

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES



Physician Assistant Program
Chattanooga
Student Handbook
2027-2028

Handbook Purpose and Scope

This handbook is designed to serve as a guide to the rules, policies, and services of the LMU- SMS- Chattanooga PA Program; therefore, it is not intended to establish a contract and the LMU- SMS- Chattanooga PA Program reserves the right to amend, modify, or change regulations, policies, and financial charges stated in the handbook throughout the year. In such a case, the LMU-SMS- Chattanooga PA Program will make reasonable efforts to notify its PA Students, in a timely manner, of any changes in policies and regulations. Notification shall be made via the student's LMU-issued email account.

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PART I: GENERAL UNIVERSITY AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

Welcome to the LMU-SMS CHATTANOOGA PA Program

We are excited to welcome you to a program rooted in integrated care, community service, and the belief that excellent healthcare begins with human connection. Our curriculum is designed to prepare you for collaborative, patient-centered practice by emphasizing whole-person care across disciplines and settings. As a student in the LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program, you will be immersed in a learning environment that values not only clinical knowledge and technical skill, but also the professional attributes we call the Five A's: *attunement, advocacy, accountability, altruism, and autonomy*. These principles guide how we teach, how we serve, and how we expect our graduates to practice medicine.

Your journey through this program will be rigorous, challenging, and transformative. What you gain from this experience will be directly shaped by what you invest—your effort, curiosity, professionalism, and commitment to growth. At the same time, you will never walk this path alone. Our faculty and staff are deeply committed to your success and will support you academically, professionally, and personally throughout your training. Together, through integrated education and meaningful community engagement, we will prepare you to become a compassionate, capable physician assistant ready to serve Chattanooga, the Appalachian region, and the patients who need you most.

Welcome to the LMU-SMS PA—Chattanooga family,

Johnna Yealy

Johnna Yealy, PhD, PA-C

Assistant Dean and Program Director

LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program

Lincoln Memorial University Overview

Heritage

Lincoln Memorial University grew out of love and respect for Abraham Lincoln and today honors his name, values, and spirit. As the legend goes, in 1863 Lincoln suggested to General O. O. Howard, a Union Army officer, that when the Civil War ended he hoped General Howard would organize a great university for the people of this area.

Mission and Goals

Lincoln Memorial University grew out of love and respect for Abraham Lincoln and today honors his name, values, and spirit. The Lincoln Memorial University Mission can be found at [Heritage and Mission](#) and Institutional Goals at [Institutional Goals](#).

Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy

Lincoln Memorial University is and Equal Opportunity educational institution. In support of its Mission Statement, LMU is committed to equal opportunity in recruitment, admission, and retention for all students and equal opportunity in recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, and retention for all employees. The Lincoln Memorial University Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy can be found at [Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy](#).

School of Medical Sciences Overview

Mission

The Lincoln Memorial University School of Medical Sciences vision is to change the face of health care, the Mission can be found at [LMU School of Medical Sciences](#).

Accreditation

Institutional Accreditation

Lincoln Memorial University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, specialist, and doctorate degrees. Questions about the accreditation of Lincoln Memorial University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org)

Professional Accreditation

The LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program has applied for Accreditation - Provisional from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

The LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program anticipates matriculating its first class in January 2027, pending achieving Accreditation - Provisional status at the October 2026 ARC-PA meeting.

In the event the Lincoln Memorial University (LMU) Physician Assistant Program – Chattanooga is not granted Accreditation-Provisional status from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the Program will not commence and will not matriculate a student cohort in January 2027 as planned. Applicants will be notified in writing and receive a **full refund** for any deposit,

tuition, and/or fees paid to the Program within 30 days of the Program receiving notification of the ARC-PA decision. Other expenses associated with the admissions process, such as interview travel, are not included in the LMU-C refund policy.

The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at:

<https://www.arc-pa.org/entry-level-program/currently-accredited-programs/>

Contact the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc., (ARC-PA) at 12000 Findley Road, Suite 275, Johns Creek, Georgia 30097, call 770-476-1224, or visit the ARC-PA website (<http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/standards-of-accreditation/>) for questions about ARC-PA Standards.

PA graduates must pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) in order to practice in all states, the District of Columbia, and all American territories. PA graduates are only eligible to take the PANCE if they have graduated from a PA program accredited by the ARC-PA. The LMU-SMS-CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Program is responsible for obtaining and maintaining ARC-PA Accreditation and for complying with ARC-PA Standards and policies. The program will inform all matriculating and enrolled PA Students in person and/or via LMU student email or U.S. mail to the mailing address provided by the student of any change in the program's ARC-PA Accreditation status in addition to posting this information on the program's website.

LMU-SMS - CHATTANOOGA PA Program Overview

Mission

Guided by Lincoln Memorial University's values of service, integrity, and excellence, the LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program educates compassionate and competent physician assistants who embody autonomy, attunement, advocacy, and accountability. Committed to advocacy, our graduates bridge the gap to improve health and reduce disparities in underserved communities across Appalachia and beyond.

Program Goals and Outcomes

To accomplish this mission, the LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program is committed to achieving the following goals:

Goal #1: The program will matriculate and graduate highly qualified students.

Benchmarks:

1. 90% of matriculants will exceed the minimal academic admission requirements.
2. The program will maintain a two-year average attrition rate below 15% and a graduation rate of > 86% to support student retention and successful program completion.

Rationale:

1. A benchmark was set stating that at least 90% of matriculants will surpass the program's minimum academic standards. This benchmark permits up to 10% of applicants who, while meeting the minimal academic requirements, demonstrate exceptional strength in other areas aligned with the program's goals. This method balances academic rigor with a holistic admissions approach, ensuring we accept highly qualified candidates with diverse strengths beyond GPA or test scores.

2. The benchmark was selected to align with the SMS LMU PA program's historical averages, national standards, and ARC-PA benchmarks. Keeping attrition at or below this level shows the program's dedication to student retention, support, and overall educational quality.

Strength: $\leq 5\%$ of students per cohort are lost to attrition over a period of 3 consecutive years. The program selected this level to demonstrate our commitment to retaining students within the cohort. Keeping a higher number of students, each year shows that the program effectively minimizes attrition, meaning a greater proportion of students are achieving program competencies.

Area in need of improvement: $\geq 15\%$ of students per cohort are lost to attrition for a period of two consecutive years.

Triangulation includes the number of remedial interventions (such as content remediation per course, Global Academic Improvement plans, and the number of students in remedial labs), the number of C or lower course grades, prerequisites, and undergraduate GPAs. Other analysis factors will consider students' reasons for academic dismissal (if applicable), individual student outcomes and performance, and the timing of dismissals during the semester.

Other analysis factors will consider students' reasons for academic dismissal (if applicable), individual student outcomes and performance, and the timing of dismissals during the semester.

Goal #2: The program will provide a foundation of medical knowledge necessary for clinical entry.

Benchmarks:

1. The program will achieve an all-time PANCE pass rate at or above 95%.
2. The program will achieve a first-time pass rate at or above 90%.
3. At least 95% of students will achieve a passing score on the first attempt on all components of the senior summative assessment, demonstrating competence in the program-defined clinical knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors necessary for entry into clinical practice.

Rationale:

1. The benchmark of 95% or higher for the all-time PANCE pass rate was chosen to reflect the program's dedication to long-term graduate success and alignment with national standards for certification. This metric considers both first-time and subsequent attempts, offering a comprehensive view of the program's effectiveness in preparing students for clinical practice. Consistently meeting or surpassing this benchmark supports accreditation standards related to graduate competency and program quality.
2. The program set a goal of achieving a first-time PANCE pass rate of at least 90%, aligning with national averages reported by the NCCPA. This target reflects a realistic, data-driven standard for a growing PA program, while also demonstrating the program's commitment to meeting or surpassing accreditation standards for student readiness and curriculum quality. Tracking first-time pass rates acts as a measure of student performance and enables timely improvements to curriculum and teaching strategies.
3. The senior summative assessment acts as a comprehensive review of each student's readiness to start clinical practice. It is designed to ensure that students have met all program-defined competencies, including core medical knowledge, clinical reasoning, communication, and professional conduct. Setting the benchmark at 95% allows for rare remediation instances while upholding high academic standards. Reaching this benchmark demonstrates the program's effectiveness in preparing graduates who are competent and safe to begin supervised clinical practice.

Strength: For three consecutive years, the program's first-time taker PANCE pass rate has been at least 2% higher than the national average. The program selected this level for strength because it shows sustained PANCE performance above the national average.

Area in need of improvement: The annual all-time or first-time taker PANCE pass rate falls below the benchmark for a period of two consecutive years.

Triangulation: Admissions criteria as a predictor of success, course outcomes, student evaluations of courses and instructors, faculty evaluations of courses and instructors, curriculum assessment (including curriculum mapping of program instructional objectives and learning outcomes, as well as the breadth and depth of the curriculum), preceptor evaluations of student preparedness, student summative evaluation results (such as EOC, PACKRAT, OSCE), remediation practices and outcomes, student progress and attrition data, feedback from students who do not pass the PANCE, graduate exit surveys (at 0 months and 6 months), employer feedback (if available).

Goal #3: The program will foster a commitment to providing care in medically underserved areas.

Benchmarks:

1. 100% of students will be placed in at least 2 clinical rotations in a federally designated medically underserved area.
2. 25% percent of graduates will report the intent to work in medically underserved areas.

Rationale:

1. Placement in an underserved medical area during clinical training encourages a commitment to work in similar settings by providing students with firsthand experience of the unique challenges and rewards involved in caring for underserved populations. Being immersed in these environments helps students develop a deeper understanding of healthcare disparities, form meaningful connections with patients and communities, and often fosters a stronger sense of purpose and social responsibility. This experience can change perceptions, enhance cultural humility, and inspire long-term dedication to addressing healthcare inequalities.
2. NCCPA data show that 22% of PAS practice in medically underserved areas; the benchmark is set to surpass that percentage by a realistic amount.

Strength: For three consecutive years, students will complete more than 2 rotations in medically underserved areas. Over the same period, graduates' reports of intent to work in underserved areas have consistently exceeded 30%. The program selected this level for strength because it shows higher underserved employment rates than the HRSA median over an extended period.

Area in need of improvement: The report has fallen below the benchmark for two consecutive years, indicating a trend.

Triangulation: Intent on working in underserved areas on the graduate survey, participation in loan repayment of service programs.

* The program defines participation in the military as serving as a reservist, guardsman, or active-duty member as employment in an underserved area

Goal #4: The program will cultivate graduates who actively contribute to their communities through service and advocacy.

Benchmark:

1. 100% of students will complete 50 hours of community service throughout their learning experience.
2. 100% of students will participate in PA Day on the Hill to advocate for the profession.
3. 100% of students will participate in at least one health-focused community outreach event (e.g., free clinic day, health fair, vaccination drive, or wellness education program).
4. >90% of students will report the intent to be involved in community service as alumni.

Rationale:

1. Community service hours offer structured, measurable ways for students to engage with communities outside the classroom. Requiring all students to complete a substantial number of hours ensures they experience different community needs and supports the program's mission of service.
2. Advocacy is a fundamental duty of physician assistants. Participating in PA Day on the Hill introduces students to legislative processes, enhances advocacy skills, and helps them understand the role PAs play in shaping healthcare policy.
3. Direct involvement in community health initiatives gives students real-world opportunities to tackle health disparities, practice patient education, and build stronger connections with the underserved populations the program aims to serve.

Strength: For three consecutive years, students will participate in more than 50 hours of community service.

Area in need of improvement: The report has fallen below the benchmark for two consecutive years.

Triangulation: Student surveys and reflections indicating intent to stay involved in community service.

Program outcomes, in relation to the above goals, are published on the program's website as soon as data is available.

Graduate Competencies

Upon completion of the LMU-SMS PA Chattanooga PA Program, graduates will demonstrate competence in medical knowledge, clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving, interpersonal skills, and professional behaviors. These specific competencies can be accessed here: [Academics](#)

Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Lincoln Memorial University (LMU)

LMU is led by a group of passionate leaders dedicated to the success of every person in the LMU community. Information about the administration can be found at [LMU Administration](#). Information about faculty and staff can be found at [LMU Undergraduate Catalog](#).

School of Medical Science (SMS) Administration

Dean

Paula Miksa, DMS, PA-C

Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

Paul Miller, Ph.D

Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs

Michael Stephens, DMS, PA-C

CHATTANOOGA PA Program Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Assistant Dean, Program Director & Professor – Johnna Yealy, PhD, PA-C

Medical Director – Randal Dabbs, MD,

Associate Program Director –

Assistant Professor, Principal Faculty & Director of Assessment – Kimberly Hendrix, MS, LPC

Principal Faculty & Director of Clinical Education – Cortney Bryant, DMS, PA-C

Director of Didactic Education –

Principal Faculty Pharmacology – Christopher Kilgore, Pharm D.

Didactic Faculty – Morning Star Vaber, PA-C, RT-R, MRI

Principal Faculty –

Program Admin Coordinator – Taylor White

Admissions Coordinator – Jenna Reaves

Didactic Education Assistant –

Clinical Education Assistant –

Clinical Site/Rotation Mgr –

Hospital Relations Manager –

PART II: ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

General Admission Process

Admission Philosophy

We are thrilled to welcome you to our LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA program. We seek academically prepared applicants who are inspired by our mission and values. Our program requires a full-time commitment—one that demands dedication, curiosity, and a strong sense of responsibility for your own learning. In return, you'll be supported by faculty who are fully invested in your success and deeply committed to education, community service, patient advocacy, and advancing the PA profession through holistic, compassionate care. If you share these values, we invite you to apply and join a learning community driven by purpose, service, and passion for making a difference.

Admission Criteria and Procedure

[Admissions](#)

Transfer Credit

The program does not accept transfer credit.

Minimum Technical Standards for Enrollment & Progression and Medical Clearance Policy

The LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program has established minimum technical standards that all students must meet and maintain to be admitted, progress, and graduate. These standards ensure that students can successfully complete the didactic curriculum and provide safe, effective patient care during supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) and in professional practice following graduation.

The technical standards outlined below are essential for achieving the program's Graduate Competencies (detailed in the LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program Student Catalog), meeting accreditation requirements, and upholding the standards of the physician assistant profession.

All students must demonstrate the required health, cognitive, and motor skills, as well as professional behaviors—either independently or with reasonable accommodations—to meet these standards throughout the program. Students seeking accommodation should contact the Office of Accessible Education Services (www.LMUnet.edu). While the program makes every effort to support qualified applicants and enrolled students through appropriate accommodation, all students must continue to meet the Minimum Technical Standards for Enrollment and Progression. This ensures the full delivery of the curriculum and the ability to provide safe and effective patient care.

Clinical affiliates that host students for SCPEs require that students meet these standards and can perform assigned duties promptly and competently. Therefore, extra time is not granted during assessments of physical exam skills, clinical procedures, simulated patient encounters, or during SCPE responsibilities. Likewise, the use of trained intermediaries is not permitted in these assessments or clinical settings.

Prior to matriculation, all students must submit a completed Medical Clearance Form signed by a licensed health care provider, confirming that they meet the Minimum Technical Standards and are medically cleared to participate fully in the program's curriculum. Students must promptly notify the Program Director of any changes in their ability to meet these standards at any time during enrollment.

General Health:

Students must be able to fully participate in all learning activities and assessments across classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings. These activities may require prolonged periods of active engagement—such as sitting, standing, or performing procedures—for more than eight hours, and may involve exposure to body fluids, communicable diseases, radiation, and potentially toxic substances.

To meet the demands of the program and the PA profession, students must maintain a level of physical and mental health that supports sustained performance under typical academic and clinical conditions. This includes adherence to standard preventive health measures, such as receiving annual immunizations.

Prior to matriculation and before beginning supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs), students must be medically cleared by a licensed healthcare provider. Medical clearance confirms the absence of any physical, behavioral/mental health condition, or communicable disease that could pose a risk to patients or interfere with full participation in the curriculum.

All enrolled students are required to maintain active health insurance coverage from matriculation through graduation.

Critical Thinking and Cognitive Abilities:

Students must possess the intellectual capacity to successfully complete the full curriculum and meet the competencies established by the program and the PA profession. This includes the ability to think critically—specifically, to measure, calculate, synthesize, and analyze large volumes of complex information. Students must also be able to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships, which are essential for understanding anatomical structures and performing clinical procedures.

Computer Technology Skills:

Students must demonstrate proficiency in using computer technology to support their academic and clinical responsibilities. This includes navigating learning management systems, completing computerized assessments, conducting online research, creating multimedia presentations, accessing electronic medical resources, and entering and reviewing data in electronic medical records (EMRs).

Communication Skills:

Students must be able to effectively speak, hear, and observe patients to gather relevant clinical information, describe findings, and interpret nonverbal cues. They must be able to communicate clearly and accurately—both orally and in writing—with peers, faculty, staff, patients, families, and members of the healthcare team. This communication must be respectful, sensitive, and effective across diverse social and cultural backgrounds to ensure safe and compassionate patient care.

Visual Abilities:

Students must have sufficient visual acuity to perform essential functions in clinical and educational settings. This includes accurately observing patients during physical examinations, monitoring patient status, and safely performing a variety of medical and surgical procedures.

Hearing and Tactile Abilities:

Students must possess adequate hearing and tactile sensory skills to accurately gather clinical information through methods such as palpation, auscultation, and percussion. These abilities are essential for conducting physical examinations and safely performing a broad range of medical and surgical procedures.

Motor and Fine Skills:

Students must possess sufficient physical strength, mobility, coordination, and cardiovascular endurance to meet the demands of patient care. This includes maintaining upright posture, tolerating physically taxing workloads, and performing tasks such as sitting, standing, and moving for extended periods.

Students must also demonstrate the motor skills necessary to navigate confined clinical spaces, calibrate and operate medical equipment, assist with patient positioning and transfers, and perform a variety of clinical procedures required in medical and surgical practice.

Interpersonal Abilities:

Students must possess a wide range of interpersonal skills, including (1) management of high stress situations while maintaining full intellectual abilities, (2) utilization of good judgment, (3) time management (arrive on time, prioritize activities, complete tasks efficiently), (4) development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with classmates, faculty, staff, all members of the healthcare team, and patients and their families, (5) recognition of one's own emotional state and the emotional states of others, (6) management of personal emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict, (7) engagement with patients and families in a way that establishes confidence and trust, and (8) acceptance of constructive criticism and initiation of appropriate behavior modification.

Students must submit a Medical Clearance Form, completed, and signed by a licensed health care provider, confirming whether they meet the Minimum Technical Standards for Enrollment and Progression and are medically cleared to participate fully in the program's curriculum prior to matriculation. Students must notify the Program Director as soon as possible if there is any change in their ability to meet these technical standards.

**PART III: LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM
STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

LMU STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All LMU-SMS Students must comply with LMU student policies and procedures published in the LMU Railsplitter Community Standards Guide which can be accessed electronically at <https://handbook.lmunet.edu/>

LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA Program STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Program policies and procedures apply to all students, faculty, and staff, whether on campus or off campus at a clinical site. Where program policies and procedures exceed LMU student policies and procedures and create enhanced or additional obligations for the LMU-SMS Student, program policies and procedures shall apply. The policies and procedures of clinical affiliates who provide Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs) may supersede the program's policies and procedures. Policies and procedures published in this handbook are reviewed annually. Students may access this handbook electronically on the program's website. The Program Director provides matriculating students with an overview of program policies and procedures during orientation in the first semester. Changes to program policies and/or procedures are communicated with students via LMU-issued student email accounts. These changes are also published in the handbook.

Exposure to Infectious Agents and Environmental Hazards Policy

The LMU-SMS PA Program–Chattanooga is committed to ensuring a safe learning environment and minimizing student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards. All students must adhere to established safety policies, procedures, and best practices designed to reduce risk during both the didactic and clinical phases of the program.

General Prevention Measures

To avoid exposure to infectious and environmental hazards, PA students are required to:

- Follow all OSHA, CDC, and institution-specific infection control guidelines.
- Practice proper hand hygiene before and after all patient encounters or clinical activities.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)—including gloves, masks, face shields, gowns, and respiratory protection—when indicated by clinical site policy or patient condition.
- Adhere strictly to standard precautions and, when required, transmission-based precautions (contact, droplet, airborne).
- Follow all sharps safety guidelines, including proper disposal of needles and avoidance of recapping.
- Report malfunctioning, inadequate, or unavailable PPE or safety equipment immediately to the supervising preceptor and the Program.

Clinical Environment Safety Measures

To reduce exposure in clinical settings, students must:

- Review and comply with each clinical site's infection control and environmental safety policies.
- Complete required training modules on bloodborne pathogens, respiratory protection, and environmental hazard awareness prior to beginning SCPEs.
- Be knowledgeable about location-specific procedures for exposure management, emergency contact numbers, and reporting mechanisms.
- Avoid situations that exceed their level of training or fall outside the scope of student responsibilities.

Environmental Hazard Avoidance

Students may encounter environmental risks such as chemicals, radiation, heat sources, or physical hazards.

To mitigate these risks, students must:

- Complete all required safety training before entering environments with potential hazards.
- Use required protective equipment (e.g., lead aprons, gloves, safety eyewear) when working around radiation or hazardous materials.
- Observe all posted hazard warnings and avoid restricted or high-risk areas unless supervised and authorized.
- Report environmental concerns, spills, or unsafe conditions immediately to the clinical site and the Program.

Exposure Response

If a student is exposed or believes they have been exposed to an infectious or environmental hazard, they must:

- Follow the clinical site's exposure management protocol immediately.
- Notify their preceptor and site supervisor as soon as safely possible.
- Seek medical evaluation through the site's occupational health service or designated facility.
- Report the incident to the LMU–SMS PA Program- Chattanooga on the same day using the Program's exposure incident report process.

Program Responsibilities

The Program ensures student safety by:

- Providing education and training related to infection control and environmental safety during orientation and throughout the curriculum.
- Informing students of the risks associated with clinical practice and providing guidance on hazard avoidance.
- Ensuring clinical sites have appropriate policies and resources in place to protect students.
- Supporting students during exposure evaluation, documentation, and follow-up.

In the event of an exposure, please proceed to the following:

[Needlestick and Bloodborne Pathogens Policy and Instructions](#)

Costs incurred: Most training sites provide post-exposure treatment to students at no cost. If there are charges for services, the student must file all medical claims to their personal medical insurance first, then to the LMU intercollegiate policy.

Immunizations, Tuberculosis Screening, and Urine Drug Screening Policy

Prior to matriculation and prior to beginning SCPEs, students must have a licensed health care provider verify the student's immunization, tuberculosis screening, and urine drug screening status relative to the requirements listed on the program's website. Clinical sites may have additional requirements. Students are responsible for all costs associated with meeting the program's immunization and screening requirements, as well as any additional requirements of clinical sites that provide SCPEs for the student. Students must submit their immunization records, tuberculosis screening results, and urine drug screening results to the online central screening service by the program's submission due dates. Failure to meet the requirements of the program and clinical site(s) may result in a delay in progression in the program, including a delay in beginning SCPEs, a delay in graduation, and failure to complete the program curriculum within 48 months of initial matriculation. Program faculty and staff responsible for confirming proof of vaccination, immunity, and tuberculosis and urine drug screening results review these documents after obtaining written permission from the student (Appendix E). For more information see: [Admissions](#).

Student Health Insurance Policy

Students enrolled in the program must maintain and provide evidence of health insurance coverage prior to matriculation and prior to beginning SCPEs (Appendix D). LMU provides health insurance coverage for students enrolled in the LMU-SMS-Chattanooga PA Program. The Office of Student Financial Services assists students with LMU's health insurance coverage. Student accounts are automatically charged for this coverage. Students may apply for a waiver of automatic enrollment.

Infection with Communicable Diseases Policy

Any student displaying “flu-like” symptoms or students testing positive for influenza/COVID-19 must notify the Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team and clinical site and/or clinical preceptor (Clinical Phase) as soon as possible. Students with influenza may be excused from class/SCPE to minimize viral exposure to others and promote the health of the infected student. The Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team and clinical site and/or clinical preceptor (Clinical Phase) will discuss the appropriate date of return to class/SCPE with the student.

Students potentially exposed to patients with meningitis, Ebola infection, or infection with other highly contagious pathogens must follow post-exposure protocols (as published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or clinical affiliates) and contact the Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team and clinical site and/or clinical preceptor (Clinical Phase) as soon as possible. Students may be excused from class/SCPE to minimize pathogen exposure to other persons and to promote the health of the infected student. The Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team and clinical site and/or clinical preceptor (Clinical Phase) discuss the appropriate date of return to class/SCPE with the student.

Attendance Policy

Didactic Phase: Attendance at all program-scheduled learning activities and assessments (including classroom and laboratory sessions) is mandatory. Students are responsible for all material presented in missed learning activities, announcements, and assignments. Students must contact the Director of Didactic Education via email as soon as an absence for illness/injury occurs. Students who expect an absence must request approval (Appendix G) from the Director of Didactic Education via email no less than 72 hours prior to the date/time of absence. If the absence is not foreseeable within 72 hours, then the student should communicate as soon as safely feasible.

Clinical Phase: To ensure that each student receives the greatest benefit from the program's curriculum, attendance for all SCPEs is mandatory. Students must contact the Clinical Team via email as soon as they are absent due to illness or injury. Students completing SCPEs must also notify the clinical site and/or clinical preceptor, via phone (or method of communication preferred by the clinical site/clinical preceptor), of their absence due to illness/injury prior to the time/date they are expected at the clinical site. Students who expect an absence must request approval from the Clinical Team via email no less than 72 hours prior to the date/time of the absence. Students must also obtain written approval from their clinical preceptor for an absence for personal matters no less than 72 hours prior to the date/time of the planned absence. If the absence is not foreseeable within 72 hours, the student should communicate as soon as it is safe to do so.

Excused absences include personal illness or injury (with care rendered by a health care provider for absences greater than three (3) days), illness of a family member (requiring the student's assistance for care for greater than three (3) days), death of an immediate family member (spouse/partner, child, parents/in-laws, siblings, and grandparents), and military service. Requests for an absence related to legal matters or to attend professional meetings or employment interviews are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students must obtain prior approval from the Clinical Team to attend professional meetings or employment interviews during SCPEs. An absence for any other reason may be considered an unexcused absence.

Students who miss a scheduled assessment (e.g., written examination, physical examination skills assessment) must contact the Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team (Clinical Phase) via email as soon as possible for approval to reschedule the assessment. If the absence is due to an illness/injury, then a medical note is required.

Students with more than three (3) excused absences during a semester (Didactic Phase) or SCPE (Clinical Phase) may be referred to the SPC for a progression decision(s). Students with an unexcused absence(s) will be referred to the SPC for a progression and/or disciplinary action decision(s), which may include dismissal from the program.

Academic Calendar and University Closures

The official LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program is available online. The calendar includes all term start/end dates and scheduled student breaks. [Academics](#).

The LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program offices are closed during official LMU Holidays which include Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the Day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and New Years Day.

In the event of inclement weather or other temporary campus closures, the University's instructional continuity policy applies. While instruction will continue, students are required to check their LMU email for specific information from faculty regarding potential assignments or any alternate instructional activities. Official announcements for campus closures are sent via LMU email and direct text messaging for those students that have opted in.

Identification as a Physician Assistant Student (PA-S) Policy

All students must identify themselves as Physician Assistant Students (PA-S) while on campus, during SCPEs, and in any other setting where they represent the program. Students must never present themselves as a physician, resident, medical student, graduate PA, or as a current colleague of clinical preceptors. Use of titles earned prior to matriculation into the program is not permitted (e.g., EMT, RN, Ph.D., etc.) when representing the program.

During orientation in the first week of the first semester, students are issued a name badge identifying them as an LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Student. Students must wear this name badge while on campus, during SCPEs, and in any other setting where they are representing the program.

Arrest/Criminal Background Check Policy

The Physician Assistant profession requires that both students and licensed health care professionals submit criminal background checks. Therefore:

- Prior to matriculation, accepted students must submit to a criminal background check.
- Prior to beginning SCPEs, students must submit to a repeat criminal background check.
- From time to time, students may be required to submit to additional criminal background checks, which may include fingerprinting, based on clinical affiliation agreements with the program's clinical affiliates (clinical sites) or at the Program Director's discretion.
- Any student arrested or formally charged with a violation of the law (other than minor traffic violations) must report the arrest or formal charge to the Program Director within two (2) business days after the arrest/formal charge.

- Students are responsible for the costs of criminal background checks and fingerprinting.

The Program Director reviews pre-matriculation criminal background checks to determine if matriculation is appropriate. Post-matriculation criminal background checks are reviewed by the Program Director to determine if referral to the SPC for recommendations on progression in the program is appropriate. Decisions regarding matriculation and program progression are made on a case-by-case basis.

The program reserves the right to rescind an offer of admission and to prohibit progression in the program at any time, based on the results of criminal background check(s) or the student's refusal to submit to criminal background check(s). Additionally, clinical affiliates reserve the right to refuse or remove students from their clinical site(s) based on the results of a criminal background check(s) or student refusal to submit to a criminal background check(s)/fingerprinting. The contents of a criminal background check, or a student's refusal to submit to one, may prevent the student from completing one or more program-required components and, thereby, from graduating. Additionally, the contents of a criminal background check may prevent a graduate from obtaining state licensure and/or hospital/practice credentialing.

Drug/Alcohol Screening and Driving Policy

Safe and competent delivery of patient care requires all providers to be free of impairment from drugs and alcohol. Prior to matriculation and prior to beginning SCPEs, students must submit the results of a urine drug screen to the program. At times, students may also be required to submit to additional drug and/or alcohol screens. Students are responsible for the cost of drug and alcohol screens. The Program Director reviews any positive finding(s) on the pre-matriculation urine drug screen to determine if matriculation is appropriate. Any positive findings on post-matriculation drug and alcohol screens are reviewed by the Program Director to determine if referral to the SPC for recommendations on progression in the program is appropriate.

The program reserves the right to rescind an offer of admission and prohibit progression in the program at any time, based on the results of a drug and/or alcohol screen(s) or the student's refusal to submit to a drug and/or alcohol screen(s). Additionally, clinical affiliates reserve the right to refuse or remove students from their clinical site(s) where SCPEs occur based on the results of a drug and/or alcohol screen(s) or student refusal to submit to drug and/or alcohol screens. Positive findings on a drug/alcohol screen(s) may prevent the student from completing the SCPEs required for graduation and may prevent graduates from obtaining state licensure and/or hospital/practice credentialing.

Students, especially those under the age of 21 years, may not possess, consume, sell, distribute, or be in the presence of alcoholic beverages on LMU grounds, in LMU facilities, at LMU activities, and at clinical sites of the program's clinical affiliates.

Technology Support (IS Help Desk) [A2005]

The LMU Information Services (IS) Help Desk is the primary contact for all technology-related issues, including account access, LMU email, and university-provided software.

[LMU Information Services](#)

Phone: 423.869.7411 (or Ext. 7411 on campus)

Email: helpdesk@LMU.net.edu

Please note that while the IS Help Desk supports university-provided systems and software (e.g., LMU account, email, and MS Office), it is not responsible for the maintenance, repair, or integrity of a student's personal computer hardware or devices.

Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPEs) Policies

Student Credentialing for SCPEs

Clinical affiliates have specific requirements for student credentialing that must be completed before the SCPE begins. The Clinical Team provides students with the student credentialing requirements for each assigned SCPE. Students are responsible for all costs associated with student credentialing except for malpractice insurance. LMU provides students with liability insurance coverage throughout the program. Failure to complete credentialing requirements by clinical affiliate and program deadlines will result in a delay or cancellation of the SCPE (which may also result in a delay in graduation and failure to complete the program curriculum within 48 months of initial matriculation). If an SCPE is cancelled due to the student's failure to complete credentialing requirements, the student will be referred to the SPC for progression and/or disciplinary action recommendations.

Students must keep a copy of documents commonly used in student credentialing for clinical affiliates.

- Proof of health insurance coverage
- Criminal background check, Fingerprinting
- Urine drug screening results
- Tuberculosis screening results
- Proof of annual influenza vaccination
- Proof of immunity to hepatitis B virus (HBV), measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella
- Proof of Tdap vaccination as an adult
- Proof of current Tdap or Td vaccination
- Proof of COVID-19 vaccination/booster (or exemption approval)
- Student biography/curriculum vitae
- LMU photo identification.

Informed Consent Regarding Student Involvement in Patient Care

The clinical affiliate must inform patients that a PA Student will be participating in patient care. Patients must consent to evaluation and treatment by the PA Student, who is properly supervised by the clinical preceptor, before the PA Student may participate in the patient encounter. Students must introduce themselves as a Physician Assistant Student to patients. Patients have the right to decline PA Student involvement in their care.

Student Supervision Policy

For each SCPE, students are assigned a primary clinical preceptor who is responsible for coordinating and supervising the student's learning activities and assessing student performance. The program orients the clinical site and primary clinical preceptor to the supervision requirements, as outlined in the clinical affiliation agreement. Clinical preceptors provide direct supervision of student encounters with patients and performance of clinical procedures. Clinical preceptors may gradually increase student autonomy in accordance with demonstrated expertise; however, clinical preceptors must review every patient the student evaluates and every clinical procedure the student completes prior to patient discharge.

Documentation in the Medical Record and Prescription Writing Policy

The medical record is a legal document. Students must use the initials “PA-S” after their signature to clearly indicate they are a Physician Assistant Student for all entries in the medical record. Students must not use any previously earned titles (e.g., EMT, RN, Ph.D., etc.) while enrolled in the program.

Students receive instruction from the clinical affiliate regarding the use of electronic medical records. Students may be provided with access to electronic medical records for review and/or documentation. Students must not use the username/password of the clinical preceptor or other member of the healthcare team to access electronic medical records. Students must follow HIPAA guidelines when viewing electronic medical records.

Students may document patient encounters in the medical record if authorized by the clinical affiliate. The clinical preceptor must verify in the medical record all student documentation and findings, including history, physical examination, and clinical decision-making. The clinical preceptor must personally perform (or re-perform) the physical examination and clinical decision-making activities of the evaluation and management (E/M) service being billed, but may verify any student documentation of them in the medical record, rather than re-documenting this work. (www.cms.gov)

Students may transmit prescribing information for the clinical preceptor; however, the clinical preceptor must sign all prescriptions. The student’s name must not appear on any prescription. For electronically submitted prescriptions, the clinical preceptor must use their personal username and password to complete, electronically sign, and transmit the prescription to the pharmacy.

Student-Clinical Affiliate Relationship Policy

Students must maintain a professional relationship with all members of the clinical affiliate (e.g., clinical preceptors, nurses, and clinical support staff) and adhere to appropriate professional boundaries. Social activities and personal relationships outside the professional learning environment should be appropriate and carefully selected to avoid placing the student or clinical affiliate in a compromising situation. Contacting members of the clinical affiliate via social media prior to graduation is prohibited. If a student and a member(s) of the clinical affiliate have a pre-existing personal relationship, a professional relationship must always be maintained.

Adherence to SCPE Policies and Procedures

The protection of patients is of utmost importance to the program and the clinical affiliates providing SCPEs. The program instructs and assesses students on HIPAA, bloodborne pathogens, and universal precautions; however, when discrepancies exist relative to these three areas, the policies of the clinical affiliate supersede program policy. Students suspected of violating the clinical affiliate's policies and procedures will be referred to the SPC for progression and/or disciplinary action recommendations, which may include dismissal from the program. The SPC recommendation may lead to a delay in graduation and failure to complete the program curriculum within 54 months of initial matriculation. Students may also be removed from the SCPE prior to SPC referral if patient care is thought to be compromised by the student’s actions and/or at the clinical affiliate’s request.

Shadowing Health Care Professionals and Volunteering Policy

Shadowing of any health care professional not arranged and authorized by the program while enrolled in the program is not permitted and is not covered under LMU’s malpractice coverage for PA Students. This policy is intended to prevent students from violating healthcare facility credentialing procedures and from providing patient care for which they lack appropriate training. LMU’s malpractice coverage for PA Students does not

cover any volunteer activities not arranged and/or authorized by the program.

Employment Policy

Outside employment is strongly discouraged while enrolled in the program, as it may conflict with the program's academic and professional conduct requirements. LMU's malpractice coverage for PA Students does not cover any employment activities. Absences from any component of the program curriculum due to employment commitments are not allowed (except for military service requirements). Students are not required to work for the program. Students must not substitute for or function as faculty, clinical or administrative staff, regardless of prior knowledge, experience, or skills, at any time throughout the program (Didactic or Clinical Year). The Clinical Team advises clinical affiliates of this policy.

Evaluation, Grading, and Remediation

How Students are Evaluated

A student's academic performance is evaluated through various course-specific assessments, such as written and recorded assignments, problem-based cases, activity learning sheets, discussion boards, live discussions, quizzes, and both written and practical examinations. Specific rubrics may be available in the learning management system or included as an appendix to the syllabus.

Grading Scale and Passing a Course

To pass a course, a student must earn a final grade of 70% (C) or higher and have no substantial incomplete coursework (meaning they have not missed assignments totaling 20% or more of the final grade). **Grades are not rounded** and reported as:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89.9%
- C = 70-79.9%
- F = < 70%

For the LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program:

- A minimal 3.00 cumulative GPA is required for progression between semesters and graduation.
- The student may be allowed to progress a single semester with less than a 3.0 GPA at the discretion of the Student Progress Committee. If the student does not raise their cumulative GPA to a 3.0 within one semester, then they will be dismissed.
- Minimal assessment scores and criteria to pass a course or rotation are outlined in the syllabi.

Temporary Grades (In Progress & Incomplete)

In certain circumstances, a grade of "in progress" or "incomplete" may be awarded. In this case, the student will be notified of the reason and the process for converting it to a final course score.

Remediation Policy

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 remediation triggers 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 (less than 80% average in more than one course)
 - c. Difficulty meeting or understanding expectations
 - d. Peer or informal concern (“hallway chatter”)
 - e. Professionalism red flags

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 Director of Didactic Education (DDE), Associate Program Director (APD), or Program Director (PD).

- (2) The DDE, APD, or PD will meet with the student within two business days 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 Director of Didactic Education 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.

*If an IRP is developed by both the program faculty and the Success Coach, the plans will be merged into a single plan with specified expectations and clear measures of improved performance.

Clinical Triggers for Remediation

The remediation triggers 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 $\geq 70\%$ 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 $\geq 70\%$ 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.

(5) Clinical Competency Gap Analysis Tracker. Any competency noted to be deficient on the tracker will be remediated.

Process for Clinical Remediation

(1) The Director of Clinical Education (DCE) or designee will meet with the student within two business days of receiving the remediation referral form to discuss the concerns. Based on the conversation, the DCE 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.

*If an IRP is developed by both the program faculty and the Success Coach, the plans will be merged into a single plan with specified expectations and clear measures of improved performance.

Remediation of Failed Assessment Policy (Assessment Retake)

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) Preceptor Evaluation of Student (less than 70% overall or less 3/5 on any individual CLO)
- (7) Failure of any part of the didactic or senior summative

No other assessments may be repeated or retaken. This includes quizzes, problem-based cases, and active-learning worksheets. The first grade on these assessments will be recorded as the final score.

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 (greater than 70%) 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.

The final assessment score will be raised to 70% if the retake is successful. If not, the original score will be

recorded.

Remediation through Retake Limits

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.

If a student reaches the maximum number of retakes or remediations, they will be referred to the student progress committee for an escalated decision to include probation, deceleration, or dismissal.

PART IV: STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE (SPC)

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. Any student referred to the SPC is encouraged to contact the SPC Chair for guidance in the SPC process prior to the SPC meeting. Students are referred to the SPC for the following reasons:

- 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, dismissal from the program)
- Follow-up on prior SPC decisions (e.g., removal from academic probation)

SPC Procedures

The SPC comprises five principal faculty members of the program. The SPC convenes at least once each semester to review each student's academic performance and professional conduct, as reported by program faculty, and make decisions on student progression in the program. The SPC also convenes whenever necessary at the discretion of the SPC Chair.

The SPC Chair informs any student required to meet with the SPC at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting via the student's LMU-issued student email account and provides the date, time, location, and reasons(s) for the meeting. Students required to meet with the SPC must appear in person to answer questions and submit any information felt to be relevant to their case. Students may appear via videoconference at the SPC Chair's discretion. If a student who is required to meet with the SPC fails to appear before the SPC, a decision(s) is made in their absence.

All SPC meeting proceedings are confidential and closed to anyone, not part of the SPC proceedings. Students and SPC members are not permitted to bring personal items to SPC meetings, including audio/video recording devices, cell phones, and smartwatches. Meeting minutes are recorded by a program staff member and maintained by the SPC Chair. The SPC members review all documents relevant to the students' meeting. When the student enters the meeting room, the SPC Chair verifies that the student knows all SPC members present and can explain the reason for the SPC meeting. The student is invited to provide testimony relevant to the meeting. SPC members may ask the students questions relevant to the meeting. The student is then asked to leave the premises while the SPC members discuss progression and disciplinary action options. A decision(s) is submitted to a vote with a simple majority ruling. The SPC Chair is a non-voting member except in the case of a tie vote. Because this is not a criminal court, the level of proof for a decision shall be "more likely than not" and not the strict criminal law standard of "proof beyond a reasonable doubt". Once the SPC has reached a decision(s), the student will be notified by the SPC Chair with an explanation of the decision(s) and relevant instructions/expectations for the student.

The SPC Chair notifies the Program Director of all SPC decisions. Campus Security, the Registrar, the Executive Director of Student Financial Services, and the program's Admissions and Community Relations Coordinator are notified if a decision(s) results in student dismissal or a delay in graduation. Within three (3) business days following the meeting, the student receives notification of the SPC's decision(s) and relevant instructions/expectations via the student's LMU-issued student email account. When the SPC decides to delay progression in the program, including a delay in beginning SCPEs or a delay in graduation, or dismisses a student from the program in the absence of the student, the student is informed of the SPC's decision in person or via telephone communication by the SPC Chair, in addition to receiving email notification as stated above.

SPC Decisions

The SPC has the authority to make decisions regarding student progression in the program and disciplinary

action(s) based on each student's academic performance, professional conduct development, and adherence to the Student Code of Conduct policies.

For Professional Conduct Deficits

Any student who is suspected of violating the Student Code of Conduct may be referred to the SPC for a decision(s) on disciplinary action and progression, including dismissal from the program.

In cases where the SPC does not dismiss the student, the student is placed on Professional Probation and is required to successfully complete remediation of the professional conduct deficit(s) in the following time frame:

Didactic Phase

Prior to beginning the Clinical Phase (this may result in a delay in beginning SCPEs, a delay in graduation, and failure to complete the program curriculum within 48 months of initial matriculation).

Clinical Phase

Prior to beginning the next scheduled SCPE or beginning the Summative Evaluation (this may result in a delay in graduation and failure to complete the program curriculum within 48 months of initial matriculation)

In addition, SPC may require any of the following for professional conduct deficits:

- Mentoring by faculty
- Use of other program/LMU resources
- Other (e.g., use of resources external to LMU)

If the student does not successfully remediate any professional conduct deficit(s), the student will be dismissed from the program. In addition, students referred to the SPC more than once for professional conduct deficits may be dismissed from the program.

Violations of the Arrest/Criminal Background Check and Drug/Alcohol Screening Policies

Students arrested for alcohol, illicit drug(s), or illegally obtained prescription drug(s) charges are referred to the SPC for immediate review. This may result in the student being removed from the current SCPE. The SPC may make the decisions listed in the "For Professional Conduct Deficits" section above. This may result in a delay in beginning SCPEs, a delay in graduation, failure to complete the program curriculum within 54 months of initial matriculation, or dismissal from the program.

Clinical affiliates reserve the right to refuse and remove any student arrested for an alcohol, illicit drug(s), or illegally obtained prescription drug(s) charge from their clinical site(s). This may result in a delay in beginning SCPEs, a delay in graduation, failure to complete the program curriculum within 54 months of initial matriculation, or dismissal from the program.

Students found guilty of alcohol, illicit drug(s), or illegally obtained prescription drug(s) charges are immediately dismissed from the program.

In addition, students arrested for alcohol, illicit drug(s), or illegally obtained prescription drug(s) charges are

expected to seek appropriate medical/behavioral treatment/counseling to determine if future patient safety may be compromised by the student's actions. The program may require the student to obtain medical/behavioral treatment/counseling to ensure the program and the public are informed that the student's actions will not compromise patient safety.

Academic and professional standing within the program for students arrested for other charges is at the discretion of the Program Director and the administration of the School of Medical Sciences (SMS) and LMU and is based on current policies or precedents. Students who falsify information about their past or current criminal history will be dismissed from the program.

For Academic Deficits

Didactic Phase – Academic Probation

Any student required to complete remediation is automatically placed on Academic Probation at the time of identification and documentation of the academic deficit. The course grade for the related course may be initially recorded as “IP” (in progress) until the remediation assessment(s) are completed. The SPC reviews documentation for every student required to complete remediation at the end of each semester. At that time, the SPC may recommend any of the following actions/requirements for students who have successfully completed remediation:

- Removal from Academic Probation
- Mentoring by program faculty
- Use of other program/LMU resources
- Other (e.g., use of resources external to LMU)
- Progression in the program

Students who do not successfully complete remediation assessment(s) will be dismissed from the program.

Didactic Phase – Course Failure

Course grades are calculated after remediation assessments are completed. Failure of any remediation assessment for a course may result in failure of that course, regardless of the final calculated course grade. This will be at the SPC's discretion following a holistic review of the students' performance in the program.

Any student who fails a Didactic Phase course may be dismissed or decelerated from the program at the SPC's discretion following a holistic review of the student's performance and professionalism. Professionalism behaviors considered include the student's active participation in all opportunities offered for academic or personal assistance..

Clinical Phase – Academic Probation

Any student required to complete remediation is automatically placed on Academic Probation at the time of identification and documentation of the academic deficit. The rotation grade for the related rotation may be initially recorded as “IP” (in-progress) until the remediation assessment(s) is completed. The SPC reviews documentation for every student required to complete remediation at the end of each semester. At that time the SPC may recommend any of the following actions/requirements for students who have successfully completed remediation:

- Removal from Academic Probation
- Mentoring by program faculty

- Use of other program/LMU resources
- Other (e.g., use of resources external to LMU)
- Progression in the program

Clinical Phase – Course Failure

Rotation grades are calculated after remediation assessments are completed. Failure of any remediation assessment for a rotation may result in failure of that course, regardless of the final calculated rotation grade. This will be at the SPC's discretion following a holistic review of the students' performance in the program.

Any student who fails a Clinical Phase course may be dismissed or decelerated from the program at the SPC's discretion following a holistic review of the student's performance and professionalism. Professionalism behaviors considered include the student's active participation in all opportunities offered for academic or personal assistance..

Didactic Phase Cumulative Examination, Clinical Phase Cumulative Examination, and Summative Evaluation – Remediation

The SPC reviews documentation for every student required to complete a remediation assessment(s) for any component of the Didactic Phase Cumulative Examination, Clinical Phase Cumulative Examination, and Summative Evaluation following completion. At that time, the SPC may recommend any of the following actions/requirements for students who have successfully completed the remediation assessment(s):

- Removal from Academic Probation
- Mentoring by program faculty
- Use of other program/LMU resources
- Other (e.g., use of resources external to LMU)
- Progression in the program
- Completion of a PANCE review course prior to taking the PANCE
- Independent review of specific content on the PANCE Content Blueprint prior to taking the PANCE
- Progression to graduation

Students who do not successfully complete the Cumulative or Summative Evaluation remediation assessment(s) will be dismissed.

Follow-up on SPC Decision(s)/Recommendation(s)

The SPC monitors student progress and compliance with all SPC decisions and may meet with students to determine whether they have met all SPC requirements for removal from academic/professional probation and progression in the program. The SPC can remove the student from academic/professional probation and allow the student to progress in the program. Failure to meet SPC requirement(s), in whole or in part, may result in the following:

- Continued Academic/Professional Probation
- Continued mentoring by program faculty
- Use of other program/LMU resources
- Other (e.g., use of resources external to LMU)
- Dismissal from the program

Definitions of SPC Decisions/Recommendations

Academic/Professional Probation is defined as a demonstration of academic/professional deficits of such a magnitude as to warrant more frequent monitoring by the SPC and/or disciplinary action(s).

Academic/Professional Probation may result in a delay in beginning SCPEs, a delay in graduation, and failure to complete the program curriculum within 54 months of initial matriculation. State licensing and hospital credentialing boards may decline to grant licensure or credentialing to graduates who have been placed on academic/professional probation while enrolled in a professional training program.

Remediation is defined as the program's applied process for addressing deficits in a student's knowledge, skills, and professional conduct such that correction of deficits is measurable and can be documented.

Remediation may result in a delay in beginning SCPEs, a delay in graduation, and failure to complete the program curriculum within 48 months of initial matriculation. Failure to successfully complete any remediation assessment will result in dismissal from the program.

Dismissal is defined as an SPC-initiated immediate discontinuation of the student's enrollment in the program, where the student is not eligible to re-enroll without re-application to the program. Students dismissed for professional deficits are not eligible to reapply to the program.

Deceleration is defined as the loss of a student who entered the cohort but remains matriculated in the program. Deceleration is not offered to students dismissed from the program by the SPC for academic and/or professional deficits. If a student appeals the SPC's decision for dismissal and the Appeals Committee determines the SPC should make an alternate recommendation, a declaration may be offered to the student at that time. Deceleration may be offered to students who take a leave of absence (Leave of Absence [LOA]/Withdrawal Policy).

Graduation from the program does not guarantee successful state licensure or hospital credentialing. State licensing and hospital credentialing boards may require documentation to support the applicant's written explanation for a delay in graduation and may decline to grant licensure/credentialing to graduates with a history of disciplinary action, including academic/professional probation, while enrolled in the program.

Progression, Deceleration, and Graduation

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 (may progress one time with less than a 3.0 GPA by the discretion of the SPC, the student will have one semester to raise their semester and cumulative GPA to a minimum of 3.0).

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.
- Pass all didactic summative assessments

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 complete graduation application to the LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program.
- Maintain good academic/professional standing: If on academic/professional 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.

Deceleration/Delay

Deceleration: An officially recognized adjustment to a student's original program of study that extends the time required for degree completion. In the instance of deceleration, the student will take a leave of absence and return with another cohort.

Delay: An officially recognized adjustment to a student's original program of study that extends the time required for degree completion. In the event of a delay, the student will graduate after their original cohort but before the next cohort.

In both instances, additional tuition may be required and will be communicated at the time the delay/deceleration is offered.

The Student Progress Committee (SPC) may, at its discretion and after a holistic review of the **students'** performance, offer a delay or deceleration option. Such options are not guaranteed and may not be offered for academic, professional, or personal circumstances that result in academic difficulty. If a delay or deceleration is offered and the student declines, **the decision will be treated as** a voluntary withdrawal from the program.

Leave of Absence, Withdrawal, & Dismissal

Official Policy – SMS: Leave of Absence, Withdrawal, and Dismissal Processes and Procedures Policy

This section outlines the official procedures for taking a temporary break from studies (Leave of Absence), withdrawing from courses, or withdrawing from the program entirely (Withdrawal). It also explains the process for program-initiated student dismissal.

These procedures are critical to a student's academic and financial standing. A change in enrollment status may have significant financial implications, students should plan on consulting with the Program Director to navigate these processes.

Leave of Absence (LOA) and Withdrawal Policy

Dismissal

The LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program reserves the right to dismiss any LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Student at any time while enrolled in the program.

- Circumstances warranting such action may be of an academic, professional, or legal nature.
- Any student who is dismissed from the LMU-SMS Chattanooga 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 students' status and notify the appropriate faculty and staff.
- Failure to complete this checkout procedure will cause the LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program to withhold all records about the student's attendance.
- Any student who is dismissed from the LMU-SMS Chattanooga 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
 - Refund of tuition or fees related to the timing of dismissal are reported on the LMU Financial Aid page, [Course Withdrawal & Adding/Dropping Info | LMU Financial Aid](#)
- 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.
- Refusal to attend an assigned rotation will result in dismissal from the program.

Reapplication Policy

Any student dismissed from the program for academic deficits is eligible to reapply to the program. The program does not offer automatic readmission for any student dismissed for academic deficits. Any student dismissed from the program for violation of the Student Code of Conduct is not eligible to reapply to the program.

PART V: STUDENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND CONDUCT

Student Rights & Responsibilities

Student Rights

Students have the right to learn in a fair, respectful, and safe environment free from mistreatment, discrimination, or harassment. They are entitled to due process in disciplinary matters, timely feedback, academic advising, confidentiality of their records (per FERPA), and the right to report concerns without fear of retaliation. Matters involving discrimination or sexual misconduct are handled by the LMU Office of Institutional Compliance in accordance with university policies.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to uphold high standards of professional conduct, including altruism, compassion, integrity, respect, and excellence. Maintaining academic integrity (including adhering to the Honor Code), respecting confidentiality (HIPAA), identifying themselves appropriately as a student, behaving professionally online, respecting University property, avoiding conflicts of interest, and reporting any arrests/formal charges within two (2) business days are key responsibilities. Students are also responsible for maintaining a professional learning environment by adhering to the program's dress code as defined in this handbook and avoiding any activities that interfere with the learning opportunities of any student.

Professionalism & Conduct Standards

Student Code of Conduct

LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Students must maintain high standards of private and public conduct on campus, off campus, and at LMU-sponsored events. Violation of these and other generally accepted rules of behavior, whether covered by specific policies or not, may subject a student to disciplinary action. **Claims of ignorance of acceptable behavior or enumerated policies and standards are not accepted as an excuse for violation.**

Students are formally evaluated on their professional conduct at least once each semester during the Didactic Phase (Appendix F). These records are maintained by the program. Students are evaluated on their professional conduct for each SCPE by clinical affiliates, program faculty, and staff. Students suspected of violating the Student Code of Conduct may be referred to the Student Progress Committee (SPC) for recommendations regarding progression and/or disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

The LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program's Student Code of Conduct includes policies for the following areas:

- Professional Conduct
- Academic Conduct
- Testing
- Attendance
- Confidentiality
- FERPA
- Social Media
- Audio and Video Recording
- Learning Environment
- Dress Code (Professional Appearance)

- Identification as a Physician Assistant Student (PA-S)
- Arrest/Criminal Background Check
- Drug/Alcohol Screening and Driving while Under the Influence (DUI)

Professional Conduct Policy

Physician Assistants are highly trained healthcare professionals who practice medicine within the ethical framework of the Physician Assistant oath. By entering the Program, students commit to developing and demonstrating professional behaviors consistent with the responsibilities of patient care and their role on the healthcare team.

Professionalism requires prioritizing the needs of patients and others over personal convenience; demonstrating empathy, compassion, and respect; maintaining confidentiality; acting with honesty and integrity; taking responsibility for learning and behavior; recognizing the limits of one's training; engaging in lifelong learning; and maintaining freedom from impairment that interferes with safe and effective performance.

Unprofessional conduct may place patients at risk and undermine trust in the PA profession, the PA–patient relationship, and the healthcare team. **Therefore, professional conduct is evaluated as equally important as academic and clinical performance and is required for successful progression and graduation from the Program.**

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior upon matriculation and throughout the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum. Faculty mentor students in professional development through structured advising and ongoing feedback. Students meet with their assigned faculty mentor each semester to review academic and professional development and to establish goals for improvement. During the clinical phase, students develop a plan for ongoing self-assessment, self-directed learning, service, scholarship, and leadership.

Professionalism - Due Dates

- Meeting deadlines is a professional expectation. Due dates are clearly marked in the learning management system. Assignments submitted late will receive a grade of zero (0) unless the student has communicated a valid reason to the Course Director in advance.
- Valid reasons include but are not limited to: loss of a family member, accident or serious illness, or emergency situations requiring immediate attention.
- Invalid reasons include, but are not limited to, scheduling conflicts (e.g., vacations), forgetting, not receiving assignment notification, limited internet access, or technical difficulties.
- The Course Director will work with the student if a valid reason exists.

Domains of Professional Conduct and Behavioral Expectations

Professional conduct is evaluated using the following domains. Examples of expected behaviors are provided to clarify performance standards.

1. Altruism

Prioritizing the needs and interests of others before self.

Expected behaviors include:

- Placing patient welfare above personal convenience or discomfort

- Volunteering assistance to peers or team members when appropriate
- Completing assigned responsibilities even when inconvenient
- Demonstrating a willingness to serve underserved or vulnerable populations

Examples of unprofessional behavior:

- Refusing reasonable tasks or responsibilities
 - Prioritizing personal needs over patient care or team obligations
 - Failing to assist peers when able to do so safely
-

2. Empathy and Compassion

Recognizing and responding appropriately to the suffering or needs of others.

Expected behaviors include:

- Demonstrating sensitivity to patients' physical, emotional, and cultural needs
- Listening attentively without interrupting
- Using appropriate tone and language with patients, families, peers, and staff
- Responding respectfully during stressful or emotionally charged situations

Examples of unprofessional behavior:

- Dismissive, sarcastic, or insensitive comments
 - Lack of concern for patient comfort or distress
 - Inappropriate emotional detachment
-

3. Respect for Others

Demonstrating consideration for the dignity, autonomy, and values of others.

Expected behaviors include:

- Arriving on time and prepared for all classes, labs, and clinical assignments
- Communicating professionally with faculty, staff, peers, patients, and preceptors
- Maintaining patient confidentiality in all settings (including social media)
- Contributing positively to a collegial learning environment
- Accepting differing perspectives without hostility

Examples of unprofessional behavior:

- Tardiness or unexcused absences
 - Disruptive or disrespectful classroom or clinical behavior
 - Breaches of confidentiality
 - Discriminatory or derogatory language
-

4. Service

Sharing time, skills, and resources for the benefit of others and the community.

Expected behaviors include:

- Participation in service-learning or community outreach when assigned
- Sharing knowledge and resources with peers
- Supporting institutional or professional service initiatives

- Demonstrating commitment to the mission of the Program

Examples of unprofessional behavior:

- Refusal to participate in required service activities
 - Disengagement from community or team-based initiatives
-

5. Integrity

Demonstrating honesty, accountability, and ethical behavior.

Expected behaviors include:

- Submitting one's own work and following academic integrity policies
- Accurately reporting clinical findings and errors
- Taking responsibility for mistakes and addressing them appropriately
- Recognizing limits of training and seeking supervision
- Complying with Program policies and legal requirements

Examples of unprofessional behavior:

- Cheating, plagiarism, or falsification of records
 - Dishonesty with faculty, preceptors, or patients
 - Practicing beyond scope or without appropriate supervision
 - Failure to disclose errors
-

6. Excellence

Commitment to continuous improvement and high professional standards.

Expected behaviors include:

- Preparing for classes and clinical experiences
- Seeking and responding constructively to feedback
- Demonstrating initiative in learning
- Accepting increasing responsibility under appropriate supervision
- Adhering to ethical and professional standards of care

Examples of unprofessional behavior:

- Repeated failure to prepare
 - Defensive or dismissive responses to feedback
 - Minimal effort toward professional growth
-

7. Emotional Resiliency

Adapting to stress, change, and ambiguity in a professional manner.

Expected behaviors include:

- Managing stress appropriately without disrupting learning or patient care
- Demonstrating flexibility in changing clinical or academic situations
- Seeking assistance when overwhelmed
- Maintaining professional demeanor during conflict

Examples of unprofessional behavior:

- Emotional outbursts or inappropriate reactions
 - Inability to adapt to change
 - Refusal to seek help when performance is impaired
-

Assessment of Professional Conduct

Professional conduct is evaluated throughout the Program using multiple methods, including:

- Faculty observation in didactic courses
- Clinical preceptor evaluations
- Professionalism rubrics and checklists
- Peer and self-assessment activities
- Advising and mentoring meetings
- Documentation of professionalism concerns
- Concerns regarding professional behavior may result in:
 - Informal counseling
 - Formal professionalism reports
 - Required remediation plans
 - Referral to the Student Progress Committee
 - Disciplinary action in accordance with Program policies
- Repeated or serious violations of professional conduct standards may result in probation, suspension, or dismissal from the Program.

See Appendix F for the Professional Behaviors Grading Rubric, which is completed at the end of each semester. Any student who fails to meet expectations in one or more rubric domains will be referred to the Student Progress Committee (SPC) for evaluation and to determine required remediation of professional behavior. Following a holistic review of the student's overall performance, the outcome may include a delay in progression or dismissal from the Program.

Academic Integrity & Honor Code

Absolute honesty is required in all academic work. Cheating, plagiarism (including improper use of AI), fabrication, abetting, or misrepresentation are serious violations. Students must abide by the Honor Code they acknowledged upon entry.

This honor code states: "I hereby attest that as a learner advancing my knowledge and skills for the purposes of patient care, I will perform all tasks, assignments, tests, and quizzes to the best of my ability. I will refrain from cheating, plagiarizing, borrowing, or stealing or otherwise submitting work that I did not autonomously author. I will uphold the highest standards of professionalism at all times."

Testing/Assessment Policy

To ensure fairness, academic integrity, and a secure testing environment, all students are required to follow the Program's testing procedures. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct policies.

Pre-Examination Expectations

Students must:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start time and be prepared to begin testing
 - Present required identification if requested
 - Use the restroom prior to the exam start time
 - Bring only permitted testing materials as directed by faculty
 - Ensure that exams have been downloaded before entry.
 - Ensure that all required updates to the computer have been completed prior to the exam; failure to deliver the exam due to update issues will result in a grade of zero.
 - Students may not enter the testing room once the examination has begun without faculty approval.
-

Prohibited Items During Testing

The following items are not permitted in the testing room:

- Watches (including smartwatches and fitness trackers)
 - Mobile phones or electronic devices of any kind
 - Hoodies, hats, or head coverings (except for documented religious accommodations)
 - Earplugs (unless provided by the Program)
 - Books, notes, papers, or study materials
 - Food or drink unless approved as accommodation
-

Permitted Items

- Program-provided earplugs (available upon request)
 - Writing utensil provided or approved by the Program
 - Approved accommodation through the appropriate institutional process
-

Storage of Personal Items

- All personal belongings must be placed in a designated locker or storage area before entering the testing room
 - Pockets must be empty
 - No personal items may be accessed during the examination
-

Conduct During the Examination

Students must:

- Remain silent throughout the examination
 - Follow all proctor instructions
 - Keep eyes on their own work
 - Raise a hand to request assistance
 - Remain seated unless permission is granted to leave the room
 - Any observed or suspected academic misconduct will be documented and referred in accordance with Program policy.
-

Completion of the Examination

Upon completing the examination, students must:

- Submit all testing materials as instructed
 - Leave the testing room quietly and immediately
 - Avoid disrupting other students
 - Not return to the testing room after exiting
-

Post-Examination Confidentiality

Students are prohibited from:

- Discussing examination content or specific test items with classmates or others
 - Posting or sharing examination material in any format (verbal, written, electronic, or social media)
 - Violation of this policy is considered unprofessional conduct and may be treated as an academic integrity violation.
-

Accommodation

Students requiring testing accommodation must have approval through the appropriate institutional office. Religious head coverings and medically required devices are permitted with prior approval.

Confidentiality (HIPAA)

Students are exposed to private health information during training. A patient's health information is private and protected by law. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a federal law that sets rules governing who can access and use patient health information. Students must always follow HIPAA regulations. Students receive HIPAA training during orientation in the first semester and again prior to beginning SCPEs.

Students must respect the confidentiality of their classmates, patients (standardized patients, patient models, and patients and their families encountered during service activities and SCPEs), program faculty and staff, clinical preceptors, and members of the program's clinical affiliates. Students are not permitted to discuss or post on social media any protected health information about their classmates, patients (standardized patients, patient models, patients and their families encountered during service activities and SCPEs), program faculty and staff, clinical preceptors, and members of the program's clinical affiliates. Students are not permitted to obtain or post any pictures of patients (standardized patients, patient models, donors, and patients and their families encountered during service activities and SCPEs). Students may use a patient's initials in patient case presentations and other program-required assignments.

Students do not have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or program faculty or staff. Students are only informed of their own performance in the program. The results of assessments (including minimum, maximum, or mean grades) and SPC decisions are not posted and are only accessible to program faculty and staff with a legitimate need to know.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The program complies with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 1974, as amended. This law maintains that the program will provide for the confidentiality of student education records. Identifiable information from a student's educational record will only be accessible to program faculty and staff and other LMU employees with a legitimate educational need for the information.

Student grades are recorded, stored, and secured with the LMU Registrar. All other student educational records are maintained by the program. Please see (www.LMUnet.edu) for detailed information regarding FERPA and the list of disclosures that LMU may make without student consent in accordance with FERPA.

Social Media Policy

Students are expected to exhibit professional and ethical conduct on campus, during SCPEs, and in any setting where they represent the program. This includes the “persona” put forth by students when engaged in social media platforms (e.g., Facebook®, Snapchat®, blogs, etc.) in which they are identified as part of the LMU-SMS-Chattanooga PA Program in any form. PAs are held to a higher standard of personal and professional conduct than many other professions because of the trust patients place in health care professionals. State licensing boards have the authority to discipline licensed PAs or deny state licensure to PAs for social media posts that do not meet the professional standards of the state licensing board. Employers, including hospital credentialing boards, may dismiss an employed PA or decline to hire a PA for social media posts that do not meet the health system or practice's professional standards. Therefore, the program holds students at all stages of training responsible for adhering to the same ethical and professional conduct rules, including confidentiality, on social media platforms as in any other setting set forth in this handbook.

The program’s social media Policy is as follows:

- Students are not allowed to engage in social media platforms with program faculty and staff and members of any clinical affiliate while enrolled in the program.
- Students must not use any social media platform during any activity scheduled by the program, including
- SCPEs, without permission from the program faculty or staff member leading the activity or members of clinical affiliates providing the SCPE.
- Students must not post photos, comments, or memes of classmates, program faculty and staff, members of any clinical affiliate, or patients and their families on any social media platform.
- Students must not share patient information on any social media platform.
- Students must not engage in discussions using profanity and/or discriminatory or disparaging comments about any patients or groups of patients; LMU faculty, staff, and students; members of any clinical affiliate; or the community on any social media platform.
- Students must not interact with current or past patients and/or the families of patients on any social media platform.
- Students must not post photos or comments showing themselves in potentially unprofessional situations (e.g., appearing intoxicated, using illicit substances, assuming provocative body positions, etc.) on any social media platform.
- Students must not represent themselves as a graduate PA (or other type of health care provider except for any previously obtained titles, e.g., EMT, RN, etc.) on any social media platform prior to graduation from the program.

Audio and Video Recording

It is expressly prohibited to make audio or video recordings of any learning or assessment activities without prior written permission from the Program Director. Likewise, it is expressly prohibited to copy and distribute any recorded, electronic, or printed learning and assessment materials without prior written permission from the Program Director. Failure to follow this policy is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Professional Appearance (Dress Code)

As part of professional conduct, students must adhere to the program's dress code policies. Failure to comply with the dress code may result in dismissal from the activity, classroom, laboratory, or clinical site. Students are required to purchase standardized color/style scrub attire for use during laboratory activities. Students must change out of scrubs worn during anatomy laboratory sessions prior to attending other learning and assessment activities.

Clothing should allow for adequate movement during patient care (this includes bending/leaning forward, kneeling, and reaching) and must not be tight, short, low cut, or expose the shoulders, anterior chest, back, abdomen, buttocks, or thighs (whether standing/bending/leaning forward, kneeling, or reaching). Athletic shoes may be worn during laboratory sessions. Shoes that expose the toes or the heel are not acceptable during laboratory activities and during simulated patient encounters (human and manikin). On special occasions, students may be allowed to wear jeans and LMU-branded hoodies, sweatshirts, and T-shirts. Jeans must not have holes, rips, or tears.

Piercings of body areas other than the ears or nose must be covered. Large grommets or colored plugs are not acceptable. Fingernails must be kept trimmed to finger length. Students must remove jewelry during laboratory sessions and surgical SCPEs. Nail polish must be removed for scrubbing, gowning, and gloving in laboratories and surgical SCPEs. Head covers traditionally worn for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition may be worn. Hair must be clean and neatly arranged to avoid interfering with laboratory activities and patient care.

Unless directed otherwise, the dress code for each activity is listed below.

Lecture: Students are expected to wear casual business attire to lectures and small group activities (e.g., PBLs) unless notified of an exception by the Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) and the Director of Clinical Education (Clinical Phase).

Donor laboratory (including clinical procedure skills laboratories and assessments conducted in the donor laboratory): Students are expected to wear program-approved scrubs and non-slip, closed-toe shoes. On any day when students have an activity requiring program-approved scrubs, business casual attire must be worn for the rest of the day. Disposable face masks, eye protection (e.g., goggles), and gloves are provided by the program and must be worn at all times when students are working with donors.

Physical examination and clinical skills laboratories and assessments (not conducted in the donor laboratory): Students are expected to wear program-approved scrubs over athletic shorts with bike shorts underneath, socks, and non-slip, closed-toe shoes. Students may wear program-approved scrubs all day on any day when they have an activity requiring them, unless they are also scheduled to complete activities in the donor laboratory.

Simulation laboratory and Clinical Examination Center (SIMs and OSCEs): Students are expected to wear program-approved scrubs, socks, and non-slip, closed-toe shoes. Disposable face masks may be required for simulated patient encounters.

Examinations: Students may wear program-approved scrubs or business casual attire to written examinations and to lectures that occur after written examinations.

After hours/weekend (not during official program activities): When on campus after hours and on weekends, students may wear modest casual attire.

SCPEs: Unless directed otherwise, students must wear business casual attire. Near the end of the Didactic Phase, students participate in a White Coat Ceremony, during which the program provides a short white laboratory coat with the program's patch and an embroidered student name. This laboratory coat must be worn during SCPE's and other activities as directed. Students must always wear the LMU-issued name badge that identifies them as an LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Student and any additional identification provided by clinical affiliates.

Faculty, staff, and any member of clinical affiliates providing SCPEs reserve the right to dismiss students from the classroom, laboratory, or clinical site for inappropriate dress, including improper identification (see Identification as a Physician Assistant Student [PA-S] below).

Conflict of Interest Policy

Students and faculty must avoid conflicts of interest. Students must not accept personal gifts worth more than \$10 from industry representatives. They must not act as a healthcare provider for colleagues, faculty, or staff. Industry representatives may only interact with students under direct faculty supervision in structured learning environments.

As related to professionalism, see the Identification as a Physician Assistant Student (PA-S), Arrest/Criminal Background Check, Drug/Alcohol Screening and Driving while Under the Influence (DUI) policies in this handbook.

University Conduct & Community Standards

LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program students are expected to maintain high standards of private and public conduct both on-campus, off-campus, and at university sponsored events. Student code of conduct policies can be found in the [LMU Railsplitter Community Standards Guide](#) and also apply to LMU-SMS Chattanooga PA Program students.

Students suspected of violating the student code of conduct may be referred to the SPC for a progression and/or disciplinary action decision(s), which may include dismissal from the program.

Sexual Misconduct, Harassment, and Title IX

Official Policy – LMU Office of Institutional Compliance

LMU prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. LMU prohibits an actual or attempted act of sexual misconduct, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or other forms of non-consensual sexual activity. These policies protect all students, whether on campus or remote.

All LMU employees (including all program faculty and staff, except for counselors in the LMU Office of Mental Health Counseling) are Mandatory Reporters. This means that if a student discloses a situation involving sexual misconduct to an employee, that employee is required by law to report it to the Title IX Coordinator.

Making a Report

Students who have experienced discrimination or sexual misconduct, or wish to discuss options, are

encouraged to contact:

Title IX Coordinator & Institutional Compliance Officer

(423) 869-6315

titleix@lmunet.edu

Tobacco, Alcohol, & Other Drugs

LMU is committed to a substance-free environment and complies with all federal, state, and local laws. The possession, consumption, use or distribution of tobacco, illicit drugs, controlled substances, and alcohol on university premises or during university-sponsored activities is prohibited, with the exception of alcohol in designated graduate residential spaces for students 21 years of age or older.

This policy applies to any in-person program requirements as well as any university-sponsored virtual events.

Students concerned about substance use are encouraged to seek confidential help from university health and counseling services. Resources are available on the official webpage at [Alcohol & Drug Resources for Students](#).

Official University Identification Cards

All enrolled LMU students are required to obtain and carry an LMU ID Card on campus. The LMU ID Card will be made for all students. The card should be retained over all semesters that the student is enrolled in the DMS program. Replacement of lost or damaged cards will cost \$10.00.

The LMU ID Card should be carried and visible while on campus. It is used for identification, to check out library books, to obtain admission to most campus activities, and for entrance into LMU-SMS facilities, and serves as a form of identification in the surrounding community as well.

Campus Police & Security will need to see the LMU ID Card before a student can gain access to a campus facility. If a student has forgotten their LMU ID Card, they may be asked to show a picture ID, such as a driver's license. If identification cannot be provided, campus access may be denied.

PART VI: ADDRESSING CONCERNS, CONDUCT, AND APPEALS

This section outlines the different pathways for addressing concerns, resolving conflicts, and appealing formal decisions within the Lincoln Memorial University School of Medical Sciences Chattanooga PA Program. It is crucial for students to follow the correct procedure based on the nature of the concern.

Pathways for Addressing Concerns

Whenever possible, students should first attempt to resolve concerns directly and informally with the individual(s) involved. If informal resolutions fail or are not appropriate, the student must follow the correct formal process based on the nature of their concern.

Student Initiated Grievances

This pathway is for students who have specific complaints or concerns.

Formal Non-Academic Grievances

Grievance is defined as dissatisfaction with an action or inaction that is non-academic in nature and perceived as unjust, inequitable, or creates undue hardship. **Students should contact the Office of Institutional Compliance/Title IX Coordinator (TitleIX@LMU.net) as soon as possible for any grievance stemming from sexual harassment, racial discrimination, or any other act discriminatory in nature.** Each student can advise the program of grievances with the assurance of fair treatment. The student, faculty, or staff member alleged to have caused the grievance must be fully informed of the allegations by the program and provided the opportunity to respond in a fair and reasonable manner.

Conflict with a Student

If a student has a conflict with another student in the program, the student should attempt to resolve the conflict in a direct and constructive manner with the other student as soon as possible. If a resolution cannot be reached, the student should request help from the Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team (Clinical Phase). If the conflict remains unresolved, the student may then request help from the Program Director for final resolution of the conflict. If a student has a conflict with a student from a different LMU program, the student should attempt to resolve the conflict in a direct and constructive manner with the other student as soon as possible. If the conflict remains unresolved, the student may then request help from the Program Director for final resolution of the conflict.

Conflict with a Faculty or Staff Member

If a student has a conflict with a program faculty or staff member, or faculty or staff member from a different LMU program, the student should attempt to resolve the conflict in a direct and constructive manner with the faculty or staff member as soon as possible. If a resolution cannot be reached, the student may then request help from the Program Director. If the conflict remains unresolved, the student may then request help from the School of Medical Sciences (SMS) Dean.

Conflicts with a Member of a Clinical Affiliate

If a student has a conflict with a member of a clinical affiliate (e.g., clinical preceptor, staff), the student should attempt to resolve the conflict in a direct and constructive manner with the member of the clinical affiliate as soon as possible. If a resolution cannot be reached, the student may then request help from the Clinical Team as soon as possible. If the conflict remains unresolved, the student may then request help from the Program Director for final resolution of the conflict.

Special Reporting Channels (Mistreatment & Title IX)

Mistreatment

Official Policy – SMS: Student Grievance Policy: Mistreatment

Mistreatment includes conduct that is perceived as disrespectful, humiliating, or unfair but may not meet the legal definition of discriminatory harassment.

If a student perceives mistreatment (disrespectful, humiliating, or unfair behavior not rising to discriminatory harassment), they should follow the reporting process in the SMS Student Grievance Policy: Mistreatment.

Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)

Official Policy – LMU Office of Institutional Compliance

Discrimination and harassment involve unwelcome conduct based on a person's protected status (e.g., race, color, sex, religion, disability, etc.) and all forms of sexual misconduct.

Any grievances related to discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct must be reported directly to the LMU Office of Institutional Compliance/Title IX Coordinator. These issues are handled exclusively under official university policies, not through program grievance procedures or the SPC.

Appeals Process

This pathway is only for students who wish to appeal a formal, written decision from the Student Progress Committee (SPC)

Appeals of Student Progress Committee (SPC) Decisions

Official Policy – SMS: Appeals Policy

Only judgements or disciplinary actions originating from an SPC decision will initiate the SMS appeals process if the student submits written notification to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

Program Grade Appeals Process

To appeal an assessment grade, email the course director within 24 hours of the assessment grade posting with an explanation of the appeal. The course director will discuss with the appropriate director and respond within 48 hours. This decision is final.

To appeal a course grade, email the course director within 24 hours of the course grade posting with an explanation of the appeal. The course director will discuss it with the Program Director and respond within 48 hours. This decision is final.

Selected LMU-SMS Policies

Selected LMU-SMS Policies

PART VII: UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Academic Support

SMS Director of Student Success (DSS)

The SMS provides dedicated academic support through the SMS Director of Student Success (DSS). The SMS DSS works closely with students who are at risk of academic difficulty to promote achievement and program completion. They can help with study habits, learning strategies, and offer academic advising to help them succeed.

Accessible Education Services

LMU is committed to providing accessible educational support and reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, ensuring all students can participate in and benefit from university programs.

Requesting Accommodations

Students who require accommodations must actively request them, as accommodations are not retroactive. The process is as follows:

1. **Register with the Office:** The student must register with the Office of Accessible Education Services (AES) by submitting a Student Request for Accommodation form and the required medical documentation.
2. **Review:** The AES Director will contact the student to discuss their specific needs and determine appropriate accommodations.
3. **Letter of Accommodation:** If accommodations are approved, a Letter of Accommodation is created and provided to the student and their instructors.
4. **Activation:** The letter becomes effective only after all parties have signed it and the signed copy is returned to the AES Director.

Meet Semester Deadlines: Accommodations must be requested each semester by the pre-set semesterly deadlines.

- **Late Requests** Accommodation requests submitted after the deadline will be considered only if the disability first presented itself after the deadline. In such cases, the request must be submitted at least fourteen (14) days before the accommodation is needed.

Grievances and Appeals: The Office of Accessible Education Services also has procedures to manage any grievances or appeals concerning academic accommodations.

Contact Information

Information and resources can be found at the official webpage at [LMU Office of Accessible Education Services](#).

Library and Research Services

Students have 24/7 remote access to the University's extensive digital resources essential for research, including the collections of the Carnegie-Vincent Library (CVL) & Reed Health Sciences Library (RHSL). The library system provides access to more than 631,000 titles—over 466,000 e-books, 64,000 print books, and roughly 90,000 full-text journals, and 274 Databases (213 subscribed, 61 open access).

Professional librarians are available via phone, email, video conference, and chat to assist with research and resource utilization. Should students need physical materials, the library offers mail delivery for print books and electronic delivery of scanned articles or chapters. Materials not owned by LMU can often be obtained through Interlibrary Loan (ILL). While visiting campus, students can also explore the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum.

For more information and to access these resources, please visit the official webpages:

- [Carnegie-Vincent Library & Reed Health Sciences Library](#)
- [LMU Interlibrary Loan \(ILL\)](#)
- [Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum](#).

Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE)

The CTLE offers training and support for Canvas, LMU's online learning platform, and other educational technologies used in student courses. To learn more about CTLE and what they offer, please visit the official webpage at [Center of Teaching and Learning Excellence](#).

Financial Services and Student Accounts

The program is committed to ensuring every student has access to the financial resources necessary for success. The initial point of contact for any financial question is the Admissions Coordinator. This individual will assist with program-specific information or direct the student to the appropriate university personnel for specialized support.

Financial Aid Services

The Office of Student Financial Services assists students with the entire financial aid process, from application to disbursement. Staff are available for appointments to:

- Assist with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Provide information on loans, scholarships, and grants.
- Help budget the cost of education through payment plans.
- Discuss the financial impact of withdrawing or decelerating.

For comprehensive details on loans, scholarships, and other financial aid opportunities, please visit the official webpage at [LMU Office of Student Financial Services](#).

Tuition, Fees, & Billing

A complete schedule of current tuition and fees can be found at the official webpage: [LMU Tuition and Fees: Graduate and Professional Programs](#).

Payment Policies and Due Dates

Registration for courses is complete only when all financial obligations have been met, Payment of tuition and fees is required before the start of each semester. Approved financial aid, including grants, loans, and scholarships, will be applied directly to these charges. If a balance remains, payment can be made via cash, check, money order, or major credit card. The University also offers payment plans to help divide educational costs into more manageable monthly payments.

Delinquent Accounts and Penalties

It is the student's responsibility to maintain good financial standing with the University. Accounts that are more than 30 days past due are considered delinquent and will accrue interest. Failure to resolve an outstanding balance may result in penalties. Please refer to the official webpage at [LMU Student Financial Services](#).

Withdrawal and Refund Schedules

Students who must withdraw from the program are required to follow a specific process, which directly impacts financial refunds.

Official Withdrawal Process

A student must initiate a withdrawal by completing a University WD form and coordinating with the Program Director. The date on the form is recorded by the Registrar and serves as the official date used to calculate any refund. Verbal requests do not constitute an official withdrawal.

For students who officially withdraw after a semester begins, tuition charges are refunded on a prorated schedule:

- During the first week of the semester: 100%
- During the second week of the semester: 75%
- During the third week of the semester: 50%
- During the fourth week of the semester: 25%
- After the fourth week of the semester: 0%

Please note, for return of Title IV (Federal) funds, there is a separate refund schedule. This schedule involves calculations based on how much aid was earned in alignment with the percentage of the semester completed. Unearned funds must be returned to the federal government.

Support for Students Using VA Benefits

In accordance with federal law (Public Law 115-407), the University ensures that students entitled to educational assistance under Chapter 31 or Chapter 33 (Post 9/11 GI Bill®) will not be penalized due to delayed disbursement of VA funding. Covered students will be permitted to attend classes and access university facilities provided the required Certificate of Eligibility has been submitted. For specific questions regarding benefits, please contact:

Certifying Official - Conrad Daniels

(423) 869-6279

William.Daniels@LMU.net.

Health, Wellness, and Safety

Counseling and Mental Health Support

The following information is provided for faculty and students to provide a pathway for timely access and/or referral for services to address personal issues which may impact their progress in the PA program.

LMU prioritizes mental health and employs seven full-time counselors. Students may contact LMU's Office of Mental Health Counseling for support with mental health concerns or stress management. Appointments are confidential, free of charge, and available via secure message, chat, phone, or video. Students may schedule an appointment through the counseling website. If a counseling appointment requires missing class, the student must notify the course director in advance. Faculty maintain open-door availability when possible, for students to raise concerns.

LMU partners with EMPATHIA to provide StudentLife, a 24/7 remote counseling and support service available to all students regardless of location. StudentLife offers counseling as well as additional support such as financial planning, legal guidance, and childcare referral services.

Information regarding crisis services and emergency mental health procedures is available on the Mental Health Counseling webpage. <https://www.lmunet.edu/counseling/>

Campus Safety & Security

The Chattanooga Police Department and the Lincoln Memorial University Police and Security Department wish to welcome all new and returning students to all LMU sites. The University strives to provide an environment that is as crime-free as possible in which you can live, work, and study. Each officer is trained to professionally and efficiently manage and respond to the community's needs.

All crimes or emergencies, including fires, hazardous materials, spills, police emergencies, or anything that threatens imminent harm to people, must be reported to the Chattanooga Police Dept at (423) 698-2525 or by calling 911. If the local authorities are contacted about criminal activity off-campus involving LMU students, they may notify the LMU Police and Security Department. Local police may arrest students in these cases and students may also face University disciplinary proceedings. Notify the Program Director as soon as safely possible of any incident so that she may notify LMU Campus Police and Security.

LMU Chattanooga Building Access and Security

The LMU-Chattanooga PA Program is located in the Unum Building in Chattanooga. The building is highly secure with private security. Badge access is required to enter the building. Unum Security should be notified of any incident that occurs in the building by the program director. During regular business hours, the LMU-Chattanooga PA Program building is open to students and employees. During non-business hours, access is not permitted. Typical business hours are 7:00 am-6:00pm. Additional access hours may be scheduled to allow students to study and practice clinical or physical examination skills. Students will be made aware of the study hours schedules when they become available. Students trying to enter the building during non-approved hours may be subject to disciplinary action.

Contact Information for Reporting on Campus Crime and Emergencies

All crimes or emergencies, including fires, hazardous-materials spills, police emergencies, or anything that threatens imminent harm to people, must be reported to the Chattanooga Police Dept at (423) 698-2525 or by calling 911, and to the Program Director.

LMU Emergency Notification System (LiveSafe)

LMU utilizes the FREE LiveSafe alert system to notify University members in the event of any emergency. All employees and students are automatically enrolled in LiveSafe by email and alerts are sent to their LMU email address. Students MUST download the LiveSafe App if they wish to also receive alerts by phone:

LiveSafe App Download Instructions:

- Visit the Google Play or App Store and search for "LiveSafe."
- Download the app, register with your email, and fill out your profile.
- Search for and select "Lincoln Memorial University" as your school.

The LiveSafe notification system is initiated during severe weather, violent conditions, or hazardous incidents that pose danger to the safety of LMU students and employees. Notifications include a description of the situation, its exact location, and any emergency procedures that are to be followed. Local police and emergency responders will also be alerted of any immediate threat, or on-site emergency. Immediate threats include but are not limited to active shooter incidents, mass acts of violence, tornadoes, terrorist attacks, or hazardous materials incidents.

LMU Weapons Policy

Visitors, students, and employees are prohibited from possessing weapons of any kind, including but not limited to firearms, fireworks, guns, explosives, bows and arrows, knives, paintball guns, and so on while on LMU property, at any University-sponsored activity, or while at any clinical site, even if the weapons are legally registered. Visitors, students, and employees are also prohibited from keeping weapons in their personal vehicles parked on LMU's premises. LMU reserves the right, based upon reasonable suspicion of a violation, to search an office, vehicle, or property of a visitor, student, or employee or require them to remove a jacket or sweater and to turn out their pockets. Individuals are permitted to carry mace, pepper spray, and pocketknives with blades no longer than three (3) inches as long as they are concealed in a pocket, purse, briefcase, or other personal belongings. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action or arrest. Some clinical sites may have additional weapons regulations that must be followed.

Off Campus Crime Involving LMU Students

If the local authorities are contacted about criminal activity off-campus involving LMU students, they may notify the LMU Police and Security Department. Students in these cases may be subject to arrest by the local police and also to University disciplinary proceedings.

Reporting Stalking

In Tennessee, stalking is defined as a deliberate pattern of repeated harassment that causes the victim to feel terrorized, threatened, or fearful. It is considered a Class A misdemeanor, though it can be elevated to a Class E felony or a Class C felony in aggravated circumstances, such as when a credible threat is made or a prior restraining order is violated. Consequences for stalking include imprisonment and fines, with penalties increasing for aggravated forms. All stalking incidents or suspicions should be reported to the LMU Police and Security Department at (423) 869-6911 or to 911. It must be reported to the Clery Compliance Officer at (423)869-6301 or by email at robin.johson02@lmunet.edu or cleryofficer@lmunet.edu, even if it is reported to 911.

Sex Offender Registry Awareness

It is recommended that students visit the <https://sor.tbi.tn.gov/home> for information about registered sex offenders living near campus.

LMU Annual Security & Fire Safety Report (Act Clery Act)

The [LMU Annual Security & Fire Safety Report \(ASF SR\)](#) will be published online by October 1st of each year and posted on the LMU website. www.LMUnet.edu. The LMU ASF SR contains three previous years of crime statistics, campus policies and procedures, including: alcohol, drug, weapons, stalking, hazing, sexual violence, etc., and law enforcement authority. This publication is required to be in compliance with the Clery Act and the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) To request a paper copy, contact the Clery Act Compliance Coordinator at (423) 869-6301 or in person at: 1260 Morris

Lane, Harrogate, TN 37752. Additional information on LMU Crime reporting and the Clery act can be found on the website at [Campus Police and Security](#).

Clinical Site Safety

In the development of clinical sites, safety of these sites is evaluated by the Program prior to approval of the clinical site. To ensure student and faculty safety at clinical rotation sites, the Program also conducts site visits to evaluate the safety of each clinical site. Any clinical site deemed unsafe is immediately discontinued by the Program. Furthermore, students are never required to rotate at a site where they feel unsafe or where security seems inadequate.

Any student who fears that their safety is in immediate jeopardy must leave the immediate area, walk to a more populated area if possible, and call 911 to report the issue to the police.

If a student feels unsafe but is not in imminent physical harm at a clinical site, the student should immediately report this to the preceptor, the office manager, and/or security. If the situation is not handled immediately by on-site personnel, then the student is to report it to the Director of Clinical Education. The Program takes seriously any student allegation or concern regarding safety and will promptly investigate any safety concerns. The PA Program will address issues regarding safety and security. The student may be relocated to a new rotation site. Should this occur, there will be no penalty to the student.

To assist the Program in ensuring safety, all students must ensure that the Program has up-to-date, and correct, contact and emergency contact information, and absences must be reported promptly to the clinical team. The Program should know where students are during all work hours for the rotation site.

Students at the clinical site should:

- Always be aware of their surroundings.
- Familiarize themselves with the safety procedures at the clinical site.
- Store all valuables, such as a wallet, checkbook, jewelry, or keys, out of sight.
- Travel with a friend or request a security escort if safety is of concern.
- Avoid shortcuts through isolated areas.
- Have a charged cell phone and car keys on them at all times.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Lock doors and windows when going out and never prop doors open when entering/exiting.
- Do not store large amounts of money or credit cards.
- Report any burnt out entrance/hallway lights to the appropriate personnel.
- Call Security immediately with any unusual activity or loitering on hospital/clinical grounds.

Housing Safety During Clinicals

LMU does not provide housing to students enrolled in the LMU-Chattanooga PA program during their didactic or clinical phase. During the clinical phase, rotations may be such that the student will have to seek lodging alternatives during distant rotations. This is the student's responsibility to secure housing during such rotations. In the interest of our students' wellbeing and safety when securing these housing arrangements, the program has provided a list of references to help ensure that the living arrangements students secure are in safe accommodations.

- [The Apartment Security Guide for Renters](#)
- [The Guide to Securing a Safe, Comfortable Apartment on a Budget](#)
- Google "safest areas to live in _____"
(This will bring up statistics on the surrounding neighborhoods.)

Safety Training

Students will be required to complete any clinical site-specific safety or security training requirements in preparation for supervised clinical practice rotations.

Personal Safety and Security

Student safety and security are of utmost importance while on clinical rotations. The program conducts routine site visits to evaluate the safety of students at clinical sites. If a student perceives themselves to be in immediate danger, they must promptly and clearly communicate their distress using any available means, withdraw from the situation without delay, and contact emergency services by calling 911. If at any time while on clinical rotations a student feels that the rotation site is unsafe, the student must contact the Director of Clinical Education or Clinical Coordinator immediately by telephone, text, or email. This includes any form of harassment or bullying behaviors. The program investigates all concerns or allegations promptly.

Students should exercise good judgement while on clinical rotations regarding their safety. Please practice the following common-sense measures while at all rotation sites:

- Leave laptops, tablets, and other valuables at home, unless required at a clinical site.
- Do not carry large amounts of money or credit cards.
- Be sure to lock your car when you park and exit the car. If you are in a large parking structure, take a picture of the section where you parked so you are not wandering to find your vehicle.
- Pay attention to the surroundings. Avoid shortcuts through isolated areas. Be alert to potential hazards.
- If necessary, call hospital/clinical site security for an escort.
- If you see unusual activity or someone loitering, call hospital/clinical site security immediately.
- Park in well-lit areas and do not walk alone to/from parking areas at night. Use the escorts/shuttles provided by the hospital/clinical sites. If you are working an odd shift, always call security to walk you out or ask someone in the clinical site. Don't take any unnecessary risks please!
- In the event of any problems or conflicts at a clinical site, students should attempt initially to work out any minor problems with their preceptor or supervisor. If students still perceive a problem in any area of the experience, including personality conflicts, communication issues, supervision, or inadequacy of the learning experience, they should contact the Director of Clinical Education or Clinical Coordinator immediately.

Blood Born Pathogens and Infectious Disease Safety

See the immunization and infectious disease policies:

- [Needlestick and Bloodborne Pathogens Policy and Instructions](#) (Infectious Disease)
- [Immunization and Screening Requirements](#)

Technology Support Services

Information Services (IS)

For general technical help with LMU systems (MyLMU portal, email, network access, password resets), contact the IS Help Desk via phone or online work order.

[LMU Information Services](#)

Help Desk Phone: (423) 869-7411 or (800) 325-0900

Help Desk Email: helpdesk@LMU.net

University Accounts and Portal Access

Students will primarily use their LMU Email (firstname.lastname@lmu.net) for all official communication and to log into university systems. Students are expected to check their email regularly. The MyLMU portal supports access to student e-mail, the learning management system for their courses, and the self-service platform for their grades, schedules, financial aid, and other student services. To ensure security of information and resources, students are expected to keep their passwords secure.

Access to self-service resources may be restricted if a student has an outstanding financial balance.

Career Services

Students can advance their professional goals with support from the LMU Office of Career Services. They offer one-on-one appointments for guidance on curriculum vitae (CV) development and interview preparation. To learn more about these resources, please visit the official webpage at [LMU Career Services](#).

University Facilities & Other Services

Unum Building

The Physician Assistant Program is housed in the Unum Building in the heart of downtown Chattanooga. Students will have access to a dedicated program floor designed to support learning, collaboration, and community. Lockers are provided for personal belongings, and the building offers a safe and secure environment with controlled access; students are required to wear their University ID at all times while in the facility.

In addition to our instructional space, the building features a fitness center, a cafeteria, and secure parking for student use. PA students will enjoy access to the program's space from **7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily**, giving flexibility for both study and group work.

Welcome to your new academic home in the center of Chattanooga — we're excited to have you here.

PART VIII: APPENDICES

This appendix contains the key contacts, key forms, agreements, and a comprehensive glossary of terms used within the handbook to ensure clarity and understanding of the program policies.

Appendix A – Handbook Acknowledgement

RECEIPT OF THE LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK AND THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY STUDENT HANDBOOK

I, _____, attended orientation for the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM on _____ and was advised of LMU and LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM policies, procedures, and regulations.

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Student Handbook and that I am able to access a copy of the CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Student Handbook online. I further acknowledge that I am responsible for all the information contained within this handbook and that I will abide by the policies, procedures, and regulations set forth in this document, or subsequent versions.

I further acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Lincoln Memorial University Student Handbook, that I am able to access a copy of the Lincoln Memorial University Student Handbook online, and that I am responsible for the policies, procedures, and regulations set forth thereof. I realize that in some cases, the policies, procedures, and regulations of the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Student Handbook exceed those of the Lincoln Memorial University Student Handbook and/or create enhanced or additional obligations for LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Students, such as minimum technical standards and dress code, and understand that in such cases I must comply with and shall be subject to the policies, procedures, and regulations set forth in the CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Student Handbook, or subsequent versions.

I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions regarding the contents of the CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Student Handbook and should I have any further questions regarding the stated policies, procedures, and/or regulations, I understand that it is my responsibility to ask the Program Director and faculty for clarification. I understand that the program will notify all students, via LMU-issued student email accounts, of any revisions and subsequent versions of the Student Handbook and that such revisions and subsequent versions will be posted on the program's website. I understand that failure to comply with the policies, procedures, and regulations set forth in these handbooks, or subsequent versions, may result in disciplinary action, suspension, or dismissal from the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM.

Student Name (print legibly)

Student Signature

Date

Appendix B – Student Participation as Human Subjects Policy

STUDENT PARTICIPATION AS HUMAN SUBJECTS POLICY

I hereby acknowledge that as part of my experience at the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM I am required to participate as a living subject and an examiner during the Didactic Phase of the program. The program faculty expect that students are professional and cooperative when participating as a living subject and an examiner during instruction and assessment of physical examination techniques and other clinical procedures. Physical examination techniques include, but are not limited to, inspection, auscultation, palpation, and percussion. Clinical procedures include, but are not limited to, extremity splinting and casting and image acquisition with ultrasound.

I further acknowledge that I need to be prepared for all laboratory sessions and that I may be required to partially disrobe for facilitation of physical examination techniques. Shorts are required for examination and splinting of the lower extremities. Male students will be asked to remove their shirt and female students will be asked to wear a sports bra for examination of the thorax and image acquisition with ultrasound.

I acknowledge that if I am unable to follow the dress code for participation as a living subject in laboratory sessions due to religious beliefs, cultural norms, or other reasons that I must discuss this with the Program Director and faculty as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by this policy.

Student Name (print legibly)

Student Signature

Date

Appendix C – Student Code of Conduct

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

I hereby acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM Student Code of Conduct. I understand that I must maintain high standards of private and public conduct on campus, off campus, and at LMU-sponsored events.

The LMU-SMS-Chattanooga PA Program’s Student Code of Conduct includes policies for the following areas:

- Academic Conduct
- Professional Conduct
- Communication with the Program
- Attendance
- Confidentiality
- Social Media
- Audio and Video Recording
- Learning Environment
- Dress Code
- Identification as a Physician Assistant Student (PA-S)
- Arrest/Criminal Background Check
- Drug/Alcohol Screening and Driving while Under the Influence (DUI)

Violation of these and other generally accepted rules of behavior, whether covered by specific policies or not, may subject a student to disciplinary action. **Claims of ignorance of acceptable behavior or enumerated policies and standards will not be accepted as an excuse for violation.**

I further acknowledge that my adherence to the LMU-SMS-Chattanooga PA Program’s Student Code of Conduct will be monitored continuously while enrolled in the program and will be formally evaluated by program faculty and clinical preceptors providing Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs).

I further acknowledge that violation of the LMU-SMS-Chattanooga PA Program’s Student Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including dismissal from the PA Program.

Student Name (print legibly)

Student Signature

Date

Appendix D – Insurance and Healthcare Attestation/Acknowledgement

PROOF OF HEALTH INSURANCE ATTESTATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEALTHCARE EXPENSES

I, _____, attest that I have health insurance coverage, a copy of which I have provided (front and back of health insurance card). I certify that I will maintain this coverage so that it will remain in effect during my attendance at the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM. If at any time this coverage lapses, I understand that I have an obligation to immediately inform the Program Director (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team (Clinical Phase). I further understand that a lapse in health insurance coverage may result in dismissal.

I also acknowledge that I am financially responsible for any healthcare expenses not covered by my health insurance provider. In the event I incur medical expenses while enrolled in the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM, I will be financially responsible for all expenses.

I also understand it is my responsibility to maintain health insurance coverage that is effective in any geographic area, internationally or in the U.S., where I go for SCPEs or other learning/service experiences while enrolled in the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM.

Student Name (print legibly)

Student Signature

Date

Appendix E – Release of Information

RELEASE OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK AND FINGERPRINTS, HEALTH RECORDS, AND PROOF OF HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE AUTHORIZATION

Several clinical affiliates utilized by the program require documentation of confidential information for the students completing Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs) at their clinical site(s). Student permission is required for the program to release necessary documentation to clinical affiliates providing SCPEs.

I, _____, authorize the LMU-SMS- CHATTANOOGA PA PROGRAM to release my criminal background check and fingerprint information, health records (specific documents listed below), and proof of health insurance to any of my assigned SCPEs during my enrollment. I understand that the information will be sent as a composite only to those facilities requiring the documentation. I also understand that the following forms and information will remain on file in the program and will be released as stated above:

- Criminal background check and fingerprints*
- Medical Clearance and Immunization form**
- Tuberculosis screening form**
- Proof of influenza vaccination
- Proof of COVID-19 vaccination/booster (or exemption approval)
- Urine drug screening form
- Copy of the front and back of health insurance card

Student Name (print legibly)

Student Signature

Date

*Students are required to obtain a criminal background check prior to matriculation and prior to beginning SCPEs. Some clinical affiliates also require fingerprint information.

**ARC-PA 6th edition standard A3.18: Student *health records* are confidential and *not* accessible to or reviewed by *program faculty* or staff except for immunization and screening results, which may be maintained and released with the student's written permission.

Appendix F – Professional Conduct Assessment

Semester Professionalism Evaluation Rubric

Student: _____ Semester: _____
Faculty Advisor: _____ Date: _____

Rating Scale:

4 Exceeds Expectations – Consistently demonstrates professional behaviors

3 Meets Expectations – Demonstrates expected behaviors with rare lapses

2 Needs Improvement – Inconsistent demonstration of behaviors

1 Unsatisfactory – Fails to demonstrate expected behaviors

1. ALTRUISM

Prioritizes the needs of others before self

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|--|---|---|
| Consistently places patient, peer, and program needs above personal convenience; volunteers to assist others | Usually prioritizes others' needs and completes responsibilities | Occasionally prioritizes self over patients, peers, or program responsibilities | Frequently prioritizes self; avoids responsibilities or service |

Score: 4 3 2 1

2. EMPATHY & COMPASSION

Responds appropriately to the needs and suffering of others

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|--|--|---|
| Demonstrates consistent sensitivity, kindness, and emotional awareness | Demonstrates appropriate concern and respectful interactions | Occasionally insensitive or dismissive | Demonstrates lack of concern or inappropriate emotional responses |

Score: 4 3 2 1

3. RESPECT FOR OTHERS

Demonstrates professional conduct and communication

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|--|--|--|
| Always punctual, prepared, respectful, and maintains confidentiality | Generally punctual, prepared, and respectful | Inconsistent punctuality, preparation, or professional communication | Disrespectful, disruptive, or breaches confidentiality |

Score: 4 3 2 1

4. SERVICE

Contributes to peers, program, and community

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Actively engages in service and supports peers | Participates in required service activities | Minimal or reluctant participation | Avoids or refuses service responsibilities |

Score: 4 3 2 1

5. INTEGRITY

Demonstrates honesty and accountability

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Always honest, accepts responsibility, seeks help appropriately | Demonstrates honesty and accountability | Occasionally avoids responsibility or delays seeking help | Dishonest behavior, academic misconduct, or unsafe practice |

Score: 4 3 2 1

6. EXCELLENCE

Commits to growth and high standards

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Actively seeks feedback and demonstrates continuous improvement | Responds appropriately to feedback | Defensive or inconsistent response to feedback | Refuses feedback or shows no effort to improve |

Score: 4 3 2 1

7. EMOTIONAL RESILIENCY

Manages stress and adapts to change

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|--|---|---|
| Demonstrates flexibility, composure, and appropriate coping strategies | Manages stress with minimal disruption | Occasionally overwhelmed or resistant to change | Emotional outbursts or inability to adapt |

Score: 4 3 2 1

Summary

Overall Professionalism Rating:

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

Strengths Observed:

Areas for Improvement:

Advisor Comments:

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Faculty Advisor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix G – Absence Request Form

Absence Request Form

Any student requesting an absence must complete and submit this form to the Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team (Clinical Phase) for review at least 24 hours prior to the requested absence. The Director of Didactic Education (Didactic Phase) or the Clinical Team (Clinical Phase) has the authority to approve or deny the request.

Semester and year:

Phase: Didactic Clinical

Date(s) of requested absence and scheduled activities:

Reason for request:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix H – Academic Calendar

CLASS OF 2028
ACADEMIC CALENDAR
 (January 2027 – December 2028)

| DIDACTIC PHASE | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Spring: Semester I | |
| Orientation /First Week of Semester | January 4 – 8, 2027 |
| Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Class | January 18, 2027 |
| Spring Break – No Class | March 8 – 12, 2027 |
| Good Friday – No Class | March 26, 2027 |
| Last Day of Semester | April 24, 2027 |
| Semester Break | April 26 – 30, 2027 |
| Summer: Semester II | |
| First Day of Semester | May 3, 2027 |
| Memorial Day – No Class | May 31, 2027 |
| Summer Break – No Class | July 5 – 9, 2027 |
| Last Day of Semester | August 20, 2027 |
| Semester Break | August 23 – 27, 2027 |
| Fall: Semester III | |
| First Day of Semester | August 30, 2027 |
| Labor Day – No Class | September 6, 2027 |
| ACLS/PALS | Sept. 13-17, 2027 |
| Skills/Procedures | November 8 – 19, 2027 |
| Didactic Summative | November 22-23, 2027 |
| Thanksgiving Break | November 24-26, 2027 |
| Last Day of Semester - Didactic Phase | December 17, 2027 |

| CLINICAL PHASE | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Spring: Semester I | |
| Orientation | The previous fall semester |
| Rotation 1 | January 3 – 28, 2028 |
| Rotation 2 | January 31 – February 25, 2028 |
| Rotation 3 | February 28 – March 24, 2028 |
| Rotation 4 | March 27 – April 21, 2028 |
| Return to Campus | April 24 – 28, 2028 |
| Summer: Semester II | |
| Rotation 5 | May 1 – 26, 2028 |
| Rotation 6 | May 29 – June 23, 2028 |
| Rotation 7 | June 26 – July 21, 2028 |
| Rotation 8 | July 24 – August 18, 2028 |
| Return to Campus / EOC Exam | August 21 – 25, 2028 |
| Fall: Semester III | |
| Rotation 9 | August 28 – September 22, 2028 |
| Rotation 10 | September 25 – October 20, 2028 |
| TN PA Conference | October 2028 |
| Rotation 11 | October 23 – November 17, 2028 |
| Break | November 20 – December 1, 2028 |
| Senior Summative / Return to Campus | December 4-13, 2028 |
| Graduation | December 13, 2028 |

Appendix I – Daily Schedule

| Spring | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Success and Science- Week 1 Monday-Friday | | | | | |
| 0800-0900 | Faculty Admin Time- No student meetings | | Clinical Medicine | Educational Clarification Lab | Weekly Exam Block |
| 0900-1000 | | H&P Group A | | Clinical Reasoning Group A | Integrated Health |
| 1000-1100 | Weekly Reading Quiz | | | | |
| 1100-Noon | Lunch | | | | |
| Noon-1300 | Biomedical Science & Diagnostics | H&P Group B | Pharmacology | Clinical Reasoning Group B | Community Health |
| 1300-1400 | | | | Educational Clarification Lab | |
| 1400-1500 | | | | | |
| 1500-1600 | | | | | |
| 1600-1700 | | | | | |
| Skills and Procedures Week - April 12-23 | | | | | |
| Summer | | | | | |
| 0800-0900 | Faculty Admin Time- No student meetings | | Clinical Medicine | Educational Clarification Lab | Weekly Exam Block |
| 0900-1000 | | H&P Group A | | Clinical Reasoning Group A | Integrated Health |
| 1000-1100 | Weekly Reading Quiz | | | | |
| 1100-Noon | Lunch | | | | |
| Noon-1300 | Biomedical Science & Diagnostics | H&P Group B | Pharmacology | Clinical Reasoning Group B | Clinical Inquiry |
| 1300-1400 | | | | Educational Clarification Lab | |
| 1400-1500 | | | | | |
| 1500-1600 | | | | | |
| 1600-1700 | | | | | |
| Skills and Procedures Week-August 9-20 | | | | | |
| Fall | | | | | |
| 0800-0900 | Faculty Admin Time- No student meetings | | Clinical Medicine | Educational Clarification Lab | Weekly Exam Block |
| 0900-1000 | | H&P Group A | | Clinical Reasoning Group A | Integrated Health |
| 1000-1100 | Weekly Reading Quiz | | | | |
| 1100-Noon | Lunch | | | | |
| Noon-1300 | Biomedical Science & Diagnostics | H&P Group B | Pharmacology | Clinical Reasoning Group B | Transition to Care |
| 1300-1400 | | | | Educational Clarification Lab | |
| 1400-1500 | | | | | |
| 1500-1600 | | | | | |
| 1600-1700 | | | | | |
| ACLS/PALS- Sept 13-17; Skills and Procedures Nov 8-19; Didactic Summative Nov 22-23 | | | | | |

Definitions

Abetting: Encouraging or assisting another student to do something wrong.

Academic advising: Each student is assigned to a faculty member or the Program Director as their academic advisor during the first semester of the program. Academic advisors provide guidance on scholarly projects, monitor academic and professional progress, and communicate any concerns to the SPC during regularly scheduled meetings.

Academic Grievance: A grievance related to the evaluation of a student's academic performance. This includes, but is not limited to, disputes over an assignment grade or a final course grade.

Academic Integrity: A commitment to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, and responsibility in scholarship.

Academic Misconduct: Any action that violates academic integrity, including but not limited to: Abetting, Cheating, and Plagiarism.

Academic Probation: A formal status indicating a student has significant academic or professionalism deficits that warrant frequent and formal monitoring by the SPC.

Assessment: Any graded activity used to evaluate course learning outcomes.

Business Day: Monday through Friday, excluding University holidays.

Chain of Command: The established hierarchy for escalating a grievance, beginning with the individual most directly involved and progressing to higher levels of administrative authority.

Cheating: Acting dishonestly to gain an advantage, such as using unauthorized study materials, obtaining information from another student to complete program assessments, or altering grade records.

Commitment Letter: A formal acknowledgment of a student's intent to pursue the DMS program as part of the GPA pathway.

Course End Date: The last instructional day published in the official course schedule for the term.

Course Repetition: The act of re-enrolling in and completing all components of a course that was previously failed. Course repetition is distinct from remediation, which applies only to individual assessments within a course.

Deceleration: An officially recognized adjustment to a student's original program of study that extends the time required for degree completion.

Dismissal: A permanent, SPC-initiated discontinuation of a student's enrollment in the program. Students dismissed for professionalism deficits are not eligible to reapply to the DMS program.

DMS Pathways Club: A professional organization within LMU that connects LMU-SMS PA students with DMS faculty to provide academic and professional mentorship, as well as professional development opportunities.

Egregious Violation: A single act of professional misconduct that is sufficiently severe in nature to warrant immediate formal disciplinary review.

Enrollment: The process by which an accepted student formally registers for the program, completes required documentation, and pays any applicable fees to secure their seat in the program.

Evaluation of Academic Performance: Academic performance is evaluated through course-specific assessments including but not limited to, written assignments, recorded assignments, discussion boards, live discussions, quizzes, and both written and practical examinations, as detailed in each course syllabus.

Evaluation of Professionalism: Professionalism is evaluated throughout the DMS program in all settings, including coursework and both synchronous and asynchronous interactions with faculty, staff, and fellow students.

Event: Arrest, formal criminal charge, or adverse action against their professional license.

Excused Absences: An excused absence is an absence due to personal emergency or incapacitating illness of a student or their dependent or immediate family. Extenuating circumstances will be considered at the discretion of the Program Director.

Feedback: Course-specific feedback may be provided by principal faculty, instructional faculty, or the Program Director. Feedback on scholarly work is given by each student's assigned advisor.

GPA Pathway: An admissions pathway for eligible LMU-SMS PA students to gain guaranteed entry into the DMS program.

Guaranteed admissions: Guaranteed admissions is available for students who enroll in the DMS Guaranteed Professional Admissions (GPA) pathway and who meet standards outlined in the DMS Guaranteed Professional Admissions Pathway Policy.

In Progress ("IP") Grade: A temporary grade assigned for the scholarly project courses (DMS 800, 889, and 900).

Incomplete ("I") Grade: A temporary grade assigned for non-scholarly project courses.

Key Assessment: An assessment identified in the course syllabus as essential for demonstrating achievement of course or student learning outcomes.

Matriculation: The official start of the student's academic journey in the DMS program, marked by participation in coursework and fulfillment of all initial program requirements.

Non-Academic Grievance: A grievance related to the application of program policies or procedures, or conflicts with other students, faculty, or staff that do not involve academic evaluation or fall under the specific definitions of mistreatment, harassment, or discrimination.

Non-submission: No attempt or an insufficient submission that cannot be evaluated against the rubric.

Norm-referenced interview scoring system: Applicants are evaluated using standardized rubrics and ranked relative to other candidates.

Passing Grade: The minimum score for a specific assessment, as defined in the course syllabus.

Pattern of Behavior: A series of separate acts of professional misconduct that when viewed collectively, indicate a significant concern regarding the student's overall professionalism.

Plagiarism: Offering the work of another as one's own without proper acknowledgement, including material from artificial intelligence, books, articles, or other students.

Professional Misconduct: Behavior that violates the ethical and professional standards of the program, the Railsplitter Community Standards Guide, or the healthcare profession.

Recurrent Behavior: The repetition of a specific unprofessional act for which a student has received prior informal notification and counseling.

Remediation: A structured academic intervention allowing a student to demonstrate competency on a key assessment or course learning outcome that was previously unmet.

Remediation Plan: A written document issued by the Course Director to the student that authorizes remediation of a specific assessment and sets the terms for completion.

Rolling admissions cycle: A continuous application review process where candidates are evaluated as applications are received, rather than after a fixed deadline.

Self-Report: A student's professional and mandatory obligation to proactively notify the Program Director, within the timeline specified in program policy, of any arrest, formal criminal charge, or adverse action against their professional license.

Student Progress Committee (SPC): A standing faculty committee that monitors student academic progress and professionalism across the program, reviews assessment and progression data, and makes determinations in matters that extend beyond the scope of an individual course.

Substantial Incomplete Coursework: A condition in which a student fails to submit required assignments that, in total, accounts for 20% or more of the final course grade.

Temporary Grades: In specific situations, a student who is unable to complete a substantial amount of coursework due to verifiable, extenuating circumstances may be eligible for a temporary grade. Temporary grades include either In Progress (IP) or Incomplete (I).

Unexcused Absences: Any absence not meeting the criteria for an excused absence as detailed above shall be considered an unexcused absence.

Waitlist: A list of qualified applicants who may be offered admission if a seat becomes available in the program.