South University, Savannah PA Program
Policies of Interest to Prospective and Enrolled Students

Standard	Policy Information
A1.02g	**Policies for Harassment and Mistreatment** *Non-Discrimination Policy* *No Harassment Policy*
A3.02	**PA Students are Not Required to Work for the Program** *At no time is a South University PA student allowed to or required to work for the program. Additionally, PA students will not substitute for or function as instructional faculty, clinical, or administrative staff.* *Published in PA Student Handbook
A3.03	**PA Students Do Not Substitute for or Function as Instructional Faculty or Clinical or Administrative Staff** *At no time is a South University PA student allowed to or required to work for the program. Additionally, PA students will not substitute for or function as instructional faculty, clinical, or administrative staff.* *Published in PA Student Handbook
A3.04	**PA Students Clearly Identified in the Clinical Setting** *South University PA students will be clearly identified to distinguish themselves from physicians, residents, and other health professional students. In clinical settings, PA students will wear short white laboratory coats with an embroidered name or name tag attached. This will clearly state the student's name with an underlying title of Physician Assistant Student (PA-S). The South University patch must be affixed to the left sleeve of the lab coat. If a situation arises when the lab coat is not worn, the name tag must be worn. Name tags are to be worn on the left side of the chest. Additionally, many of the hospitals and clinics in which program students are affiliated require them to wear distinguishing name tags or security badges while working at those facilities. Students must wear the appropriate South University identification, as well as the institution's required badge.* *Students are required to wear their identification badges at all times while on the South University campus.* *Published in PA Student Handbook and Clinical Policy Manual
A3.05	**Student Exposure to Infectious Diseases and Environmental Hazards**

POLICY

The objective of the following guidelines is to prevent the spread of infection and avoid exposure to blood and body fluid pathogens.

GENERAL

It is the policy of the South University Physician Assistant program to follow the guidelines and recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regarding STANDARD PRECAUTIONS. Before beginning any clinical education experience through the South University Physician Assistant program, students must receive training regarding CDC STANDARD PRECAUTIONS.

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

Standard Precautions are the minimum infection prevention practices that apply to all patient care, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status of the patient, in any setting where healthcare is delivered. Standard Precautions combine the major features of Universal Precautions and Body Substance Isolation and are based on the principle that all blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, non-intact skin, and mucous membranes may contain transmissible infectious agents. These practices include:

- *Hand hygiene*
- *The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g., gloves, gowns, masks) for mouth, nose, eye protection*
- *Safe injection practices*
- *Properly handle, clean, and disinfect patient care equipment and instruments/devices. Clean and disinfect the environment appropriately.*
- *Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette*
- *Ensure appropriate patient placement.*
- *Handles textiles and laundry carefully.*

In addition to Standard Precautions, students will receive training in the three categories of Transmission-Based Precautions:

- *Contact Precautions*
- *Droplet Precautions*
- *Airborne Precautions*

Transmission-Based Precautions are used when the route(s) of transmission is (are) not completely interrupted using Standard Precautions alone.

EXPOSURE TO BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Strict adherence to STANDARD PRECAUTIONS and other infection control measures should prevent a student's exposure to blood borne pathogens. Should a student

sustain a possible exposure (including a needle stick injury) to blood borne pathogens during a clinical training experience, the student is responsible for immediately notifying their supervisor, instructor, preceptor, or department manager. The student should then follow the steps outlined in the section titled "Post-Exposure Procedure" and "Student Injuries or Exposures". Exposure is defined as a demonstrated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE SHOULD BE INITIATED AND FOLLOWED AFTER AN EXPOSURE

POST-EXPOSURE PROCEDURE

- *Aggressive local wound care to the site of exposure should be initiated immediately. Percutaneous wounds should be expressed to promote bleeding. The site should be cleansed thoroughly with soap and water using a surgical hand brush when possible. It may be beneficial to use an antiseptic such as chlorhexidine gluconate (Foam Carer CHG), an iodophor (EZ Scrub, Betadine), or Dakins solution (dilute 1:9 buffered sodium hypochlorite). Difficult to scrub areas should be soaked in chlorhexidine gluconate (Foam Carer CHG) or other antiseptic. Non-intact skin should be cleansed with soap and water. It may be beneficial to use an antiseptic as described above.*
- *Mucous membrane exposures (e.g., eye splashes) should be irrigated thoroughly with tap water using the nearest eye washing station (or faucet if none available).*
- *The incident should be reported immediately to the student's supervisor, instructor, preceptor, or department manager.*
- *Post Exposure Prophylaxis protocol should be initiated if indicated. The student may access current guidelines through the National Clinician Consultation Center.*

Access to emergency health care is recommended, and the student is urged to become informed about current PEP guidelines in order to receive most effective treatment within the recommended time frame.

Finally, the student must notify the Director of Clinical Education or if unavailable, the Education Clinical Coordinator or Program Director. In addition, the South University Physician Assistant Program incident form must be completed and sent to the program.

STUDENT INJURIES

Incidents involving an injury to a student (such as a fall, or other accidental injury) during a clinical education experience will follow a similar protocol.

	• *The injury should be reported to the student's supervisor, instructor, preceptor, or department manager.* • *Students should report to the nearest Emergency Room for treatment.* • *The program should be notified as soon as it is possible to do so. The student must notify the Program Director or if unavailable, the Director of Clinical Education or if unavailable, the Education Clinical Coordinator. In addition, the South University Physician Assistant program incident form must be completed and sent to the South University Physician Assistant Program.* *If a potentially infectious exposure occurs, do not allow feelings of embarrassment, a large workload, or misplaced peer pressures to prevent you from reporting the event immediately. Needle sticks and other exposures can be life-threatening. Responsible health care providers recognize that unintentional injuries and occupational exposures may occur and must be evaluated by competent, objective, and experienced medical professionals.* ***IMPORTANT*** *All charges incurred by PA students for evaluation and management related to an injury, needle stick; blood or body fluid exposures are the student's responsibility. Students must maintain health insurance throughout their educational experience at the South University Physician Assistant program. All medical or health care services (emergency or otherwise) that the student receives or requires are the student's responsibility and are at the student's expense.* *Published in PA Student Handbook and Clinical Policy Manual
A3.06	**Healthcare Providers for Students Policy*** *Students are not permitted to seek personal health care advice or care from any full time or part time faculty member, instructional faculty, preceptor, program staff member, the program director, the medical director, guest lecturers, or guests of the program. Students in violation of this rule will be referred to the Program's Student Progress and Promotions Committee.* *At no time is a full-time or part-time faculty member, instructional faculty, program staff member, the program director, or the medical director allowed or expected to participate in the provision of health care to a student enrolled in the South University Physician Assistant program. Violation of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination.* *In an emergency, faculty and/or staff may assist any student who may be in imminent danger in accordance with their scope of practice and current standards of care.* *Published in PA Student Handbook
A3.07	**Referral of Students to Services for Personal Issues***

	Within two business days, students identified as having personal issues that may impact their progress in the PA program are referred to the Office of Student Affairs. *Published in PA Student Handbook
A3.08	**SCPE Placements*** *Students are not required to provide or solicit their own clinical sites or preceptors for clinical rotations. Sites for rotations will be determined by the PA program.* *Published in Clinical Policy Manual
A3.09a-b	**Health Screening, Immunization, and International Travel Policy** *In compliance with ARC-PA Standard A3.09, South University Physician Assistant (PA) Program students must meet health screening and immunization requirements based on current CDC recommendations (https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/) and applicable state and facility mandates. These requirements are necessary to protect both students and the patients with whom they will interact during clinical education. South University PA students do not participate in international travel for curricular components or clinical rotations; all program activities occur within the United States.* *Students are solely responsible for maintaining up-to-date health records and are expected to consult their own licensed healthcare provider regarding vaccines, titers, screenings, and any medical concerns. At no time may South University faculty, staff, or preceptor provide medical advice or treatment to students other than in an emergency. Clinical facilities may also have requirements that are more stringent than CDC guidelines, and students must comply with all clinical site requirements in order to participate. Failure to maintain compliance may result in delayed progression or removal from clinical courses.* ***Health/Immunization Documentation*** • *Students must maintain current immunization records and health documentation (physical exam, TB screening, titers, etc.) at all times throughout enrollment.* • *Documentation is required for clinical site credentialing.* • *Tracking and maintenance are conducted by a third-party vendor; discrepancies are addressed between the student and vendor.* • *The PA Program retains final authority regarding compliance and matriculation decisions.* ***Medical Insurance***

	• *Each student must maintain personal health insurance from matriculation through graduation without interruption.* • *Coverage must include needle stick injuries and exposures to infectious agents.* • *South University does not provide or endorse specific plans.* • *Students are financially responsible for all medical services, including laboratory, diagnostic, therapeutic, and exposure-related care.* ***Required Immunizations, Screenings, and Documentation*** *Annual renewal and clinical site-specific requirements must also be followed.* *Tuberculosis (TB) Screening* • *Negative QuantiFERON Gold or T-Spot test; or* • *Negative two-step PPD with documentation.* • *Students with prior positive tests must provide documentation of a negative chest x-ray and annual symptom screening.* • *Annual screening required.* *Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis)* • *Documentation of Tdap within 10 years of expected graduation.* *Hepatitis B Vaccine and Titer* • *Completion of full Hepatitis B vaccine series and a positive quantitative antibody titer.* • *Non-immune students must repeat the vaccine series and provide post-series quantitative titer results.* *MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)* • *Proof of immunity via titer or documentation of 2-dose MMR series.* *Varicella (Chickenpox)* • *Proof of immunity via titer.* • *If negative/non-immune, completion of 2-dose vaccine series plus repeat serologic titer required.* *Influenza* • *Annual seasonal vaccine required.* • *Due by October 1 or as required by clinical site.* *COVID-19* • *Vaccination as recommended by the CDC.* *Physical Exam* • *Required annually.* • *Statement from a licensed healthcare provider confirming student ability to participate in patient care.* *Authorization to Release Information Form*

	• *Signed and submitted to the third-party vendor by the deadline.* *Definitions* • *2-Step PPD: TB skin test performed twice, 7–18 days apart.* • *Vaccine: Product administered to stimulate immunity.* • *Quantitative Serum Titer: Blood test with a numerical value confirming immunity.*
A3.11a	**Accreditation Status:** Campus Weblink
A3.11b	**PA Program Effectiveness in Meeting Goals:** Campus Weblink
A3.11c	**PA Program NCCPA PANCE Exam Performance:** Campus Weblink
A3.11d	**PA Program Curriculum Components and Delivery Method:** Campus Weblink *The South University, Savannah Physician Assistant Program delivers the didactic curriculum as a full-time, primarily on-campus experience with some blended instruction that may include virtual, synchronous modalities. As a complement to the on-campus didactic curriculum, clinical subject matter experts are included to ensure students are provided with current standards of medical practice. The clinical curriculum and clinical rotations are primarily direct patient care experiences with blended telehealth/telemedicine opportunities.*
A3.11e	**PA Program Academic Credit:** Campus Weblink
A3.11f	**Tuition Information:** Savannah Master in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree | South University
A3.11g	**Program Defined Competencies for Entry Level Practice:** Savannah Master in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree | South University
A3.11h	**Distant Campus Policy:** Not Applicable
A3.11i	**Graduation Rate:** Campus Weblink
A3.12a	**Admissions Preferences:** Savannah Master in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree | South University
A3.12b	**Admissions Requirements/Education:** Savannah Master in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree | South University
A3.12c	**Policies on Advanced Placement** *The South University Physician Assistant Program does not accept transfer of credits from another physician assistant program or provide enrolled students with a waiver of credit for any component of the required curricular coursework. All students must complete each course in the South University Physician Assistant curriculum.*

A3.12d	**Admissions Required Work Experience:** Savannah Master in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree | South University
A3.12e	**Required Technical Standards for Enrollment:** Savannah Master in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree | South University
A3.13	**Admissions Committee Selection Factors**: Savannah Master in Physician Assistant (PA) Degree | South University

A3.14a	**Required Academic Standards for Enrollment and Progress in Curriculum**
	
	Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy:
	
	Master of Science in Physician Assistant
	Students in the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Program are evaluated for SAP at the completion of every quarter. Students in the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Program must complete all curricular requirements within 45 months of their initial matriculation into the South University PA program. The minimum standards used to assess each student's academic performance are outlined:
	• *At the completion of every quarter, a student must achieve a minimum CGPA of 3.0 and an ICR of 66.67%.*
	  ○ *Students who fail to achieve a minimum CGPA of 3.0 will be placed on Academic Warning and will have one quarter to achieve a CGPA of 3.0.*
	  ▪ *Students with a CGPA less than 3.0 for two consecutive quarters, will be dismissed from the program.*
	• *At the conclusion of each quarter all course grades must be a "C" or higher in a course awarded letter grades or a "Pass" for a course that is graded as Pass/Fail.*
	  ○ *Students who fail to achieve a "C" or higher or a "Pass" in any course will be dismissed from the program.*
	
	PA Program Progression Policy

A3.14b	**Requirements and Deadlines for Program Completion:** Graduation Requirements *Master of Science in Physician Assistant Degree Program Graduation Requirements* *To receive a Master of Science in Physician Assistant degree a student must satisfy the following requirements:* 1. *The student must complete all course and program requirements as outlined in the Academic Catalog in effect at the time of enrollment and/or, if applicable at the time of reentry.* 2. *The student must receive a minimum grade of "C" or better in all courses.* 3. *The student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for all coursework taken while in the South University Physician Assistant program.*

	4. *The student must demonstrate achievement of the program learning outcomes/competencies including successful completion of course required evaluations and program comprehensive evaluations.* 5. *The student has met the technical standards throughout the program.* 6. *The student must successfully complete the summative evaluation before graduation.* *The typical pace of the Physician Assistant program curriculum is 27 months. Students must complete all graduation requirements for the Master of Science of Physician Assistant Degree within 45 months of their initial matriculation into the South University PA program.*
A3.14c	**Remediation:** ***Students at Academic Risk and Remediation*** *The program expects each student to obtain a basic competency in each area of medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical skills, technical skills, professional behaviors, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, and appropriate use of healthcare resources required for PA practice. However, the program also recognizes that each student may progress at different rates in obtaining these basic competencies. The program has developed the faculty advisor structure for numerous purposes. One of the primary purposes of the faculty advisor is to monitor student progress in achieving all competency domains.* *Below, the program defines the process for the development of a formal Remediation Plan, Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), deceleration. These action plans are developed when students are identified as deficient in any of the following: individual performance/practical evaluations, learning outcomes, standardized skills assessment performance, satisfactory academic progression, programmatic progression, failure to meet the technical standards, and violation of professionalism and/or behavioral policies.* ***Remediation and Student Success Plans*** *The program develops a formal remediation plan when a student demonstrates global deficiency in medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical skills, technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, professionalism, and appropriate use of healthcare resources. A formal remediation plan may be initiated at the request of the Student Progress and Promotions Committee (SPPC) or as the result of an assessment failure. The purpose of remediation is to allow for students to review learning objectives, identify areas of misunderstanding, recognize weakness in knowledge or skills, and to correct these deficiencies in order to obtain basic mastery in the deficient area(s).* *The course director is responsible for collaborating to develop a formal remediation plan. When appropriate, the course director may seek assistance from a content expert, the Director of Didactic or Clinical Education, or the SPPC, to ensure the plan is comprehensive. The formal remediation plan is documented on the Remediation Form.* *Individual remediation plans can include, but are not limited to: reading assignments, review of lecture materials or case studies, faculty-led tutoring sessions (especially for skill deficiencies), and breakout sessions. Once remediation is completed, the course*

	director will evaluate the student's proficiency. This evaluation may include, but is not limited to: an oral question-and-answer session, a written exam, a written paper, or written responses to selected examination questions. The course director will determine if the student has met the expectations of the remediation process. All remediation must be completed as per the discretion of the course director and within the time frame and under the conditions determined by the course director. Should remediation result in a delay of graduation, the student will incur additional tuition and fees. *Remediation is required for all students with unsatisfactory performance, defined as scoring below:* • *70% on all exams during the didactic year* • *70% on an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), practical, or technical skills exam* • *The established passing score for an End-of-Rotation Exam, Preceptor Evaluation, Clinical assignment, or PASS/FAIL activities as defined in the clinical syllabus of the rotation. ** **Programmatic progression during the clinical year is determined by the SPPC. Students who do not meet the required remediation objectives will be referred to the SPPC for further action regarding program progression. Students who are required to take additional coursework to meet the program learning outcomes, competencies, or graduation requirements will incur additional tuition and fees and will have a delayed graduation.* *Please refer to the PA Student Handbook for further details.
A3.14d	**Policies and Procedures for** Deceleration *In the event the Student Progress and Promotions Committee (SPPC) determines that a student is deficient in any of the program learning outcomes, competencies, or technical standards, the committee may require deceleration. The SPPC has the exclusive authority to implement deceleration. Students cannot request this option. Deceleration results in a delay of graduation and students are responsible for additional associated tuition and fees. The SPPC will develop a reentry plan that may include Independent Study (PAS5499 Independent Study I and/or PAS5599 Independent Study II), auditing previously taken coursework, repeat rotation courses, professional or personal development requirements, and/or extracurricular assignments to remediate identified deficiencies.* *During the didactic phase, if a student is placed on deceleration, they must delay reentry for up to one year. This delay occurs because these courses are only offered once per year. Upon reentry, the student will join the next cohort.* *Students who successfully remediate and complete all program requirements will graduate at the end of the term in which all requirements are fulfilled* *All curricular requirements of the Physician Assistant program must be completed within 45 months of their initial matriculation into the South University PA Program.*
A3.14e	**Policies and Procedures for Withdrawal**

	A student who elects to withdraw from the program must submit the request in writing to the Program Director. All students must follow the South University Withdrawal policies and procedures in the Academic Catalog. If a withdrawn student desires to reenter the program, they must reapply through CASPA and are not guaranteed readmission. If accepted as a reapplicant, the student will be required to repeat all curriculum previously attempted.
A3.14f	**Dismissal Policies and Procedures** *Dismissal can occur after review of the student's academic, clinical, or professional deficiency.* *Students will be automatically dismissed from the Physician Assistant program for the following reasons:* • *Failure to achieve and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in two consecutive quarters. (Please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy in the Academic Catalog)* • *Failure to achieve a grade of C or better (or a "Pass" in a "Pass/Fail course) in any course, in any quarter. (Please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy in the Academic Catalog)* • *Two consecutive or exceeding two cumulative quarters on warning or probation for any performance cause (academic, clinical, or professional behavior) during the student's enrollment. (Please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy in the Academic Catalog)* *Students may additionally be dismissed from the Physician Assistant program by the Student Progress and Promotions Committee for the following reasons:* • *Failing to successfully complete Performance Improvement Plans (PIP), Remediation Plans, or achieve Program Learning Outcomes/Competencies* • *Severe transgressions of ethical and moral conduct (including but not limited to violation of the Physician Assistant Program Standards of Conduct or Professionalism, stealing, or providing false documentation intended to deceive faculty or administration)* • *Violation of the College of Health Professions Background Check and Drug and Alcohol Screening Policy* *Any student who is dismissed from the South University PA Program must complete the checkout procedure. The checkout procedure is as follows:* • *Complete an exit interview with financial aid* • *Return their student ID badge, clinical facility badges, books, university supplies, and parking tag to security* *A student dismissed from the PA program is prohibited from any further attendance in class or participation in medical training. The student may choose to appeal the decision and will not be allowed to continue program related activities until resolution of the appeal. Any dismissed student from any South University PA program who elects to reapply through CASPA will have their prior enrollment status considered and will not be guaranteed readmission.*
A3.14g	**Policies and Procedures for Student Grievances**

	Student Grievance Policy and Procedure *For concerns regarding general complaints, please refer to the South University Academic Catalog: General Complaint Procedures.* *In compliance with U.S. Department of Education and SACSCOC regulations, South University is committed to implementing a student concern/complaint process that is fair, timely, and effective. Students should follow the process outlined in the South University Student Concern Submission form including; discuss complaints with the appropriate individual(s) within the PA Department or College of Health Professions. Initial discussion should be with the person most knowledgeable of the issues involved or with immediate decision-making responsibility.* *If you feel that the complaint has not been fully addressed, a written account can be sent using the Student Concern Submission form. Your concern will be submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs if related to non-academic issues or to the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations for academic issues.*
A3.14h	**Policies and Procedures for Student Appeals** ***Student Appeal Procedures for Dismissal*** *Students seeking to appeal any dismissal (including academic/financial aid dismissal, Student Progress and Promotions Committee decisions, and/or Code of Conduct Violations) must do so in writing to the Department Chair within three business days of receipt of notification of their dismissal. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Department Chair, the appeal can proceed to the Assistant Dean of the College of Health Professions within three business days of receipt of notification of the prior decision. If the student is not satisfied with that decision, they can appeal to the Dean of the College of Health Professions within three business days of receiving the prior decision. The decision of the Dean of the College of Health Professions is final.* *If a final course grade challenge is denied by the instructor and subsequently results in the dismissal of a student, the student may submit a combined appeal of the course grade and academic dismissal following the procedures outlined above. Students dismissed for failure to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress due to a cumulative grade point average below 3.0, where it is mathematically impossible to reach a cumulative GPA of 3.0 with one additional quarter of coursework, are not eligible to appeal the dismissal. In addition, any student who has previously been dismissed, granted reinstatement through an appeal, and subsequently dismissed again is not eligible to appeal the second dismissal.*
A3.02, A3.03a,b, A3.14i	**Policies for Student Employment while enrolled in the Program***

	Due to the rigorous nature of the Physician Assistant program, employment during a student's course of training is strongly discouraged. Employment must never interfere with academic or clinical assignments. At no time is a South University Physician Assistant student allowed to or required to work for the South University Physician Assistant program or program clinical sites. *Published in PA Student Handbook
A3.14j	**Clinical Experiential Learning and Travel Policy:** *All students may be required to travel/commute and/or relocate for any given clinical rotation. While many rotations are located within a commutable distance from the program, students may be assigned to clinical rotation sites outside the local campus geographical area up to 500 miles and should anticipate the need to travel or temporarily relocate for up to four assigned rotations across two quarters. Students are responsible for all costs associated with travel, transportation, housing, credentialing, and living expenses during the clinical year, including distant rotations. These expenses will vary based on the location of each clinical rotation site. Please refer to the program website for further details on clinical travel.*