1/1/2027

Lincoln Memorial University School of Medical Sciences Physician Assistant Program

Chattanooga, Tennessee

Academic Standards

Contents

POLICY: REQUIRED ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS WHILE IN THE PROGRAM

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15a
Published: Website
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Course/Rotation Grades
- The student must pass each course (and rotation) with 70% or better to graduate**.**

Grading Scale
- The grading scheme is set by each course director and is displayed in the syllabus.
- The final course grades will **NOT** be rounded.

Letter grades for each course correspond with the following numeric ranges:
- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- F = < 70%

A final course grade of less than "C" (<70%) is a failure.

Minimal Cumulative GPA Requirement
  A cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required to graduate from the LMU SMS Chattanooga PA Program.

Minimal Semester GPA Requirement
- A semester GPA of **3.0 is required** to progress from one semester to the next.
- The student may progress on academic probation with less than a 3.0 semester GPA at the discretion of the Student Progress Committee. If the student does not raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 or above within one semester. In that case, they will be decelerated or dismissed from the LMU SMS Chattanooga PA program at the discretion of the Student Progress Committee.
- GPA is not rounded.

POLICY: REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES FOR COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15b
Published: Website

This is a **lockstep, 24-month curriculum** (January–December of the following year) requiring students to progress with their cohort and complete courses as scheduled.

In cases of **extenuating circumstances,** students may be granted extensions for progression or graduation. The maximum time allowed to complete the program is **48 months from the original date of matriculation**.

Requirements for Progression Between Semesters

- Earn a grade of **"C" or better** in each course or rotation.
- 3.0 Semester GPA

Requirements for Progression to the Clinical Phase

- Earn a grade of **"C" or better** in every didactic-phase course.
- Maintain a **cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher**.

Requirements for Graduation

- Complete all coursework in compliance with program academic standards, including demonstration of all **Program Learning Outcomes**.
- Earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Pass all components of the **Summative Evaluation**.
- Submit a completed **graduation application** to the LMU-C PA Program.
- Maintain **good academic/professional standing**:
    - o If on academic/professionalism probation entering the final semester, the student must meet all requirements to return to good standing before the end of that semester.
- Complete all degree requirements within **48 months** of matriculation.
- Receive **SPC approval** for graduation.
- Clear all **financial obligations and institutional requirements** for graduation.

Program Delay/Deceleration/Leave of Absence:

- The Student Progress Committee will communicate the approved length of any graduation delay, deceleration, or leave of absence with return to the program.
- Course retakes or a re-entrance exam may be required for re-enrollment in the LMU SMS Chattanooga PA program. The Student Progress Committee will outline these requirements at the time the delay, deceleration, or leave of absence is granted.

POLICY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REMEDIATION

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15c/B4.01b
Published: Website

Definition: Remediation- The program-defined process for addressing deficiencies in a student's knowledge and skills, such that the correction of these deficiencies is measurable and can be documented.
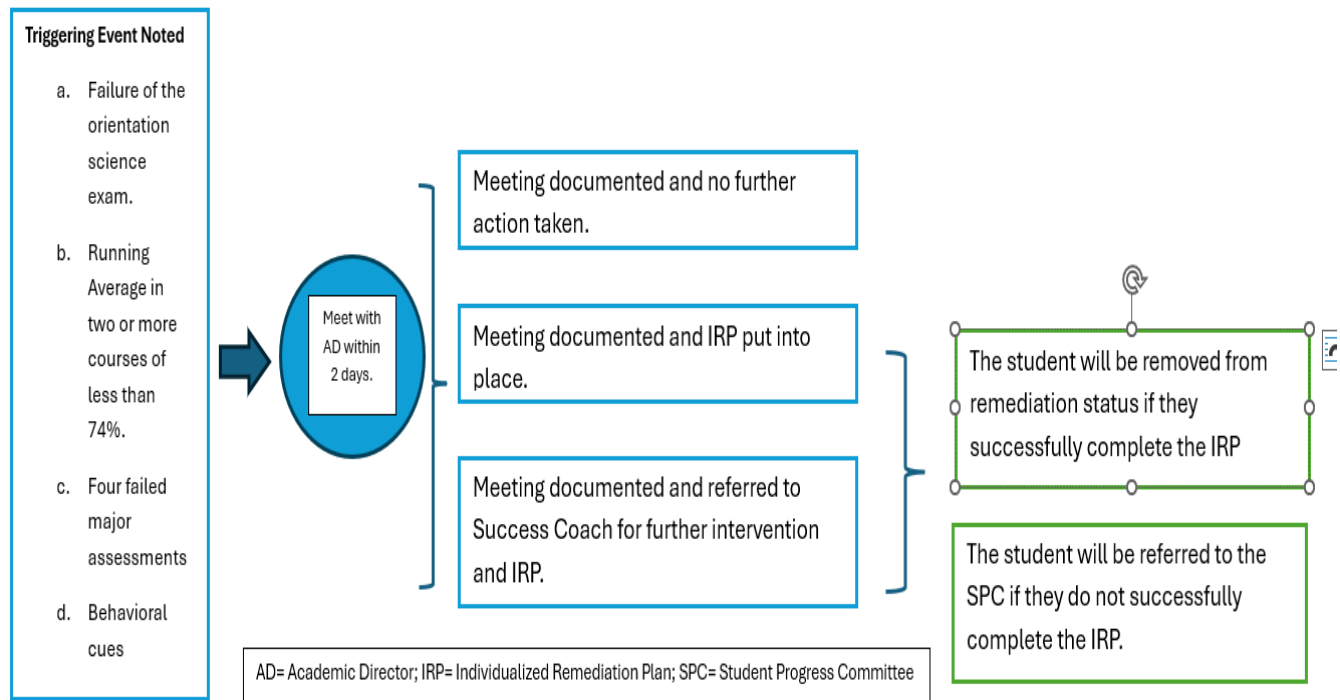
Didactic Triggers for Remediation- The triggers for remediation were developed to ensure early identification of student deficiencies across multiple domains: academic, professional, and personal.

(1) Students will be identified as needing remediation through any one of the following events:
   a. Failure of the orientation science exam.
   b. Running Average in two or more courses of less than 74%.
   c. Four failed major assessments (OSCE/Major Exam/Practical Exam) within a semester.
(2) Students will be identified as needing remediation if any of the following are identified by two individual faculty or staff members within a 2-4 week period, with the following behavioral cues:
   a. Time management concerns
   b. Marginal academic performance
   c. Difficulty meeting or understanding expectations
   d. Peer or informal concern ("hallway chatter")
   e. Professionalism red flags*

*See the appendix for the form and an expanded definition/example of behaviors that trigger the above concern.

Process for Didactic Remediation

(1) Once the concern has been noted (by a triggering event), the remediation referral form will be completed by the appropriate faculty or staff member and sent to the Didactic Director (DD), Associate Director (AD), or Program Director (PD)
(2) The DD, AD, or PD will meet with the student <u>within two business days</u> of receiving the remediation referral form to discuss the concerns. Based on the conversation, the student may be referred to success coaching, an individualized remediation plan (IRP) may be developed for the student to complete, or both.
(3) If the student meets with the Success Coach, they will create a mandatory individualized remediation plan for the student.
(4) The individualized remediation plan may include:
   a. Referral for counseling if needed.
   b. Educational testing or neuropsychiatric testing for learning concerns.
   c. Life skills remediation to improve time management, professionalism, emotional maturity, resilience, etc.
   d. Academic skills remediation to improve study skills, critical thinking, and test-taking skills.
   e. Tutoring for improvement in content knowledge.
   f. Participation in educational clarification labs
(5) The IRP plan will be documented with timelines and must be completed as a progression requirement. The plan will be communicated to the Didactic Director and advisor.
(6) Once the student has completed the IRP and shown improvement in their academic performance as specified on the plan, they will be removed from remediation status. Measures of improvement will be included in the plan to show that remediation has been effective.

Triggering Event Noted

a. Failure of the orientation science exam.

b. Running Average in two or more courses of less than 74%.

c. Four failed major assessments

d. Behavioral cues

Meet with AD within 2 days.

Meeting documented and no further action taken.

Meeting documented and IRP put into place.

Meeting documented and referred to Success Coach for further intervention and IRP.

The student will be removed from remediation status if they successfully complete the IRP

The student will be referred to the SPC if they do not successfully complete the IRP.

AD= Academic Director; IRP= Individualized Remediation Plan; SPC= Student Progress Committee

Clinical Triggers for Remediation- The triggers for remediation were developed to ensure early identification of student deficiencies across multiple domains: academic, professional, and personal.
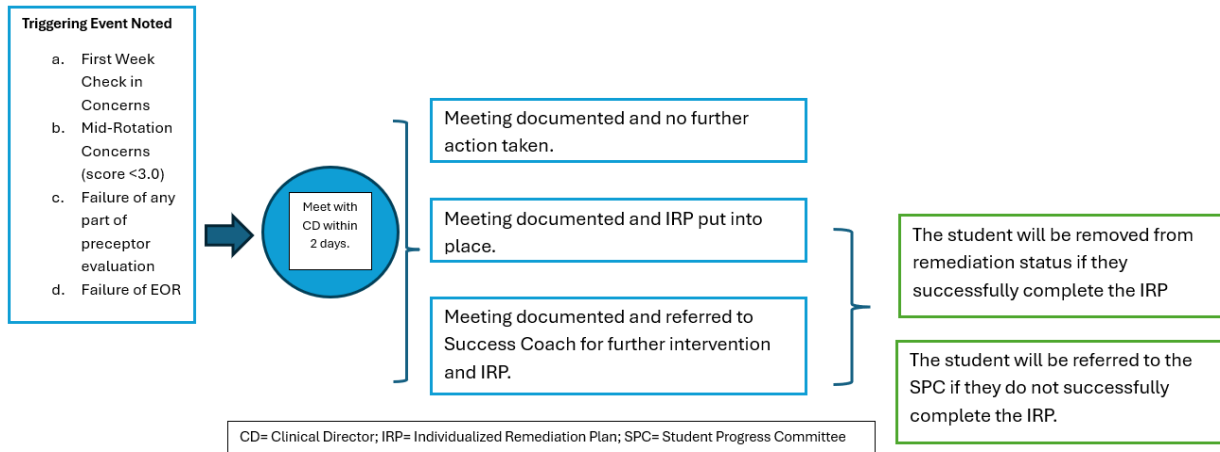
(1) **Week One Check In:** Concerns raised during the first week's check-in (Any score less than two is considered concerning).
(2) **Preceptor evaluation.** A final score of > 70% is required to pass. Remediation is required for a final score of < 70% and for a score of < 3.0 on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) for any CLO assessed on the Clinical Preceptor Evaluation of Student Performance.
(3) **End of Rotation Exam**. A final score of > 70% is required to pass the End-of-Rotation multiple-choice question examination. Remediation is required for a final score of < 70%.
(4) **Professionalism Assessment.** Failure to complete all administrative tasks constitutes a deficit in professional conduct. It may result in referral to the Program's Student Progress Committee (SPC) for consideration of disciplinary action(s) and determination of progression in the curriculum. This may result in a delay in graduation and failure to complete the program within 48 months of initial matriculation.

Process for Clinical Remediation

(1) The CD of the clinical faculty advisor will meet with the student within two business days of receiving the remediation referral form to discuss the concerns. Based on the conversation, the CD may refer the student to success coaching, develop an individualized remediation plan (IRP) for the student to complete, or do both.
(2) If referred to a Success Coach, they will create a mandatory individualized remediation plan for the student.
(3) The individualized remediation plan may include:
   a. Referral for counseling if needed.
   b. Educational testing or neuropsychiatric testing for learning concerns.
   c. Life skills remediation to improve time management, professionalism, emotional maturity, resilience, etc.
   d. Academic skills remediation to improve study skills, critical thinking, and test-taking skills.
   e. Tutoring for improvement in content knowledge.

      f.   Participation in educational clarification labs

(4)   The IRP plan will be documented with timelines and must be completed as a progression requirement. The plan will be communicated to the Academic Director and advisor.

(5)   Once the student has completed the IRP and shown improvement in their academic performance as specified on the plan, they will be removed from remediation status.

Triggering Event Noted

   a.   First Week Check in Concerns
   b.   Mid-Rotation Concerns (score <3.0)
   c.   Failure of any part of preceptor evaluation
   d.   Failure of EOR

Meet with CD within 2 days.

- Meeting documented and no further action taken.
- Meeting documented and IRP put into place.
- Meeting documented and referred to Success Coach for further intervention and IRP.

- The student will be removed from remediation status if they successfully complete the IRP
- The student will be referred to the SPC if they do not successfully complete the IRP.

CD= Clinical Director; IRP= Individualized Remediation Plan; SPC= Student Progress Committee

Remediation of Failed Assessment Policy

The following assessment failures require remediation:

(1)   Major exams (failure is <70%). Major exams are noted as "major exam" on the syllabus.
(2)   OSCEs (<70%)
(3)   Final head-to-toe physical exam (less than 70%)
(4)   Core technical skills
(5)   End of rotation exam
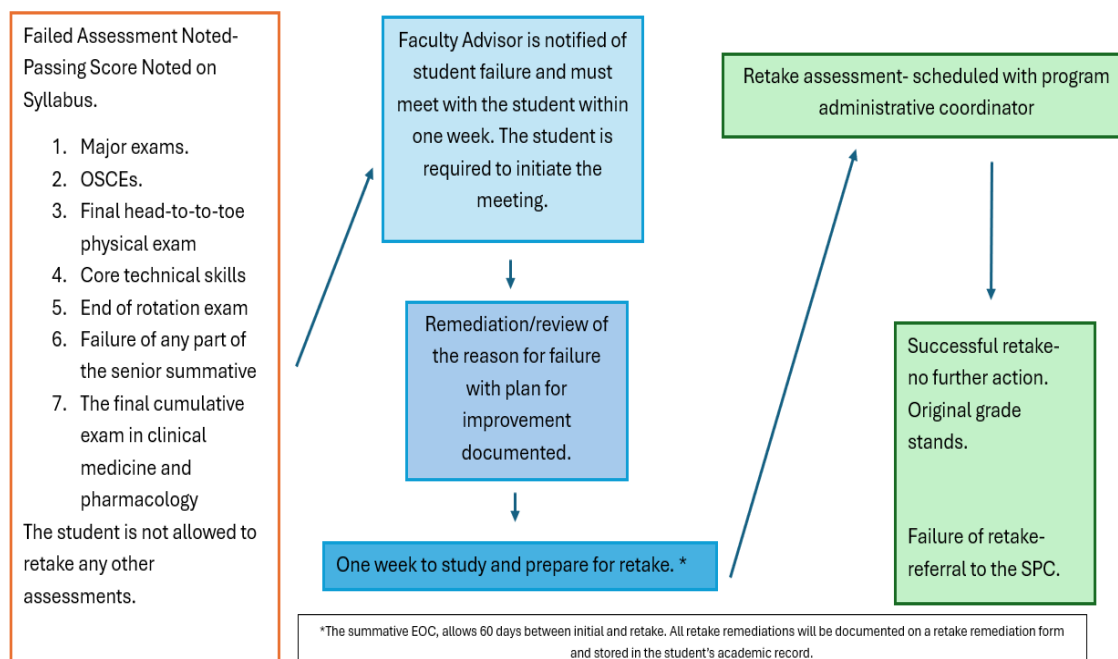(6)   Failure of any part of the didactic or senior summative

No other assessments may be repeated or retaken. This includes quizzes, problem-based cases, active learning worksheets, etc.

The process for remediation is as follows:

(1)   The student and their advisor will be notified of the failure and must meet within one week of the failure.
(2)   The remediation discussion will include discussing the missed material, the students' study habits, and personal concerns. The advisor may recommend tutoring or participation in the educational clarification labs.
(3)   The student will be given one week to study before the retake for everything other than the summative EOC, which requires 60 days between initial and retake.
(4)   A second assessment will be completed, which is consistent with the initial assessment; this may be additional exam questions, a case study, a practical exam, or skill completion with a documented score.
(5)   The remediation must be successfully completed for the remediation to be successful.
(6)   Failure of the retake remediation will result in referral to the Student Progress Committee for final disposition, which may include further remediation, deceleration or dismissal.
(7)   The retake remediation will be documented on a retake remediation form and stored in the student's academic record.

Failed Assessment Noted- Passing Score Noted on Syllabus.

1. Major exams.
2. OSCEs.
3. Final head-to-to-toe physical exam
4. Core technical skills
5. End of rotation exam
6. Failure of any part of the senior summative
7. The final cumulative exam in clinical medicine and pharmacology

The student is not allowed to retake any other assessments.

Faculty Advisor is notified of student failure and must meet with the student within one week. The student is required to initiate the meeting.

Remediation/review of the reason for failure with plan for improvement documented.

One week to study and prepare for retake. *

Retake assessment- scheduled with program administrative coordinator

Successful retake- no further action. Original grade stands.

Failure of retake- referral to the SPC.

*The summative EOC, allows 60 days between initial and retake. All retake remediations will be documented on a retake remediation form and stored in the student's academic record.

Didactic Phase:

- No more than (6) total remediation assessments/assignments are permitted for retake.

Clinical Phase:

- No more than two (2) total remediation assessments/assignments are permitted for End-of-Rotation written multiple-choice examinations.
- No more than one (1) remediation assessment/assignment is permitted for a final score of less than 70.00% on the Clinical Preceptor Evaluation of Student Performance.
- There is no limit for the number of remediation assessments/assignments for a score of < 3.0 on individual evaluation items on the Clinical Preceptor Evaluation of Student Performance.

Remediation of a failed remediation assessment/assignment is not permitted.

If a student reaches the maximum number of retake remediations, they will be referred to the student progress committee for a deceleration or dismissal decision.

Student Progress Committee

- The purpose of the SPC is to ensure that each LMU-SMS-Chattanooga PA Program graduate has demonstrated the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and clinical and professional judgment to assume the responsibilities of a PA.
- The SPC monitors student progress in all phases of the curriculum and makes decisions on student progression in the program and, when appropriate, decisions on disciplinary action(s) and/or dismissal.
  Examples of actions the SPC may recommend or review:
  * Academic (e.g., course failure, remediation failure)
  * Professional (e.g., violation of the Student Code of Conduct)
  * Progression decision (e.g., continue to the Clinical Phase, continue to graduation, dismissal from the Program)
  * Follow-up on prior SPC decisions (e.g., removal from academic probation)
  *Review and approval of student leave of absence request
Composition: The committee consists of 3-5 voting faculty members from the program faculty.
- Chair: A Chair is appointed by the SPC members, who play a crucial role in managing committee operations and urgent cases.

- Subcommittee: The Chair can convene a subcommittee with at least three members to address urgent situations or if a quorum isn't met at a scheduled meeting.
- Confidentiality: The SPC upholds strict confidentiality concerning students' academic performance and progress to ensure student support and privacy.

SPC Review Process:
- Students notified 3 days in advance.
- The Student Progress Committee (SPC) will conduct a holistic review of the students' performance to date. This review will consider academic achievement across all courses, engagement with available academic support resources, evidence of motivation (e.g., meetings with the course director and faculty advisor, participation in optional educational clarification labs), and any professionalism concerns. Based on this comprehensive review, the SPC will make a final determination regarding the need for additional remediation, delay, deceleration, or dismissal. The SPC may invite the students to meet with the committee during the review process. Alternatively, the student may submit a written response to the event that prompted the SPC meeting.
- The SPC will notify the program director and student of the decision within three days.

To appeal a decision made by the SPC:

https://www.lmunet.edu/school-of-medical-sciences/sms-policies

POLICY: DECELERATION

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15d
Published: website

Definition:
Deceleration- The loss of a student from their entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the PA program and graduates **with another** cohort of students.

Delay- The loss of a student from their entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the PA program and graduates **before** the next cohort.

Leave of Absence- The loss of a student from their entering cohort, who does not remain matriculated in the PA program. The student may re-enroll at the end of their leave of absence.

Declaration Process:
(1) Deceleration is an action that the Student Progress Committee may recommend in the following circumstances:
   a. Failure to meet technical standards
   b. Failure of one course
(2) Deceleration is losing a student from the original matriculating cohort who remains matriculated in the physician assistant program. The student would be removed from the current cohort and return to the program later, delaying graduation.
(3) The conditions for deceleration and return to enrollment status will be defined when the slowdown is imposed or granted. At the SPC's discretion, the student may be allowed to retake courses for grade forgiveness or to improve the grade average.
(4) An assessment of competency may be required before re-entry.
(5) Returning as a decelerated student may result in tuition and fees not covered by financial aid. Students who graduate between January and November after their original cohort will be considered "delayed." Students who restart the program with a new cohort and graduate with that cohort will be regarded as "decelerated."

Student-initiated deceleration is **NOT** an option. If there are life events that prevent the student from performing well in PA training, they should discuss this with their advisor and may choose to take a **leave of absence.** A request for leave of absence is reviewed and approved by the SPC.

See LMU SMS PA Program Leave of Absence Policy here: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.lmunet.edu/school-of-medical-sciences/documents/pa-harrogate/LeaveofAbsenceorWithdrawalfromtheProgram.pdf

POLICY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR WITHDRAWAL

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15e
Published: website

See LMU SMS Policy

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.lmunet.edu/school-of-medical-sciences/documents/pa-harrogate/LeaveofAbsenceorWithdrawalfromtheProgram.pdf

POLICY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DISMISSAL

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15f
Published: website

(1) 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.
(2) Circumstances warranting such action may be of an academic, professional, or legal nature.
(3) 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.
(4) The SPC Chair will create a memorandum stating the change in the students' status and notify the appropriate faculty and staff.
(5) Failure to complete this checkout procedure will cause the LMU-SMS PA Program to withhold all records about the student's attendance.
(6) Any student who is dismissed from the LMU-SMS PA Program will NOT be eligible for re-admittance to the program.
(7) The check-out procedure is as follows:
   a. Complete an exit interview with financial aid
   b. Return their student ID badge and parking sticker to security
- Refund of tuition or fees related to the timing of dismissal are reported on the LMU Financial Aid page, https://www.lmunet.edu/student-financial-services/financial-aid/withdraws-and-adding-or-dropping-courses No refund of institutional charges will be made after the fourth week of the semester.

LMU-C Specific Dismissal Policy
(1) The LMU SMS Chattanooga PA Program follows the SMS PA Program dismissal policy as documented above.
(2) Failure of a single course or rotation may result in dismissal unless the Student Progress Committee determines that deceleration with course/rotation retake is a reasonable alternative after holistic review of the student's overall performance. In that case, the failed course must be retaken, and any additional failure would result in dismissal.

POLICY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT GRIEVANCES

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15g
Published: website

    (1) Institutional Policy for Non-Academic Grievance- Title IX and Other Grievances
https://www.lmunet.edu/office-of-institutional-compliance/student-complaint-process
    (2) Institutional Policy for Academic Grievance/Appeal Procedure
https://graduatecatalog.lmunet.edu/academic-grievanceappeal-procedure

POLICY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT APPEALS

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15h
Published: website

Appeal for Student Progress Committee Decision

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POLICY: POLICY FOR STUDENT EMPLOYMENT WHILE ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15i
Published: website

Prohibited Activities:
PA students are prohibited from:

- PA students are prohibited from: Employment by the Program: Students must not be required to work for the program in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid.
- Substitution for Faculty: Students may not teach courses, lead labs without faculty supervision, or assume the primary responsibility for instruction. Faculty members are responsible for all aspects of instruction.
- Substitution for Clinical Staff: Students may not function as or replace clinical staff, including but not limited to medical assistants, nurses, or other healthcare professionals. Clinical rotations are for learning, not staffing solutions.
- Substitution for Administrative Staff: Students may not perform administrative duties that are the responsibility of paid staff, such as record keeping, scheduling, or office management.
- Independent Practice: Students may not practice medicine independently. All patient care activities must be performed under the direct supervision of a licensed healthcare professional.

Enforcement: Violations of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined in the program's student handbook. Any student who believes they are being asked to perform prohibited activities should immediately report the concern to the Program Director.

Outside Employment: The rigorous, full-time nature of the Physician Assistant program, encompassing academic coursework, clinical rotations, and mandatory program events, requires students' full educational and professional focus. Therefore, outside employment during enrollment is strongly discouraged.

Program schedules will not be adjusted to accommodate work obligations. Students are advised to prioritize their education and explore available financial aid resources, including scholarships, loans, and institutional aid.

This policy ensures compliance with accreditation standards, safeguards patient safety, and maintains the integrity of the learning environment.

POLICY: POLICY FOR STUDENT TRAVEL TO REQUIRED ROTATION SITES

ARC-PA Standard: A3.15j
Published: Student handbook on the website

(1) Students will be required to travel beyond 50 miles from their residence for some of their clinical rotations.

(2) All travel, lodging, and food will be the responsibility of the students when they are on rotations located outside their residence.

(3) Students will be required to return to the LMU SMS Chattanooga PA program campus during the clinical phase.

(4) Students will be required to attend the TN Academy of PA Conference during the clinical phase (usually offered in Gatlinburg, TN). All costs associated with attendance are the student's responsibility.