

Academic Policies and Standards

Requirements for the Successful Completion of the Didactic Year

Successful completion of the Didactic Phase of the LMU-SMS PA Program requires that students have met all of the following:

- Demonstrated compliance with all policies and procedures published by LMU and the LMU-SMS PA Program
- Demonstrated compliance with the LMU-SMS PA Program's professionalism and student code of conduct expectations
- Earned a grade of 70% (C) or higher for all didactic courses
- Passed all practical and written summative examinations
- Achieved minimum competency thresholds in all domains

Requirements for the Successful Completion of the Clinical Year

Successful completion of the Clinical Phase of the LMU-SMS PA Program requires that students meet all of the following:

- Compliance with all policies and procedures published by the LMU and the LMU-SMS PA Program
- Compliance with the LMU-SMS PA Program's professionalism and student code of conduct expectations
- Earned a grade of 70% (C) or higher for all clinical courses
- Passed all preceptor evaluations
- Passed all practical and written summative examinations
- Achieve minimum competency thresholds in all domains

Requirements for Graduation

Students matriculating into the LMU-SMS PA Program have a maximum of 54 (fifty-four) months to complete all required components of the curriculum including time for recess and leave of absences. Any alterations to the student curriculum must be approved by mechanisms listed in this handbook. LMU-SMS PA Students recommended for the degree of Doctor of Medical Science (DMS) in Physician Assistant Studies MUST:

- Successfully complete all components of the program (didactic, clinical, capstone, competency, and summative) AND
- Fulfill all financial obligations to LMU

Academic Standing

LMU-SMS PA Students in good academic standing will have met all of the following criteria:

- Earned a grade of 70% (C) or higher in all didactic and clinical courses required by the LMU-SMS PA Program

- Met the LMU-SMS PA Program professionalism and student code of conduct expectations
- Complied with all University and LMU-SMS PA Program policies and procedures

Academic Progression

Progression in the LMU-SMS PA Program is contingent upon continued mastery of program objectives, course content, competency minimums, and demonstration of professional behaviors consistent with health care professionals. Students who fail a didactic or clinical course will be placed on academic probation and may be recessed or dismissed from the Program. Students who fail to meet professionalism expectations will be placed on professional probation or may be dismissed from the program. Please see the Student Progress Committee (SPC) section for further information regarding academic and professional probation.

DISMISSAL AND WITHDRAWAL

Dismissal

The LMU-SMS PA Program reserves the right to **dismiss any LMU-SMS PA Student at any time while enrolled in the LMU-SMS PA Program**. Circumstances warranting such action may be of an **academic, professional, or legal nature**. Any student who is dismissed from the LMU-SMS PA Program by the SPC will be notified by the SPC Chair and will be advised to complete the check-out procedure. The SPC Chair will create a memorandum stating the change in the student's status and notify the appropriate faculty and staff. Failure to complete this check-out procedure will cause the LMU-SMS PA Program to withhold all records pertaining to the student's attendance. Any student who is dismissed from the LMU-SMS PA Program will **NOT be eligible** for re-admittance to the program. The check-out procedure is as follows:

- Complete an exit interview with financial aid
- Return their student ID badge and parking sticker to security

Leave of Absence / Withdrawal

A leave of absence may be granted to an LMU-SMS PA Student by the PA Program Director for one of the following reasons:

- Medical emergency
- Financial emergency

- Maternity
- Call to active military service
- Pursuit of an academic endeavor other than the established curricular work, either on campus or at another recognized teaching facility
- The discretion of the PA Program Director where appropriate

Only students who are in good standing with the LMU-SMS PA Program can be granted a leave of absence without condition.

An LMU-SMS PA Student may be granted a leave of absence in good academic standing if the student has no failures at the time the leave of absence is granted. An LMU-SMS PA Student may be granted a leave of absence, not in good academic standing, if the student has one or more failures on his/her transcript in any term, including the term in which the request for leave of absence is made. The student must personally discuss the reason for the leave with the PA Program Director. The student must then submit a written request for a leave of absence to the PA Program Director who will then approve or not approve the request. Any student granted a leave of absence in good academic standing will receive a letter from the PA Program Director outlining the requirements for the student's return to the LMU-SMS PA Program. Any student granted a leave of absence, not in good academic standing MUST meet with the SPC before he/she is allowed to return to the LMU-SMS PA Program. The SPC will decide if the student should be readmitted to continue his/her training in the LMU-SMS PA Program.

Leave of absences are granted for no more than one year. The official date of the leave of absence will be the date of receipt of the student's written request. Any tuition refunds or outstanding balances will be based on this date. Students who are absent longer than the approved leave of absence duration may have to reapply to or restart the LMU-SMS PA Program. Students matriculating into the LMU-SMS PA Program have a maximum of 54 (fifty-four) months to complete all required components of the curriculum including time for recess and leave of absences. Any alterations to the student curriculum must be approved by mechanisms listed in this handbook.

Students seeking to return from a leave of absence must complete all requirements related to the leave of absence and provide notification of completion to the PA Program Director in writing. Students must notify the PA Program Director of their intent to return to the LMU-SMS PA Program in writing no less than four months before the anticipated date of return.

Students seeking to return from a medical leave of absence must have a licensed physician certify in writing that the student's physical and/or mental health is sufficient to continue their training in a capacity consistent with the technical standards (please see *Section II: LMU-SMS PA Student Policies and Procedures, Technical Standards and Typical Demands and Performance Requirements*) of the LMU-SMS PA Program. This letter must be submitted to the PA Program Director.

Students seeking to return from a financial leave of absence must provide the finance office/financial aid office with sufficient documentation to demonstrate their financial capability to advance their education.

Any student voluntarily withdrawing from the LMU-SMS PA Program must provide the PA Program Director with a letter of resignation. The PA Program Director will create a memorandum stating the change in the student's status and notify the appropriate faculty and staff.

It is imperative that any student who leaves the LMU-SMS PA Program for any reason goes through the check-out procedure before their dismissal, withdrawal, or leave of absence can said to be final. Failure to complete this exit procedure will cause the LMU-SMS PA Program to withhold all records pertaining to the student's attendance. The check-out procedure is as follows:

- Complete an exit interview with financial aid
- Return their student ID badge and parking sticker to security

Fair Practices

PA students have equal access to facilities and programs of the Lincoln Memorial University-School of Medical Sciences as students of other programs. LMU-SMS is committed to equality of opportunity and does not discriminate against applicants, students, or employees based on race, religion, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disability. All policies concerning equal opportunity/affirmative action, sexual harassment, discrimination, and conflicts of interest are found in the *LMU Student Handbook* and the *PA Student Handbook and Catalog*.

Employment during the Program

Because of the intensity of the LMU-SMS PA Program, students are *strongly discouraged* from seeking or maintaining employment during the entire program. If a PA student chooses to work during the first year of the program, it is his/her responsibility to ensure that employment does not interfere with or hinder academic progress. Having a job is not an excuse for missing lectures, examinations, clinical labs or assignments. During the clinical year, students will be required to rotate through a clinical site a minimum of 120-140 hours per 4 week rotation. In addition, students may be required to take on call, weekends, holidays, evenings and/or nights. PA students are not allowed to work for the program or be substituted for administrative or technical support at any time.

LMU-SMS PA Admissions Office

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