

The Samford University Physician Assistant Studies Program is academically rigorous and challenging. Thus, the Samford PA Program has developed the “Remediation Policy” which will allow students to remediate one rotation should a failure occur. Remediation will depend on the assignment and will be tailored to the students’ knowledge gap. Reassessment will occur after remediation. Failure of a second rotation will lead to the dismissal of the student.

Failure of any clinical rotation will require the student to repeat the specific rotation at the conclusion of the clinical year. Graduation from the program will be extended depending on when the course is retaken. After successful remediation of one clinical rotation, any additional rotation failure will result in the dismissal from the program.

Student Evaluation of the Clinical Site

On each rotation the student will evaluate the clinical site and the preceptor. These evaluations will be monitored by the director of clinical education and the program director to assure the students have the appropriate education and patient contact to obtain the desired competencies. This student evaluation of the preceptor can be found within the appendices located at the end of the student manual.

Student Identification

All students within the clinical year will be required to wear their Samford University Physician Assistant Studies student badge as well as their white coat with their names and student status listed. on them.

Attendance in the Clinical Year

Students are required to be in attendance daily during the clinical year unless otherwise notified by the preceptor. It is understood that the time at the clinical site may include nights, weekends, or holidays. If for some reason a student is unable to attend their clinical service rotation, they should ask for pre-approval or notify the director of clinical education immediately. The director of clinical education must approve the absence/personal day and may deny the request for any reason. The program does understand that unforeseen circumstances occur. Clinical year absences are used in whole day increments and cannot be taken in partial day increments. The student must inform the preceptor and the director of clinical education as soon as they determine that a personal day will be used. Students should submit days for approval through the Student Leave section in EXXAT. Each student may take ten personal days during the clinical year. Students cannot take more than **two personal days** during a required rotation. Students cannot take more than **five personal days** during an elective rotation. Any medical absences that are more than two consecutive days would fall under the “Personal Leave” policy.

Approval should be obtained in advance from the director of clinical education as well as the preceptor (unless it is an emergency). Failure to notify the preceptor and the director of clinical education will be considered unprofessional behavior and subject to disciplinary action as outlined below.

1. Counseling by the director of clinical education.
2. The initial unapproved absence will result in forfeiture of two personal days for each day missed.
3. The second unapproved absence will constitute unprofessional behavior.
4. A letter of reprimand will be placed in the student’s record describing the unapproved absence.
5. If possible, the student will be required to make up the missed time.

The student must inform the preceptor and the director of clinical education as soon as they determine that a personal day will be used. If the student does not notify the preceptor and the director of clinical education, this will be considered an unapproved absence. See below for unapproved absences.

Unapproved Absences

The director of clinical education and your preceptor must pre-approve any absence. The approval should be obtained in advance unless it is an emergency. Unapproved absences will result in following disciplinary action(s):

1. Counseling by the director of clinical education.
2. The initial unapproved absences will result in the forfeiture of two personal days for each day missed. The second unapproved absence will constitute unprofessional behavior and the student may be dismissed from the program.
3. A letter of reprimand will be placed in the student’s record describing the unapproved absence.

4. The student will have to make up the missed time but will still forfeit the days as described above.
5. The student will receive an “I” in the clinical service until the missed time is made up.

Personal Leave

If a student experiences an extended absence, more than their personal days, this will be considered personal leave. Examples might include illness, illness/death of a family member or accident. Students must notify in writing the director of clinical education and request personal leave, except of unanticipated personal illness or accident. In these situations, the student or family member should contact the director of clinical education as soon as possible. The director of clinical education will notify the preceptor of the student’s absence.

Personal leave time may exceed the student’s personal days, in these cases, the student will have to make up each day that is missed. If make up days cannot be completed prior to the end of the rotation, the student will receive an “I” for the clinical service until the make-up days are completed. Once the day are made-up, the “I” will be removed and replaced with the grade of the student.

Preceptor Illness or Vacation Time

If a preceptor is absent from the clinical site, the student must immediately notify the director of clinical education. The director of clinical education will make the determination regarding moving the student to another preceptor on a case-by-case basis.

The director of clinical education will ensure that the student receives the best clinical experience. This may require that the student move to another similar clinical site during the preceptor’s absence. Any failure to notify the director of clinical education of a preceptor's absence may result in the student receiving disciplinary action, as described in the attendance policy.

Jury Duty or Military Duty

If the student is required to miss their clinical rotation due to Jury or Military duty, the student will be required to make up missed time at a rate of one day per missed day. The student and the director of clinical education will mutually agree on a make-up schedule for the time missed. If the student is required to complete the two-week reserve training, the student is encouraged to request a waiver. If the waiver is not granted by the military, then the student will be required to make-up the missed time.

Inclement Weather on Clinical Rotations

The Department of Public Safety monitors the National Weather Service radio network. A campus-wide alerting system notifies the campus community of threatening weather conditions. If inclement weather occurs, and the University is closed, students will not be required to attend their clinical rotation that day. If the University closes while the student is working on the rotation, they will be able to leave the rotation if conditions are safe for travel that day. These days will not count as personal days.

For further information visit the website at: <https://www.samford.edu/departments/public-safety/>
Additional information regarding how to get the latest Samford University weather alerts and emergency updates can be found at: <https://www.samford.edu/emergency/>

Rotation Experience Assignment

Under no circumstance should a student leave his/her rotation to participate in another clinical experience. This is unprofessional behavior, and the director of clinical education will counsel the student regarding this behavior. The first incident will be documented, and a letter will be placed in the student's file. If a second event occurs, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Electronic Devices in the Clinical Year

Students should not be on their electronic device during the clinical service rotations. You may check emails and make phone calls during lunch breaks and with the permission of the preceptor.

Travel or Distant Rotations

The program has worked to provide rotations located within the Birmingham area, however some of our clinical service sites require some travel. Students will be responsible for the travel expenses of distant rotations.

Patient Privacy/Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

As a reminder, patient safety and confidentiality are of utmost importance. Thus, we reiterate the HIPAA laws and regulations within the clinical portion of the manual. Please review the HIPAA laws and regulations listed within the student manual.

Educational Objectives and Competencies of Clinical Service

The Samford University PA Program has educational objectives and specific rotational objectives for the clinical phase of your PA education. You will need to refer to those objectives within your syllabi PAST 601-612, while on rotations to guide your clinical experiences as well as your selection of reading and study materials. Your preceptor will also receive a set of these objectives. Please notify the director or clinical education if you find the objectives are not being met. You will need to work with your preceptor to meet these objectives.

Academic Dishonesty

Dishonesty within the academic community is a very serious matter because dishonesty destroys the basic trust necessary for a healthy educational environment. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated by the program or Samford University. Please refer to Samford University Academic Integrity Policy. Please see the link below.

<https://www.samford.edu/files/Student-Handbook.pdf>

Appendix 1

Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure

Post Exposure Actions/Bodily Fluids

If a PA student experiences an exposure to blood or other body fluids the following steps should be performed:

Immediately cleanse the wound or mucous membrane with soap and water. If contact is to the nose and/or mouth, flush with clean water for several minutes. If contact is to the eye(s), irrigate with clean water, saline, or sterile irrigates for several minutes.

Exposure incidents must be reported immediately. The student should immediately contact their clinical preceptor and the director of clinical education to receive direction with respect to post-exposure medical evaluation. All information will be kept confidential and secure.

The student may seek medical care and attention from Samford University Health Services. If Samford University Health Services is closed the student may seek medical care from the student's personal physician of choice, the nearest urgent care center or emergency department.

Some experiential sites may have the PA student receive care through the facility's employee health center. Other experiential sites may require follow-up with the nearest urgent care center/emergency department. The preceptor and the director of clinical education should provide guidance regarding the appropriate post-exposure protocol.

An incident report for PA students (Student Body Fluid/Needle Stick Incident/Exposure Report Form) should be completed. Documentation should include the name, contact information of the PA Student exposed, and the source individual from which the contaminated exposure originated. The time, date and location of the exposure and a description of the incident should also be included in this documentation.

Laboratory testing of the source individual once consent is obtained should be ordered by a physician and should be based on current guidelines and available source individual medical history. Laboratory testing should be conducted immediately post-exposure and may require additional testing in the future. Testing should be conducted for HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C based on current CDC guidelines and available source individual data. Results of laboratory testing should be reported directly to the student by the physician.

Confidentiality of the source individual information and laboratory results will be maintained at all times. If the source individual refuses testing, the PA student should proceed with an appropriate medical evaluation, follow-up testing, and prophylactic measures and medication based upon current guidelines and source individual history, if available.

Clinical sites are under no obligation to provide medical evaluation or treatment if needed. Some clinical sites will treat the PA student as they do employees, but sites are under no obligation to do so. PA students should actively seek knowledge and understanding of the appropriate expected behaviors to follow.

This guidelines will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure current standards.
Approved by:

Physician Assistant Studies Student
(Print)

Signature

Date

Appendix 2**Samford University Physician Assistant Studies Program Required Technical Standards**

The Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies is an intense and rigorous program that requires knowledge in all fields of medicine and the basic skills needed within these fields to practice effectively. The objective of this program is to prepare graduates to enter a variety of employment settings and to render care to a diverse patient population. Students must exhibit both the mental and cognitive capabilities to complete the program including all of its didactic and clinical components. Students are expected to graduate in good standing and successfully complete the board examination obtaining licensure. Samford University will provide the necessary accommodations to prepare our students for both the didactic and technical aspects, preparing them for their future careers as Physician Assistants. Please refer and review the technical standards of the program listed within this document.

Alternative statement for students requesting accommodations:

I certify that I have read and understand the technical standards of selection listed above, and I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can meet each of these standards with certain accommodations. I will contact the Advisor for Students with Disabilities to determine what accommodations may be available. I understand that if I am unable to meet these standards with or without accommodations, I will not be admitted into the program.

The above technical standards for admission are approved by the following Samford University, School of Health Professions representatives:

Physician Assistant Studies Student
(Print)

Signature

Date

Paul Harrelson, MPAS, PA-C
Program Director, Physician Assistant Studies

Appendix 3**Student Acknowledgement of Receipt of Student Handbook**

DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been made to include updated and pertinent information however, changes may occur, and it is the student's responsibility to contact their faculty advisor and/or the DCE if they have any questions regarding the content of this handbook.

I, _____, (please print name), have thoroughly read the Physician Assistant Studies Program Student Manual and agree to abide by the policies describe within this document.

Signature

Date

Appendix 4

College of Health Sciences Health Forms

[CHS Physical Examination Form](#)

[CHS Immunization Form](#)

[CHS Tuberculosis Form](#)

