

**DOMINICAN
UNIVERSITY**
of CALIFORNIA



SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND NATURAL SCIENCES

**MASTER OF SCIENCE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
STUDIES PROGRAM**

STUDENT HANDBOOK – AY 2022-23

Including Program Policies and Procedures

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
FOREWORD	8
INTRODUCTION	9
MISSION STATEMENT	9
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY	9
VISION STATEMENT	9
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY	9
PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	10
PROGRAM CURRICULUM.....	11
PHASE I — Didactic (16 months)	11
PHASE II — Clinical (48 weeks).....	11
PHASE III – Summative Session (4 weeks).....	11
MSPAS PROGRAM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS.....	13
GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION.....	13
RE-ENTRY TO THE MSPAS PROGRAM.....	13
ADVANCE PLACEMENT AND TRANSFER OF CREDIT	13
CREDIT BY EXAMINATION	13
CREDIT FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING	13
PART-TIME STATUS.....	13
TRANSFER STUDENTS FROM OTHER PA PROGRAMS.....	13
DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT.....	13
DISABILITY SERVICES	14
TECHNICAL STANDARDS.....	14
Observation.....	14
Communication	15
Motor	15
Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities	15
Behavioral and Social Attributes.....	15
MEDICAL RECORDS.....	16
Student Health Admission Requirements.....	16
Immunizations/Titer Result Documentation	16
Recommended Immunizations	16
Enrolled Student Immunization Requirements	16
MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	17
LAPTOP/TABLET REQUIREMENTS.....	17
System Requirements	18
Software Requirements	18
Hardware Requirements	18

BOOKS	18
PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR HEALTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES	19
MSPAS STUDENT ADVISING.....	19
STUDENT REQUIREMENTS	19
CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM EVALUATION	20
PROGRAM MEETINGS	21
DRESS CODE	21
On Campus	21
During Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences	21
During Guest Lectures.....	21
CASTLEBRANCH AND OSHA/HIPAA TRAINING	21
UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS	22
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY	23
EVACUATION PROCEDURES IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.....	24
DUOC GRADUATE PROGRAMS GENERAL SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS	24
Academic Performance	24
Advancement to Clinical Phase.....	24
Academic Deficiencies	25
MSPAS PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES	26
INTRODUCTION	26
BACKGROUND CHECKS/TOXICOLOGY SCREENS	26
ATTENDANCE	26
Tardiness.....	27
Absences.....	27
<i>Excused Absences</i>	27
<i>Unplanned Absence</i>	27
<i>Planned Absence/Time Off Requests</i>	27
<i>Unexcused Absences</i>	28
<i>Program Notification of Absences</i>	28
Remote Classroom Attendance	28
<i>Video</i>	28
<i>Participation and Absence</i>	28
COUNSELING SERVICES.....	28
CAMPUS RESOURCES.....	28
CLASSROOM POLICIES	28
Use of Wireless Devices in the Classroom.....	29
Recording of Lectures	29
Remote Learning	29
COMMUNICATION POLICIES.....	29
Moodle and E*Value.....	29
Communications with the Program and University	29
Students are responsible for maintaining access to their email accounts as they move during their education.....	29

EMAIL ETIQUETTE	29
Change of Address, Email Address, or Phone Number	30
EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE	30
EXAMINATION POLICY	31
MSPAS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.....	33
TIME PROVIDED FOR WRITTEN EXAMS.....	33
EXAMINATIONS AND GRADED ACTIVITIES DURING DIDACTIC SEMESTERS ...	33
Requirements to Pass a Didactic Course:	34
Courses with OSCE Exams	34
Examination during Clinical Semesters	34
Exam Review Process and Procedure	34
Retesting of Failed Examinations Limit.....	34
COURSE GRADING	34
Grade Point Average	34
Incomplete (INC).....	34
Incomplete or Failure (INC or F)	34
Withdrawal (W).....	34
FAILURE OF A COURSE.....	35
GRADE APPEAL PROCESS	35
GRIEVANCE POLICY	36
Complaints Against Professors, Classes, or Programs	36
Complaints of Student Academic Dishonesty	36
LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWAL	36
Medical LOA.....	37
MODIFIED CURRICULUM DUE TO DECELERATION OR LOA	37
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	37
Employment	37
Student Service Work.....	37
Student Activities Related to the PA Profession	38
ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS.....	38
Academic Progress	38
Professional Progress.....	38
Professional Code of Conduct.....	38
CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-ADHERENCE.....	40
ACADEMIC STANDARDS.....	41
MSPAS Academic Progress Committee (APC).....	41
MSPAS Program Warning	41
ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONALISM PROBATION.....	41
Grade Point Average	42
MSPAS Program Criteria for Placement on Academic/Professionalism Probation	42
MSPAS PROGRAM TERMS OF ACADEMIC PROBATION.....	43
MSPAS PROGRAM EXAMINATION REMEDIATION	43
MSPAS PROGRAM DISMISSAL	44
MSPAS PROGRAM CRITERIA FOR DISMISSAL	44

APPEAL PROCESS & PROCEDURE FOR PROGRAM DISMISSAL	45
Appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs	45
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	46
MSPAS Program Requirements	46
PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS	46
DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY	47
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	47
LIBRARY INFORMATION	47
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES	47
TUTORING SERVICES	47
2021-2022 STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE SHEET	49

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<p>MASTER OF SCIENCE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA</p>

FOREWORD

Welcome to the Dominican University of California Physician Assistant Studies Program!

This handbook outlines the policies and procedures for students enrolled in the program and presents a collection of resources that you will find useful during your graduate studies at Dominican. In some instances, the handbook will refer you to other documents that contain more detailed information, such as the Dominican University of California (DUoC) Student Handbook or the Dominican University of California Catalog, which can both be accessed online through the DUoC portal. Students in the Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) Program are bound by the policies in those documents. However, the policies in this handbook extend beyond the university policies and apply to MSPAS students at all locations-- on campus or off-site, in lectures, at clinical rotations, at professional meetings/gatherings, or during service work. You should use this handbook and the Student Clinical Handbook as your primary reference resources throughout the 28-months you're enrolled in the program.

We have attempted to make the material in this manual as up-to-date and useful as possible, but to improve it even more, we need your feedback. Please contact your advisor or the Program Director with your questions and comments concerning any of the material contained herein.

The MSPAS faculty are committed to providing you with a broad education of the basic and clinical medical sciences. Our desire is impact positively thousands of patient lives through our graduates, and we will direct you to the resources you will need to become well-prepared clinicians. It is our goal to help each student develop the skills necessary to be a self-directed learner, which starts with your reviewing the policies and expectations of the program. **As a PA student, it is your responsibility to read and understand this handbook.**

Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information in this publication. The MSPAS Program reserves the right to alter the contents at any time. All changes apply to all current and prospective students. The faculty also reserves the right to alter the schedule of required courses if extenuating circumstances warrant it. The need for any clarification should be discussed with the Course Coordinator.

Best wishes for your success!

MSPAS Faculty and Staff

<p style="text-align: center;">MASTER OF SCIENCE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA</p>

INTRODUCTION

The Dominican University of California Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies Program is a 28-month year-round program. This program has received Accreditation-Provisional from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Dominican University of California Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies Program is to prepare PAs to provide compassionate, high quality, patient-centered care as members of interdisciplinary healthcare teams. To achieve this, the program provides an exemplary, active learning environment that integrates theoretical learning and inquiry skills with clinical practice, promoting diversity and inclusion among the student body, faculty and staff. Our approach to teaching nurtures reflection, creativity, and critical thinking as core competencies of the profession. Graduates will demonstrate cultural humility and be committed to lifelong learning and their professional development. They will be prepared to make significant contributions to the diverse communities that they serve and to the advancement of the PA profession.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the University to admit qualified students irrespective of race, age, gender, color, creed, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. To be considered for admission to any program offered by the University, a student must possess the academic credentials and professional attributes deemed essential by the respective program admissions committee for selection to the program.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Dominican University of California MSPAS Program is to be a national leader in PA education and to prepare physician assistants of the highest quality to practice medicine, in partnership with physicians and other members of the healthcare team, in dynamic healthcare environments.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Dominican University Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies Program endeavors to facilitate the acquisition and development of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to respond positively and effectively to the challenges and opportunities relating to trends in healthcare delivery. Learning methodologies include group work, discussion, lecture, role-playing, and use of standardized and simulated patients, independent research, and case-based problem solving. The program focuses on higher order learning that prepares the PA for critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and the synthesis and judgment of problems, based on a biopsychosocial medical model. The PA student will learn to be reflective, insightful, and aware of his/her own professional role and limitations, needs, styles and values of patients, and those of other health professionals. PA students are considered lifelong learners of the art and science of medicine, as well as active learners who ask questions, uncover meaning, and make informed decisions based on all available evidence.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The following Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are the MSPAS Program's adaptation and adoption of Dominican University of California's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs).

ILO: Exploration and Acquisition of Knowledge

SLO1: Demonstrate core medical knowledge in biomedical and clinical sciences with its application to patient care across the lifespan.

SLO2: Employ the biopsychosocial model of patient-centered care with patients across the lifespan.

ILO: Development of Intellectual, Professional Skills

SLO3: Demonstrate the ability to engage in critical analysis using the medical literature and other information resources for the purpose of self- and medical practice improvement.

SLO4: Demonstrate the commitment to life-long learning in the ongoing development of the ability to assess, evaluate, and improve patient care practices.

SLO5: Employ self-reflective, effective communication skills as a member of interprofessional (IPE) healthcare teams.

ILO: Practice of Civic Skills and Social Responsibility

SLO6: Recognize, model, and advocate for ethical behavior in medical practice

SLO7: Demonstrate engaged service to the community and an understanding of social justice in the provision of healthcare to diverse patient populations.

ILO: Cultivation of Well-Being

SLO8: Apply strategies for self-care as a component of PA education and practice in order to cultivate resilience, adaptability and tolerance for long-term success in the profession.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND NATURAL SCIENCES

MASTER OF SCIENCE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The Dominican University of California Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies (DUoC MSPAS) Program is a 28-month year-round program.

The curriculum is 28 months divided into three phases over seven consecutive semesters.

- Phase I - Didactic (16 months) on campus
- Phase II - Clinical (~12 months) at sites throughout California and other states (includes Summative Session in final four months)

Students are strongly encouraged not to work while enrolled in the school. Any student who chooses to work is required to attend all program-related activities and will not be granted an excused absence for work obligations. Students are not required to work for the program.

PHASE I — Didactic (16 months)

The didactic curriculum is organized into systems to allow for a comprehensive and integrated approach to learning medicine by organ system. Course content areas include anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, clinical skills, laboratory studies, study of disease states, pharmacology, genetics, behavioral medicine, and preventive medicine. In addition, there are non-clinical courses including medical ethics, evidence-based medicine, and current topics relating to the PA profession. The classes utilize a combination of traditional lectures, web-based learning courses and active learning through cases, clinical skills development, role-playing, simulation, and team-based problem solving. Every student graduating from the program will have met the minimum competency of 3.0 GPA following the completion of each semester, module, and/or rotation in order to progress in the program.

PHASE II — Clinical (48 weeks)

Over ~12 months the student will participate in nine required clinical rotations, five weeks in length. These courses (as follows) do not have to be taken in any certain order. Students will participate but will not be responsible for determining their clinical sites and internship experiences. Internships must be coordinated with the Program Director and the Clinical Team. Students may not initiate their own clinical internships.

Behavioral Health
Emergency Medicine
Family Medicine
Surgery
Internal Medicine

Pediatrics
Women's Health
Elective
Elective

PHASE III – Summative Session (4 weeks)

This phase will draw on the medical knowledge and clinical and interpersonal skills that have been acquired throughout the curriculum that culminate in summative program evaluations. These summative evaluations must be completed satisfactorily in order to pass the course and progress to graduation. The elements of the summative evaluations consist of medical knowledge, clinical skills, professionalism, and communication and interpersonal skills. In addition, students will attend lectures that will help them prepare for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE), and will present professional case presentations.

Course	MSPAS Program Didactic and Clinical Curriculum	Units
	Semester 1 - Didactic	
PA 5101	Current Topics in the PA Profession	1
PA/PAL 5111	Clinical Assessment	6
PA 5120	Foundations of Clinical Medicine	8
PA 5130	Medical Ethics and Professionalism	2
PA 5141	Introduction to Pharmacology and Infectious Disease Principles	1
PA 5151	Introduction to Evidence Based-Medicine and Health Policy	4
	Semesters 2, 3 & 4 - Didactic	
PAL 5720	Anatomy and Physiology I	1
PA/PAL 5280	Clinical Medicine I	8
PA 5290	Clinical Pharmacology I	3
PAL 5205	Clinical Applications I	1
PAL 5370	Anatomy and Physiology II	1
PA/PAL 5380	Clinical Medicine II	7
PA 5390	Clinical Pharmacology II	3
PAL 5305	Clinical Applications II	1
PA 5480	Healthcare for Special Populations	2
PA/PAL 5450	Emergency Medicine/Surgery/Skills	4
PA 5470	Behavioral Medicine	2
PAL 5405	Clinical Applications III	1
PA 5430	Professional Practice Seminar	2
PA 5900	Capstone	3
	Semesters 5, 6 & 7 - Clinical	
PAL 5610	Clinical Rotation #1	4
PAL 5620	Clinical Rotation #2	4
PAL 5630	Clinical Rotation #3	4
PAL 5640	Clinical Rotation #4	4
	Call Back Week I	
PAL 5650	Clinical Rotation #5	5
PAL 5660	Clinical Rotation #6	5
	Call Back Week II	
PAL 5670	Clinical Rotation #7	4
PAL 5680	Clinical Rotation #8	4
PAL 5690	Clinical Rotation #9	4
PA/PAL 5800	Summative Course	3
Total:		102

MSPAS PROGRAM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

All physician assistant courses require prior admission to Dominican University of California and the Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies Program.

[DUOC ACADEMIC CATALOG 2022-2023](#)

GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

RE-ENTRY TO THE MSPAS PROGRAM

Students who have requested a Leave of Absence or have been decelerated from the program due to course or clinical rotation failures may be offered a seat in the incoming class for the academic year. However, there is a limit on the total amount of time allowed for completing the program. All students must complete all program requirements within 44 months from the term in which they initially entered the program, which is 150% of the usual program completion time. If it is determined at any point during a student's course of study that he/she will be unable to graduate within the 150%-time frame, the student will become ineligible for financial aid. Questions regarding this should be directed to the Registrar and/or the Office of Financial Aid.

ADVANCE PLACEMENT AND TRANSFER OF CREDIT

No advanced placement or transfer of credits will be accepted.

CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

There is no credit by examination for courses taken in other institutions. All students must take all courses in the program and complete the clinical year of rotations in its entirety.

CREDIT FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

No credit will be granted for work-related experiences.

PART-TIME STATUS

The program does not allow a part-time option for incoming students.

TRANSFER STUDENTS FROM OTHER PA PROGRAMS

The MSPAS Program does not accept transfer students.

DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

All members of the Dominican University of California academic community are expected to abide by ethical standards both in their conduct and in their exercise of responsibilities toward other members of the community. Students, faculty members, administrators, and staff are expected to adopt standards of behavior that place a high value on respecting the ideas of others. All intellectual accomplishments- examinations, papers, lectures, experiments, and other projects- should adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and ethics. The faculty, administration, and staff recognize their obligation to provide continuing guidance as to what constitutes academic honesty and to promote procedures and circumstances that will reinforce the principle of academic honor. Fundamental to the principle of independent learning is the requirement of honesty and integrity in the performance of academic assignments, both in and outside of the classroom. Students should avoid academic dishonesty in all forms, including plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct. The University reserves the right to determine in any given instance what action constitutes a violation of academic honesty and integrity.

Students should visit <http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/catalog> for a link to the General Academic Policies and Procedures content area of the DUoC Academic Catalog. This section contains complete and detailed information relating to University academics, academic policies and procedures (including plagiarism), Academic Honesty, and the Academic Honor Code.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Dominican University of California is fully committed to compliance with Content area 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. As such, it is the policy of the University to provide an educational environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on disability in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic or other university-sponsored programs. Dominican prohibits discrimination against any individual with a disability, and further prohibits harassment or retaliation against any individual requesting an accommodation or filing a complaint under the grievance procedure set forth herein.

Dominican University of California is committed to providing effective, reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act. Reasonable accommodations are provided to remove barriers that unfairly deny students with disabilities the opportunity to access the University's programs, services and activities. Through advising and support, the Academic Advising and Achievement Center (AAAC) will provide guidance to assist students with disabilities in their academic pursuits. Once a student with a disability is admitted to the University, the student is responsible for notifying the Disability Services Office of her/his disability, requesting academic accommodations, and providing any necessary evidence of a disability-related need for the requested accommodations.

An individual with a disability is defined as any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. An individual satisfying parts (1) or (2) of this definition, who is otherwise qualified to be a student at Dominican University of California, shall be referred to as a "qualified student."

Students with temporary illnesses, injuries or conditions are not considered disabled under these laws. However, the Disability Services Office will work with such students to make appropriate adjustments to assist them within available resources of the AAAC. Complete and detailed information about Disability Services, including policies and procedures for students with disabilities (and procedures for seeking accommodations) can be found within the DUOC Academic Catalog (<http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/catalog>) or by visiting the office of Disability Services (part of the AAAC) located in Bertrand 109.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

All candidates for the MSPAS Program must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data. They must have functional use of the senses of vision, hearing, equilibrium, and taste. Their exteroceptive (touch, pain, temperature) and proprioceptive (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis and vibratory) senses must be sufficiently intact to enable them to carry out all activities required for a complete PA education. Candidates must have motor function capabilities to meet the demands of PA education and the demands of total patient care. The candidate for the MSPAS Program degree must possess the following abilities and skills:

Observation

- The ability to observe is required for demonstrations, visual presentations in lectures and laboratories, laboratory evidence and microbiologic cultures, microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states.

- A candidate must be able to observe patients accurately and completely, both at a distance and closely. This ability requires functional vision, hearing, and somatic sensation.

Communication

- A candidate should be able to speak, hear, and observe patients in order to elicit information, perceive nonverbal communications, and describe changes in mood, activity, and posture.
- The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and families.
- Communication in oral, written, and electronic form with the healthcare team must be effective and efficient.

Motor

- A candidate should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, and percussion, as well as carry out diagnostic maneuvers.
- A candidate should have motor function sufficient to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Such skills require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and sensation.
- A candidate should be able to manipulate equipment and instruments to perform basic laboratory tests and procedures required to attain curricular goals (e.g., needles, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, tongue blades, intravenous equipment, gynecologic speculum, and scalpel).
- A candidate must be able to transport him/herself from one location to another in a timely fashion in order to facilitate patient care responsibilities and to receive educational training.

Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

- Problem solving is a critical skill demanded of PAs and this requires all these abilities.
- The candidate must also be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and the spatial relationships of structures.
- A candidate must be able to collect, organize, prioritize, analyze, and assimilate large amounts of technically detailed and complex information within a limited time frame. This information will be presented in a variety of educational settings, including lectures, small group discussions, and individual clinical settings. The candidate should be able to analyze, integrate, and apply this information appropriately for problem solving and decision-making.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

- A candidate must have the emotional health to fully use his/her intellectual ability, exercise good judgment, and complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.
- A candidate must be able to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and colleagues.
- A candidate must be able to tolerate physical, mental, and emotional stress in training and continue to function effectively.
- A candidate must possess qualities of adaptability and flexibility and be able to function in the face of uncertainty. He/she must have a high level of compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity, and a consciousness of social values.
- A candidate must possess sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems.
- A candidate must be able to accept criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior.

In the first sixteen months of the program, all PA students are expected to attend all classes and educational sessions, master physical examination skills, complete all surgery laboratory exercises, attend assigned patient interactions, and complete BLS, ACLS. In the clinical year, students must successfully complete all assigned rotations, which may include extended hours of instruction, evenings, nights, and weekends. Students must be able to transport themselves to all training sites. It is the responsibility of each applicant to affirm that he/she meets these technical standards upon entrance to the MSPAS Program.

During enrollment, the program's Academic Progress Committee will monitor students for continuing compliance with technical standards. The faculty of the MSPAS Program recognize this responsibility to assess each student's compliance with the technical standards in order to allow students to enter and continue in the program and to present candidates for the PA certificate who have the knowledge and skills to function in a wide variety of clinical situations and to render a broad spectrum of patient care.

MEDICAL RECORDS

Information provided by students at matriculation and periodically during their education at Dominican University (i.e., immunization and/or blood test documentation and tuberculosis clearance and screening forms) will be collected and retained in a secure environment in the MSPAS Program offices and/or by CastleBranch, the online background screening and compliance tracking company used by the program. Immunization and tuberculosis clearance records are also kept by the program and/or by CastleBranch for submission to clinical training sites as requested. However, **all students should retain a copy of all documents for their records** since these records may be required by a variety of institutions as the student progresses through her/his professional career.

Student Health Admission Requirements

Students must fulfill the requirements listed below prior to and during the program in compliance with the MSPAS Program health policies in order to assure protection against certain communicable diseases.

Immunizations/Titer Result Documentation

- Proof of three vaccinations AND positive antibody titer for Hepatitis B within the past five years. Negative or equivocal titer will require additional vaccination and/or testing.
- Proof of MMR and Varicella positive antibody titers within the past five years
- Proof of T-dap within ten years
- Tuberculosis Screening requirement to include completion of Initial TB Screen & History form, 2-step PPD skin test AND QuantiFERON Gold blood test within one year. Prior positive test results will require additional testing and verification of clearance.
- Proof of completion of COVID-19 vaccination series

All health screening information is to be made available, as required, to the MSPAS Program, clinical preceptors, and clinical rotation sites. Students whose immunizations and titers are not up to date will be removed from classes or from clinical rotation(s) until the deficiency is corrected. No exceptions will be made.

Some clinical training sites require students with positive latent TB test results to be treated. As a result, students who have not been treated may not be allowed to attend certain clinical rotations, which may result in a delay of completion of the MSPAS Program.

Recommended Immunizations

Immunizations and titers that are recommended, but not required, for matriculation into the MSPAS Program include:

- Hepatitis A vaccine two dose schedule
- HPV vaccine
- Hepatitis C antibody test
- Meningococcal Vaccine

Enrolled Student Immunization Requirements

- Repeat tuberculosis screening to include 2-step PPD skin test AND QuantiFERON Gold blood test as required per clinical site (no less than one repeat test per year). Prior positive test results will require additional testing and verification of clearance.
- Annual flu vaccination. (This vaccination is required unless documentation is provided that receipt of the vaccination is medically contraindicated.)

Students must report any significant change in their health to the Program Director immediately. Failure to notify the University of any significant health changes that may affect patient care or the ability to meet program Technical Standards may result in dismissal from the MSPAS Program.

A reminder to all students: PA program faculty, Program Director and Medical Director may not participate in the medical care of PA students. This is an ARC-PA accreditation standard.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

New students are strongly encouraged to wait to purchase their equipment until after they communicate with the MSPAS Program. The MSPAS Program anticipates that most, if not all, medical equipment will be purchased for use beginning in the first semester of the program.

The program will arrange for new students to purchase equipment at discounted pricing prior to arrival on campus the first semester. (Specific information on equipment and vendor will be sent to new students during the summer.) Most students choose to have the equipment delivered to campus, which allows the program to have it available for them at orientation. Students are not required to purchase from this vendor; however, buying from this vendor will ensure that students are purchasing the correct equipment. In addition, the program has found this company to be reliable and to offer Dominican students very competitive group discounts. The cost of this equipment has been factored into the total cost of the program and, therefore, is accounted for by Financial Aid.

The cost of the required medical equipment will range from approximately \$600 to \$1200, depending on the exact equipment models and/or styles chosen. Students are encouraged to remember that a higher cost does not necessarily mean a better product.

- Diagnostic Set - oto/ophthalmoscope (averages \$450-\$600)
- Stethoscope - depending on type, (ranging from \$150-\$400)
- Blood Pressure Cuff (ranges from \$25-\$160)
- Reflex Hammer (approx. \$10-\$15)
- Pocket eye chart/ruler (approx. \$2)
- White student (short) lab coat-embroidered with name and program logo (approx. \$30-\$37)
- Tuning fork C-128 (approx. \$10)
- Tuning fork C-512 (approx. \$10)

If students have their own equipment, or wish to purchase equipment from other vendors, they are requested to bring the equipment to orientation to determine if it meets the required program diagnostic capabilities. If it does not meet the necessary criteria, the student will need to purchase the correct equipment.

LAPTOP/TABLET REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to have a cell phone and a laptop computer with webcam, appropriate lighting, and audio technology for remote learning. By specifying these items as program requirements, the cost is included in the student's financial aid.

Laptop computers provide students access to primary and supportive information to better prepare for and supplement the learning process. DU utilizes Moodle, an electronic learning tool that will be used as the central component of the “electronic classroom” employed throughout much of the curriculum. Assignments, course material, assessments, and other tools are available for each class through Moodle. Moodle is not resident on the laptop but is simply a web address to servers at Dominican. Because of this, students will be able to access materials from any location with web access. Additionally, the MSPAS Program utilizes computer-based examinations and survey tools.

The lecture areas offer a wireless environment enabling access to informational resources via the Internet and proprietary Dominican sites such as the online library and other University resources.

Any laptop computer made within the last four years with at least 2GB of memory and with either an internal or external camera is acceptable and should work well. However, students are encouraged to check that their laptop hardware and software meet each of the following requirements:

System Requirements

- Microsoft Windows 10 or higher
- Mac OS 10.14 Mojave or higher

Software Requirements

- Microsoft Office version 2013 (Windows) | 2016 (Mac) or higher
- Antivirus (Avast!, Norton Antivirus, Sophos Anti-Virus, McAfee)

Hardware Requirements

(For Windows or Mac systems)

- Processor: Intel or Advanced Micro Devices (AMD)
- Hard-Drive Capacity: 100 GB or greater
- Memory: 4 GB or more is strongly recommended

A laptop with these specifications should cost between \$1000-\$1800, depending on memory and hard drive size. Students should also purchase an external hard drive to back up their data (highly recommended). Net PCs such as the models from ASUS are also acceptable. They can be a low-cost alternative to a regular laptop.

Tablets such as Windows Surface, Acer and Asus tablets, and Apple iPad are also acceptable provided they meet the aforementioned requirements.

The program STRONGLY recommends that students purchase extended warranties or service contracts in the event of a hardware failure. Neither the MSPAS Program nor the Dominican University of California IT offers support to assist with hardware and software issues.

BOOKS

Students should consult course syllabi and the program book list for required textbooks. The Dominican University library provides access to many online textbooks, some of which are required texts for courses. If a required text is available online, purchase of a hard copy text is optional. However, students should note that online text versions may vary slightly in presentation. Students are expected to have purchased required texts that are not available online by the beginning of class for each term.

Students may purchase or rent books at the DUoC campus bookstore or may purchase them online through the bookstore at <http://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/current/bookstore>. Books may also be purchased from another retail source, such as Amazon.com or various publisher sites. The campus store offers a Price Match program so students can take advantage of the lowest retail prices.

When purchasing texts, students are advised to obtain the correct edition, which is listed next to the title of the book on the book list. Older edition texts are inadequate as they may not provide current information. The ISBN number, provided on the program book list, is the unique identifier for a specific edition of a text.

PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR HEALTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Community service is a mission-related activity of the MSPAS Program and is encouraged. However, students who wish to participate in health-related extracurricular activities must be properly supervised. Therefore, this policy sets forth guidelines and an approval process for participation:

- Any student or student group wishing to participate in an extracurricular health-related activity must contact the Program Director. No activity will be approved unless complete information is provided which addresses the following, including but not limited to, nature and scope of the activity, sponsorship and/or faculty advisor; group to be served, place of the activity, clinical oversight, and the date on which the activity is scheduled to occur.
- The request and information must be provided to the Program Director a minimum of two weeks in advance of the activity. The Program Director will review the request and determine whether the activity is appropriately supervised.

MSPAS STUDENT ADVISING

Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor with whom he/she will meet at least once per academic term to review academic progress, professionalism, and any issues that may have come up during the term. The encounter is documented on a *Faculty/Student Meeting Note* and placed in the student's file. A copy of this form is available on Moodle.

Aiding in and monitoring the development of professionalism is an important component of PA education. Student professionalism is evaluated and monitored by faculty, preceptors, and the student through advisor meetings, classroom behavior, and appropriate interpersonal communication with faculty, staff and preceptors.

Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor more frequently if they feel they are having problems academically or personally. It is desirable to identify problems at an early stage and bring these to the attention of the faculty advisor so remedies can be developed and implemented. Students experiencing academic and/or other difficulties have access to the Teaching and Learning Center and University Counseling Services, which provide tutoring and counseling. Timely access and/or referral of students who are having personal and/or academic difficulties are provided by program faculty or advisors.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to participate in all class meetings and laboratories. Attendance is essential for the acquisition of knowledge and competencies basic to practice. Physician assistant course objectives are designed to assure that each student attains the knowledge and skills that are essential to beginning clinical practice as medical professionals. Attending PA classes, skills labs, and clinical experiences is crucial to the achievement of these course objectives. Each student is responsible for all the material covered in a class. A student who is ill for more than one to two days should communicate this fact to the Course Coordinator and provide medical documentation upon return to class.

2. Academic work begins and ends on the days and at the times specified in the MSPAS Program calendar. It is particularly important that students attend classes immediately preceding and following vacation and/or holiday periods. Special permission to make up work missed at these times will be given at the discretion of the Course Coordinator. Students should not schedule travel until after the completing remediation which may follow the completion of semester courses.
3. Written assignments must meet the following criteria: be legible and neat (typed, unless otherwise specified) and include correct form, grammar, spelling and reference citations. Paraphrases and quotations should be identifiable as such. Guidelines must be followed when applicable (i.e., APA). Points may be deducted if guidelines are not followed or if an assignment is late. An assignment which is submitted after the due date may have points deducted per calendar day. Any exception to this policy will require written prior approval from the Course Coordinator.
4. Students are required to complete all assignments to a level of competency as determined by the faculty. Students who fail an assignment may be required to redo the assignment to demonstrate competency. Students who do not complete all assignments to competency level as determined by the faculty, may receive a course grade of Incomplete (INC) until they satisfy course requirements, and/or may receive a grade of zero for the assignment.
5. Students must complete all examinations, assignments, and course evaluations as scheduled, and within the semester the course is taken, unless they have requested and received a grade of Incomplete. Students who are unable to take an examination on the scheduled date may have a percentage of the possible total score deducted for every calendar day it is delayed. Any exception to this policy will require prior written approval from the Course Coordinator/Instructor giving the exam. The final examination may not be taken in advance of the scheduled time, nor may examinations be deferred for personal reasons (travel, visits home for the holiday, etc.) unless pre-approved by Course Coordinator/Instructor or Program Director. Examinations are rescheduled only for exceptional reasons at the discretion of the Course Coordinator/Instructor and must be taken within one week of the original exam date.
6. Students are required to attend academic and/or clinical conferences with faculty when requested. Failure to do so may result in a professional behavior warning.
7. Students are expected to show increasing self-direction in their approach to learning in both clinical and classroom settings. Students are responsible for their own learning needs under the guidance of the DUOC MSPAS faculty. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the appropriate faculty member whenever problems are encountered or anticipated, rather than waiting until the course evaluation examinations.
8. Students shall fulfill all supervised clinical practice experience rotation requirements in order to satisfactorily complete the clinical component of the MSPAS Program.
9. It is the responsibility of each student to know and adhere to University policies and procedures regarding academic honesty. The Dominican University Academic Honor Code can be found in the General Academic Policies and Procedures content area of the University Academic Catalog: <http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/catalog>.

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

All Dominican students contribute to the evaluation of the faculty's teaching effectiveness by completing the standard university form at the end of each course. In addition, the MSPAS Program faculty may ask

students to assess course content, procedures, and teaching strategies by filling out additional evaluation forms. Participation may be required, is anonymous, and strongly encouraged. Throughout their years in the program, students may be asked to complete additional surveys, questionnaires, and evaluations. All of these are designed to evaluate and improve the program.

PROGRAM MEETINGS

Meetings of faculty and staff occur regularly. Topics of discussion may include curriculum development, faculty development, administrative projects, and supervised clinical practice experiences coordination. Student concerns may be submitted in writing, at any time, to the MSPAS Program Director for consideration.

DRESS CODE

In order to effectively prepare students for professional practice, and to create an environment conducive to learning and scholarship, the following dress code standards apply to MSPAS Program students at Dominican University of California. Students are expected to be well groomed and neatly dressed at all times while in the program. The program reserves the right to require individual students to meet these requirements, as stated below, for reasons of health, safety, and decorum. Students who violate the dress code will be counseled by faculty and required to improve their appearance. Students who present inappropriately attired in clinical settings may be sent home. Repeated violations may result in a lowered class grade for participation and/or an unprofessional behavior evaluation.

On Campus

Overly revealing clothing, such as low cut tops, skintight tops, or very short skirts or shorts are **NOT** appropriate classroom attire. Appropriate attire must be worn during participation in remote classrooms and assessments.

- T-shirts and jeans are allowed when neat and clean without holes and/or tears.
- Fingernails should be kept short for lab activities.
- No hats are to be worn in class.
- No strong scents or perfume are permitted.

During Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences

- Students are required to adhere to the dress code policies of the clinical site.
- No sun dresses, sweatshirts/sweat pants, T-shirts, jeans, tank tops, revealing tops, or shorts more than two inches above the knee are permitted.
- No large pieces of jewelry (i.e., bracelets, necklaces, earrings) are permitted for safety reasons.
- Fingernails should be trimmed close to fingertips. Makeup should be minimal if worn.
- No open-toed shoes or sandals are allowed except with the permission of the clinical instructor.
- No perfume or strong scents are permitted.

During Guest Lectures

During guest lectures, students are required to dress in business casual attire or in the attire required for their supervised clinical practice experiences. Students who violate the dress code will be counseled by faculty and required to improve their appearance. Repeated violations may result in a lowered class grade for participation and/or an unprofessional behavior evaluation.

CASTLEBRANCH AND OSHA/HIPAA TRAINING

The MSPAS Program utilizes a nationally recognized immunization and document verification service called CastleBranch. Each student will work directly with CastleBranch to complete health status and insurance verification, immunization requirements, background check, and drug screening. This service will keep student records confidential, allow students to access their records at any time, and send reminders when records need to be updated.

All required items are listed on the CastleBranch website, including mandatory forms that must be completed and submitted to the service. The Immunization and Health Document Requirements document may also be used to aid in gathering the required items.

In addition, many Supervised Clinical Practice Experience sites require proof of training in OSHA, Blood Borne Pathogens and HIPAA compliance. These courses are to be completed through CastleBranch or other verified education services as instructed by faculty. These courses are **REQUIRED** and must be completed by end of Semester 1. Upon completion of the courses, students will receive a certificate of completion which can then be retrieved from CastleBranch by the Clinical Coordinator for on-boarding students to the clinical sites.

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

“Universal Precautions” should be followed by **ALL** personnel at **ALL** times on **ALL** patients. The use of Universal Precautions is based on an individual’s skills and interaction with patient’s body substance, non-intact skin, and mucous membrane. This applies to all personnel at all times regardless of the patient’s diagnosis. The following precautions apply to personnel performing all “invasive procedures”:

1. All patients must be regarded as potentially infected with blood borne pathogens.
2. Strict hand washing must be practiced before and after each patient contact. **HANDS MUST BE WASHED IMMEDIATELY IF THEY ARE CONTAMINATED WITH BLOOD OR BODY FLUIDS.**
3. Gloves should be worn in the following instances and not reused
 - If soiling with blood or body fluids is anticipated.
 - If intravenous lines will be placed.
4. Gowns or aprons should be worn during procedures that are likely to generate splashes of blood or other body fluids and if soiling with blood or body fluids is likely.
5. Masks and protective eyewear (goggles) should be worn during procedures that are likely to generate droplets, splashes of blood, or other body fluids, in order to prevent exposure of mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, and eyes.
6. Articles contaminated with blood or body fluids should be discarded as follows:
 - If disposable, items should be placed in red bags labeled "infectious waste."
 - If non-disposable, items should be cleaned with a hospital approved disinfectant.
7. Care should be taken to avoid needle-stick injuries. Used needles should not be recapped or bent; they should be placed in a prominently labeled puncture-resistant container designated specially for such disposal.
8. Blood spills should be cleaned up promptly with a solution of 5.25% sodium hypochlorite dilute with water (1:10 household bleach).
9. Healthcare workers who have exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis should refrain from all patient care and the handling of equipment until the condition is resolved.
10. To minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, disposable mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.

11. Pregnant healthcare workers should strictly adhere to precautions to minimize the risk of HIV transmission.
12. All specimens must be contained in a leak-proof plastic bag labeled “bio-hazard.”

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social media refers to Internet-based tools designed to create a highly accessible information highway. These tools are a powerful and far-reaching means of communication that can have a significant impact on a student’s professional reputation and status. Examples include, but are not limited to, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram.

Students are liable for anything they post to social media sites, and the same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines must be maintained as if they were interacting in person. The following guidelines have been developed to outline appropriate standards of conduct for the future of a student and the reputation of the MSPAS Program:

1. Students should behave responsibly and use good judgment. Incomplete, inaccurate, threatening, harassing posts, or the use of profanity on postings is strictly prohibited. It is inappropriate to use social media sites as a venue for venting. Example: A student posts on Facebook about his frustration with a course instructor (or preceptor) after he is given feedback. The instructor is not identified by name, but is identified by title (i.e., “my course instructor,” or “my preceptor”) with negative or derogatory comments.
2. Students are advised to think before posting, as internet and email archives can permanently affect their reputations.
3. Social networking during class, program activities, and clinical hours is strictly prohibited.
4. HIPAA laws apply to all social networking, so students should remember that it is the utmost priority to protect patient privacy by not sharing information or photographs. Example of a privacy breach: A student posts heartfelt concern on her Facebook page for a patient for whom she’s caring. The patient is not identified by name, MR number, or date of birth. However, the type of treatment, prognosis, and the time of treatment are provided and personal characteristics of the patient are described making the patient identifiable.
5. Students are advised to protect their own privacy by using privacy settings to prevent outsiders from seeing their personal information, as students may be held liable for postings from other individuals as well.
6. If students state a connection to the MSPAS Program or Dominican University of California, they must identify themselves, their roles in the program, and use a disclaimer stating that their views are their own and do not reflect the views of the program.
7. All laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material must be followed.
8. A student should consult his/her faculty advisor or the Program Director if the student has any questions regarding the appropriateness of social networking use.
9. Failure to follow the above stated guidelines may be considered a breach of appropriate professional behavior and be subject to discipline, up to and including, dismissal from the program.

10. Students may not communicate with a member of the media or an outside source attempting to gather information regarding the MSPAS Program or the University through social networks. Students should refer all questions regarding program information, policies, and procedures to the Program Director.
11. For additional information regarding internet services and user-generated content policy, including social media, students should refer to the following locations on the University website:

www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/technology
<https://www.dominican.edu/social-media-guide>

EVACUATION PROCEDURES IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- Choose the closest and safest evacuation route from the building.
- Evacuate immediately in silence, leaving lights on and doors open.
- Do not use elevators.
- Assist those with disabilities.
- Feel doors for heat. If cool, exit carefully. If hot, do not open the door. Find another exit or go to the window and call for help.
- If a room or passageway is filling with smoke, crawl rather than walk, since smoke rises.
- Assemble for roll call in silence at the designated assembly area.
- Be prepared to give the Check-In Team any information that would be helpful in taking roll, i.e., who went to another building or who might be left in the building unable to exit.
- Once out of the building, STAY OUT, until explicitly notified by authorities that it is safe to re-enter.
- Proceed to the designated assembly site with your class.
- Follow directions given by responsible parties, i.e., the fire marshal or emergency personnel.

DUoC GRADUATE PROGRAMS GENERAL SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS

Academic Performance

Satisfactory performance and progress* are defined as

1. Obtaining a passing grade based on the criteria outlined in the syllabus for each required MSPAS course.
2. Maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher measured at the completion of each semester in the MSPAS Program curriculum. (See program's grading rubric included in each course syllabus or located in Moodle.)
3. Demonstrating clinical competence commensurate with the level of training required in the program. Clinical competence includes, but is not limited to, clinical judgment, technical and psychomotor skills, interpersonal skills and attitudes, and professional comportment. (See Technical Skills)

*Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is also monitored by the Office of Financial Aid. Federal financial aid may be impacted when a student's academic progress falls below the federal standard. These standards can be found at www.dominican.edu/admissions/aid/sap

Advancement to Clinical Phase

A student may begin the Clinical Phase when all of the following conditions are met:

1. All didactic course work in the MSPAS Program curriculum has been successfully completed.
2. A cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in the program coursework has been achieved.
3. Student health clearance, including documentation of immunizations and annual TB screening and influenza vaccination, is completed.

4. Completion of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and OSHA training is documented.
5. Drug screening and criminal background check clearance is obtained.
6. BLS and ACLS certification is obtained.
7. The ability to meet the technical standards has been verified.
8. Proof that enrollment in a health insurance program is submitted.
9. Any other issues as determined by the MSPAS Program Director or the Clinical Team.

Academic Deficiencies

All MSPAS Program students are required to adhere to the Academic Standing Policies as outlined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy located at www.dominican.edu/admissions/aid/sap. Signing of the Student Handbook Signature Sheet verifies that the student has received copies or has access to these materials and agrees to adhere to its policies.

MSPAS PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

This content area contains policies and requirements that govern academic performance and professional conduct for all students who are enrolled in any phase of the 28-month Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program. These policies are unique to the program and are designed to promote standards for academic competency, professional behavior and integrity, and personal responsibility necessary for practice as a physician assistant. They represent the parameters of achievement and behavior the program faculty expects of its students as future health practitioners who will be serving the public and consumer. It is the responsibility of all students to be knowledgeable about program policies. The policies will be applied to all aspects of the student's academic progress and conduct for as long as the student is enrolled in the program.

The MSPAS Program has a responsibility to safeguard the patient and public by educating competent physician assistant graduates. As such, the program maintains the right to refuse to matriculate or graduate a student, as well as the right to remove a student from a clinical experience or rotation who is deemed by the faculty to be academically, clinically, or professionally incompetent or otherwise unfit or unsuited for continued enrollment in the program. Additionally, students are required to undergo criminal background and toxicology screening during enrollment.

The MSPAS Program reserves the right to make changes at any time to the Handbook or to the requirements for admission, graduation, tuition, fees, and any other rules or regulations.

The MSPAS Program specific policies are in addition to and may be more stringent than the Dominican University of California policies. Students are expected to refer to these policies as needed.

BACKGROUND CHECKS/TOXICOLOGY SCREENS

The Program requires students to undergo background screenings prior to matriculation and periodically throughout enrollment. Students are responsible for the costs associated with the background screening. A background check and toxicology (including alcohol) screen will be completed on all students prior to placement on clinical rotations. Some sites require an additional background check and/or toxicology (including alcohol) screen immediately prior to the start of the rotation; therefore, students may be required to complete multiple screens throughout enrollment. Facts uncovered as a result of the background screening which could preclude licensure and/or practice in the profession may impact the student's ability to begin or continue in the program.

ATTENDANCE

The MSPAS Program curriculum is designed to provide the medical and professionalism education required to be a competent physician assistant. Reliability and punctuality are expectations of professionals in the workplace. The MSPAS Program, like all PA programs, is fast-paced and builds upon previous instruction. Because important information is presented only once, the program requires students to attend all lectures, laboratory activities, clinics and other scheduled functions. This includes arriving on time and remaining until the class, clinic, or other function has ended. The MSPAS Program requires all students to be available for class and instructional activities from 8am – 9pm Monday through Friday regardless of whether classes are scheduled. Due to the nature of the program, certain courses, lectures, and exams may need to be moved on short notice. More than one unexcused absence per semester may result in the lowering of the student's final course grade. (See individual syllabi for attendance requirements.)

Attendance at all classes is considered an aspect of professional responsibility and individual dependability. In addition, class discussions and other interactions aid in the development of the PA role.

In Summary:

1. This is a professional program, and therefore
2. Attendance is mandatory at all lecture, lab and clinical rotations.
3. Excessive or repeated absences may result in lowering of the course grade.
4. A physician's note may be required for extended absences due to illness.
5. Students must call or email the Course Coordinator if they will be absent or late.

Tardiness

Punctuality and attendance are markers of professional behaviors and attitudes. Tardiness, early departures, and absence from classes are not conducive to optimal learning for any student in the program. It is a student's responsibility-- and an expectation of professional behavior-- to arrive on time, be prepared for class on time (with gear stowed before class begins), and remain for the entire class period.

Arriving on time demonstrates respect for instructors and peers. Tardiness in the didactic phase of training has been linked to tardiness and other unprofessional behaviors in the clinical phase of training, and later in the workplace. Therefore, tardiness is considered a professionalism infraction. The first incident will result in a verbal warning. The second incident will be followed up with a written warning and a meeting with the student's advisor. A third occurrence will be documented in the student's academic file as an incident of unprofessional behavior and will impact the student's professionalism evaluation.

Students who arrive late to class are fully responsible for the material covered during the time period missed.

Absences

While it is the MSPAS Program policy that students attend all classes, labs, and other program-related functions, the program understands that there may be exceptional events which could keep a student from classes or program activities. Students are not permitted to take vacations during didactic terms. Students are responsible for all material and examinations missed during their time away. Assignments that are due during an approved absence must be submitted before departure unless other arrangements have been agreed upon with the Course Coordinator. Students should refer to Examination Policy for information regarding missed examinations.

Students in the clinical year must attend all rotations and adhere to the rotation's schedule. Absences during the clinical year are addressed separately in the MSPAS Student Clinical Year Handbook.

Excused Absences

Students are permitted one excused (planned and/or unplanned) absence per term.

Unplanned Absence

Illness and family emergencies (*i.e.*, not routine activities that can be rescheduled to accommodate a PA student's education and career) are generally the only acceptable reasons for an unplanned absence.

Planned Absence/Time Off Requests

Any student requesting time away for an exceptional event must complete and submit a Time Off Request form (available on Moodle) a minimum of one month in advance. The student is required to obtain signatures on this form from the Course Coordinator of every class he/she will miss. Time Away Request forms are to be submitted to the Program Administrator, who will add them to the student's file. The approval of each request by the Course Coordinator, Associate Program Director, and/or the Program Director is made on an individual basis, and there is no guarantee the approval will be granted.

Time away from class for professional conferences must be approved in advance through the same mechanism (see Student Activities Related to the PA Profession). Absences for professional conferences are not included as part of the two excused absences per term.

Unexcused Absences

Students will be permitted one unexcused absence for each didactic course without penalty.

Program Notification of Absences

Students are required to notify the Course Coordinator, and if unavailable, the Program Administrator of any absence, and the reasons for the absence, via email if the absence is anticipated 24 hours in advance. If 24 hours advance notice is not feasible (e.g., the student became ill during the night), notification by phone and/or email as soon as possible is acceptable. Sending messages through classmates is not an acceptable form of notification. The Course Coordinator will determine if the student is granted an excused absence. Failure to properly notify the Course Coordinator will result in an unexcused absence. Chronic tardiness, early departures, and/or absences will result in intervention by the faculty and may have consequences for a student's continuation in the program.

Remote Classroom Attendance

Video

Student video must be on for all guest lecture instruction with student remaining visible utilizing a light source that does not create shadowing or limit visibility. Video must remain on during introduction, instruction, questions and discussion. Attire should be appropriate as outlined in the [Dress Code content area](#).

Video must also be on for principal faculty lectures unless instructed otherwise. If you have an underlying issue preventing the use of your video during lecture, message the Course Coordinator directly.

Participation and Absence

More than one attempt to contact the student unsuccessfully during lecture (via Zoom chat function or directly speaking to the student during lecture) will constitute an unexcused absence. This includes failure of the student to respond with video attendance or written/verbal response if legitimate inability to attend with video within a five minute time frame. If a student is logged in but not physically present, or responding to questions or communication, it will result in the student's removal from the remote lecture, an unexcused absence, and may result in the lowering of the student's overall course grade.

Greater than three instances of unprofessional behavior regarding attendance and participation as defined in this handbook will result in referral to the Academic Progress Committee (APC) as outlined under CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-ADHERENCE.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling interns, under the supervision of the Director of University Counseling Services, offer free, confidential personal counseling. Students wishing to resolve problems and enhance their lives through individual, group, family, or marriage counseling should make an appointment with a counselor by calling the University Counseling Services at (415) 485-3258 or by completing a request form in the Student Health Center (Bertrand Hall, Room 100).

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Students should visit www.dominican.edu for campus information and resources.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Use of Wireless Devices in the Classroom

Laptops, tablets/ iPads, and smart-phones may be used in the classroom at the discretion of the Course Coordinator. Instructors will notify students if electronic equipment will be required for an in-class activity. The following activities are considered disruptions:

- Texting
- Cell phone ringing
- Checking email
- Playing games
- Web chat forums

Distractions in class are considered a professionalism issue and will be addressed individually by the Course Coordinator. Professionalism issues will be monitored across all courses. The first incident will result in a verbal warning. The second will be followed up with a written warning and documented in the student's academic file as an incident of unprofessional behavior. A third occurrence may result in placement on academic probation, and/or placement in the category for dismissal with referral to the Academic Progress Committee.

Recording of Lectures

Permission to record lectures is solely at the discretion of the Course Coordinator and lecturer unless recording is a University approved accommodation. Otherwise, prior approval must be obtained. The Course Coordinator's approval is given on a voluntary basis and, as such, is considered a privilege, which may be withdrawn at any time. Recording of group discussions and exam reviews is not permitted.

Remote Learning

In the setting of unforeseen events including but not limited to natural disasters, global events, and campus closures, remote learning may serve as an appropriate method of ongoing education and assessment. In the event remote learning is required, the program will provide direction around resources and instruction. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Zoom
- Google Meets
- Virtual learning platforms/tools
- Implementation of the MSPAS Program Remote Proctoring Policy and Remote Review Policy provided to each student

COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Moodle and E*Value

The MSPAS Program uses Moodle and E*Value; both are web-based instructional platforms used to support courses. Students are automatically registered for Moodle and E*Value via their courses and are expected to check there regularly for course-related information. Students should also check the MSPAS Program electronic bulletin board on the Moodle site for forms, policies, and other departmental information. Tips on using Moodle are available on the Dominican University website and training on E*Value will be completed by program faculty.

Communications with the Program and University

Each student will be assigned a University (students.dominican.edu) email address. This is the only email address that will be answered by DUOC personnel. Forwarding a DUOC email to another email account is discouraged. These accounts can lack the security, capability, and sometimes, sufficient space necessary for downloading important attachments.

Students are responsible for maintaining access to their email accounts as they move during their education.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Email is an effective and standard way to communicate quickly with Dominican faculty, staff, and fellow students and is also the standard in business communication. Following are reminders to help make the experience more positive and productive for students, faculty, and staff and other professionals.

- Students are required to use their assigned Dominican email account for all departmental communication.
- Emails should be kept short and simple, state clearly and directly a question or concern, and mention a desired time frame for response.
- Emails should include a meaningful subject line so the reader can decide how quickly a response is needed.
- Emails should include a respectful salutation (Dear Dr...., or Professor....). Students are advised to check with faculty to see how they prefer to be addressed. Beginning an email to a faculty member with a salutation such as “Hey” is never appropriate.
- Emails should include standard punctuation and spelling, and not use slang.
- STUDENTS SHOULD AVOID THE USE OF ALL CAPS IN AN EMAIL. IT IS THE EQUIVALENT OF SCREAMING and can be seen as disrespectful.
- Emails should maintain a neutral, respectful tone at all times. If a student is experiencing strong emotions about a subject, he/she should arrange a face-to-face meeting with the person it concerns.
- Emails can be friendly and cordial but should avoid jokes, which are often misinterpreted.
- Students should not personally attack each other or faculty members via email. This approach is unprofessional and reflects badly on the student as a person. Students are advised to remember that the content of an email lives forever on the web.
- Faculty and staff are expected to respond to a student’s email within 24-48 hours, not including weekends. If a student sends a faculty member an email on a Friday afternoon, the student should not expect to hear back until the following Monday or Tuesday.
- Students are also expected to respond to faculty emails within 24 hours and are advised to check their accounts regularly.
- A student sending an email containing an attachment should mention this in the message. Completed assignments may only be sent as email attachments if a student has received permission to do so from a faculty member.
- Students are advised not to send passwords, credit card information, or other sensitive material over the web.
- Students are expected to check their DUoC email accounts at least once every 24 hours.
- Email responses and forwarded emails should include the original message when appropriate.
- Email messages and responses should be saved to a file (if necessary) for reference.
- Students are advised to use a signature line in their emails, including their full name and class, as well as a phone number, such as the following example:

David Smith
MSPAS Class of 2023
415-123-4567

Change of Address, Email Address, or Phone Number

Students are required to keep the program and the Office of the Registrar informed of any changes to mailing address, email address, and/or phone numbers within one business day of the change. Address and personal contact information should be submitted to the Registrar’s website at <https://www.dominican.edu/directory/registrar>

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The modalities listed below are used to evaluate student performance in the MSPAS Program.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Written examinations and quizzes | 9. Objective Structured Clinical Evaluations (OSCEs) |
| 2. Class/lab/seminar assignments, papers, and oral presentations | 10. Clinical site visits |
| 3. Class/lab/seminar attendance and/or participation | 11. Clinical year assignments |
| 4. Lab examinations | 12. E*Value patient tracking |
| 5. History and physical examination assignments | 13. Academic faculty observations |
| 6. Practical examinations | 14. Clinical preceptor, or designee, observations/evaluations |
| 7. Physical examination skills | 15. Summative comprehensive written examination |
| 8. Procedure Competency Evaluations | |

EXAMINATION POLICY

The following are the procedures regarding the administration of an examination. Both the student and proctor are responsible for adhering to the Examination Policy. Exams may be given outside of the regularly scheduled class time. Students should check their schedules for dates and times.

Students are responsible for the course instructional objectives and learning outcomes whether or not they are covered in lectures. Exam questions may be from the text, lectures and/or handouts. All questions will be based on both the general course and specific instructional objectives.

1. Students are required to be present for all scheduled examinations and must arrive on time for the examination.
2. Computer-based examinations must be downloaded prior to scheduled examination time or as instructed.
3. A student's belongings and personal items, **including cell phone and personal electronics**, must be placed at the front of the classroom prior to the start of the exam(s), and must remain there until that student has completed all examinations scheduled for that day. A student may not access any of the belongings or personal items while an exam is ongoing, even if he/she is finished early. Once a student has completed the exam(s), he/she is free to take his/her belongings and personal items and exit the classroom.
4. No talking is allowed once an examination starts.
5. Should more than one exam be given on one day, every student will take the exams in the same order. (For example, in the Clinical Medicine courses, the first exam will be Anatomy & Physiology followed by Clinical Medicine, followed by Clinical Pharmacology.) A short break will be given between exams.
6. Students will be provided with one sheet of scratch paper at the beginning of the first examination. This paper must remain in the classroom until testing is completed at which time students must turn in the (all) scratch paper.
7. If absolutely necessary, a student may leave the classroom to go to the restroom but must first raise his/her hand to be excused. Examinees will be excused **one at a time** to leave the testing room for this purpose. Use of the bathroom during an examination should be minimal.

8. All students will start each exam at the same time. The shared student calendar will be updated with each final examination's specific start and end time.
9. Every exam will have a unique password that will be shared at the start of that particular exam.
10. All students are expected to be in their seats ready to start their respective examinations at the time posted.
11. Once a student has finished an examination, he/she should close his/her computer and leave the classroom. **Students are not to congregate outside the classroom and may not enter the classroom until all students have completed the examination.** Students may return to the classroom when the test is completed.
12. Hats/caps may not be worn during any examination except for the wearing of a headpiece for religious reasons. Any student wearing a hat will be asked to remove it. Failure to comply with this or any other reasonable request of a proctor will result in the immediate dismissal of the student from the examination and may result in a zero (0) for the exam.
13. Food and drinks are not allowed during exams and must be stowed with other belongings. An exception may be made at the discretion of the Course Coordinator.
14. In the setting of remote examination administration, students are required to adhere to the MSPAS Program Remote Proctor Policy.
15. Late Arrival A student who arrives late to an examination will not be given additional time to complete the exam. If a student arrives > 15 minutes late from the exam start time, it will be at the discretion of the Course Coordinator or designated proctor to determine if the student will be permitted to take the exam at that time or whether the exam will be rescheduled for that student. Furthermore, any student arriving after other students have completed the exam and left the testing area will not be allowed to start the examination. If the exam is rescheduled, the exam will be worth the same number of points as the original exam and will cover the same subject material; however, the makeup exam may be in a different format from the original examination. The makeup exam may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions. Students should be prepared to take the exam with short notice.
16. Previously approved Time Off requests If a student has been previously approved to miss class and an examination is subsequently scheduled, it is the student's responsibility to contact the Course Coordinator within 36 hours to arrange to take the exam. The missed exam will be administered as soon as possible, so students should be prepared to take the exam with short notice. The date and time will be determined by the Course Coordinator. The exam will be worth the same number of points as the original exam and will cover the same subject material; however, the makeup exam may be in a different format from the original examination. The makeup exam may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions. Failure to make up the examination within the specified time period will result in a grade of zero (0) for that examination.
17. Absence A student unable to attend a scheduled examination for any reason must immediately notify the Course Coordinator (in person, by phone, or email) as soon as possible prior to the start of the exam. Failure to appear for an examination and/or failure to communicate with the Course Coordinator prior to the exam start time is considered unprofessional behavior and may result in an unexcused absence and/or disciplinary action. The Course Coordinator will determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

- Excused absences If an absence is deemed excused, a makeup exam will be scheduled for the student. Although the makeup exam will cover the same subject material covered by the original examination, it may be in a different format from the original exam. Failure to make up the examination within the specified time period will result in a grade of zero (0) for that examination.
- Unexcused absences If an absence is deemed unexcused, a grade of zero (0) will be given for the test. No makeup exam will be offered. Formal documentation will be placed in the student's file.

MSPAS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Exam integrity is vital to the assessment of the academic knowledge of students. It is therefore essential that academic and professional standards be maintained at all times to ensure fairness and validity of exams. Students are expected to uphold the Student Code of Conduct as stated in the Dominican University Student Handbook: <https://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/student-handbook-and-policies>

The MSPAS Program is in alignment with the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) policy regarding examination integrity. Academic honesty and integrity policies are applicable to any and all examination environments including examinations administered remotely. All examinations, including examination grading sheets such as for practical/OSCE exams, will remain confidential and in possession of the program. No student may retain a copy of an examination or part of an examination. Violation of exam integrity via any method noted below, in the NCCPA Policy, Remote Proctoring Policy, Remote Exam Review Policy, or by any other form of cheating, such as but not limited to, obtaining a copy of the exam, a previous year's exam or questions, and/or getting help from another student during the exam, is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

Although the NCCPA Policy states that test takers must not discuss exam questions under any circumstances, the program recognizes the utility of discussing exam questions for learning purposes after taking an exam. However, students are strictly prohibited from discussing or communicating exam content or exam questions with others who have not been tested on the exam's content. Any student(s) found to be discussing examination content in violation of this policy shall be referred for disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program.

Incoming students will be given a copy of the MSPAS Program's Remote Proctoring Policy and the Remote Exam Review Policy during Orientation and will be expected to review these policies before the start of classes.

TIME PROVIDED FOR WRITTEN EXAMS

Timing for each type of question is as follows:

1. Multiple choice questions:
 - a. 1.25 min/question for first semester
 - b. 1 minute/question for second semester and thereafter
2. Fill in the blank
 - a. In general, 1.5 min/question
 - b. If the answer requires a sentence or more, 2 minutes/question
 - c. Essay questions – timing is at the discretion of the Course Coordinator as based on answer expectations.

EXAMINATIONS AND GRADED ACTIVITIES DURING DIDACTIC SEMESTERS

Requirements to Pass a Didactic Course:

Please refer to individual course syllabi for requirements to pass the course. Failure to meet any of these syllabi requirements may result in a failure of the course.

Courses with OSCE Exams

All OSCE examinations must be passed according to the grading criteria outlined in the course syllabus.

Examination during Clinical Semesters

Students should refer to the MSPAS Student Clinical Year Handbook for further information regarding this.

Exam Review Process and Procedure

Students may review graded exams during designated course exam review sessions after exams have been completed, as delineated in the procedure set forth in individual course syllabi.

Retesting of Failed Examinations Limit

A student will be granted no more than three (3) retests for failed exams on first attempt during the didactic phase of the program. Should the student fail another exam on first attempt, that failed grade will be used in the calculation of the course grade as outlined in the syllabus. Remediation for failed exams will be outlined in individual syllabi.

Regarding EOR exams and retesting limitations in the clinical year, refer to the clinical handbook.

COURSE GRADING

Course grading is delineated in the individual course syllabi.

Grade Point Average

All students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better to progress in the MSPAS major at the completion of each semester. Students will not be awarded a graduate degree from DUOC with a cumulative GPA below 3.0. Students with a cumulative GPA below 3.0 for one semester will be placed on academic probation. A second semester of a below 3.0 cumulative GPA may result in program dismissal.

Incomplete (INC)

An Incomplete (INC) grade indicates that a student has not been able to finish all required work for issuance of a grade. An Incomplete is not counted in the grade point calculations until a final grade replaces it. An INC during the academic phase must be replaced before the student enters the clinical phase. Replacement of an Incomplete is under the direction of the Course Coordinator. If the required work is not completed within the specified time, the INC will be automatically converted to a failing grade (F). It is to the student's advantage to arrange to make up any incomplete work as soon as possible. Students who receive an INC grade are not eligible for financial aid in subsequent terms for completing the same course.

Incomplete or Failure (INC or F)

If the student fails an exam and is provided the opportunity to remediate by the Course Coordinator or the Director of Clinical Education, the student will receive a grade of incomplete (INC) until remediation is completed.

Note: Students must take at least six credits to be eligible for financial aid and should contact the Office of Financial Aid with any questions.

Withdrawal (W)

A withdrawal indicates that a student has withdrawn from the University in good academic standing.

FAILURE OF A COURSE

Failure of a course will be determined by the criteria outlined in each MSPAS course syllabus.

Students who fail one course/rotation will be referred to the Academic Progress Committee. Students who fail two courses/rotations will be placed in the category for dismissal and referred to the Academic Progress Committee. If a student is already on Academic Probation, one course failure places him/her in the category for dismissal. Students are advised to read content areas, [Academic/Professionalism Probation](#) and [MSPAS Dismissal](#), for additional details.

GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

Grades represent the professional judgment about student performance in relation to the goals and requirements of a particular course. Although it is the sole responsibility of the instructor to assign grades, students should not be subjected to calculation errors or misapplication of course criteria for grading, nor to improper grading, such as the application of non-academic criteria, including race, politics, religion, or gender. All grades except “I” (incomplete) are considered final. Incomplete grades that have reverted to “F” are final. An instructor may change a grade when he/she has made a computational, procedural, or judgmental error. If a student believes there has been a computational, procedural, or judgmental error in the calculation of a grade, the student must raise the question with the instructor, either in conversation or in writing prior to the final posting of the course grades.

If an instructor determines that there has been an error in grading, he/she obtains a Change of Grade Authorization Form located on the intranet under Academic Affairs. The instructor must submit the grade change form directly to the Registrar. Students may not submit the grade change form. If a student believes he/she has been assigned a grade unfairly, based upon criteria other than those named above, the student must first discuss the grade with the instructor. The student should begin by requesting that the instructor review the following with the student:

1. The factors that were weighed in assigning the grade
2. The instructor's perceptions of where and how the student's performance fell short

If the student still thinks that the issue has not been resolved, the student must submit to the instructor, with a copy to the Program Director, a full written statement of the case along with all graded course assignments. This statement must be made before the submission of the semester grade by the instructor or Course Coordinator. The instructor and/or Course Coordinator must give a written response to the student, with a copy to the Program Director, and set a meeting date with the student within 10 working days of receipt of the student's written statement.

If, after the exchange of written statements and conversation, the student still thinks that the grade is unfair, he/she must formally appeal in writing to the Program Director within 10 working days of the receipt of the instructor's response. The Program Director will consider any additional material presented by either the faculty member or the student and then prepare a written response, with copies to the instructor and/or Course Coordinator, student, and Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences, regarding the assessment.

If, in the judgment of the Program Director, the grade is unfair, the Program Director will ask the instructor and/or Course Coordinator to re-evaluate the student's work. In every case the burden of proof remains with the student. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Program Director, he/she must file a formal complaint in writing to the Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences within 10 working days of the Program Director's decision. The written formal complaint should contain reasons why the Program Director's decision should be reconsidered. The Dean will provide a formal response within 10 working days of receiving the formal complaint. The decision of the Dean is final.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Students may present general grievances, concerns, or suggestions for improvement to the Program Director. If there is a concern from the class as a whole, then the student leaders are encouraged to meet with the Program Director to share these concerns in an in-person meeting. The purpose of these meetings is to encourage open communication between the students and program administration and to address student concerns. It is the program's goal to encourage feedback for the purpose of quality improvement. Students should voice their concerns in a thoughtful and constructive manner. Any situation involving specific faculty members, specific students, or an individual student's grades should be addressed in individual sessions as outlined below. The program will not take action based on a concern expressed anonymously (e.g., through note or email).

Complaints Against Professors, Classes, or Programs

Grievances, not including grade appeals, with a specific faculty member should initially be addressed directly with the faculty member unless the nature of the complaint is such that the student feels uncomfortable doing so. Complaints should be expressed using a diplomatic, reasoned approach with the goal to reach quick, amicable conflict resolution, if possible. If the student feels uncomfortable approaching the involved faculty member for whatever reason, or if the student has not been successful at resolution of the conflict with the faculty member, he/she should register the grievance with the Instructor and/or Course Coordinator unless that is with whom the student has the issue.

If the student is not satisfied with this decision, the student should appeal in writing to the Program Director (PD) within four days of the decision from the Instructor and/or Course Coordinator, and a decision must be given to the student in writing within four days from the date of this appeal. Course grade appeals must follow the process outlined in the student manual. If the grievance is with the PD or if the student has not been able to resolve a conflict at that level, he/she should contact the Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences.

Complaints of Student Academic Dishonesty

Course Coordinators shall report, in writing, any incident of academic dishonesty involving major assignments and examinations to the PD and Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences who will maintain a record of such reports. The PD and/or the Dean will then inform the instructor of any previous incidents reported for the student. In the event that more than one incident of academic dishonesty in the same course involving the same student has been reported, the Dean will assess the student's status in the University and may either place the student on probation or dismiss the student.

A student penalized for academic dishonesty has the right to appeal the judgment. The review process will be as follows:

1. The student and Course Coordinator will confer.
2. If they are not in agreement, they will consult with the MSPAS Program Director.
3. If the meeting with the Program Director does not resolve the issue, the Course Coordinator and the student will confer with the Dean. The Dean's decision is the final determination of outcome for academic dishonesty.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWAL

Students can request a Leave of Absence (LOA) or withdrawal from the program for medical or personal reasons. Students must make this request in writing to the Program Director and follow all procedures as outlined on the Dominican University website regarding University policies and procedures:

<https://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/student-handbook-and-policies>

Students who take a LOA prior to the completion of a semester or clinical block will not receive credit for that material/rotation, unless the semester contained a modular course that was completed and passed prior to taking the leave.

Medical LOA

If a student takes a leave of absence for medical reasons, he/she will need a medical release in order to return. Once the student receives a medical release, he/she can petition to return to the program. During a LOA, a student is not permitted to take any PA courses. Petitions to return to class must be submitted a minimum of six weeks prior to the start of the term in which the student plans to return. If timing is such that the PA courses needing to be repeated are not offered, the student must wait until appropriate PA courses are available.

Students returning from a Medical Leave of Absence must be able to meet the Program Technical Standards and will be required to provide clearance to return to the program from their medical provider (forms available).

MODIFIED CURRICULUM DUE TO DECELERATION OR LOA

Dominican University of California recognizes that some students may need to modify the standard prescribed curriculum. A modified curriculum due to deceleration or LOA may be recommended by the program or a student may petition the Program Director in writing for a modified curriculum due to deceleration or LOA. This petition is not granted automatically and is approved only in extenuating circumstances. The Program Director is responsible for evaluating and approving the petition.

A student on modified curriculum due to deceleration or LOA may not serve as an officer of any official University club or organization (including holding a class officer position), or as a representative of the University as it may detract from time needed to be academically successful.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Employment

The MSPAS Program curriculum is rigorous and requires the presence of the student at all classes and rotations. Many hours are committed to classroom work with additional hours dedicated to self-study. For this reason, the program strongly discourages outside employment. If a student feels that it is necessary to work while in the program, it is advisable that the student inform his/her faculty advisor of this. Program expectations, assignments, schedules, deadlines, and responsibilities will not be altered to adjust or accommodate working students. It is expected that employment will not interfere with a student's learning experience.

Students may work within the institution while participating in the Federal Work Study Program as long as such work will not interfere in their academic pursuits. However, MSPAS Program students are not required to, and do not work for the program. In addition, students may not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical experiences. Students may also not serve as instructional or primary faculty for the program.

Student Service Work

In order to avoid practices that might conflict with the professional and educational objectives of the MSPAS Program and to avoid practices in which students are substituted for regular staff, the following shall be in effect in regard to service work:

1. Students may not be hired as employees for any private or public practice, clinic or institution to perform medical services during any time they are part of the program under the sponsorship of that

specific practice, clinic, or institution. An example of this would be a student who is working at a clinic on the weekends while functioning as a student at this clinic during the week.

2. Students may not take the responsibility or place of qualified staff.
3. Students may not be given any payments, stipends, or other remuneration for medical services performed as part of the program.
4. Students not on academic probation may volunteer for charitable, humanitarian, or community service organizations. Such volunteer work shall not interfere with a student's academic responsibilities or be conducted at the same time as scheduled classroom or clinical instruction unless prior program approval has been granted.

Student Activities Related to the PA Profession

Leadership development is an essential component of the educational process. This may require that students attend relevant off-campus activities during class/preceptorship time. Off-campus activities must be in accordance with students' professional development. It is the responsibility of the student or approved student organization to coordinate the event and receive approval from the program. Students requesting permission to attend an off-campus conference or program must be in good academic standing. Students may request to be excused up to three school days to attend a professional activity, e.g., the AAPA Annual Conference. However, the duration of approved time is determined on an individual basis.

Students attending off-campus events are responsible for making up any missed classes, laboratories or other course assignments and should refer to the examination policy for information regarding missed examinations. Attendance at off-campus events will be the fiduciary responsibility of the student.

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS

Academic Progress

Satisfactory academic progress must be evident and demonstrated by students in the program in order to continue in the program. Any failure to progress academically up to and including the failure of a course may be cause for referral to the MSPAS Academic Progress Committee (APC). The APC monitors academic progress for the entire program to include the clinical year of experiences. (Students should refer to the MSPAS Student Clinical Year Handbook for academic progress policies associated with the clinical year).

Students must complete and pass all didactic courses in the first four semesters before they can progress to the clinical phase of the program.

Professional Progress

Professionalism is as important as, and holds equal importance to, academic progress. Students are expected to demonstrate the legal, moral and ethical standards required of a healthcare professional and display behavior that is consistent with these qualities. Professionalism and professional ethics are terms that signify certain scholastic, interpersonal, and behavioral expectations. Among the characteristics included in this context are the knowledge, competence, demeanor, attitude, appearance, mannerisms, integrity, and morals displayed by the students to faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, patients, colleagues in healthcare and other educational settings, and the public. The MSPAS Program expects nothing short of respect and professional demeanor at all times.

Professional Code of Conduct

Success in the physician assistant profession requires certain professional behavioral attributes in addition to content knowledge. Therefore, these professional behavioral attributes, to include empathy, respect, discipline, honesty, integrity, the ability to work effectively with others in a team environment, the ability to

take and give constructive feedback, the ability to follow directions, and the ability to address a crisis or emergency situation in a composed manner, are considered to be a part of academic performance.

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education 5th edition states, “The role of the PA demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills and the capacity to respond to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. Essential attributes of the graduate PA include an attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient’s welfare.” Adherence to these attributes requires that physician assistants and physician assistant students exhibit a high level of maturity and self-control even in highly stressful situations or in difficult circumstances and situations.

In keeping with these principles, physician assistant students must conduct themselves in a demeanor that is nothing less than professional and consistent with appropriate patient care and adhere to the Professional Code of Conduct. Students will be evaluated not only on their academic and clinical skills but also on their interpersonal skills, reliability, and professional and behavioral conduct.

Respect: Students are expected to treat all patients, faculty, university staff, clinical preceptors, healthcare workers, and fellow students with dignity and respect. Students are expected to be able to follow direction and to appropriately express concerns in a professional and respectful manner. Conflicts are to be resolved in a diplomatic and reasoned manner. Students should be sensitive to, and tolerant of, diversity in the student and patient population. PA education requires a close working environment with other students and includes physical examination of fellow students and discussion groups that may reveal personal information. These situations must be approached with respect for the privacy, confidentiality, and feelings of fellow students.

Students should offer constructive feedback in a thoughtful and reasoned manner that fosters respect and trust. Displays of anger, which include demeaning, offensive, argumentative, threatening language/behavior, or language that is insensitive to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability will not be tolerated. Students must be appropriately responsive to lawful requests from their instructors, preceptors, and clinical sites. Students shall not display disruptive or obstructive behavior at the university or at clinical sites. Any concerns brought to the program regarding the student will be addressed and discussed with the student.

Flexibility: PA education involves instruction from practicing clinicians with unpredictable schedules. At times, lectures, sessions, or clinical rotations may need to be adjusted with short notice. The program believes the advantage of utilizing practicing clinicians outweighs this inconvenience and requires students to be flexible and tolerant of changes. Student schedules in the academic and clinical year may involve night and weekend hours.

Integrity: Students are expected to follow all policies in the DUOC Student Handbook and the MSPAS Student Clinical Year Handbook, including those pertaining to academic honesty. Infractions such as forgery, plagiarism, stealing/copying tests, and cheating during examinations will not be tolerated. PA students are also expected to display the highest ethical standards commensurate with work as a healthcare professional. Some of these standards are outlined in the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession published by the American Academy of Physician Assistants: <https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf>

Students are mandated to report any illegal or unethical activity to the Program Director or Clinical Coordinator. Students may not accept gifts or gratuities from patients or families. Breaches in confidentiality, falsification of records, misuse of medications, and sexual relationships with patients will not be tolerated.

- **Identification:** Students must always identify themselves as a “physician assistant student” to patients and clinical site staff and never present themselves as physicians, residents, medical students, or graduate physician assistants. Students must always wear their program-supplied nametag while at clinical sites. While in the program, students may not use previously earned titles (i.e., RN, MD, DC, Ph.D., etc.) for identification purposes.
- **Confidentiality:** In accordance with the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession and in compliance with HIPAA Standards, students must respect and maintain the confidentiality of patients. Students are not permitted to discuss any patients by name or any other identifiable means outside the clinical encounter. For academic presentations and H&P and/or SOAP note assignments, all identifiable information must be removed as per HIPAA requirements. The confidentiality of fellow students should be respected and maintained as well.
- **Health and Safety:** Any student whose actions directly or indirectly jeopardize the health and safety of patients, faculty, clinical site staff or fellow students may be immediately removed from the clinical site and/or face disciplinary action. Removal from a clinical rotation may delay the student’s completion of the program.
- **Non-discrimination:** Students shall deliver healthcare service to patients without regard to their race, religion, gender, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability, disease status, legal involvement, or political beliefs.
- **Student Role:** Students must be aware of their limitations as students and of the limitations and regulations pertaining to PA practice. Students at clinical sites must always work under the supervision of a preceptor. They may not function in the place of an employee or assume primary responsibility for a patient’s care. Students shall not treat and discharge a patient from care without consultation with the clinical preceptor. All patients must be seen by a licensed provider PRIOR to leaving the facility. Students should seek advice when appropriate and should not evaluate or treat patients without supervision from, and direct access to, a supervising clinical preceptor at all times. Unusual or abnormal physical findings should be confirmed by a licensed provider. Students shall perform only those procedures authorized by the preceptor. Students must adhere to all regulations of the MSPAS Program and the clinical sites. The student is to contact the program immediately with any questions or concerns about the student’s role at a site.
- **Attire:** Attire is a component of professionalism. Students should refer to the [Dress Code content area](#) for further information.
- **Impairment:** Students shall not appear at the university or clinical sites under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Should this occur, the student will immediately be removed from the rotation and referred to the APC for disciplinary action.
- **Weapons:** Students are not permitted to carry any firearms or other weapons on campus or to clinical sites.
- **Attendance:** Students must report to all classes, labs, seminars, Call Back Weeks and clinical sites at the scheduled time and remain for the entire session. Students should refer to the [Attendance content area](#) for further information.
- **Timeliness:** Students must submit all required assignments and forms by their designated due date. Timeliness is an important aspect of professional behavior. Repetitive delay in paperwork/ assignment submission during any phase of the program may result in disciplinary action.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-ADHERENCE

All cases involving alleged misconduct (with the exception of those involving alleged academic dishonesty) will be processed solely under the guidelines of the Student Code of Conduct as stated in the Dominican University Student Handbook: <https://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/student-handbook-and-policies>

Failure to adhere to the professional standards and Professional Code of Conduct will result in the following consequences for unprofessional behavior:

First incident

The program will provide the student with a verbal warning to change the behavior depending on the severity of the offense. The appropriate faculty member (e.g., advisor or Clinical Coordinator) will document the incident in the student file.

Second incident

The program will document the incident in writing and the student will meet with the faculty. This documentation will go on the student's permanent record, and the student will receive a Program Warning.

Third incident or egregious behavior

The student will be automatically referred to the Academic Progress Committee. The Committee will meet to determine a course of action for the behavior that can include, but is not limited to, corrective or disciplinary action, probation, or dismissal.

Additional guidelines for conduct specific to the clinical training experiences are outlined in the MSPAS Student Clinical Year Handbook, which will be distributed to students prior to the clinical phase of their education.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS**MSPAS Academic Progress Committee (APC)**

The MSPAS APC is charged with monitoring all MSPAS students both academically and professionally, promoting students who have successfully completed a semester, as well as reviewing the cases of students who meet the criteria for probation or dismissal. It is made up of faculty members from the MSPAS Program and may include faculty from other DUoC programs that provide instruction to the PA students. The APC may review student records and discuss student records with appropriate faculty members and/or preceptors in determining an appropriate course of action for students experiencing academic and/or professional conduct difficulties in the program. The APC may choose to request the appearance of the student during an APC meeting. The committee can recommend actions such as, but not limited to, probation, remediation, deceleration, suspension, or dismissal. Recommendations are on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances. The committee's recommendations are forwarded to the Program Director for review. The Program Director may agree, amend, or disagree with APC recommendations. Final decision regarding student status is determined by the Program Director. A letter of decision to the student regarding his/her status in the program will be issued by the Program Director or a designee.

Since the MSPAS Program only offers courses once a year, if the APC recommends that a student repeat an entire semester, the student must take a leave of absence from the program until those courses are offered again. A place will be held for the student to return to the program at the beginning of the semester that must be repeated.

MSPAS Program Warning

Program Warning is internal to the MSPAS Program and is not documented on the official transcript. It is instituted when a student fails a major course or exam (e.g., End of Rotation Exam) or has professionalism issues and serves as a warning that improvement is needed. A student must successfully pass reexamination of the failed course material and/or demonstrate improvement in professional behaviors. Failure to successfully remediate the material will result in failure of the course and placement on Academic Probation. Failure to improve professionalism issues will result in placement on Professionalism Probation.

ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONALISM PROBATION

Academic Probation is the result of unsatisfactory scholarship or professionalism, which may lead to dismissal from the MSPAS Program. It is documented on the official transcript.

Professionalism Probation is a subcategory of Academic Probation. It is the result of unsatisfactory professionalism, which may lead to dismissal from the program. It is documented on the official transcript as Academic Probation.

Probation is a warning that there are deficiencies determined by the MSPAS Academic Progress Committee in consultation with the Program Director. Steps to remediate these deficiencies will be provided to the student. During probation, the student's academic/clinical progress and/or professional conduct will be closely monitored by the MSPAS Academic Progress Committee. Failure to demonstrate improvement in areas of deficiency may place a student in the category for dismissal. Final determination of dismissal will be assessed and decided by the Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences. Decisions regarding Academic Probation cannot be appealed.

Note: Most state licensure boards request information on academic and professionalism probation on the official program completion verification paperwork. The program must document when a student has been on Academic and/or Professionalism Probation, and in most cases, the reasons for probation. Additionally, this information is often requested by credentialing agencies, and therefore, it may impact a student's ability to obtain employment clearance. Students are advised to see the content areas on [Academic/Professionalism Probation](#) and [MSPAS Dismissal](#).

Students must meet the minimum standards and requirements set by the MSPAS Program and Dominican University of California in order to remain in good academic standing.

Grade Point Average

All students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better to progress in the MSPAS Program. Students will not be awarded a MSPAS degree from Dominican University of California with a GPA below 3.0.

MSPAS Program Criteria for Placement on Academic/Professionalism Probation

The following are criteria for which a student may be placed on probation, including but not limited to

1. Failure of a course
2. Failure of reexamination under a remediation plan
3. Semester GPA < 3.0 for MSPAS coursework
4. Professional misconduct, behavior, and/or attitude inconsistent with the PA profession or in violation of the Professional Code of Conduct policies found in this handbook
5. Failure to adhere to the program policies and procedures found in the MSPAS Student Handbook and/or the MSPAS Student Clinical Year Handbook
6. Verbal or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptor, or designees indicating that a student is not progressing academically and/or not demonstrating proficiency to a level where it may jeopardize patient safety
7. Verbal or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptors, or designees indicating that a student is not adhering to site regulations, site schedule, ethical standards of conduct, and/or the limitations of a student's role
8. Failure to follow and/or comply with requirements set forth by the MSPAS APC and Program Director

It is important to remember that some aspects of knowledge integration and clinical judgment cannot be adequately evaluated by examinations alone. Observations from academic and/or clinical faculty are crucial for evaluating these critical skills. Failure to achieve minimum competency in coursework, including clinical assignments and satisfactory progress in professional development, behaviors, and attitudes, may result in probation or dismissal. A pattern of documented evaluator concerns about performance may indicate unsatisfactory progress when the record is viewed as whole, even though passing grades have been assigned.

In such instances, if eligible, successful completion of a remediation plan is required to continue in the program.

MSPAS PROGRAM TERMS OF ACADEMIC PROBATION

1. When a student is placed on academic probation he/she will be notified in writing by the program and the reasons will be stated. A copy of this letter will be provided to the appropriate university officials and placed in the student's academic file. Probation is also noted on the official transcript.
2. A student will remain on Academic Probation until the terms of probation have been satisfied as stated in the remediation plan and probation letter. Probation may continue throughout the remainder of the didactic year, or until graduation, if deemed appropriate. A student placed on Professionalism Probation will remain so until graduation.
3. In the case of probation due to professional misconduct, the program will determine whether the student has achieved an acceptable level of professional behavior. This information may be gained from professionalism assignments, faculty evaluations, preceptor evaluations, or any other evaluations from individuals the program deems appropriate. Failure to remediate professionalism issues will result in referral to the APC.
4. When the terms of probation have been satisfied, notification of removal from probation will be forwarded to the appropriate university officials, including the Registrar, so the necessary documentation on the student's transcript can be made. Additionally, documentation will be placed in the student's academic file.
5. The primary responsibility of an MSPAS student is to gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become a competent and professional PA. Therefore, a student on Academic Probation may not serve as an officer of any official DUoC club or organization (including holding a class officer position), or as a representative of the University as it may detract from time needed to be academically successful. If a student who is presently serving as an officer/representative is placed on Academic Probation, a substitute officer/representative will be chosen by the class to fulfill the position until the student is removed from probation.

MSPAS PROGRAM EXAMINATION REMEDIATION

Student course performance assessments are intended to ensure that MSPAS students graduate with the content knowledge required for the profession and also to give students sufficient exposure and practice with the multiple-choice question format found on the PANCE. The MSPAS Program is invested in the success of its students and as such recognizes the need for flexibility in evaluating student performance. To that end, the program offers examination remediation for most courses in the curriculum.

Remediation is the opportunity to correct unsatisfactory performance, progress, and/or professional conduct in the MSPAS Program. The offer of remediation is not automatic or guaranteed. Recommendations regarding remediation can be made by the individual Course Coordinator, and/or the MSPAS APC on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances in each case and, in some individually determined cases with a final decision made by the Program Director. Students will be informed in writing of his or her options and next steps at all stages of poor performance. Any student placed on probation for academic or professionalism reasons and offered remediation must fulfill all the terms of the remediation contract within the designated time frame or face actions including, but not limited to, dismissal.

Remediation is to be regarded as a privilege which must be earned by a student through demonstrated dedication to learning and active participation in the educational program to include, but not be limited to, overall academic/clinical performance, regular attendance, individual initiative, and utilization of resources available to her/him. Remediation plans/decisions cannot be appealed. A student will be granted no more than five (5) opportunities for remediation of assessments such as OSCEs, MCQs throughout the didactic phase of the program. This is to include one (1) opportunity to remediate up to five failed examinations after retest limits have been surpassed. At this time, a student will no longer be eligible for remediation. Persistent

poor academic performance with failure of any further examinations beyond this point will result in course failure and referral to the APC.

Remediation opportunities differ by semester and are separated by non-clinical didactic courses, clinical rotations and the summative semester. Individual syllabi will outline remediation process.

MSPAS PROGRAM DISMISSAL

The Dominican University of California MSPAS Program, after due consideration and process, reserves the right to require the dismissal of any student at any time before graduation if circumstances of a legal, moral, behavioral, ethical, patient safety, health or academic nature justify such an action.

MSPAS PROGRAM CRITERIA FOR DISMISSAL

Any of the following may place a student in the category for dismissal:

1. Failure of two or more courses, either didactic or clinical within the MSPAS curriculum
2. Failure of a repeated or remediated course
3. Failure by a student on probation to comply with or complete a remediation program within the defined time frame
4. Meeting two or more criteria for Academic and/or Professionalism Probation
5. One egregious or more than two other occurrences of professional misconduct, behavior, and/or attitude inconsistent with the PA profession or in violation of the Professional Code of Conduct Policies
6. Failure to maintain a minimum term cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater after being on Academic Probation in the prior academic term
7. Verbal and/or written reports from academic faculty, clinical preceptors, or designees indicating that a student who is already on probation is not adhering to site regulations, site schedules, ethical standards of conduct, or limitations
8. Verbal and/or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptors, or designees indicating that a student who is already on probation is not progressing academically
9. Verbal and/or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptors, or designees indicating that a student who is already on probation is jeopardizing patient safety due to a lack of knowledge and/or skill proficiency
10. Consistently failing to progress academically as demonstrated by repetitive failure to demonstrate competency across multiple evaluation modalities, including but not limited to, written examinations, OSCEs, preceptor evaluations, written assignments, faculty observation of clinical skills/decision making, and site visits
11. Two or more occurrences of failure to follow program policies and procedures as defined in this Handbook as well as those defined in the Student Clinical Year Handbook
12. Unprofessional conduct due to failure to comply with requirements set forth by the APC and the Program Director

Decisions regarding dismissal are made on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances and extenuating circumstances relating to the case. The APC's recommendations are forwarded to the MSPAS Program Director for review. The Program Director may agree, amend, or disagree with APC recommendation. The Program Director issues a letter of decision to the student regarding his/her status in the program. If the Program Director agrees with the APC recommendation, the dismissal is immediately effective upon receipt of the letter of notification from the Program Director. Students may appeal a dismissal decision as stated in [Appeal Process & Procedure for Program Dismissal](#). If a student is dismissed, his/her registration will be voided and tuition will be refunded per University policy.

Since the MSPAS Program only offers courses once a year, if the APC recommends that a student repeat an entire semester, the student must take a leave of absence from the program until those courses are offered again. A place will be held for the student to return to the program at the beginning of the semester that must be repeated.

APPEAL PROCESS & PROCEDURE FOR PROGRAM DISMISSAL

Appeals may only be filed for decisions of dismissal. Following notification (email plus hand or traceable delivery) of a decision for dismissal, a student may wish to appeal the decision to the Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The student has seven business days from the date on the dismissal letter from the program within which to submit a formal written appeal of the decision to the Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences. The appeal request must be submitted in writing and received by the Office of the Dean within this seven-day period. The request should be accompanied by a narrative explaining the basis for the appeal. The narrative should fully explain the student's situation and substantiate the reason(s) for advocating a reversal of the dismissal. Failure to submit an appeal within the deadline will cause the student to lose his/her right to appeal.

While the appeal is pending, the status of the student will not be altered unless the student is in the clinical year. The program reserves the right to remove the student from clinical rotations if there is concern about patient safety until such time the appeal decision is rendered by the Dean. Removal from a clinical rotation may delay the student's completion of the program should the appeal be granted.

The Dean may grant an appeal only by showing one of the following:

1. Bias of one or more of the members of the MSPAS APC or by the Program Director
2. New, significant, documented information not available to the APC at the time of its initial decision
3. Procedural error

The Dean may choose any of the following options when an appeal to dismiss a student is under consideration:

1. Concur with recommendation of the MSPAS APC and/or Program Director to dismiss
2. Amend the recommendation of the MSPAS APC and/or Program Director
3. Convene an ad hoc committee consisting of three members to review the Program Director's decision and present its findings to the Dean for consideration

If the Dean concurs with the recommendation to dismiss, the student may make a final appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Students are advised to review their rights as stated on the University website at <https://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/student-handbook-and-policies>

Appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs

This appeal request must be submitted in writing and received by the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs within seven business days from the date on the appeal decision letter from the Dean. The request should be accompanied by a narrative explaining the basis for the appeal. The narrative should fully explain the student's situation and substantiate the reason(s) for advocating a reversal of the dismissal.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs may grant an appeal only on showing one of the following:

1. Bias of one or more of the members of the MSPAS APC, Program Director, or Dean
2. New, material, documented information not available to the committee, Program Director, or Dean at the time of its initial decision
3. Procedural error

The Vice President for Academic Affairs may choose any of the following options when an appeal to dismiss a student is under consideration:

1. Concur with recommendation of the Dean to dismiss
2. Amend the recommendation
3. Convene an ad hoc committee consisting of three members to review the Academic Progress Committee, Program Director, and Dean's recommendation and present its findings to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for consideration

The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is final, and notification of his/her decision will be sent directly to the student. If the Vice President for Academic Affairs upholds the decision to dismiss, the dismissal is effective immediately and the student must withdraw from the University.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

MSPAS Program Requirements

A student will be recommended for the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) provided he/she has fulfilled the following:

1. Completion of all prescribed academic requirements with a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 or higher in the MSPAS Program and no incomplete or unsatisfactory grades
2. Successful completion of the program Summative course
3. Demonstration of no deficiencies in ethical, professional, or personal conduct which would make it inappropriate to award the degrees, and receipt of a final overall satisfactory rating on the professional evaluation
4. Compliance with all legal and financial requirements of the Dominican University of California
5. Completion of the academic requirements within the required 150% of time frame following matriculation
6. Completion and submission of the application for graduation from the Office of the Registrar

Upon successfully completing graduation from the MSPAS Program, students are welcome to participate in the University's campus-wide graduation ceremony at the end of the regular academic year.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Membership in national and state professional associations is a critical element of a student's professional development; therefore, all students in the MSPAS Program are required to join the California Academy of PAs (CAPA) and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The information, conferencing, and networking opportunities provided within these organizations are invaluable to students as they enter the profession. Proof of membership in CAPA and AAPA is required. Student benefits from membership in CAPA and AAPA include eligibility for scholarships, conference discounts, and access to online versions of professional journals. Most importantly, CAPA and AAPA advocate for the profession at the national and state levels. Online applications are available at the sites below.

California Academy of PAs

2318 S. Fairview St.
Santa Ana, CA 92704-4938
Phone: (714) 427-0321
Email: capa@capanet.org

American Academy of Physician Assistants

2318 Mill Road Suite 1300
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (703) 836-2272

Email : aapa@aapa.org

DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY

Dominican is committed to maintaining a drug-free campus. The full text of the University's policy on drugs and alcohol, including procedures governing disciplinary actions, can be found in the DUOC Student Handbook: <https://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/student-handbook-and-policies> As members of the Dominican community, students are advised that they will jeopardize their status at the University if they use, sell, or in any way help to make available to others any illegal drugs or alcohol.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

A majority of Dominican University of California students are receiving financial aid, typically a combination of grants, loans, and work study. Complete forms and applications are available from the Office of Financial Aid. It is the student's responsibility to know and adhere to all financial aid application deadlines. If a student needs assistance with the process, financial aid counselors are available, and students are advised to contact the office for an appointment.

LIBRARY INFORMATION

The Archbishop Alemany Library houses close to 100,000 volumes and subscribes to 375 journals and newspapers in print as well as having online access to over 19,000 journals and e-books through subscription databases. The Library is open over 80 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. Reference services provide assistance in library research and reference librarians are available six days a week during the regular school term. It is recommended that all new students request a library orientation, which may be done at the circulation desk.

Other useful area libraries:

J. Paul Leonard Library, SF State University
UC Berkeley Library
UCSF Library
Stanford University Medical Center Library
Samuel Merritt University Library

www.library.sfsu.edu
www.lib.berkeley.edu
www.library.ucsf.edu
<http://healthlibrary.stanford.edu/>
www.samuelmerritt.edu/library

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The Student Health Center is committed to quality care and the promotion of optimal health. The University encourages disease prevention and health awareness in its student clients. The Health Center is staffed by a nurse practitioner who has advanced education in primary healthcare and an emergency medical technician/coordinator. They work in collaboration with a physician consultant. Services at the Health Center are available to all students enrolled at Dominican University of California. The Student Health Center is located in Bertrand Hall and can be reached by phone at (415) 485-3208.

TUTORING SERVICES

Tutoring is available free of charge to all Dominican students through the Student Success Center. Every effort is made to provide tutoring in as many subjects as possible; however, the University cannot guarantee that tutoring will be available in any particular subject other than writing and math. Tutors are primarily students who have been referred by faculty members to the campus Student Success Center. Tutors have strong academic records and have demonstrated the skills to provide support and encouragement to students. A number of the tutors are professionals, hired on a part-time basis to assist students in several different subjects.

Students are allowed one hour of tutoring a week per subject, as available. Students may receive additional tutoring hours requested on a case-by-case basis. The Student Success Center is located on the first floor of Bertrand Hall, Room 109. In general, tutoring is available by appointment only and is provided on a first-come/first-serve basis; however, drop-in tutoring is available in many subjects. Students can check the

listings in the TLC and sign up for a tutor by submitting an online Tutor Request Form at https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?DominicanUnivofCA&layout_id=10.



2021-2022 STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE SHEET

I have read, understand, and agree to follow the policies and procedures set forth by Dominican University of California and the Master of Science Physician Assistant Studies Program as outlined in this handbook. I am responsible for referring to this handbook for specific policies and procedures governing my status as a student, which include program requirements, goals and objectives, satisfactory academic and professional progress, graduation requirements, and grievance policies.

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Date

Signature Sheet due to MSPAS Program Office no later than one week after program orientation.