

Physician Assistant Studies Program Student Manual

East Falls/New Jersey Program
Class of 2027

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SECTION I: Program Overview

Introduction

Congratulations! You are about to embark on an exciting and challenging educational program as you move toward your goal of becoming a PA. The Physician Assistant Studies East Falls/New Jersey Program at Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) is a **professional medical training and academic program**. During your training, you represent not only the Program and Thomas Jefferson University (aka Jefferson) but also the PA profession. It is the commitment and responsibility of the Program faculty to ensure that the Program graduates healthcare providers who are excellent clinicians and responsible professionals.

This manual is designed to provide guidance and information related to the policies and procedures of Thomas Jefferson University and those of the TJU EF/NJ Physician Assistant Studies Program and apply to all students enrolled on the East Falls and New Jersey campuses. This manual is designed to be used in conjunction with the following:

1. Thomas Jefferson University Academic Catalog
2. Thomas Jefferson University Student Handbook
3. Jefferson College of Health Professions Student Handbook
<https://www.jefferson.edu/academics/colleges-schools-institutes/health-professions/student-resources.html>
4. Physician Assistant Program, East Falls and New Jersey Campuses Clinical Education Handbook

Together these resources are designed to provide you with information that will assist you in your academic endeavors in the Program and at the University. This includes available resources, policies that pertain to you as a student in this program and the University, lists of needed equipment, an outline of the curriculum, and guidelines to help you in preparation for this challenging academic experience. All references to the TJU Physician Assistant Studies (PA) Program in this manual specifically apply to the PA Program on the East Falls and New Jersey campuses only.

If you have questions that cannot be answered from these sources, please contact the Program Director or Program faculty. In addition, you must sign the attestation statement on the last page of this manual. By signing it, you acknowledge your understanding of and agreement to the RULES, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, and PROCEDURES outlined in this manual.

The Physician Assistant Studies Program reserves the right to amend, modify, rescind, or implement any policies, procedures, regulations, fees, conditions, and courses described herein as circumstances may require without prior notice to persons who might thereby be affected. The provisions of this manual are not and may not be regarded as contractual between or among the College, its students, employees, or agents.

PA Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Thomas Jefferson University East Falls/New Jersey Program is to educate students to become innovative, collaborative providers who are clinically well-prepared, adaptable, and who provide humanistic care to all patients and to the diverse communities they serve.

Definition of Humanistic Care

Humanistic care focuses on the importance of all human relationships and developing the trust, humility, and compassion that is at the heart of healing. Humanistic providers care about their patients and themselves, which allows them to meet the demands of today's healthcare environment.

Program Graduate Outcomes/Competencies

Upon graduation from the TJU PA Studies Program at EF/NJ campuses, each student will be able to:

1. Accurately elicit a medical history and perform an appropriate physical examination based on patient presentation.
2. Formulate an appropriate differential diagnosis based on history and physical exam findings.
3. Appropriately recommend and interpret common diagnostic studies based on history and physical exam findings.
4. Diagnose and manage acute and chronic medical and psychological disorders based on clinical presentation and diagnostic testing results for patients across the lifespan.
5. Develop and implement appropriate treatment plans for common disorders, including medications, surgery, counseling, therapeutic procedures, rehabilitative therapies, or other therapeutic modalities.
6. Perform and/or recommend appropriate clinical procedures based on clinical presentation.
7. Screen for diseases, assess for common disease risk factors, and initiate and recommend health promotion and disease prevention measures.
8. Provide patient education and counseling for common medical and psychological illnesses, common medical procedures, therapeutic regimens, adherence, and health maintenance.
9. Recognize when a problem is beyond the scope of the PA provider and refer the patient to the supervising physician, appropriate specialists, and/or community resources.
10. Effectively document medical information in a variety of formats.
11. Competently communicate with patients, families, and other healthcare team members in written, oral, and electronic forms.
12. Apply evidence-based medicine principles to clinical practice.
13. Integrate a humanistic approach to the care of all patients and the diverse communities they serve.
14. Conduct themselves in a professional, courteous manner and with the highest ethical and legal standards expected of a health care professional and consistent with the role and responsibilities of a physician assistant.
15. Work collaboratively as part of the healthcare team

Technical Standards

Essential characteristics and abilities required for completion of the TJU Physician Assistant Studies Program consist of certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities, and sufficient mental stability to provide reasonable assurance that candidates can complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of medical training.

All PA students must possess those intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities necessary to undertake and achieve levels of competence in the full curriculum required by the faculty. An avowed intention to practice only a narrow part of clinical medicine does not alter the requirement that all students take and achieve full competence in the full curriculum.

Technical standards are the fundamental abilities that are required to complete their degree. These standards are determined by the competency, proficiency and/or skill standards set forth by accrediting and professional organizations appropriate to each program and apply to classroom, laboratory and clinical/fieldwork environments. Students are allowed reasonable accommodation.

The technical standards for admission set forth by the Department of Health Science & Clinical Practice establish the essential qualities that are considered necessary for students admitted to this program to achieve the knowledge, skills and levels of competency stipulated for graduation by the faculty. All students admitted to this program are expected to demonstrate the attributes and meet the expectations listed below. These Technical Standards are required for admission and also must be maintained throughout a student's progress through the Physician Assistant Program. In the event that, during training, a student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, then the student may be asked to leave the program.

Students must possess aptitude, ability, and skills in the following areas:

- 1 General
- 2 Observation
- 3 Communication
- 4 Motor coordination and function
- 5 Conceptualization, integration, and quantization
- 6 Behavioral and social skills, abilities, and aptitudes
- 7 Professionalism

General: The student is expected to possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, taste, and smell so that data received by the senses may be integrated, analyzed, and synthesized in a consistent and accurate manner. A student must also possess the ability to perceive pain, pressure,

temperature, position, vibration, position equilibrium, and movement that are important to the student's ability to gather significant information needed to effectively evaluate patients.

Observation: The student must have sufficient capacity to accurately observe and participate in the lecture hall, the laboratory, and with patients at a distance and close at hand, including non-verbal and verbal signals, to assess health and illness alterations in the outpatient and inpatient clinical settings. Inherent in the observational process is the use of the senses to elicit information through procedures regularly required in physical examination, such as inspection, palpation, percussion, and auscultation.

Communication: The student must communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally to elicit information; describe changes in mood, activity, posture; and perceive non-verbal communications from patients and others. Each student must have the ability to read and write, comprehend and speak the English language to facilitate communication with patients, their family members, and other professionals in health care settings where written medical records, verbal presentations, and patient counseling and instruction are integral to effective medical practice and patient care. The student must communicate effectively verbally and in writing with instructors and other students in the classroom setting, as well.

Motor coordination and function: The student must be able to perform gross and fine motor movements with sufficient coordination needed to perform complete physical examinations utilizing the techniques of inspection, palpation, percussion, and auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A student must develop the psychomotor skills reasonably needed to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medication, management and operation of diagnostic and therapeutic medical equipment utilized in the general and emergent care of patients required in practice as a physician assistant. The student must be able to maintain consciousness and equilibrium; have sufficient levels of postural control, neuromuscular control, and eye-to-hand coordination; and to possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, and physical exertion required for satisfactory performance in the clinical and classroom settings.

Conceptualization, integration, and quantization: The student must be able to develop and refine problem-solving skills that are crucial to practice as a physician assistant. Problem solving involves the abilities to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures; to measure, calculate reason, analyze, and synthesize objective and subjective data; and to make decisions that reflect consistent and thoughtful deliberation and sound clinical judgment. A student must have the capacity to read and comprehend medical literature. Each student must demonstrate mastery of these skills and the ability to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and the medical literature to formulate sound judgment in patient assessment and diagnostic and therapeutic planning.

Behavioral and social skills, abilities, and aptitudes: Flexibility, compassion, integrity, motivation, effective interpersonal skills, and concern for others are personal attributes required of those in physician assistant practice. Personal comfort and acceptance of the role of a dependent practitioner functioning under supervision is essential for training and practice as a physician assistant. The student must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of the student's intellectual abilities; the exercise of good judgment; the prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom setting, as well as those in the clinical setting attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients; and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and other members of the health care team. Each student must have the emotional stability required to exercise stable, sound judgment and to complete assessment and interventional activities. The ability to establish rapport and maintain sensitive, interpersonal relationships with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds is critical for practice as a physician assistant. The student must be able to tolerate physically taxing loads and still function effectively under stress; adapt to changing environments; display flexibility; graciously accept constructive criticism; manage difficult interpersonal relationships during training; and learn to function cooperatively and efficiently in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical practice.

Professionalism: A candidate/student must consistently display honesty, integrity, respect for self and others, tolerance, caring, fairness, and dedication to their patients, peers, PA faculty and staff, Jefferson faculty and staff, the community and the PA profession. In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and applicable federal and state laws, Thomas Jefferson University ensures people with disabilities will have an equal opportunity to participate in its programs and activities. Members and guests of the Jefferson community who have a disability need to register with the Office of Student Life, if requesting auxiliary aids, accommodations, and services to participate in Thomas Jefferson University's programs. All requests for reasonable and appropriate auxiliary aids, academic adjustments, and services will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in a timely fashion.

Please submit accommodation requests to:

Accessibility Services
130 South 9th Street
Edison Building, Room 1800
Philadelphia, PA 19107
TJU_CC_AccessibilityServices@jefferson.edu
215-503-6531

Once admitted to the Jefferson Physician Assistant Studies Program, in the Department of Health Science & Clinical Practice, all students will be measured by the same academic standards. Regardless of disability and reasonable accommodation, a student must pass all courses at an acceptable level and master all essential clinical competencies.

Students interested in seeking accommodations should contact the Department Chair or Program Director and Accessibility Services as directed above.

Curriculum

The Program spans 25 months. This curriculum has been carefully sequenced to build upon concepts in order to facilitate learning. The didactic phase is 12 months. The clinical phase is 13 months in length and includes 9 clinical rotations, the Transition to the Clinical Year and the Master's Comprehensive Experience courses.

DIDACTIC Phase

Year 1

<u>Summer</u>	<u>Credits</u>
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PASF 507A/PAST 407A Advanced Anatomy A	2
	2

Fall

PASF 507B/PAST 407B Advanced Anatomy B	3
PASF 522/PAST 422 Medicine I	7
PASF 524/ PAST 424 Patient Care and Clinical Reasoning I	5
PASF 526/ PAST 426 Principles of PA Practice I	4
	19

Spring

PAST 628 Medicine II	8
PAST 627 Patient Care and Clinical Reasoning II	5
PAST 626 Principles of PA Practice II	3.5
PAST 615 Diagnostic Medicine	2
	18.5

Summer

Didactic	
PAST 629Medicine III	6
PAST 631 Patient Care and Clinical Reasoning III	3
PAST 632 Principles of PA Practice III	1.5
PAST 622 Pharmacotherapeutics Seminar	1
	11.5

51 Didactic Total Credits

CLINICAL Phase

Year 2

Summer

PAST 762 Transition to Clinical Year course	6
Experiential Phase (Rotations)	
PAST 741 Internal Medicine	6
PAST 742 Pediatrics	6
PAST 743 Women's Health	6
PAST 744 Psychiatry/Mental Health	6

PAST 745 Surgery	6
PAST 746 Emergency Medicine	6
PAST 759 Primary Care 1 (Family Medicine)	6
PAST 760 Primary Care 2	6
PAST 764 Elective	6
PAST 773/774 PA Master's Comprehensive Experience I & II	2
	62

Graduation Requirements

- Students must complete the entire 25 months of the Program within 4 academic years.
- Students must successfully complete and pass all required didactic and clinical coursework.
- Students must be in good academic standing after completion of all didactic and clinical coursework.
- Students must successfully complete and pass the Didactic Summative Exam, administered prior to clinical rotations.
- Students must successfully complete and pass the PA Master's Comprehensive Experience, including the Master's Project, and all components of Summative Testing including Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), clinical skills assessment, and the written summative exam.
- Students must have a minimum 3.00 graduate cumulative grade point average.
- Students must have no standing grades below a "C-."
- Students must complete all University graduation application procedures.
- Students must have no outstanding financial obligations to the University.
Students will be billed for graduation fees and must also pay these fees in order to gain a diploma.
- Students must have complied with all procedures and met all requirements of the University.

Upon successful completion all degree requirements, students will receive their Master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies, and will meet academic preparation requirements to sit for the PANCE examination.

The official Program Completion date will be the last day in August.

Program Faculty and Staff

The success of the Program involves the work of many people completing an enormous number of tasks and responsibilities, many of which are not directly visible to students. The following is a listing of names, email addresses, and telephone numbers for Program faculty and staff to assist you in identifying the appropriate resources in the coming months. To reach other members of the Program (including part-time instructors or other staff), students should telephone the Program main office number directly at 215.951.0837 (East Falls) or 856.784.1317 (NJ).

FACULTY

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Principal and Instructional Faculty

The success of the curriculum relies upon the teaching contributions of Program faculty. The Program also utilizes instructional faculty from other departments in the TJU enterprise, as well as healthcare professionals from the community. The invaluable contributions of these clinicians, educators, and professionals enrich and strengthen the multidisciplinary content and academic excellence of the curriculum.

Clinical Preceptors

Clinical site preceptors are instructional faculty who are responsible for the clinical education and experience of the student during their rotations. Preceptors provide guidance, instruction and oversight to students assigned to their clinical site. Preceptors submit written evaluations of a student's performance that is included in the student's grade for each of their (9) clinical rotations.

Students will not be evaluated by individuals such as a family member, or by someone with whom they have had or have a close personal relationship as a preceptor in a clinical setting.

Communication with Faculty and Staff

Communication with faculty and staff is accomplished through face-to-face or virtual meetings, assigned university email, or telephone (voice mail message). Meetings should be arranged during posted office hours or by appointment. You are expected to schedule meetings during non-class hours. You can expect to receive a response to emails from faculty and staff within **two (2) business days**.

SECTION II: General University and Program Policies

Advanced Placement

This Physician Assistant Program does not grant advanced standing or waivers for applicants to the Program or waivers of required coursework included in the PA curriculum for currently enrolled students. All curriculum courses and components must be satisfactorily completed as a matriculated student in the Program.

Tuition Fees and Refunds

PA Program tuition fees and costs: <https://www.jefferson.edu/tuition-and-financial-aid/tuition-information.html>

Email: TJU_EF_StudAccts@jefferson.edu

Phone: 215-951-5988

Appointments via Zoom/phone available by request. Documents may be sent via email.

Tuition Refunds

A student who withdraws, who is dismissed for academic reasons, or who is granted a leave of absence from the University may be eligible for a refund of tuition paid in accordance with the tuition refund policy.

For more information please go to:

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/policies/graduate-policies/tuition-and-university-fees-refund.html>

Student Health Requirements

You are required to have the health exams listed below prior to, and during the Program. Any student who requires a medical exception must discuss their need with the Student Health Services or the Office of Accessibility Services, who will then coordinate with the Program. These requirements are subject to change based on CDC guidelines. These documents must be uploaded to Complio by the required deadlines given by the Program. Prior to starting the clinical phase, you must renew with Complio and purchase a clinical year package as well as repeat drug and clinical background checks which will cost roughly \$250-275. You are responsible for this expense. You will also need updated tuberculosis testing, which must be submitted to Complio with copies of your current health insurance card by the deadlines defined by the Program. If you do not submit these documents, except for those with a medical exception, you will not be permitted to participate in clinical training. *During the clinical year, some clinical placement sites may require repeat or additional clearances then the ones mentioned here for which you will be financially responsible (i.e., additional vaccines).* Please note, if a student is granted a medical exception by Thomas Jefferson University, some of our clinical partners may not

accept or recognize the medical exception which could impact the student's ability to be placed in the clinical setting and possibly interfere with the student's ability to timely complete the Program. If this is an issue, the Program will endeavor to find a suitable rotation. This may delay placement and graduation and may have financial implications. If the Program is unable to locate a clinical site who will accept the student, this will prohibit graduation.

All costs associated with injuries or illnesses acquired during clinical training including physician visits, diagnostic tests, treatment, and prophylactic medications or immunization are the responsibility of the student. It is for this reason that the Program and all clinical sites require that students have current health care insurance and needle stick coverage while in the Program. You should evaluate your health care insurance coverage as hospital treatment and prophylactic medications may not be covered and can be costly.

1. A physical examination is required once upon matriculation to the Program.
2. IGRA Blood Test for tuberculosis within 6 months of starting the Program, and annually while in the Program. If this test is positive the student must have a chest x-ray which reveals no active disease. Additional testing for TB may be required during the clinical year.
3. Documentation of immunization and protective titer levels to:
 - Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis: a one-time dose of Tdap if two years since last tetanus/diphtheria booster. All adults who have completed a primary series of a tetanus/diphtheria containing product should receive tetanus booster every 10 years.
 - Measles: 2 doses plus antibody titer required to verify immunity.
 - Mumps: 2 doses plus antibody titer required to verify immunity.
 - Rubella: 2 doses plus antibody titer required to verify immunity.
 - Hepatitis B: series of 3 doses with Hep B antibody quantitative levels showing immunity.
 - Varicella: 2 doses or disease plus antibody titer required to verify immunity.
 - Annual Influenza (flu) is required
 - Meningococcal vaccination is also strongly recommended, some clinical placements sites will require it.
4. Documentation of current health insurance coverage with needle stick coverage is required by the university and clinical sites. Needle stick insurance is provided through an outside vendor that the University works closely with to arrange coverage.
5. It is the student's responsibility to report significant change in their health to Student Health Services.

Leave of Absence

You can request a Leave of Absence for medical or personal reasons.

Please note, if a medical or personal leave of absence is granted, interruptions in enrollment can cause challenges in the continuity of course work within a professional graduate Program. The nature of PA education is a sequential, fast paced, cohort-based curriculum, with required coursework offered only

once a year and the necessity for passage of all courses during each didactic semester in order to proceed in the Program.

Medical Leave

A request for medical leave of absence must be submitted to and is facilitated by the Dean of Student's Office <https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/dean-of-students.html>

If you are considering a medical leave, you must meet with the Program Director or their designee first before engaging the Dean of Students. You will work with the Program Director or their designee and the Dean of Students to determine your return from a medical leave.

In order to return from a medical leave of absence you must obtain medical clearance along with meeting with the Program Director or their designee and potentially the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee (APSRC) to determine requirements for your return, which may include repeating coursework, successful passage of competency examinations or assignments, or auditing courses. Please refer to the Leave of Absence-Medical section in the TJU Graduate Academic Policies for additional information

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/policies/graduate-policies/leave-absence-medical.html>

Mandatory Medical Leave of Absence

Thomas Jefferson University reserves the right to temporarily remove a student from the University, a course, or a rotation, pending evaluation, and if necessary, course of appropriate treatment. The University will determine the length of the medical leave of absence and will require the student to demonstrate fitness to return to school. The University will also determine whether restrictions in access to campus, students, email account or other University services are necessary during the leave. You will be informed, in writing, of any restrictions during your leave of absence.

Prior to reentry, an appropriate screening(s) will be arranged by the Student Health clinician with consultation, if necessary. Should the University require a mandatory leave of absence, the conditions of return will be defined, which may include restricting the scheduling of experiential education at away sites or at Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals.

Please refer to the Leave of Absence-Medical section in the TJU Graduate Academic Policies for additional information

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/policies/graduate-policies/leave-absence-medical.html>

Personal Leave

When personal circumstances make a temporary short absence from the College and the Program advisable and when intent to return is evident, a personal leave of absence may be granted to students. You must be in "good standing" and making satisfactory progress in order to request a personal leave of absence. If you wish to request a personal leave of absence you must meet with the Program Director who will determine suitability/eligibility for the requested leave and conditions for return. Approval for a personal leave is not guaranteed. A personal leave of absence cannot be granted

for academic difficulties or offered to students who are subject to dismissal for academic or disciplinary reasons.

Although personal leave of absence can be granted for a period of one semester to a full academic year, due to the nature of the PA education curriculum, personal leaves are generally granted for short periods of time, such as one to three weeks in the didactic phase and up to 5 weeks in the clinical phase. If you do not return to enrolled status at the end of an approved period of leave you will be administratively withdrawn from the Program and will have to seek readmission to the Program through CASPA pathway.

Should you be out for an extended period of time, return to the Program will be determined individually and may include requirements to repeat coursework, successful completion of examinations or assignments, or auditing courses. When you return to the Program you may be required to meet with the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee (APSRC) prior to return.

During any period of leave, you are not permitted use of university facilities.

Deceleration

Deceleration is an accreditation term that refers to any leave of absence from the Program which necessitates or results in you returning, joining and graduating with a different class cohort from the one you originally enrolled.

Please Note: Any leave of absence may result in a delay in graduation, as well as additional financial responsibilities and costs for repeated coursework or other required Program components.

Time Restrictions Policy

You must complete the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree Program within 4 academic years of matriculation. This time period includes any approved leaves of absence time and deceleration. Any student not meeting graduation requirements within 4 academic years of matriculation, will be administratively withdrawn from the Program.

Withdrawal from Program/University

You may initiate withdrawal from the Program and University at any time if not subject to dismissal because of failure or disciplinary action. If a withdrawal is initiated, the procedures and policies pertaining to grading of individual course withdrawals will be in effect.

In order to withdraw, you should notify the Program Director first and then contact the Office of the Registrar on the East Falls campus for necessary paperwork requirements. The official day of withdrawal will be the date that the form is filed, not the date of the last class attendance.

Office of the Registrar:

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

(215) 951-2990 • email: tju_ef_registrar@jefferson.edu

<https://www.jefferson.edu/registrar.html>

Staff:

Jan Mellon, Campus Registrar

Peter Medwick, Associate Registrar

A student matriculated in a degree-granting or post-baccalaureate certificate Program who fails to enroll for more than two consecutive semesters without having been granted a leave of absence will be given an administrative withdrawal.

Student tuition refund information can be found on the registrar's website:

<https://www.jefferson.edu/registrar/policies/tuition-and-university-fees-refund.html>

Student Employment/Work for Program

The Program strongly discourages outside employment and extracurricular activities while you are a student in the Program. If you feel that it is necessary to work or participate in extracurricular events while in the Program, it is advisable that you inform your faculty advisor. Program expectations, assignments, schedules, deadlines, and responsibilities will not be altered or adjusted to accommodate non-academic responsibilities, including outside employment and participation in university or club team sports teams. It is expected that employment or extracurricular activities will not interfere with students' learning experience.

PA students cannot be required to work for the Program or substitute for or be used as instructional faculty or clinical or administrative staff.

Shadowing

Students enrolled in the TJU East Falls/New Jersey PA Program are discouraged from shadowing in clinical settings while participating as a student in the program. These activities are not affiliated with or endorsed by the TJU East Falls/ New Jersey PA Program. Should a student decide to independently shadow in a clinical setting on their own, please note that students must not identify themselves as TJU PA students while shadowing independently. Students are prohibited from wearing their TJU PA Program name badge, short white coat with the program patch, or any other identifying items. Students are not covered under TJU malpractice or needlestick insurance while shadowing independently. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they have appropriate coverage and/or clearance to be in the clinical setting if required by the shadowing site. Any issues or incidents that arise during independent shadowing are the sole responsibility of the student. Students should understand and acknowledge the risks and responsibilities associated with independent shadowing.

Required Textbooks, Supplies, Medical Equipment and Trainings

Student Malpractice Insurance:

All Students are required to carry medical malpractice insurance. The required malpractice insurance is supplied by Thomas Jefferson University for all approved clinical assignments, and evidence of this will be provided to clinical sites.

Equipment

You will be required to purchase and have the medical equipment listed below. You must have the equipment by the start of Fall Semester.

List of Required Medical Equipment	
Otoscope/Ophthalmoscope Kit	Reflex Hammer
Stethoscope (must have open bell/diaphragm)	Tuning Fork (Frequency 128)
Sphygmomanometer (BP cuff)	Tuning Fork (Frequency 512)
Short White Coat (minimum of 2)	Tape Measure
Rosenbaum Pocket Vision Screener	Safety Goggles
Patient Gown	Scrubs
Privacy Screen for your Computer	Pillowcase (Provided This Year)

Laptop/Internet Access

A laptop computer with reliable internet access is required for the Program. The University's Canvas learning management system used for course materials and grades is accessed by students through the internet. In addition, during the clinical year, patient logging and reporting will occur on a computer-based system that requires internet access. The Program and University use e-mail as the primary method of communication. There is computer access and availability on the East Falls and new Jersey campuses, however, access will be needed while off campus, on clinical rotations, and these locations may not be within commutable distance from the campus.

You will also be required to use a laptop for testing purposes and a point-of-care device, such as a smartphone. The Program strongly recommends student have a file back-up drive or cloud storage to prevent loss of documents. The laptop must comply with current ExamSoft requirements and should be no more than 3-4 years old at the start of the Program. Laptop prices vary widely. Smartphones typically cost between \$350-900, and have an additional monthly charge depending on plan. Laptops and a point-of-care device will also be utilized for virtual instructional sessions, meetings and examinations. Students also need to purchase a privacy screen for their device for testing purposes.

Examsoft/Examplify

The Program uses ExamSoft for computer-based examinations. Therefore, students must have a newer computer/laptop (within last 3-4 years) in order to use Examsoft.

Students should review these Minimum System Requirements (MSRs) to ensure their devices are supported. Exemplify works with most computers, both Mac and Windows operating systems. Exemplify **will not run** on Chromebooks, Android, or Linux operating systems.

Please view the following link regarding computer minimum requirements needed for this Program.

<https://examsoft.com/resources/exemplify-minimum-system-requirements/#windows>

Books

You can plan on spending up to \$1,000 to \$1,500 on required textbooks throughout the Program. Recommended books are not required for purchase, but may serve as important reference materials. Many required books are accessible on the Jefferson Library websites as electronic versions.

Other Required Expenses

- Membership in the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) \$75 for entire student duration
- Membership in the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (\$30/yr or \$50/2yr) or New Jersey State Society of Physician Assistants (\$50/yr).
- Malpractice insurance (this will be covered by the university).
- University health insurance if do not have own coverage (approximately \$6000/year).
 - <https://www.universityhealthplans.com/Jefferson>
- Needle stick rider for medical insurance (approximately \$85-100).
- Registration fee for the American Heart Association CPR courses. (approximately \$60-150). This **must be** an American Heart Association certification.
- Fees for renewal of Complio packages for the clinical year, required and additional background checks, drug testing, child abuse clearances, on-boarding fees, HIPAA training, and OSHA training (approximately \$300). Please note, there may be additional screenings for clinical rotations that may increase this cost.
- Additional costs include expenses involved with travel to and from campus, in between the Philadelphia and New Jersey campuses, campus parking, living/lodging expenses, and food both during didactic and clinical year.

AAPA/PSPA/NJSSPA Memberships

The Program requires that you join the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) which is the PA national professional organization and either the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants or New Jersey State Society of Physician Assistants, depending on campus. We also strongly encourage your participation in AAPA by being part of the Challenge Bowl, attending the Annual Conference during the clinical year, and supporting relevant legislative changes. This advocacy supports the profession and keeps PAs and PA students informed on important issues that affect PA education and practice. You may also wish to join specialty societies if they have an interest in those areas. You will receive informational packets from the national and state organization during their first few weeks in the Program.

CPR/ACLS Certification

Upon matriculation, you are required to have and maintain current CPR certification from the American Heart Association at the Healthcare Provider level. American Red Cross CPR certification will not be accepted. Prior to starting clinical education rotations, copies of CPR certification cards must be submitted to the Program by the deadline determined by the Clinical Year Team. Students not submitting these documents will not be permitted to participate in clinical training.

You will be given the opportunity to complete Advanced Cardiac Life Support training through the Program. If you do not successfully complete this training, you will be required to complete the course at your own expense, prior to the start of their clinical year.

HIPAA and OSHA training

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA): Once matriculated, you will be required to complete HIPAA training on medical privacy regulations, which will require updating or re-certification prior to starting clinical rotations so you can demonstrate continuous understanding and compliance with these regulations

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Precautions: Working in a clinical setting can expose you to a wide variety of health risks and infectious disorders. Health care professionals and students can also act as vectors carrying infectious illnesses to patients who are already ill and sometimes immune-compromised. Safety of you, patients and other health care provider is critical to the health and well-being of all. Health care practitioners can reasonably anticipate that they will come in contact with blood and/or other potentially infectious materials. Therefore, you will receive instruction in OSHA compliance and universal precaution requirements including the use of gloves, care of sharp objects, use of eyewear, protective clothing, and other precautionary measures.

Exposure to Infectious or Environmental Hazards

If a potential exposure to a blood borne pathogen occurs, you should instantly cleanse the affected area and report the exposure to the supervising clinician, site supervisor or faculty immediately. If the exposure occurs during the clinical year, clinical sites are not required to nor will they provide you with free medical care. You should seek medical attention through the closest emergency room or your personal health care provider immediately. Additional care and follow up may be with your personal provider. **Any and all expenses for the care and potential treatment are your responsibility. It is your responsibility to understand your medical insurance coverage, policies, and procedures.**

In addition, you **must contact/leave a message for the Thomas Jefferson University East Falls Student Health Services office within 24 hours of the exposure: 215-951-2986.**

Drug Screening and Background Checks

You will be required to submit to urine drug testing, a criminal background check and a child abuse clearance prior to starting the PA Studies Program. The criminal background information will then be cross-checked against your CASPA application (for those who applied via CASPA). If the information

found via the background check is not consistent with the previously submitted information, or a significant incident is reported via either the criminal background check or the child abuse clearance, you will be referred to the Program Director or the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee for evaluation, with the option to contact the Dean's Office to appeal the final decision made. If, after you have been admitted or matriculated, you are found to have misrepresented yourself, your credentials, or (if applicable) your stated licensure/certification information on their CASPA application or other documents, the Program and the College of Health Professions reserve the right to rescind your offer of admission **or dismiss you from the Program**. Criminal background checks and drug testing will be repeated prior to starting clinical rotations, in addition to any clearances that may be requested by the clinical affiliation site. If an arrest and/or conviction of a misdemeanor or felony occurs while you are an enrolled in the physician assistant Program, you are obligated to notify the Program immediately.

Clinical rotation and fieldwork sites that require a criminal background check, child abuse clearance, urine drug screening and/or fingerprinting may deny a student's participation in the clinical experience, rotation or fieldwork because of a felony or misdemeanor conviction or a record of child abuse. Clinical sites may also deny participation in clinical experiences for other reasons, such as failure of a required drug test, or inability to produce an appropriate health clearance. As participation in clinical experiences is a required part of the curriculum and a requirement for graduation, denial of participation by a clinical site may result in the delay of graduation or the ineligibility to graduate from the Program. Students may also be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal from the Program.

Regardless of whether or not you graduate from Jefferson, individuals who have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor may be denied certification or licensure as a health professional. Information regarding individual eligibility may be obtained from the appropriate credentialing bodies.

Alcohol, Drug and Prohibited Substance Policy

You are expected to follow all federal, state and local laws related to possession, use or distribution of drugs, alcohol and prohibited substances and all University policies.

The University reserves the right to test students for the presence of drugs or alcohol in their system upon reasonable suspicion or for other reasons including but not limited to: pre-employment screening for students electing to take paid or volunteer positions at Jefferson or within Jefferson Health; pre-placement prior to a rotation at an outside site, if required by the outside institution, and periodic screenings as a student according to the college/school requirements. The results of the evaluation will be shared with appropriate university administrators for further action or referral, if needed.

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/alcohol-drugs-prohibited-substances.html>

Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited in identified areas to include but not limited to open offices, hallways, stairwells, restroom and classrooms. The East Falls policies includes the Voorhees campus.

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/smoking-policy-east-falls.html>

Correspondence/Communication

You must use appropriate email etiquette in communication with lecturers, faculty, staff, clinical sites, fellow students, and all university personnel. Expectations for appropriate email etiquette include use of proper greetings and titles, email signatures at the end of an email, respectful and professional communication, and proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

You are responsible for checking your email regularly to stay abreast of important messages and notification. Failure to read official Program and/or official University communications sent to students' official email addresses does not absolve you from knowing and complying with the content of the official communications. You are responsible to check your email boxes at regular intervals to avoid missing emails from the Program faculty or staff. **You are expected to respond to emails from faculty and/or staff within 24 hours Monday-Friday.**

Faculty Advisors

You will be advised by faculty associated with the PA Studies Program. You must meet with your faculty advisor at least one time per semester to review your progress and advise them on your progress during the didactic year. During the clinical year you will be required to check in with the Program at the beginning of each clinical rotation. The faculty will schedule specific periods within the semester for these meetings and it is your obligation to arrange this appointment.

You are encouraged to meet with your advisor more frequently if you feel you are struggling academically. It is desirable to identify problems at an early stage and bring these to the attention of an advisor, so that support and resource options can be suggested and implemented. The Academic Success Center, senior student tutoring, and faculty assistance are available to help you if you are experiencing difficulty. It is your responsibility to request help and utilize provided resources.

Self-Care and Wellness

The PA educational process can be highly demanding and stressful. The Program encourages you to maintain outside activities such as hobbies, exercise, spiritual endeavors, and meditation as methods for stress reduction and advises not to isolate yourself, as outside support systems are crucial to a healthy, balanced life.

However, many PA students have significant outside stressors such as personal or family illness, family duties, financial difficulties, etc. These stressors, along with other factors, sometimes leave people vulnerable to a variety of challenges that may impact your ability to be successful in the academic, professional and clinical expectations of the Program. Although the Program and faculty seek to

support student success, if you are experiencing such challenges, you should reach out to your faculty advisor, faculty member and/or the Associate Program Director or Program Director as soon as possible. If you do not inform the Program of such challenges and you earn an unsatisfactory or failing outcome for an assessment or evaluation, there is little that can be done. There is no extra credit or re-do options. Therefore, the importance of letting someone in the Program know if you are dealing with significant challenges will allow for the exploration of options for support and guidance both from within the Program as well as from the Student Counseling Center, Student Health Center, or outside resources (please refer to Section IV: Student Services in this handbook).

Mandatory Medical Leaves of Absences

If faculty or preceptors have concerns that a **medical health problem (both physical and mental health)** may be impairing your ability to safely and effectively learn and/or carry out their responsibilities, Thomas Jefferson University may remove you from classes or a clinical site in accordance with the Leave of Absence – Medical policy.

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/policies/graduate-policies/leave-absence-medical.html>

You may also be referred to the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) who provide support to faculty to help with students displaying concerning, disruptive or inappropriate behavior that should be addressed but does not require immediate follow-up.

Accommodations for Students

Thomas Jefferson University is committed to providing equal education opportunities to all students, including students with disabilities, in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Thomas Jefferson University will provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals with disabilities to allow equal access and full participation to all University sponsored activities and programs. For more information on disability accommodations, please visit <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/disability-accommodations.html>

Any enrolled student in the PA Program who seeks to receive accommodations must contact the **Accessibility Services** office directly <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/student-resources-services/academics-career-success/accessibility-services.html>

If you have received accommodations in the past, you must re-establish your eligibility through the Accessibility Services office in order to receive such services.

Please note: In order to ensure accommodations are in place during the didactic phase, you are encouraged to submit your formal accommodation letter to the Associate Program Director (APD) **at the start of each semester or as soon as the accommodation is granted.** Once accommodations are granted, it is the student's responsibility to contact faculty and their program regarding accommodation needs.

Testing accommodation for the clinical experience must be renewed and submitted prior to starting your first rotation. If you require medical accommodations for clinical rotations, you must receive approval and formal documentation from the student accessibility office prior to starting clinical rotations, unless the need for accommodations is not realized until after the start of clinical rotations.

Accommodations cannot be granted without formal documentation from the Accessibility Services Office.

It is your responsibility to follow all policies and procedures in order to receive accommodations including providing the Program with a formal letter from the Accessibility office prior to the start of each semester or as soon as the accommodation is granted.

Student Grievances

All members of the Thomas Jefferson University Community have the right to express concerns when they perceive that they have been treated in a manner not consistent with the standards of conduct at the University. The student grievance procedure is intended to allow students this mode of expression. However, the student grievance procedure is not intended for grade appeals or dismissal due to unsafe clinical practice. Please see the policy for grade appeals protocol on page 25.

For grievances, you should refer to the Student Grievance Procedure outlined in the JCHP Student Handbook at <https://www.jefferson.edu/academics/colleges-schools-institutes/health-professions/student-resources.html>

For grievances external to the academic Program, students should consult the Grievance Procedure outlined in the Rights and Responsibilities section of the TJU University Handbook or via the East Falls TJU webpage.

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/grievance-procedure.html>

Grade Appeal Protocol

If a student believes the final course grade is inaccurate, they should first speak to the course director. For students wishing to appeal a final grade in a course, please refer to the Grade Appeal Protocol in the TJU Student Handbook at <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/policies/graduate-policies/grade-appeal-protocol.html>

Final Grade appeals must occur within 10 business days after the deadline date for grade submittal per the Academic Calendar.

Harassment Policies, Title IX and Sexual Misconduct

Thomas Jefferson University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex, including, but not limited to, sex-based disparate treatment, sexual misconduct and sexual harassment. Instances of Sexual Misconduct include, but are not necessarily limited to, sexual

harassment, unwanted sexual acts which are committed by coercion, force, intimidation, manipulation or otherwise without consent.

For more information, please go to:

- <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/student-resources-services/academics-career-success/title-ix-sexual-misconduct.html>

For more information on how to report please go to: <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/student-resources-services/academics-career-success/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/reporting-and-confidentiality.html>

SECTION III A: Specific Program Policies

Academic Progression

Progression and Completion Requirements

You must complete and pass all didactic semester courses to progress to the next semester of the Program.

To progress into the clinical year's experiential phase (rotations), you must have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater and pass the Didactic Summative Exam

You must have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater at the end of the Program to be eligible to graduate.

GPA Determination

Given the nature of the curriculum, the PA program has defined checkpoints when the GPA requirement (semester *and* cumulative) of 3.0 or greater must be met. Please note that only PA program curriculum courses are factored into this calculation. Regardless of whether you are a TJU 3+2, Stockton Track-up, or entering graduate student, GPA determination is made as follows:

At the end of the fall semester (which includes only summer and fall semester PA courses)

At the end of the didactic spring semester

At the end of the summer semester (didactic course work + Transitions to Clinical Practice course)

Program Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Numeric Value	Quality Points	Letter Grade	Numeric Value	Quality Points
A	93-100	4.0	C+	77-79.99	2.3
A-	90-92.99	3.7	C	73-76.99	2.0
B+	87-89.99	3.3	C-	70-72.99	1.7
B	83-86.99	3.0	D	60-69.99	1.0
B-	80-82.99	2.7	F	Below 60	0.0
			WF		0.0

Program grades are carried out to the hundredth decimal place.

Please Note: While a grade of C- or better is considered a passing grade in the PA curriculum, grades earned below a B (B-, C+, C, C-) will make it more difficult to remain in good academic standing and achieve the minimum required 3.0 semester and cumulative GPAs to progress in the curriculum and meet graduation eligibility requirements. Therefore, you should consult with your academic advisor regarding academic progress. Any grade below a C- is considered a course failure.

Methods of Evaluation

The Program utilizes various formative and summative evaluation methods to assess your academic and professional progress. The methods of evaluation for each course are described in the course syllabus.

In addition to course-level evaluations, the Program uses program-level evaluations to include an End-of-Didactic Year (EODY) exam and Summative Testing. The EODY exam will be a 150-question exam that will evaluate your knowledge gained over the course of didactic year from all courses in which you have been enrolled. You must pass the EODY exam in order to matriculate into the clinical phase of the program. If you fail the exam on the first attempt, you will be given the opportunity to remediate the exam one time. If you fail the exam a second time, you will be required to enter into a remediation program, which will delay both the start of your clinical rotations and completion of the program. You will have one additional attempt to pass the EODY exam at the end of the remediation period. If failure occurs a third time, the student will be dismissed from the program.

The summative testing will evaluate your medical knowledge, interpersonal communication, clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving, and professionalism. At a minimum, the summative testing at the end of the program will include an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), clinical skills testing, your Capstone experience, and a written test. Summative testing occurs within four months prior to graduation. You must pass all components of the summative testing to graduate from the Program. More information regarding remediation of Summative Testing components will be provided during your clinical year.

You cannot be evaluated for standardized testing activities (OSCEs, simulation) or performance-assessments by a family member or someone with whom you have or have had a relationship.

Program Progress and Good Standing

Successful academic and professional progress must be evident and maintained in the Program to progress through the curriculum. Professionalism is as important as and holds equal importance to academic progress. You are expected to demonstrate the legal, moral, and ethical standards required of a health care professional and display behavior that is consistent with these qualities. These behaviors include but are not limited to effective communication, demeanor, attitude, appearance, mannerisms, and integrity displayed to faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, patients, colleagues in health care and other educational settings, and the public. The Program expects nothing short of respect and a professional demeanor at all times.

Your academic records and professional behaviors are monitored and reviewed throughout the Program and at the end of each semester, including the summer sessions, to evaluate academic standing and satisfactory progress in the Program.

In general, successful academic and professional performance, successful progress, and good standing in the Program are demonstrated by:

- Maintaining a semester AND cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher
- Completing and passing all courses/rotations with a B or greater
- Complying with all University, College, and Program policies and procedures, including but not limited to those in this manual, the PA Clinical Education handbook, the University Community Standards, and the Standards of Conduct.
- Consistently demonstrating appropriate and expected professional, ethical, emotional, mental behaviors and conduct

Probation

You will be placed on probation status upon a determination of unsatisfactory academic or professional performance. It serves as a warning and provides an opportunity to improve. Probation defines a period during which you must work to return to good academic or professional standing as defined by the Program. Additionally, you should be aware that probation may impact financial aid or scholarship status. You should consult with the University Office of Financial Aid. (Please refer to Section IV: Student Services in this manual).

If you are placed on probation, you must return to good standing by the end of the next semester, GPA checkpoint, or time frame as defined by the probationary period. In extraordinary circumstances where the student has made significant progress toward achieving good standing, the Program Director, in consultation with the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee, may grant one additional probationary period. If, at the conclusion of that extended period, the student has failed to meet the requirements for good academic standing, the student will be dismissed.

***A student may not be on probation for two consecutive semesters, except in extenuating circumstances determined by the Program Director and the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee and may not be on probation more than two times during the entire Program.**

Didactic Year:

Conditions that will result in probation include but are not limited to:

- Failure to achieve or maintain a semester and/or cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater by the designated GPA checkpoints will automatically be placed on probation

Conditions that may result in probation include but are not limited to:

- Professional or behavioral misconduct or academic dishonesty

If you fail to attain a semester GPA of 3.0 or greater *for the first time* at the end of the entire summer semester (Summer 1 & 2 sessions) but retain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater you will be permitted to enter the experiential phase (rotations) of the clinical year on probation.

Clinical Year

Conditions that *will result* in probation include but are not limited to:

- Earning a grade of less than C- on one clinical course
- Failure of 3 end of rotation (EOR) exams on the first attempt

Please note: If you are placed on probation during the clinical year for failure of one rotation, you will remain on probation for the remainder of the clinical year until the failed rotation is successfully repeated and passed.

Although you are granted the opportunity to repeat one failed clinical rotation, the second failure of a clinical course will result in dismissal.

Conditions that *may result* in probation include but are not limited to:

- Failure to meet clinical year requirements and expectations as defined in the PA Clinical Education Handbook
- Professional or behavioral misconduct or academic dishonesty

Return to Good Academic Standing

Didactic Year

If you are on probation at the end of the summer/fall or at the end of the spring semester, you must attain a semester and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater by the end of the following semester or GPA checkpoint to return to good standing.

If a student fails to return to good standing, the student will be immediately dismissed from the Program.

Clinical Year

If you *enter* the experiential component (rotations) of the clinical phase on probation, you must return to good academic standing by the end of the fall semester GPA checkpoint by attaining a semester and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater.

If a student fails to return to good standing, the student will be immediately dismissed from the Program.

If you are placed on probation during the clinical year for earning a grade of less than a C- on one rotation course, you will remain on probation for the remainder of the clinical year until the rotation course is repeated and passed.

If you have one rotation course failure, **you must pass all subsequent rotations with a B or better.** Earning a grade of less than B on any subsequent rotation will result in referral to APSRC and may result in dismissal from the Program.

Return to Good Professional Standing

If you have been placed on probation for non-academic and/or professional issues, you must correct the identified issues by the end of the following semester or by the time specified in your probation letter.

Failure to correct the non-academic or professional issue within the stated time frame will result in referral to the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee and may result in dismissal.

Implications of Probation Status and Credentialing

Many accrediting and credentialing bodies require notification that a student was placed on probation. By requesting that the Program complete the appropriate paperwork, a student affirmatively consents to release such information. This means that if accrediting or credentialing bodies require verification from the university, instances of academic and/or professionalism probations will be reported. This may or may not affect your license acquisition, job placement, or ability to gain credentialing for a particular institution.

Dismissal

The Program reserves the ability to dismiss or recommend dismissal of any student at any time before graduation if circumstances of legal, moral, behavioral, ethical, patient safety concerns, health, or academic nature justify such an action. You may be dismissed from the Program without first having been placed on probation. Disregarding your obligation of professional conduct may constitute the sole reason for dismissal from the Program through the Community Standards procedure.

Conditions that will result in immediate dismissal include but are not limited to:

- Receiving a grade of below C- in any didactic course
- Failure to earn a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater for any two terms. *These terms do not have to be sequential*
- Failure to return good standing at the end of the probationary period (you cannot be on probationary status for two consecutive semesters)
- Failure of a clinical course with a grade of less than C- for the second time
- Failure of a repeated didactic course (in cases of re-admission)
- Failure to complete or successfully meet all components of a remediation plan
- Failure of 4 or more EOR examinations on the first attempt

Conditions that can result in dismissal include but are not limited to:

- Professional or behavioral misconduct or academic dishonesty
- Any situation in which your performance or unprofessional behavior would warrant probation for the third time
- Earning a grade of less than B on any remaining rotations after you have failed one rotation course.

Please note: The policies and procedures during the clinical phase vary somewhat from those of the didactic phase.

Implications of Dismissal:

If you are in the TJU 5-Year Combined BS/MS Studies Program and are dismissed during the 1st Fall semester, you may complete the BS in Health Sciences requirements by completing at least 121 credits of the curriculum. However, you will NOT complete the MS in Physician Assistant Studies Program and are NOT eligible to sit for the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination for Physician Assistant licensure.

If you entered the MS in Physician Assistant Studies Program at the graduate level and are dismissed from the Program, you are also dismissed from the College of Health Professions and are ineligible to sit for the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination for PA certification/licensure.

Clinical Probation and Dismissal

Because patient/client well-being is a significant concern of the Program and University, it is necessary that certain actions be taken when a student's clinical practice poses a potential threat to patient health, welfare or safety. Therefore, you are subject to the College and Program's specific regulations governing clinical practice and may be placed on probation and/or recommended for dismissal for unsafe clinical behavior. The specific regulations are contained in the Physician Assistant Clinical Education Handbook and will be distributed to students prior to the clinical phase of the program. Should you wish to appeal a decision of clinical dismissal for unsafe clinical performance you may do so by following the provisions of the Grade Appeal Protocol and/or the Community Standards Committee. (Please see appropriate sections of this manual for more information).

Readmission after Dismissal

Petition for readmission must be initiated within one year of dismissal.

A student may petition for readmission after being academically dismissed from the Program when they can demonstrate extenuating circumstances that directly resulted in their inability to be academically successful.

To initiate the readmission process, you must notify the Program Director via email of your interest to reapply. You will be provided with a Re-Admission Petition Form that must be completed and submitted by the assigned deadline provided on the form. The completed Re-Admission Petition Form and supporting evidence will be reviewed by the HSCP Department Chair and two other leaders from the department/JCHP (not to include a representative from the originating program). They will determine whether the petitioning student has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate extenuating circumstances existed that directly resulted in their inability to be academically successful. This decision is final.

If it is determined that extenuating circumstances existed, the completed Re-Admission Petition Form and supporting evidence will be forwarded to the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee (APSRC) who will review and evaluate this and other pertinent information and academic records to make a recommendation of acceptance or denial for readmission. You may be required to meet with the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee before a recommendation is made.

In the case of readmission, the Program will determine any and all requirements you must meet upon readmission. You will be held responsible for fulfilling these criteria of academic performance established with the Program, in addition to the overall program and College requirements for achieving good academic standing.

All readmitted students are subject to the academic and curricular requirements in place at the time of readmission. Additionally, the Program will determine start terms for the readmitted students based on the student's plan of study; readmitted students cannot assume that they will start in the next immediate term after readmission has been granted.

Students who have not been enrolled within JCHP for more than one year must re-apply for admission through the Office of Admissions and CASPA. Students re-admitted for the failure of a didactic course must pass the course on the second attempt. Failure to do so will result in dismissal.

Please note:

This policy does not apply to students dismissed for professional reasons.

Academic Difficulty or Deficiency

The course directors and faculty regularly review academic performance. Academic difficulty is a real or perceived challenge in learning the course material or tasks or diminished (not failing) examination performance. Academic deficiency is defined by clear evidence of failure to meet the academic rigor and/or requirements in any Program courses or required components. When identified, a meeting will be arranged with the appropriate course director, faculty members, faculty advisor, Academic Coordinator, Lead Clinical Coordinator, the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee (APSRC) and/or other University student support individuals. You may be referred to additional University learning support services. The purpose of the meeting and/or the referral to additional University learning support services is to assist you with addressing and

remediating any academic challenges or deficiencies, so you are able to meet the academic rigor and/or requirements in any of the Program courses or required components.

As a graduate medical education program, there is no extra credit, re-do on exams or adjusting of points or grades.

SECTION III B: Specific Program Policies - Standards of Conduct

Standards of Conduct

Standards of conduct define the principles, rules, policies, and guidance of the expected behaviors. Sometimes referred to but not limited to professional progress or professionalism, standards of conduct include appropriate actions, responses and/or behaviors expected of a PA student and future PA. The program considers these standards as important as academic progress and any instance that demonstrates a violation of these standards (unprofessional and/or inappropriate behavior) will be addressed accordingly.

Success in the PA profession requires certain behavioral attributes including but not limited to:

- Empathy - a feeling of awareness toward other people's emotions and an attempt to understand how they feel
- Compassion - an emotional response to empathy or sympathy resulting in a desire to help.
- Discipline – knowledge of and compliance with expected responsibilities, roles, and behaviors
- Motivation – ability to generate and maintain a willingness to engage and learn
- Honesty – being truthful
- Integrity – consistently behaving with authenticity
- Humility – is the ability to recognize your shortcomings, appreciate others strengths, giving credit where due, highlighting team success and showing openness to learn from others
- Mindfulness – the quality or state of being aware and fully present in the moment
- Respect – appreciation for others feelings, wishes, rights and traditions
- The ability to work collaboratively with others in a team environment
- The ability to address a crisis or emergency situation in a composed manner.

During your PA training, you will be in a close working environment with other students which includes performing physical examination of fellow students and discussion groups that may reveal personal information. These situations must be approached with respect for the privacy, mindfulness, confidentiality for you and your fellow students. There are sensitive topics and procedures that will be discussed within the PA curriculum. These topics and procedures may be in direct conflict with your personal and/or religious views. As a health care provider, you must have a sensitivity, awareness, and respect for *all* viewpoints and opinions, even those with which you may

not agree. While you may not be asked to perform such procedures in a rotation setting, educating yourself on such procedures is important to the care and well-being of your patients. You are expected to respect the views and opinions of all and attend all lectures, regardless of the content with which you may not agree.

Attributes and Expected Conduct and Behavior

As a PA student and future PA, you will be held to higher moral, ethical, personal, legal, and professional behavior standards than others. This obligation is because of your choice to become a healthcare provider, one who cares for others when they are most vulnerable. Therefore, you must exhibit a high level of maturity and self-control even in stressful situations. In keeping with these precepts, you must conduct yourself in a manner consistent with the responsibilities you will be entrusted with during your training in the Program, with the precepts of humanistic care, and in your work as a PA. You must consistently demonstrate and adhere to the conduct and behaviors listed below. You are also required to adhere to the University Community Standards found in the University Student Handbook: <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/community-standards.html>

Failure to act in accordance with these behavioral standards may result in consequences that can include a review by the Program's Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee, disciplinary action, probation, referral to the University Community Standards process and/or dismissal from the Program.

As a PA student in this program, you will consistently demonstrate the following:

Mindfulness:

1. Intentionally focusing your awareness and attention on what is happening in the present moment.
2. Being non-judgmental, curious, and kind toward yourself and others.
3. Being compassionate and humble.

Respect:

1. Treating all patients, faculty, university staff, clinical preceptors and staff, health care workers, and fellow students with dignity and respect.
2. Resolving conflicts in a diplomatic, reasoned manner.
3. Demonstrating emotional stability and maturity as evidenced by patience, empathy and compassion and refraining from displays of anger, which include demeaning, offensive, argumentative, threatening language/behavior, or language that is insensitive to race, gender/gender identity, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation, and disruptive or obstructive behavior at the university or at clinical sites.
4. Accepting and acknowledging diverse views and experiences of, students, faculty, staff, preceptors, and patients.
5. Working collaboratively, despite differences of thoughts, beliefs or opinions.

6. Offering constructive criticism or suggestions in a thoughtful and reasoned manner that fosters respect and trust.
7. Appropriately tending to and balancing my own health and well-being with the expectations and obligations of my role as PA student to ensure I am mentally, physically and emotionally sound for class and clinical practice.
8. Being appropriately responsive to lawful requests from my instructors, preceptors, and clinical sites.

Integrity and Trust:

1. Being honest and truthful at all times, in all interactions. This includes academic integrity and intellectual honesty.
2. Reporting any illegal or unethical activity to the Program and/or preceptor.
3. Maintaining **confidentiality** of patients, fellow students, faculty, and staff consistent with ethical and legal guidelines within the program, the University, and expected medical and PA practice.
4. Following all policies outlined in this manual as well as the University Student Handbook, including those pertaining to academic honesty.
5. Always identifying myself as a "PA student" to patients and clinical site staff to ensure no confusion with physicians, residents, medical students, or certified physician assistants. While in the program, previously earned titles (i.e., RN, MD, DC, Ph.D., Dr., etc.) will not be used for identification purposes.
6. Exhibiting behaviors that engender trust, caring, and ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals, including faculty, staff, fellow students, patients, preceptors, clinical staff, and myself.
7. Being fully physically and mentally present without impairment or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any other substance at the university or clinical sites.
8. Being reliable and dependable by such actions as keeping my word, following through, admitting fault and taking responsibility for my actions without making excuses.
9. Being focused and disciplined by making appropriate choices that support my effort and desire to become a PA.
10. Consistently displaying the highest ethical standards commensurate with what is expected of a PA. These are outlined in the *Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession* published by the American Academy of Physician Assistants (see Appendix A).

Appropriate Communication:

1. Using inclusive, appropriate, professional, and sensitive communication in all encounters including written, oral, and non-verbal, in person, video, voice mail and e-mail.
2. Using effective, respectful communication skills at all times to include active listening without unnecessary interruptions and avoid using insulting, derogatory or insensitive language
3. Using appropriate e-mail and voice-mail message etiquette in communication with faculty, staff, preceptors, clinical sites, fellow students, and University personnel.

Timeliness and Tardiness:

1. Consistently showing up early and prepared for classes, educational activities, labs, meetings, and clinical site placements.
2. Effectively communicating in a timely manner with the appropriate program faculty and/or clinical site personnel when you will be late or absent. This includes verbally or in written form.
3. Consistently submitting required assignments, documents, forms, reports, etc., when due.
4. Abiding by the PA Program Absence and Attendance Policies during the entire course of the Program.

Flexibility and Adaptability:

1. Being receptive and adjustable to unexpected changes in the program, curriculum schedules, clinical sites and expectations as education is a fluid and dynamic process. Due to the use of a variety of teaching and content delivery methods including synchronous (live) and asynchronous formats as well as simulcasting involving instruction from practicing clinicians with unpredictable schedules lectures times and locations may need to be adjusted with short notice. Professional responses to sudden changes include patience, understanding and acceptance, despite personal disappointment or inconvenience.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity and intellectual honesty are among the most critical attributes in higher education and as a healthcare provider. As a student in the PA program, it is your responsibility to understand and uphold academic integrity, which includes refraining from and reporting any illegal, unethical academic activities. As a future PA, it is important to learn the knowledge and skills needed to safely administer to patients with honesty and integrity. This includes putting in the effort and work to learn through self-discipline, self-motivation and trustworthiness in your performance and demonstration of your acquisition of knowledge and clinical ability throughout the program.

Violations of Academic Integrity

As a student at Thomas Jefferson University, and part of the Jefferson College of Health Professions and as a future healthcare provider within our PA profession, you are expected to maintain the highest level of academic integrity at all times. Violations will be addressed accordingly.

Violations of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized use- any use or attempted use of external assistance in the completion of an assignment and/or during an examination. This can include but not limited to:
 - unapproved or covert collaboration on a project, homework or other assignment.
 - unauthorized use of notes or digital devices
 - use of sources or another's work without consent
 - sharing unauthorized information or material
 - using unauthorized tools, digital devices or access to unauthorized resources including artificial intelligence (see below)

- Cheating
 - communicating during a test
 - copying from another student
 - intentionally allowing another to copy one's work during assessments
 - memorizing questions and writing them down after the examination
 - removal of examination material from the testing site or discussion of examination questions with others
 - using unauthorized tools, digital devices or access to unauthorized resources including artificial intelligence (see below)
- Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas (words, images or materials) as your own, either verbatim, paraphrased or rewritten in your own words and failure to appropriately cite the resources. This includes in draft submissions.
 - Acquisition of term papers or other assignments from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student's own work.
- Fabrication/falsification - invention or alteration of information, which is wholly or partially false or misleading, including the fabrication of material for class projects, assignments including clinical data, patient logging information (clinical year), or changing patient records after the records have been reviewed and/or submitted.
- Identity Misrepresentation – Using another person's name or identity in-person, online, in signature or misrepresenting yourself as a clinician

Artificial Intelligence:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is an umbrella term for any theory, computer system, or software that is developed to allow machines to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence (e.g. a personal assistant on a smart device such as Alexa, Siri, Hey Google, etc.). Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) is a type of AI system capable of generating text, images, or other media in response to prompts (e.g. ChatGPT, Copilot, DALL-E, etc.).

Unless otherwise specified by a Course Coordinator or faculty member, the use of GAI tools is permitted in this Program for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Finding information on your topic
- Checking grammar and style (e.g. Grammarly, Packback)

The use of GAI tools is not permitted in this Program for the following activities:

- Responding to a discussion prompt (initial post) or responding to a classmate's post (response post) in a graded discussion forum.
- Answering questions on quizzes, tests, or exams.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete course assignments.

Responsible and ethical use of GAI:

- Keep in mind that your use of GAI tools may hinder your own critical thinking and creative thinking skills.
- You are responsible for the information you use based on a GAI query and that information might be inaccurate, outdated, or proprietary.
- Your use of GAI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to comply with the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- Any discussion post, assignment, quiz, test, or exam that is found to have used GAI tools in unauthorized ways will be considered a violation of the University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#). When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask your instructor for guidance.

This is not an exhaustive list. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. For more information, please familiarize yourself with the Jefferson Graduate policies on Academic Integrity at <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/policies/graduate-policies/academic-integrity.html> and those of the Jefferson College of Health Professions at <https://www.jefferson.edu/academics/colleges-schools-institutes/health-professions/student-resources.html>

Possible Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

Sanctions administered within the college will be appropriate to the violation and are within the purview of the faculty, up to removal from the program or College. Any recommendation or request for separation from the program, College or University, must go through the Community Standards process for a final determination to be made through the Community Standards Board hearing process.

Examples of possible consequences administered by the program, within the College, or through the Community Standards process can include, but is not limited to:

- Students may be required to repeat the original assignment with possible point deduction
- Assignment of a grade of "F" for the assignment and/or course
- Notation on student's transcript and program record
- Professionalism probation
- Dismissal from the PA Program
- Suspension or removal from the College and/or University

Standards of Conduct Violations

You are expected to consistently demonstrate and display appropriate and professional standards of conduct throughout your time in the program. Any instance that demonstrates a violation of these standards, such as unprofessional and/or inappropriate behavior, will be addressed and may include formal documentation of the violation as defined below.

First Incident: The Program will document the incident in writing and you will meet with the appropriate faculty, staff, or other Program member who documented, observed, or received a report of the behavior. This documentation will go into your program advising notes.

Second Incident: The Program will document the incident in writing and you will meet with the appropriate faculty, staff, or other Program member who documented, observed, or received a report of the behavior. At the discretion of the Program, you may be referred to the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee and corrective or disciplinary action may be taken. This documentation will go into your program advising notes.

Third Incident or Any incident Deemed Extraordinarily Concerning: You will be automatically referred to the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee and/or the Department Chair. The Committee or Department Chair will determine a course of action for the behavior that can include but is not limited to corrective or disciplinary action, probation, and dismissal. This incident will be documented and may be reportable to credentialing and licensing bodies.

If you have either three or more incidents of conduct violations or any one incident deemed extraordinarily concerning, the incident maybe reportable to credentialing and licensing bodies.

Community Standards

All students enrolled at Thomas Jefferson University are required to follow a code of behavior consistent with the high standards and reputation of the university. Standards of professional behavior include honesty, integrity, civility and, where possible, assistance to one's colleagues with problems or in distress. For more information, please go to: <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/community-standards.html>

Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee (APSRC)

The PA Studies Program Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee (APSRC) is made up of faculty members from the PA Studies Program and Jefferson College of Health Professions, and may include representatives from other university departments. The committee may be convened by the APSRC chair(s) to review academic or professional issues that may include, but are not limited to, failure to progress or conduct issues.

The APSRC intervenes when issues are identified that may affect a student's ability to make satisfactory academic or professional progress. Referrals to this Committee can be for academic, disciplinary, and/or behavioral or professional conduct violation reasons. After prior discussion with the Dean's Office, this committee may also refer students to the University Community Standards process, which may result in suspension and/or dismissal from the university.

The committee may review and discuss the student's records and performance with appropriate faculty members, preceptors and/or University support services. The committee will render recommendations based on an individual basis after considering all pertinent information and circumstances in each case.

Students who are referred to the APSRC will be notified in writing as to the date, time, and purpose of the APSRC meeting. The student will be offered the opportunity to attend the committee

meeting, and provide a written statement when appropriate, to address the concerns brought to the committee regarding their academic performance and/or professional behavior.

Following the meeting, the APSRC will make a recommendation and forward it to the Program Director. In the case of dismissal, the student will meet with the program director and receive written notification within 10 days of the decision, unless otherwise specified. Decisions made by the APSRC will be determined on an individual basis, in accordance with program policy after considering all pertinent information and circumstances in each case.

Remediation

The APSRC may recommend remediation, a formal program-defined requirement to address academic deficiencies or professional misconduct. Students placed on a remediation plan must sign the plan and agree to comply with all its requirements as a condition for continuation in the Program.

SECTION III C: Specific Program Policies - Student Guidelines

Dress Code

As health professionals, PA students are expected to maintain the highest possible standard of appearance. You are expected to be professionally and neatly dressed and groomed throughout all phases of your professional education.

Hygiene: You must maintain personal hygiene and be free of offensive odor.

Personal Items: You may not display items with profane or vulgar text or images in the classroom or in clinical settings.

Dress code for the Program is defined as business casual (a more relaxed style of traditional business wear that is appropriate for a professional environment). Examples of business casual attire are: collared and/or button-down shirts, sweaters, blouses, non-denim pants/slacks, knee-length or longer skirts and dresses, blazers, cardigans, loafers, boots, pumps, or flats.

Gum-chewing or use of tobacco products will not be allowed during any educational events or activity including but not limited to classes, labs, small group seminars, program or class meetings, or during any aspect of the clinical year.

During the **didactic phase** of the Program, you shall dress in the following manner for all classes, labs, assessments, and Program obligations unless otherwise specified:

Clothing	▪ Your clothing must be clean, without stains, tears or rips and free of wrinkles ▪ Your clothing should fit appropriately without being too tight or revealing, see-through, excessively short, backless, or low cut (this includes shirts, skirts, dresses, or pants) ▪ Your clothing should be free from images or words that can be perceived as offensive due to being profane, vulgar, insensitive, derogatory or discriminative. Clothing should not have any alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drug references on it. ▪ Shoes must be close-toed. Open-toed shoes or flip flops are not permitted (including on dress-down days). ▪ You may NOT wear the following: ○ Shorts ○ Crop or halter type tops, tank tops ○ Leggings
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	○ Sweat pants, running, or work out clothing ○ Jeans ○ Sweatshirts or T-shirts ○ Hats ○ Well-worn athletic sneakers
Jewelry	Jewelry should not be distracting in size or number and should not be offensive.
Nails*	Fingernails should be kept trimmed to a short length in order to be able to perform physical exams
Tattoos	Tattoos with images considered offensive or vulgar must be covered at all times.
Hair*	Hair, including facial hair, should be kept neat and clean.
Perfume	No excessive or heavy perfumes or aftershaves/colognes.

***When students are in the clinical setting they shall abide by the clinical phase dress code. This includes guidelines regarding nails and facial hair.**

For virtual meetings and synchronous instruction, students are to follow the same didactic dress code as outlined above.

Attendance

Attendance and punctuality reflect your professionalism, responsibility, and individual dependability. Therefore, attendance for all lectures, labs, required course components, and exams is **mandatory**. Arriving late is disruptive to the instructor and your classmates. **You must arrive at least 5 minutes before the start of class** for all scheduled classes, labs, seminars, meetings, events, etc., in order to be in your seat and prepared to start before the session begins. If you need to leave campus while class is in session for an emergency, you must notify a faculty member and email PAEFNJabsentee@jefferson.edu prior to leaving. This policy applies to both in-person and virtual attendance.

Other than posted holidays, semester breaks, personal days, and open time as noted on the program calendar, students should expect to be present on campus from 8:00am to 5:00pm EST, Monday through Friday. There **will be** limited evening expectations, and you will be notified well in advance when required.

You are expected to arrange personal activities around the didactic year schedule. This includes (but is not limited to) travel, routine medical appointments, routine family obligations, social obligations, and business appointments. The program intentionally builds in lighter days throughout the year so that you are not in class or lab for the entire day and can schedule necessary appointments. In such cases when timely medical access is not possible due to severity, access, or after-hours availability, please email PAEFNJabsentee@jefferson.edu to be excused from class.

The student schedule, which should be reviewed daily, as it is subject to change, is posted prior to the start of each semester. If time-off is not indicated in the calendar schedule, students are expected to be on-campus for program required classes and activities. Given the amount of semester breaks, holidays, personal days, and scheduled time-off, additional absences may have significant adverse effects on a student's learning and subsequent mastery of material.

All instructional sessions will be scheduled in Eastern Standard Time (EST), including lectures, virtual lectures, labs, small group discussions, meetings, and examinations.

The Program appreciates that, infrequently, an unexpected or emergent event may occur that will prevent you from attending classes and activities, such as a personal illness or injury. In such situations during the didactic year, you must **send an email to PAEFNJAbsentee@jefferson.edu prior to the start of class/lab/other program obligation. During the clinical year, you must notify a clinical coordinator and the preceptor for the clinical day you will miss prior to the start of the clinic shift***. This is true of any additional consecutive days of absence. The course coordinator(s) or clinical coordinator will determine if the student is to be granted an excused absence. Please note, you are expected to make every effort to make it to class as soon as possible in the event of unforeseen circumstances, including reaching out for a ride if your car breaks down or you get a flat tire. Failure to notify faculty prior to an absence (no-call, no show), lateness, or leaving class early is considered unprofessional conduct and may result in a professionalism incident.

**Note:* Additional information will be provided once you enter the clinical phase of the program regarding absence policies.

Pre-Scheduled Events and Religious Observances

The Program also understands you may have **exceptional** pre-scheduled events that might keep you from class or program activities. If you seek absences for such events, you must submit a [Time Off Request Form](#) **no later than Friday 5 PM of the first week of the semester**. You will find this form on Canvas. It is to be submitted to the Associate Program Director (APD) during the didactic phase and the Clinical Coordinators during the clinical phase. The APD or clinical coordinator(s) will determine if you will be granted an excused absence. You are responsible for the material covered in any classes and may be required to make up the missed time from clinical for which you were absent.

Failure to notify the appropriate program faculty member in advance will be considered unprofessional conduct, which can result in an incident report and/or disciplinary action.

Religious Observance

Students who wish to request an absence for religious observance or holidays must communicate such wishes to the Program using the **Time Off Request Form on Canvas**. You must submit this form **no later than Friday 5 PM of the first week of the didactic semester and before the start of the clinical year**.

Please note: Students will not be excused from class or clinical sites for days that are intended for travel for religious observance.

The above is consistent with Jefferson University policy which can be found at

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/policies/graduate-policies/student-religious-observance-policy.html>

**Note:* There will be additional attendance and absence policies and requirements during the clinical phase. These will be found in the Clinical Education Handbook given to students at the start of the clinical year.

Personal Days

We recognize the incredible time commitment in the didactic phase of the program and understand that many students will greatly benefit from a day off without risking academic success. The PA Program allows one personal day per semester for didactic students. You must email a request to PAEFNJabsentee@jefferson.edu at least 24 hours in advance of your personal day. **A maximum of 5 students per campus, per day, are permitted to take a personal day.** *Your personal day request is not approved until you receive email confirmation.* The days are first-come, first-serve and if the maximum number of students has been reached, additional requests will be denied. The following guidelines also apply to personal days:

- A maximum of one personal day per semester is permitted and can only be taken in the didactic phase (Fall, Spring, Summer).
- Partial personal days (e.g. missing one course) count as full personal days.
- Students are fully responsible for any materials presented on missed days.
- A personal day cannot be taken on the day of:
 - any written, practical or lab examinations.
 - lab activities in Patient Care and Clinical Reasoning.
 - any group assignment activities in any course.
- A personal day cannot be taken on the day before an exam (including Friday before a Monday exam).
- A personal day cannot be taken during Orientation
- A personal day cannot be taken in succession with University breaks, University or Program holidays, or requested excused absences.
- The Program reserves the right to deny personal days for students taking two or more absences during one or more semesters.
- Violation of any of the above policies will result in an unexcused absence and enforcement of professionalism violations as outlined in this Manual.
- The program reserves the right to place a moratorium on all personal days for all students for any reason.

Bereavement

A student may miss three (3) days for the death of an immediate family member. Members of the immediate family shall be defined as father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, husband, wife, domestic partner, grandparent, or parent-in-law. Students will be asked to present documentation (i.e., a prayer/mass card, obituary, or the name and funeral home of the deceased) to the Associate program Director or Academic Coordinator to support the request to be absent.

University Holidays/Breaks

Students may not be absent or request to be absent on the day before or after scheduled University holidays or scheduled breaks (i.e., Thanksgiving, winter, spring recesses). Failure to attend all classes on the day before or after a scheduled University holiday or break may result in an unexcused absence, referral to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee, documentation of a professional incident, and may result in disciplinary action.

In case of Illness

As future health care providers, decisions about reporting to work or the campus when you do not feel well need to take into consideration the health and safety of those around you. **If you do not feel well, your priority is taking care of your health.** Trying to learn or work when you do not feel well compromises your effectiveness and places you and everyone around you at risk. Therefore, we ask you refrain from coming to class, virtual class, or reporting to a clinical site when you are ill. For any missed classes you are responsible for obtaining the missed material by contacting other students and/or referring to Canvas.

A pattern of repeated absences and illnesses will warrant a discussion with your advisor or Program leadership to discuss implications of missed class time, professionalism, and support for the student.

If you are ill and out from class for at least 3 days, you should seek medical attention from student health, your health care provider or, as needed, an urgent care/ER and must provide documentation to the Associate Program Director that you are cleared to return to class or clinical rotations.

If you are off campus or are home for an extended period of time due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, please contact the APD or Lead Clinical Coordinator to discuss options for missed class material or clinical site time.

If you are ill for a scheduled exam, group project, or lab:

If you are unable to report for a scheduled exam or lab due to illness or other extenuating circumstance, you must notify the course coordinator **prior to** the test/lab. The course coordinator will determine whether you will be granted an opportunity to take the test or make up the lab at a later time. Failure to notify the appropriate faculty or program member of an absence **prior to** the exam/lab may result in a grade of zero for that examination and no opportunity for a make-up. Labs will be made up as specified by the course coordinator.

If you are granted an excused absence on an exam/lab/project day, you must contact the course coordinator within 24 hours of returning to discuss making up the exam. Exams must be made up at the first available time after an excused absence. Missing a make-up examination will result in a grade of zero for the exam.

Please Note* There will be slight variations to the student illness policy during the clinical year. Guidelines for those policies are provided in the Clinical Education Handbook. If you are in the clinical phase, please refer to that handbook.

Examination Taking Policies

ExamSoft/Examplify

The Program uses ExamSoft for computer-based testing.

<https://examsoft.com/resources/examplify-minimum-system-requirements/>

Computer-Based Testing:

You must have a laptop that is capable of maintaining a charge for at least 3 or more hours. An extra battery or power supply may be helpful. The program will provide you with a white board and marker in the beginning of the didactic year. You are responsible for bringing your whiteboard and marker if you need it for an exam, no replacement or sheet of paper will be provided for failure to bring it with you. Before and after exams, proctors will verify that the white board is erased. Any

errors or concerns identified on the exam may be reported to the Program by typing your thoughts into the notes section of that question in the examination and clicking the “request feedback” checkbox. Faculty will not discuss individual exam questions from students by e-mail or in person, but will review the feedback.

Exams will be administered through ExamSoft. Exams must be downloaded prior to the exam administration time. The password will be supplied at the specified time. Any student attempting to open the exam ahead of time, attempting to open other programs during an exam, or otherwise attempting to "hack" ExamSoft will be referred to the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee.

ExamSoft/Examplify Issues:

Most testing issues can be resolved by ensuring that the computer meets the minimum requirements of ExamSoft, specifically being less than 3 years old. Intra-exam issues can usually be resolved by closing down antivirus software, completely closing Examplify, and restarting the computer through the control panel.

For in person administration of examinations, if you are having computer issues, and a significant amount of faculty intervention/troubleshooting has not worked, you may be provided with a program laptop to take the exam or on rare occasion, you may be given a paper exam.

For virtual examinations, you will be provided the contact information for the proctor for the examination. If you experience technical difficulties, you will contact the proctor and attempt to troubleshoot the issues. This may involve contacting ExamSoft. In addition, virtual proctoring software may also be utilized to ensure academic integrity. You are expected to comply with the guidelines set forth by the proctoring personnel as well as the Program. Any violation of this will result in referral to the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee.

Exam Attendance

It is expected that you arrive at least 10 minutes before the start time for all examinations whether administered in person or virtually. If you will be late for an examination, you must promptly contact the course coordinator. When arriving late for an examination you should promptly report to the proctor. You should enter the testing room quietly and be mindful that others have already begun the exam. You WILL NOT be given additional time if you arrive late. Since the exam time is set by the exam software, the proctor will start your time once you have logged into the exam. You will be given whatever time is remaining to complete the exam regardless of what the timer within the software reads. When the time is up, you must exit the exam immediately per the proctor directions.

Exam Absence

If, due to extenuating circumstances you are unable to report for a scheduled exam, you must notify the course coordinator **prior to the test beginning**. The course coordinator will determine whether you will be granted an opportunity to take the test at a later time. Failure to notify the appropriate

faculty or program member of an absence from an exam prior to the exam may result in a grade of zero for that examination and no opportunity for a make-up.

If you are granted an excused absence on an exam day you must contact the course coordinator to discuss making up the exam. Exams must be made up at the first available time after an excused absence. Missing a make-up examination will result in a grade of zero for the exam.

Test-taking Protocol:

Prior to an exam, you must leave all materials including cell phones (turned off, not on vibrate), water bottles, food, book bags and hoodies/coats either at the front or side of the classroom before sitting in your seat for the exam. You may not wear hats during testing, or leave the room during testing, except in cases of emergency or when a request to use the restroom is granted. Should you have an extenuating circumstance that would necessitate breaking protocol, this must be discussed with and approved by the course coordinator in advance.

For examinations being administered virtually with a live proctor, you will be required to show that your work space is free of electronic devices, books, notes, water bottles, etc. An additional electronic device such as a smartphone or tablet may be needed for virtual examinations. Specific instructions regarding appropriate usage of this device will be provided by the faculty. The proctor has the right to inquiry you during the examination if any behavior seems suspicious of violating academic integrity.

You should avoid asking questions during a test, as this can be disruptive to other students; as a general rule, faculty will not answer questions during an exam, but you may request a question to be reviewed by the faculty by flagging the question in the exam using the “request feedback” function.

Release of Grades:

Test scores are released after the examination and statistics have been extensively analyzed by the faculty and scores validated. Exam grades are considered final upon release.

PA Students and Social Media

Social media and networking provide a way to increase our ability to interact with each other in positive ways. However, the ability of the internet to instantly reach millions of people, both within and outside of the medical profession makes it imperative that we take safeguards to ensure that social networking does not erode the values of the medical profession or damage the reputation of our profession, the Program or Thomas Jefferson University

It is important to keep in mind that social media postings can have implications throughout your careers as the information remains available and discoverable long after it was posted. As students preparing for a career in medicine, it is imperative to be mindful of your decision to engage, post and partake in social media.

In the use of social media, you will be held to both the Program's Standards of Conduct as well as the University's Community Standards when posting on social media to include but not limited to honesty, integrity, and civility. You must consistently demonstrate a respect of others while contributing to a constructive dialogue. Social media is not an appropriate outlet for posting patient histories, images, or stories about the PA Program. If you fail to adhere to these standards regarding social networking, you will be referred to the APSRC or the Community Standards Committee for unprofessional behavior including the potential for dismissal. For more information, please go to <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/handbooks/rights-responsibilities/social-media-policy.html>

SECTION IV: Student Services

Academic Support Services

Academic Success Center: East Falls

The Academic Success Center, East Falls Campus, is the primary resource for students on both campuses who wish to get the most from their academic experience. They offer free tutoring and advising services. The Center is located in Haggar Hall, across the parking lot from Downs Hall, on the Jefferson East Falls Campus and are available for virtual meetings.

<https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/academic-success-center.html>

Safety and Security at Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls and New Jersey Campuses

Thomas Jefferson University and the PA Studies Program are committed to the safety and security of our campus community. They can be reached at 215-951-2620, or in an emergency at 215-951-2999.

The Safety and Security Office of Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls is located on the Ravenhill campus of the Philadelphia campus. <https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/public-safety.html>

The Program uses a badge reader system that requires faculty, staff and students to swipe in with their designated key card to enter the PA learning and office spaces.

On the East Falls campus, a security officer can always be reached by dialing extension 2999 while on campus. Individuals who are locked out of vehicles or buildings can call safety and security for assistance. A 24-hour escort service is available to anyone who feels unsafe walking on campus. Safety and security personnel encourage everyone on campus to call if assistance is needed. While on main campus, you are always within site of one of more than 40 "blue light" emergency telephones which, when activated, connect you directly with a security officer.

On the New Jersey campus, students are highly encouraged to be on campus in pairs. Students are not permitted in the anatomy lab alone, and need to be in the lab in pairs. In addition, the security department at Jefferson Stratford patrols the building. They can be reached at the main desk at 856-346-6358 or on a mobile phone at 609-781-7752.

Safety Tips

"Opportunity" or "temptation" crimes may occur when property is left unattended. By taking away the opportunity, these thefts cannot be committed. With everyone's assistance, these crimes can be deterred and the campus rendered much safer. The following sensible precautions can be taken to protect property and reduce the possibility of becoming the victim of these crimes:

- If you are the victim of a crime, no matter how minor it might seem, first notify Security or police immediately, and then the Program Director
- Do not leave your personal belongings (books, purses, backpacks, gym bags, computers, coats, cell phones, etc.) unattended in the library, academic buildings, athletic facilities or classrooms;
- When your vehicle is parked, do not leave items of value in plain view. Always lock your car doors and roll up the windows
- Report any suspicious person(s) or activities immediately
- Be aware of your surroundings avoid distractions such as cell phone conversations and displaying cell phones on the street
- Don't walk alone

Emergency Procedures

In Philadelphia emergencies such as crime, fire, serious illness or injury, and bomb scares, call Campus Security at 215-951-2999 or ext. 2999 from a campus telephone. In the event of a campus telephone failure contact Campus Security at 215.848.5555.

Throughout campus, there are “blue light” emergency telephones which, when activated, automatically connect you to the department of Safety and Security.

You are strongly encouraged to register your cell phone to receive emergency text alerts from JeffALERT Emergency Notification System at <https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/academic-success-center.html>

The University publishes emergency procedures in the Emergency Resource Guide, which can be found online at: <https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/public-safety/emergency-resource-guide.html> or can be viewed by downloading the Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls and New Jersey Campuses, App for iPhone or Android and selecting the Alert Info button.

In New Jersey, emergencies such as crime, fire, serious illness or injury, and bomb scares should contact Jefferson Stratford Security at 856-346-6358 or 609-781-7752 in addition to 911.

Police-Fire-Medical Emergency –911

East Falls Campus

215-951-2999 - 24 Hour Communications Center/Campus Emergency

215-951-2620 – Campus Security Main Office

<https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/public-safety/department-directory.html>

New Jersey Campus

Jefferson Stratford Security

Main desk: 856-346-6358

Cell phone: 609-781-7752

Voorhees Township Police (Non-Emergency number)
(856) 428-5400
<https://www.vtpd.com/>

Additional Philadelphia Resources

Car Trouble

The East Falls Department of Safety and Security provides "jump-start" assistance in the event of a dead battery. Safety and Security can be reached by dialing 215-951-2999 using any of the blue light emergency phones around campus or any campus phone. It is recommended that you place the emergency number in your cell phone-215-951-2999.

Ram Shuttle

The Ram Shuttle is a free service available for Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls community. More information can be found here: <https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/public-safety/parking-and-transportation/ram-van-shuttle-schedules.html> Escorts are available after the Ram Van shuttle stops running. Contact Safety and Security at 215-951-2999 for a safety escort.

Medical Services

The Program highly recommends that all students have access to a local healthcare provider for medical care. Some students may have medical issues that are exacerbated or re-emerge in graduate school, while others may experience new medical issues. The PA Program faculty are not allowed to act as medical providers for students. Resources for primary care are available at each campus. Students from each campus are entitled to seek care at the East Falls campus Health Center.

East Falls Campus:

Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls Student Health Center
Scholler Hall
Tel: 215-951-2986

<https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/student-health-services.html>

Appointments are available Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 4:00 pm for all full-time students with a student health record on file. Same day appointments are generally available. Walk-ins are discouraged, unless in the case of an emergency. There may be a cost associated for certain services.

New Jersey Campus:

Jefferson Health Voorhees Primary Care

443 Laurel Oak Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043
Josephine Tiedeken
Josephine.Tiedeken@jefferson.edu
215-313-9891

Students should call for an appointment and identify themselves as Jefferson Physician Assistant Students at the Voorhees Campus. Students should bring their insurance card and identification cards including their Jefferson student identification card with them. There may be a cost associated with certain services.

Mental Health Services

As previously stated, PA education is a rigorous, fast-paced curriculum requiring students be successful in order to continue to progress through the Program. However, there can be significant stressors that affect or impede that success. Emotional and mental well-being are essential to a healthy life both as a student and ultimately as a PA. If you are having difficulty and need personal counseling, the following resource is available.

East Falls Campus Resources:

Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls Counseling Services
The Kanbar Campus Center, Suite 323
Tel: 215-951-2868
Email: mailto:TJU_EF_CounselingServices@jefferson.edu

New Jersey Campus Resources:

Students from each campus are entitled to seek care at the East Falls campus Counseling Center. Counseling services are also available through Voorhees Behavioral Health for students at the New Jersey campus. Students may call for an appointment and should identify themselves as Jefferson Physician Students at the Voorhees Campus. Students are eligible for 6 behavioral health visits per academic year. If you send an email, please include your telephone number so that Lori can confirm your visit.

Jefferson Health Voorhees Behavioral Health

707 Haddonfield-Berlin Rd, Voorhees Township, NJ 08043
Lori Jalkiewicz
Lori.Jalkiewicz@jefferson.edu
609-707-8199

PA Faculty as Medical Providers

PA faculty, including the Program Director and medical director may not serve as medical providers for PA students except in the situation of a medical emergency.

Accessibility Services

Thomas Jefferson University is committed to providing equal education opportunities to all students, including students with disabilities, in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Thomas Jefferson University will provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals with disabilities to allow equal access and full

participation to all University sponsored activities and programs. For more information on disability accommodations, please contact the Accessibility Services Office.

<https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/student-resources-services/academics-career-success/accessibility-services.html>

Libraries

Thomas Jefferson University has several libraries. <https://library.jefferson.edu/>

East Falls Campus – Paul J. Gutman Library

The Paul J. Gutman Library is a great place for quiet study, group work or computer access, and has a wealth of academic resources. Reference librarians can provide guidance on best use of resources.

<https://library.jefferson.edu/gutman.cfm>

Financial Aid Services

We are committed to making a high-quality, professional education affordable for every qualified student. If meeting educational costs is a concern, we encourage you to apply for financial aid, regardless of family financial circumstances. For East Falls and New Jersey PA students

<https://www.jefferson.edu/tuition-and-financial-aid.html>

Email: financialaid@jefferson.edu

Phone: 215-951-2940

Registrar

East Falls and New Jersey

Email: tju_ef_registrar@jefferson.edu

Phone: 215-951-2990

Parking

East Falls

Every member of the campus community (faculty, staff, students, and visitors) must register their vehicle. Please see the current Parking and Traffic Regulations brochure at the web address below, during parking registration on the web or by requesting a paper copy from the department of safety and security.

A virtual parking permit can be obtained by going to

<https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/public-safety/parking-and-transportation.html>

and completing the registration process online. (Please be sure to have your vehicle information available).

Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls and New Jersey Campuses, shall assume no liability or responsibility for theft, damage or loss that may occur while parked in any locations listed above.

New Jersey

443 Laurel Oak Road has a parking lot on site. Students are permitted to park in this lot. It is requested that students park to the far left or far right of the parking lot as you enter from Laurel Oak Road. Parking spots directly in front of the building are to be left for patients of the medical practices located on the first floor of the building. There are ample parking spots; however, parking spots will not be assigned and will be on a first come first serve basis. Currently, students do not need to register their vehicles. However, if students will be going to the EF campus for class or the day, you must register your car and pay a fee. For more information visit <https://www.jefferson.edu/east-falls/public-safety/parking-and-transportation.html>

Jefferson Campus Store – East Falls

The Jefferson Campus Stores are proud to provide our students, staff, faculty, and alumni with a wide range of quality products. We offer a specialized selection of reasonably priced products and services, including course materials, educationally priced computer products, art, architecture, and textile supplies, medical supplies, scrubs, lab coats, and imprinted memorabilia. The Jefferson Campus Stores are self-funded enterprises fully owned and operated by Thomas Jefferson University. Your purchases directly support university operations, campus improvements, facilities and programming.

East Falls location is at 4201 Henry Ave. (Kanbar Campus Center)

<https://jeffersoncampusstore.com/default.asp?>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: AAPA Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession

The PA profession has a standing Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for practicing PAs that all should be know. These guidelines help define important boundaries of practice that should not be crossed. These guidelines are what ethical boards and legal counsel will use to determine if a PA has failed to act consistent with the profession's defined guidelines. To learn more, please visit <https://www.aapa.org/download/56983/?tmstv=1712950129>

APPENDIX B: Standards of Conduct Attestation

I hereby attest that I have received, read, fully understand and will comply with the Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls and New Jersey Campuses, Physician Assistant Standards of Conduct as defined in this manual. I am aware that violations will be referred the Physician Assistant Studies Program Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee, and other University committees or officials as deemed necessary. Any violation may result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Date _____

APPENDIX C: Authorization For Release of Medical, Immunization, And Drug Screening And Background Check Records

I hereby authorize the release of my immunization records, PPD results, child abuse clearance, criminal background check, urine drug screen, and copy of the required physical examination as requested by clinical sites.

Student Signature

Date

Print Name

Student Manual Acknowledgement

I, _____, have read, understand and agree to comply with the RULES, REGULATIONS, POLICIES and PROCEDURES outlined in the Student Manual of the Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls and New Jersey Campuses, Physician Assistant Studies Program. The Rules, Regulations, and Procedures were explained to me, and I acknowledge that I am subject to any of the disciplinary actions that may be brought against me.

I have been given a copy of the Student Manual and understand that I may ask questions at a later date if I need further clarification of its content. I take full responsibility for being aware of all policies found in this manual for the duration of my time in the Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls and New Jersey Campuses, Physician Assistant Program.

I also understand that should policies change, I will be notified in writing and an updated copy of the handbook will be made available to me.

I understand that I am responsible for understanding and adhering to the policies and regulation outlined in the Thomas Jefferson University Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and the Jefferson College of Health Professions Student Handbook.

Signature

Date

Print Name