Physician Assistant Sciences Program Didactic Handbook 2023
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Meharry Medical College
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Physician Assistant Sciences Program Didactic Manual
2023

Preface

Section 1: Meharry Medical College
Section 2: Institutional Mission, Vision, and Accreditation
Section 3: PA Program Information and Policies
Section 4: Preclinical Course of Study/Curricular Components
Section 5: Student Services
Section 6: Mistreatment Policy
Section 7: Student Complaints, Sexual Misconduct (Title IX) and Sexual Harassment Policies

Didactic Handbook Acknowledgement Form
Preface

Welcome from the faculty and staff of the Physician Assistant Sciences Program! We wish you the best in your endeavors as you embark upon this journey to pursue an education for a career as a Physician Assistant. You will be asked to dedicate the next twenty-seven months for preparation in the field of medicine as a physician assistant. You will participate in curriculum designed to prepare you to succeed in a profession which provides high quality health care that includes primary, specialty, and preventive medical care in various disciplines of medicine. The faculty and staff are committed to aiding in your progress as you develop the clinical knowledge and skills necessary for entry in the Physician Assistant profession.

The information herein is available to help facilitate the student's journey as he or she matriculates at Meharry Medical College and to provide details that are unique to students in the PA program. Description of campus-wide policies and procedures are provided online in the MMC student handbook, which is available online: https://home.mmc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021-2022-STUDENT-HANDBOOK.pdf

PA students are responsible for reviewing and adhering to the policies and procedures in the annual student handbook as well as those described below.

All policies in this handbook apply to all PA Students, Principal Faculty, the Program Director, and the Department Chair, regardless of location (A3.01). This Handbook is not to be construed as a contract. Meharry Medical College reserves the right to change fees, tuition, or other charges; add or delete courses; revised academic programs; or alter regulations and requirements as deemed necessary and appropriate.

This handbook will be reviewed with the PA students during orientation week and students will sign an acknowledgement of understanding to be maintained in their student file (A3.02).
Meharry Medical College

Meharry Medical College was founded in 1876 by Samuel Meharry and his four brothers in response to an Act of Kindness he had received on a Kentucky road one rainy night—a chance meeting now known as The Salt Wagon Story. In 1886, Dr. George Ehipple Hubbard founded a department that would “provide the Colored people of the South with an opportunity for thoroughly preparing themselves for the practice of dentistry,” and Meharry’s dental program opened its doors to nine students, three of whom were physicians.

Today, Meharry receives over 5,000 applications for admission to the M.D., D.D.S., M.S.P.H., Ph.D., and now the M.P.A.S. program, providing opportunities for people of color, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and others, regardless of race or ethnicity, to receive excellent education and training in the health sciences and conduct research that fosters the elimination of health disparities.

The School of Graduate Studies and Research

The School of Graduate Studies and Research at Meharry Medical College began in 1938 as a series of short courses in the basic and clinical sciences; in 1947, a Master of Science Degree program was implemented as the first graduate degree, a Ph.D. program was established in 1972, and an M.D./Ph.D. program in 1982. Since 1970, the School has awarded more than 15 percent of the biomedical science Ph.Ds. earned by African American scientists in the United States and is currently ranked 9th nationally by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* for the number of African American biomed Ph.Ds. the School produces.

The Master of Science in Public Health Program at Meharry was established in 1974 and graduated its first class in 1978. To date, the program has graduated approximately 300 professionals who occupy positions of leadership in many public and privy sectors of the country. The program was granted accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health, in 2020. During the time of accreditation, the College also established the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy, which also grants a Certificate of Health Policy to students within the College.

The Master of Science in Clinic Investigation was established in 2004 and its graduates are at the forefront of clinical and translational research. The Master of Physician Assistant Sciences is the latest program developed within the school with anticipated student enrollment in 2022.
SECTION 2
Mission Statement, Vision, and Accreditation

Meharry Medical College Mission
Meharry Medical College is a global academic health science center advancing health equity through innovative research, transformative education, exceptional and compassionate health services, and policy-influencing thought leadership. True to its legacy, Meharry empowers diverse populations to improve the well-being of humankind. Core values include accountability with transparency, equity with inclusion, respect with collegiality, service with compassion, and integrity without exception.

Meharry Medical College Vision
In 2026, Meharry Medical College will:

- Have an enrollment of more than 1,700, including 900 medical students, 500 dental students and 300 graduate students.
- Enroll students in:
  - Medicine
  - Dentistry
  - Biomedical science
  - Public health
  - Health policy
  - Health economics
  - Medical sociology
  - Data science
  - Physician assistant studies
  - Biomedical engineering
  - Bioinformatics
- Enroll students from across the U.S. and around the world who aspire to improve the lives of disadvantaged populations.
- Have a residential population of at least 1,200 on the “village campus.”
- Be the national model for the delivery of inter-professional training for aspiring students and working professional.
- Be a leader in data-driven, health equity-focused research in the following areas:
  - Cancer
  - Educational effectiveness and performance
  - Infectious disease
  - Mental and behavioral health/substance abuse
  - Obesity/cardiovascular disease
  - Oral Health
  - Precision medicine/health
- Be the trailblazer in defining and implementing a new model for delivering value-based, patient-centered health care:
In Nashville
- In rural Tennessee and Mississippi Delta
- In urban communities across the U.S.

- Be a national leader in clinical medicine in:
  - Cancer
  - Infectious disease
  - Mental and behavioral health/substance abuse
  - Obesity/cardiovascular disease
  - Oral health

- Have a network of regional, national and international partners to expand its clinical reach and provide additional educational opportunities for students and residents.

- Have a comprehensive multi-specialty group practice composed of technologically adept primary care and specialist physicians, dentist and oral surgeons, advance practice nurses, physician assistants, pharmacist, optometrists, nutritionists, behaviorists, and community health workers who provide value-based patient-centered health care.

- Collaborate in the design and implementation of focused synergistic community networks that complement MMC’s education, research and clinical missions and provide leverage for service engagement opportunities.

**Campus and College Accreditation**
Currently MMC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). All the professional programs on campus undergo regular accreditation by their professional organizations.

**Physician Assistant Sciences Program Accreditation**

Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program has applied for Accreditation - Provisional from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program anticipates matriculating its first class in January of 2023, pending achieving Accreditation - Provisional status at the June 2022 ARC-PA meeting.

Accreditation - Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding accreditation-provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

The program is not yet accredited. Applicants for the inaugural MMC PA Sciences cohort will be notified only after the program receives notification of the June 2022 meeting decision of the ARC-PA Commission regarding the program's Accreditation-Provisional application status. If the program is not granted Accreditation-Provisional
status, all applicants will be notified, and the program will not accept any applicants for admission.

Specific questions regarding the Program and its plans should be directed to the Program Director and/or the appropriate institutional official(s).

PA program accreditation standards are available at: www.arc-pa.org/provisional-accreditation/.

Questions or concerns regarding PA program accreditation can be addressed by contacting the Accreditation Review Commission on Education of the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) at:

3325 Paddocks Parkway, Suite 345, Suwanee, GA 30024, (770)476-1224.
Program of Study
The academic program is designed to deliver the essential academic and clinical education necessary to prepare students for their professional roles and to satisfy the eligibility requirements to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). Study is divided into four preclinical academic terms over a 15-month period (71 credit hours) and three clinical academic terms over a 12-month period (36 credit hours).

Physician assistant education is a full-time endeavor. The didactic academic year schedule is Monday thru Friday. Hours of instruction will vary depending on the availability of physical facilities and instructors, but students must plan on being available from 8am-5pm. Students enrolled in the PA Program are expected to participate in all programmatic educational endeavors throughout the duration of the program.

Academic Degree Offered:
Master of Medical Science - Physician Assistant (MPAS) Degree

The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program will confer a Master of Physician Assistant Sciences (MPAS) degree upon successful completion of the 27-month educational program.

Professional Standards of Conduct
The PA program has adopted the AAPA Code of Ethics as the framework for our expected professional standards. The PA student’s behavior should emulate that of a medical professional as described in the Code of Ethics.

NCCPA - https://www.nccpa.net/code-of-conduct

Physician Assistant Sciences Program Mission Statement (B1.01a)
The mission of the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program is to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups in medicine (URiM) into the PA profession. Students will be equipped with the ability to demonstrate cultural humility, provide evidence-based and compassionate care to all patients they encounter, and foster a commitment to community service in underserved populations, through equity, justice, and lifelong learning.

Physician Assistant Sciences Program Goals
1. Increase the number of students from underrepresented groups in medicine (URiM) into the PA profession
Metrics: Admissions data
Benchmark: > 85% of matriculated students are from URiM groups

2. Achieve high graduation rates
Metrics: Student Progress and Promotion Data
Benchmark: > 90% annual graduation rate

3. Maintain a competitive first-time PANCE pass rates
Metrics: NCCPA Program Data
Benchmarks: Program annual first-time PANCE pass rate ≥90%

4. Promote faculty development and demonstrate teaching innovation, scholarship, and service
Metric: School of Graduate Studies and Research Faculty Performance Data, Internal Promotion Criteria, PAEA Data
Benchmark: Faculty will participate in at least (1) PD opportunities, (1) external service opportunity, and submit at least (1) conference presentation proposal or peer-reviewed publication

Student Learning Outcomes of the Physician Assistant Program (Functions and Tasks Expected of the Graduate PA):

Our student learning outcomes are entry-level competencies directed by the Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession document (Adopted 2005; revised 2012; revised 2020). The purpose of that document is to communicate to the PA profession and to the public a set of competencies that all physician assistants, regardless of specialty or setting, are expected to acquire and maintain throughout their careers. The competencies provide a road map for the individual PA, the physician-PA team and PA-related professional organizations. These competencies are similarly aligned with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) competencies for the medical resident.

Program Outcomes: our graduate physician assistant students will demonstrate:

1. Knowledge for Practice
   • Demonstrate knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care.
   • Access and interpret current and credible sources of medical information.
   • Discern among acute, chronic, and emergent disease states.
• Adhere to standards of care, and to relevant laws, policies, and
regulations that govern the delivery of care in the United States.
• Participate in surveillance of community resources to determine
if they are adequate to sustain and improve health

2. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
• Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills
that result in the effective exchange of information and
 collaboration with patients, their families, and other
health professionals.
• Communicate effectively to elicit and provide information.
• Demonstrate sensitivity, honesty, and compassion in all
conversations, including challenging discussions about death, end
of life, adverse events, bad news, disclosure of errors and other
sensitive topics.
• Recognize communication barriers and provide solutions.

3. Person-centered Care
• Provide person-centered care that includes patient-and setting-specific
assessment, evaluation, and management.
• Provide health care that is evidence-based, supports patient safety, and
advances health equity.
• Counsel, educate, and empower patients and their families to
participate in their care and enable shared decision-making.

4. Interprofessional Collaboration
• Demonstrate the ability to engage with a variety of other health
care professionals in a manner that optimizes safe, effective,
patient-and population-centered care.
• Communicate effectively with colleagues and other professionals
to establish and enhance interprofessional teams.
• Recognize when to refer patients to other disciplines to ensure
that patients receive optimal care at the right time and
appropriate level.

5. Professionalism and Ethics
• Demonstrate a commitment to practicing medicine in ethically
and legally appropriate ways.
• Emphasize professional maturity and accountability to ensure
safe and quality care to patients and various populations.
• Demonstrate cultural humility and responsiveness to a diverse
patient population, including diversity in sex, gender identity,
sexual orientation, age, culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic
status, religion, and abilities.
• Exercise good judgment and fiscal responsibility when utilizing resources.

6. Practice-based Learning and Quality Improvement
• Exhibit self-awareness to identify strengths, address deficiencies, and recognize limits in knowledge and expertise.
• Demonstrate the ability to learn and implement quality improvement practices by engaging in critical analysis of one’s own practice experience, the medical literature, and other resources.
• Utilize resources for self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and practice improvement.
• Identify improvement goals and perform learning activities that address gaps in knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
• Analyze the use and allocation of resources to ensure the practice of cost-effective health care while maintaining quality of care.

7. Society and Population Health
• Recognize and understand the influences of the ecosystem of person, family, population, environment, and policy on the health of patients.
• Integrate knowledge of the determinants of health into patient care decisions.
• Demonstrate accountability, responsibility, and leadership for removing barriers to health.

PA Program Specific Technical Standards (A3.13e)
The Meharry Medical College PA Program requires that all students demonstrate the technical skills needed to complete both the didactic and clinical phases of the program. The following skills are necessary to effectively evaluate and treat patients: critical thinking, effective communication, using computerized information technology and visual, auditory and motor skills.

Students who are unable to perform the required technical standards, necessary to complete the PA curriculum, may be dismissed from the program. As required by the Federal Disabilities Act, the PA program will make every attempt to provide students necessary accommodations.

Minimum Technical Standards

Critical Thinking: Students must possess the intellectual capabilities required to complete both the didactic and clinical curriculum and achieve competency. Critical thinking requires the intellectual ability to measure, calculate, synthesize, and analyze a large and complex volume of medical and surgical information. Students in the program must also be able to perform applicable demonstrations and experiments in
the medical sciences.

**Computer Technology Skills:** Students must be able to utilize computerized information technology to access and manage on-line medical information, participate in computerized testing as required by the curriculum, conduct research, prepare multimedia presentations, and participate in the management of computerized patient records and assessments.

**Communication Skills:** Students must be able to speak clearly and effectively in order to elicit and relay medical information. They must also be able to communicate effectively and legibly in writing.

**Visual Ability:** Students must have the visual acuity needed to evaluate a patient during a physical exam and perform a wide range of technical procedures involved in the practice of medicine and surgery.

**Hearing and Tactile Ability:** Students must have the motor and sensory functions needed to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation and percussion, as well as perform a wide range of technical procedures involved in the practice of medicine and surgery.

**Motor and Fine Skills:** Students must be able to execute the physical movements required to maneuver in small places, calibrate and use equipment, position and move patients, and perform the technical procedures involved in the practice of medicine and surgery.

**Interpersonal Ability:** Students must possess a wide range of interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills, including but not limited to: the emotional health required for management of high stress situations while maintaining their full intellectual abilities; the ability to exercise good judgment; the ability to complete all assigned patient care responsibilities; the ability to manage time (show up on time, begin and complete tasks on time); the ability to develop a mature, sensitive and effective relationship with medical colleagues, clinical and administrative staff, patients and families; the ability to identify, use, understand, and manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and diffuse conflict; and the ability to recognize your own emotional state and the emotional states of others, and engage with people in a way that draws them to you.

**Program Eligibility:**

Any changes in eligibility for the program should be immediately reported to the Program Director. Examples of eligibility changes include any arrests, indictment, plea of no-contest, or convictions of any misdemeanor or felony crimes except for minor traffic violations; any action by a state healthcare professions licensing board (including the filing of a complaint, investigation, or license denial reprimand,
suspension, restriction, revocation, surrender or other discipline, related to any healthcare license); or eligibility to participate in a medicine training program (Competency Information and guidelines established by the Tennessee Department of Health), or any other requirement above.

**Estimate of Costs (A3.12f)**
Information on the tuition and fees cost of the program: [https://home.mmc.edu/admissions/school-of-graduate-studies-research/physician-assistant-program/financial-information-physician-assistant-program/](https://home.mmc.edu/admissions/school-of-graduate-studies-research/physician-assistant-program/financial-information-physician-assistant-program/)

**Tuition and Fees Refund Policy (A3.14g)**

**Immunization Policy (A3.07)**
Meharry Medical College is committed to providing a safe environment for the education of its students in the health professions and sciences, particularly those students who work in the hospital or with patients. Students, faculty, and staff in the health sciences setting are vulnerable to communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, and polio. Those students who may encounter blood or blood products also have potential of being infected with hepatitis, HIV, or other viruses. These diseases are susceptible to control by appropriate immunizations.

**Required Immunizations:**
- Influenza
- Hepatitis B vaccinations: documented series of 3 vaccines and Hepatitis B surface antibody quantitative serologic titer
- Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR): documented series of two doses and quantitative serologic titers
- Varicella: documented series of two doses and quantitative serologic titer or documented dates or disease and quantitative serologic titer
- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis: documentation of TDAP vaccine within the last 10 years
- Meningococcal
- Polio: documentation of last immunization
- Tuberculosis screening (within last 12 months): PPD results or IGRA result or documentation of previous positive PPD, subsequent treatment and most recent chest x-ray report.
- Tuberculin skin testing and influenza (flu) vaccination is required annually.
- Two doses of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna), a single shot of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, or recovery from Covid-19, followed by a single shot of any of the available vaccines is mandatory (with exceptions only for medical reasons), prior to matriculation with documentation provided to student health.
Infectious and Environmental Hazards Policy (A3.08)
Students who are exposed to blood and bodily fluids via needle stick, mucus membranes, or exposure of non-intact skin; or become ill or injured, as the result of a clinical assignment, must be evaluated at the Student Health Center during the Center’s normal operating hours. Students must also notify the Office of Student and Academic Affairs of such injury. A reportable event form must be completed in addition to individual affiliate hospital or clinical forms. If the Student Health Center is closed, the student will be referred to Nashville General Hospital Emergency Room or the appropriate medical facility.

Students who elected the Meharry Medical Insurance Plan are covered 100%. Students who did not elect the Meharry Medical Insurance Plan are also covered but will need to complete a reimbursement charge through Star Underwriting. The policy can be found at the following site: [https://home.mmc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Evaluation-of-Occupational-Exposure-Illness-and-Injury-Policy.pdf](https://home.mmc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Evaluation-of-Occupational-Exposure-Illness-and-Injury-Policy.pdf)

PA Program Faculty Serving as Health Care Providers
PA Program principal faculty, the program director, and the medical director are NOT permitted to be healthcare providers to students. Please do not ask any faculty member to consult on a personal health issue or see them in a clinical setting (A3.09).

For urgent health care concerns, students can be seen at the Student Health Clinic, Suite 331 in the Meharry Comprehensive Health Building, Monday-Friday, 8a-430p. While no appointment is necessary, students can make an appointment by calling 615.327.5757. For emergency treatment, students are encouraged to go to Metropolitan Nashville General Hospital Emergency Department.

Access to Student Record (A3.18)
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") is a federal law that protects the privacy of information contained in students’ education records. FERPA restricts the release of information contained in a student’s education record and access to that record.

- Students will not be allowed to access another student’s record.
- To access one’s own PA student file, the student must make the request in writing to the program director to be allowed to review said file in the program offices.
- The student may access academic records in the Banner student information system at any time.
- All student health records are confidential and maintained at MMC Student Health Clinic (A3.19)
ACADEMIC & PROGRESSION STANDARDS

The academic promotion and progression standards utilized by the PA program will be published annually in the MMC PA Sciences Program Didactic Handbook. During orientation week, students will be advised of these standards as well as the expectation that all students adhere to the student honor code.

Students must also adhere to the Meharry Medical College Honor Code, which can be found in the MMC Student Handbook (https://home.mmc.edu/student-affairs/student-life/handbooks-policies/). Students must acknowledge receipt of the Honor Code during orientation.

Student Advising
Students will be assigned to a faculty advisor during orientation. The role of a faculty advisor to help the student transition into graduate school, guide the student through their tenure with the PA program, and serve as a professional mentor for all things concerning the student while at MMC.

Academic Promotion, Probation and Dismissal Policy
Progression into the clinical phase of the MMC PAS Program requires that students have met all of the following requirements:

- Cumulative GPA (Grade Point Average) of 3.0 or greater
- Completion of the end of didactic phase PACKRAT exam
- Passing performance on assessing history, physical and clinical skills via a practical exam (OSCE)
- Compliance with student code of conduct, including professionalism
- Maintain a current health insurance policy (Any student who does not maintain a current health insurance policy during the Clinical Phase will be removed from clinical rotations until compliance has been established.)
- Provide proof of up-to-date status of all required immunizations and a negative PPD (or chest radiograph for conversions)
- Maintain a clear criminal background check
- Test negative on drug screening as required by clinical rotation site(s)
- Provide the Program and Clinical Education team with up-to-date personal and emergency contact information
- Completion of any additional clinical rotation site requirements (credentialing process)

Any student who does not complete the didactic phase of the program in good academic standing will be required to remediate before progressing to the clinical phase (Please see remediation policy below).

To qualify for graduation from the MMMC PAS Program and be eligible to confer a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree, students must complete the entire PA
curriculum and fulfill the following requirements:

- Completion of all MMC PAS courses with a minimum of a letter grade of “C” or above
- Satisfactory completion of all PAS program courses with a minimum GPA of 3.0 or greater
- Successful completion of all clinical phase courses
- Successfully pass all summative assessments
- Compliance with all institutional and program policies and procedures
- Settlement of all financial obligations to the institution
- Completion of all graduation clearance requirements as instructed by the Registrar

Only students who have completed all the above requirements by April 30th will receive a diploma with the published commencement date. Those completing all requirements after April 30th will receive a diploma with the date of June 30th, October 31st, or December 31st.

Non-Academic Probation/Dismissal Policy:
Any violation of published institutional or program policies pertaining to conduct unbecoming of a MMC PAS student, regardless of the student’s calculated grade for a particular course, should be reported to the Student Progress and Promotion Committee.

Based on the incident(s) and associated documentation, the committee may recommend disciplinary action, including but not limited to counseling, oral reprimand, written reprimand, probation, restitution, suspension, and expulsion. The recommended actions will be provided to the student in writing, with acknowledgement of receipt and a copy placed within the student’s file.

Students have a right to appeal the disciplinary action following the Institution’s appeal policy and procedure.

PROCEDURE:

1. A student falling below a cumulative GPA of 3.0, in any given semester, may be placed on academic probation.
2. To be removed from academic probation, the student must attain a cumulative GPA at or above 3.0 within two semesters.
3. Students who earn an “F” for any final course grade may be recommended for dismissal from the program.
4. A student, who does not obtain a GPA of 3.0 or greater, by the end of the didactic year of instruction, will be recommended for dismissal from the PA program. Such
dismissals shall be done in a timely fashion, but no later than three weeks after the completion of the phase.

5. The Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee makes recommendations of probation or dismissal to the Program Director.

6. The Program Director may accept or deny the recommendation and any recommendation for dismissal is forwarded to the Dean for final academic action.

7. A decision to dismiss by the Dean may be appealed to the President.

**PA Program Remediation Policy:**
The PA Program utilizes the following grading scale for letter grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>89.5-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>84.5-89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>79.5-84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>74.5-79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>69.5-74.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Didactic Course Remediation:**
Course remediation will only be offered to students who fail a course with a grade of less than 70%. These students will receive an “I” (incomplete) for the course, which will be converted to a letter grade upon completion of remediation. Remediation will consist of a comprehensive multiple choice examination administered within two (2) weeks following the end of the failed course. Students who earn a ≥ 69.5% on the remediation examination will receive a “C” grade (and no higher) for the course. Failure to achieve ≥ 69.5% will result in an “F” grade for the course and is not subject to additional remediation.

**Clinical Course Remediation:**
Remediation in the clinical phase of the program will occur when a MMC PA Sciences student fails to pass a graded assignment with a 70% or higher.

**PROCEDURE:**
**Didactic Phase Remediation Procedure:**

1. Failure to achieve ≥ 69.5% will result in an "F" grade for the course and is not subject to additional remediation will be referred to the Student Progress and Promotion Committee for recommendations on future progression
2. Only one course per Term may be remediated by students. If a student receives more than one “I” grade or an “F” grade (before or after remediation), the student
will be required to withdraw from all classes upon receipt of the second deficient grade and will be referred to the Student Progress and Promotion Committee for recommendations on future progression.

3. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater, on a 4.0 scale, in order to progress through the program in good standing. If at any point after the completion of a course, a student’s cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be placed on academic probation and meet with the Student Progress and Promotion Committee and academic advisor to discuss strategies and a plan for success.

4. Once on academic probation, the student will have until the end of the didactic curriculum to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 or above. The Student Progress and Promotion Committee will meet Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee to track the progress of students on academic probation.

5. Students will be recommended for dismissal by the Student Progress and Promotion Committee to the Dean if:
   1. A student earns an “F” in any course
   2. A student does not have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above at the end of the didactic curriculum
   3. A student on academic probation does not show sufficient progress, as deemed by the Progress and Promotions Committee
   4. Decisions of dismissal by the Dean may be appealed to the President.

Clinical Phase Remediation Procedure:
Failure of an End of Rotation Exam Failure of one End of Rotation Exam requires the student to remediate, which consists of a written explanation of the “keyword feedback” provided on the student’s individual PAEA EOR Exam Performance Report. The student will:

1. Select 25 bullet points (if there are less than 25 bullets, the student must answer all bullet points)
2. For each bullet point, the student must expand on the topic listed, focusing on the TASK identified (i.e., clinical intervention, clinical therapeutics, diagnosis, diagnostic studies, etc.) (References must be provided for each bullet point)
3. After the remediation plan is accurately completed, the student will be required to take another version of the Rosh Review EOR exam in timed mode within one week of failing the EOR exam.
4. Students must pass with a score of 70% or higher within one week of the original examination.
5. A grade of 70% will be recorded as the final grade
6. If the student does not achieve a grade of 70% or higher, on the remediation End of Rotation Examination, the original score will stand as the final grade.

Failure of a remediation examination of End of Rotation Exam
Failure of an End of Rotation remediation exam will result in the student failing the rotation. This will require the student to repeat the rotation during their clinical elective. The student will also be placed on academic probation.

**Failure of two End of Rotation Exams**

In the event of a second End of Rotation exam failure, the student will:

1. Perform the remediation process as outlined above.
2. Be placed on Academic Probation for the remainder of the clinical phase

**Failure of three End of Rotation Exams**

In the event of a third End of Rotation exam failure, the student will:

1. Referred to the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program Student Progress and Promotion Committee for dismissal from the program
2. The student has the option to pursue the appeals process through the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

**Failure of Graded Assignments**

In the event that a student scores below 70% on a graded activity during the clinical phase of the program, the following will occur:

1. The student will arrange a meeting with the Clinical Education Director to discuss the assignment and complete a Clinical Remediation Form.
2. The Clinical Education Director will provide the student with a list of topics that were missed on the graded assignment.
3. The student will be issued a remediation plan and a deadline for completion of his/her plan.
4. After the remediation plan has been completed, the student will be re-assessed based upon the nature of his/her deficiency.
5. On re-assessment, the student is expected to achieve a minimum grade of 70%.
6. If the student achieves a minimum grade of 70% or higher, the student has successfully completed the remediation. However, the original grade for the assignment stands as the final grade.
7. Failure to adhere to deadlines and/or failure to achieve a minimum grade of 70% will result in referral to the Student Progress and Promotion Committee.
8. Copies of the Clinical Remediation Form and any correspondence will be made available for the Chair of the Student Progress and Promotion Committee, the Course Director, the Clinical Education Director, the Didactic Education Director, the student’s faculty advisor, and placed in the student’s file
School of Graduate Studies and Research (SOGSR) Academic Appeals
1. The responsible faculty awards definitive grades. The instructor or course committee designates a grade for the student and submits it electronically to the Office of the Registrar.

2. The Registrar (or his/her designee) receives all grades from each of the Schools and provides them to the appropriate Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC), which consists of members of the teaching faculty appointed by the Dean. The Dean of the School concerned determines the number and mix of each SEPC.

3. The appropriate SEPC recommends an academic status for each enrolled student based on the School’s academic policies. The Office of the Registrar records the recommendations. If SEPC makes a dismissal recommendation, the Associate Vice President (AVP) for Enrollment Management will notify the appropriate Academic Affairs Dean of the SEPC recommendation within 24 hours. The Academic Affairs Dean will then notify the student of the dismissal recommendation, in person and in writing, within three (3) working days. The student will be required to sign for the letter.

4. The AVP for Enrollment Management will also notify the Financial Aid Office of the dismissal recommendation for closer monitoring of future disbursements and continued eligibility for federal financial aid.

5. If a student is recommended for dismissal, they will be invited to appear in a dismissal hearing with the appropriate School’s Ad Hoc Dismissal Committee where they can present their case and respond to questions from the Committee. The School’s Dean in consultation with the Academic Affairs Dean will establish the Ad Hoc Dismissal Committee’s membership. The dismissal hearing must occur within ten (10) working days of the date of the written notification to the student. Failure to appear for the hearing will be interpreted as acceptance and confirmation of the dismissal recommendation. For the hearing, the Committee will accept, either in person or in writing, up to three expressions of support for the student. This is not a legal proceeding. Therefore, representation by legal counsel is not permitted. The Committee will then deliberate and make a decision. The Dean can decide to dismiss or allow a student to return detailing specific curricular and/or behavioral requirements and stipulations. The Dean’s decision will be communicated by phone within twenty-four (24) hours, with the student required to pick-up and sign for the written decision letter within three (3) calendar days.

6. If a student is dismissed, they may appeal the dismissal decision to the Dean of their respective School. However, the basis for the appeal must be a compelling reason such as 1) bias or 2) failure to follow due process on the part of the SEPC or Ad Hoc Dismissal Committee. A student must notify the Dean’s Office within five (5) calendar days of the date of the dismissal notification letter if they wish to appeal. The Dean will hear the appeal based on the claim of compelling reasons, bias or failure to follow due process within ten (10) calendar days. The Dean will not rehear the case itself, but will evaluate the merit of the appeal claim. The Dean can either uphold or overturn
the dismissal decision. The Dean will inform the Executive Vice President/Provost and General Counsel of their final decision before it is communicated to the student. All decisions at the Dean’s level are final and must be communicated to the student, appropriate School Academic and/or Student Affairs Dean, Office of the Registrar, Treasurer’s Office, and Financial Aid within five (5) calendar days.

7. A student will continue to be enrolled, or eligible to be enrolled, throughout the dismissal hearing and appeals process until all appeal rights have been exhausted. Financial Aid and Training Grant Directors (such as T32 training grants in graduate school) will closely monitor the potential financial impact on the student to ensure their needs are met and reserves the right to establish a special disbursement schedule for living expenses. Financial Aid and Training Grant Directors will also protect the College’s interests and compliance with federal regulations to ensure that if the dismissal recommendation is upheld, the student will not have been over-awarded financial aid.

8. If the dismissal recommendation is upheld, the effective date of the dismissal will be the hearing or final appeal date, whichever is later, and the College’s refund policies would apply as of that date Failure to comply with these requirements shall waive and terminate any further rights the student may have under this procedure.

**PA Program Deceleration Policy:**
The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program recognizes that there may be circumstances other than academics that require a student to alter his or her course of study and will consider those factors when reviewing the request for deceleration. **Deceleration will only be offered in rare instances.**

**Deceleration Procedure:**
1. A student who experiences a significant interruption in the full-time plan of study may submit a written request to the Program Director to decelerate. The letter must have sufficient information to explain the request. The Student Progress and Promotion Committee may also recommend deceleration.
2. If deceleration is approved, the Program Director will convey the recommendations and expectations to the student in writing.
3. The student will return to the program as a full-time student at the beginning of the semester in which he/she decelerated during the following year unless otherwise stated. For example, a student leaving the didactic portion of the program in the middle of the spring semester will return to the program at the beginning of the following spring semester. Due to didactic courses only being offered once per year, there is no option for a shorter absence in the didactic year.

**Student Withdrawal Policy**
A withdrawal is a permanent cessation of graduate study. If a student withdraws, he or she must reapply to Meharry as a new student and be considered for admission by the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program’s Admissions
Committee.

If a student receives a medical withdrawal, he or she will be required to present medical clearance before being readmitted. Additionally, a returning student may need to complete a background check.

A student withdrawing without presenting to the director of Admissions and Records written permission from the Dean forfeits all claims for credit or refund.

Withdrawal Procedure:
1. A student may withdraw from Meharry Medical College after completing the official withdrawal form with properly executed with the appropriate signatures.
2. The form must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar.
3. Grades for completed courses will be recorded on the official record.
4. If the student desires to return to Meharry Medical College, the formal readmissions application process must be completed.

Sick Leave, Bereavement and Absenteeism Policy
If a student needs time away from the program due to illness, personal loss, or other life events, students are allowed to miss a total of five (5) days. Students are required to notify the PA Program whenever they are absent from any class or clinical learning rotation.

Absence from a didactic course or clinical learning rotation in excess of five (5) days seriously jeopardizes the educational experience and academic requirements of the program. For a clinical rotations, the student may be required to make up that missed time.

PROCEDURE:
If a student needs to be absent from class or didactic learning activity for illness or other reasons he/she must contact the Program’s Administration Office prior to the schedule class/activity, notify the Academic Education Director and the Course Director via email and phone.

- If a student needs to be absent from a clinical rotation for illness or other reasons he/she must contact the Preceptor prior to his/her regular reporting time, notify the Program’s Administration Office and notify the Clinical Education Director via email and phone.
- For absences during the didactic phase students are required to present a written note from their health care provider on the second day of their absence to the Academic Education Director or Course Director noting the reason for absence and date(s) of treatment for absences from class/activity.
- For absences during the clinical phase students are required to present a note from their health care provider on the second day of their absence the Clinical Education
Director and Preceptor noting the reason for absence and date(s) of treatment for absences from the clinical rotation

- Failure to advise the PA Program of absences may result in the lowering of the rotation grade
- Absence from a didactic course or clinical learning rotation in excess of five (5) days seriously jeopardizes the educational experience and academic requirements of the program. For a clinical rotations, the student may be required to make up that missed time
- Students will be required to make up time missed due to sickness or to repeat the entire clinical learning rotation, if such absence(s) is/are felt by the program or preceptor to jeopardize the student’s clinical competence or to compromise his/her professional responsibility
- During the didactic phase students wishing to take an absence to attend a health care conference or for personal reasons must request advance written permission from the program via the Academic Education Director. If the request is approved, the student must then notify the Course Directors of all classes that will be missed and arrange for make-up.
- During the clinical phase students wishing to take an absence to attend a health care conference or for personal reasons must request advance written permission from the Clinical Education Director. If the request is approved, the student must then notify their preceptor.

If a student suffers the loss of a close relative at any time during the program he/she will be allowed 3 days of excused absence. If more time is needed the student is to contact the Program Director by phone and/or email to formally make this request. Faculty and Course Directors will be notified and arrangements for make-up will be made.

**PA Program Inclement Weather Policy**


**Inclement Weather Procedure:**
The following apply:
1. If an exam has started once a campus closure has been issued, students should be aware that the examination would be completed while the campus is closed.
2. Campus is closed before an exam begins: Course or EOR exam must be rescheduled. All courses should have an alternate exam day and time scheduled; the rescheduled exam will occur on this backup day. If campus is closed on the backup day, then the exam will be rescheduled for a subsequent time. Students should be aware this means an examination may be delivered on a separate day and time when the class does not usually meet. The Course Director will notify students of the decision.
3. There are lectures and no required activity: Course Director will reschedule activity.
Another possibility is the MMC campus may not be closed for the entire day but may open late. In this case, all activities that were originally scheduled to occur after the opening time will still occur, including exams. Activities that were scheduled for earlier than the opening time (e.g., from 8-10 if the campus opens at 10:00), then the numbered policies above will be followed.

When adverse weather conditions are likely, or there are other situations that could affect a student’s expected participation, discussing options in advance is recommended. There may be emergency situations that warrant exclusions to this policy. In these situations, the Course Director or other persons in authority may alter this policy to appropriately deal with the emergency.

Students should have access to contact numbers of the persons with whom they work and similarly should share their own contact information. Good communication will go far to minimize misinterpretation of unexpected absences.

**Dress Code and Identification Policy**

Personal attire should be reflective of professionalism. Students in the School of Graduate Studies and Research’s PA Sciences Program, at all levels of education and training, are expected to maintain a proper professional image in their behavior and personal appearance at all times. Professional appearance includes the following:

1. Hair is to be neatly groomed and clean.
2. Nails are to be neatly trimmed and clean.
3. Males are not to wear hats or bandanas inside any Meharry or affiliate facility.
4. Students are expected to wear clean, appropriate apparel (shirts, pants, dresses, skirts, etc.) and shoes to all academic activities, and when visiting any of our affiliate institutions.

Unacceptable attire for PA students include:

1. Short (mini) skirts,
2. Tee shirts with inappropriate inscriptions,
3. Halter tops,
4. Midriffs
5. Excessively low-cut necklines,
6. Tank Tops
7. Spaghetti straps
8. Sweat bands,
9. Over-sized sagging pants/jeans/shorts
10. Caps or hats
11. Rubber thongs/Flip flops
12. Leggings
Professional Dress while in the Clinic Setting should include the following: Students must follow Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines as established by Centers for Disease Control (CDC): https://www.cdc.gov/HAI/pdfs/ppe/PPEslides6-29-04.pdf Students must follow universal precautions and the use of PPE as established by Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA) https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/hospital/hazards/univprec/univ.html 1.

1. Business professional is the accepted dress for all affiliates/clinical rotations unless specified otherwise by a preceptor of the Clinical Education Director regarding a particular rotation or rotation activity.
2. A short, white consultation jacket with the following:
   1. The MMC PA Sciences Program Patch
   2. The Student’s first and last name
   3. PA-S (PA–Student) after the student’s name will be worn during clinical situations and patient contacts unless the facility or preceptor rules require different attire. Expectations should be discussed in advance of the first day in a clinical setting.
3. Scrubs may be worn during patient contact with the white consultation jacket and closed toe shoes.
4. Students must wear, and have visible at all times, the Meharry Medical College institutional nametag with the following information:
   1. The student’s picture
   2. The student’s name
   3. The institution name
   4. The school the student is enrolled in
   5. PA-S, identifying the students as physician assistant student

The following are not accepted in the Clinic Setting:

1. Open-toed shoes are not permitted in the clinic setting
2. Jewelry that is dangling/hanging, piercings and other accessories that pose a safety concern for the student or patient are prohibited.

At no time should a student, either by virtue of his/her skills or knowledge attained while progressing through the MMC PA Program, misrepresent him-/her-self as being any medical professional other than a PA student. Students may not use previously earned titles and credentials in any correspondence regarding related to the MMC PA Program, (i.e., EMT, RN, PT, PhD, RD, etc.).

These statements are general in nature and apply to all patient care settings. The student shall also follow affiliate dress code policies established by the preceptor or facility.
MMC Social Media Policy

The PA Program follows the institution’s social media policy. Meharry Medical College recognizes the value social media plays in networking and in education; however, improper use can potentially create legal and ethical dilemmas, especially when the online behavior is deemed unprofessional or unlawful. This policy is intended to inform Meharry Medical College workforce, students and business affiliates of the expected social media etiquette and consequences of breaches to protect their personal and professional integrity and MMC’s institutional image and reputation.

DEFINITIONS:

Social Media Platforms: Technology tools and online spaces that enable users to build, integrate or facilitate community interactions. Examples include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snap Chat, Instagram, YouTube and Web2, which make available personal views and information to the public.

Social media: Media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques. Social media uses web-based and mobile technologies to convert communication into interactive dialogue.

Social networking: The use of dedicated websites and applications to communicate with others, or to find people with similar interest to one’s own.

PHI: Protected Health Information is any identifiable health information that is used, maintained, stored, or transmitted by a HIPAA-covered entity.

PROCEDURE:

1.1 Social Media Guidelines

1.1.1 Personal Responsibilities

Faculty, staff, students, and business affiliates are personally responsible for anything they publish online. MMC does not review, edit, censor, or endorse individual posts. All MMC contingents must consider how their posts reflect on them as an individual, and about how they reflect MMC thus ensuring the College is not shown in a negative light.

1.1.2

MMC supports the use of social medial for online communications but urges faculty, staff, students, and business affiliates to do so appropriately, exercising sound judgment and common sense. If there is any doubt about the suitability, the content should not be posted. All social media users shall post sensibly and responsible in accordance with MMC’s policy and guidelines. Anything posted that can potentially tarnish MMC’s image will ultimately be the responsibility of the individual.
1.1.3 When participating in online discussion forums/blogs/Facebook etc., related directly or indirectly to MMC, in the delivery of a subject, a disclaimer should be used to ensure that persons covered by this policy understand that the forum/blog etc. is not monitored on a full-time basis.

1.1.4 MMC prohibits sharing of Protected Health Information ("PHI") or sensitive electronic information on personal or professional social media sites. The posting of PHI is only permitted on MMC sponsored social media sites with management approval and prior properly executed patient authorization following MMC policies for "Photographing/Videotaping/Audiotaping of Patients" and "Authorization for Use and Disclosure of Protected Health Information." For questions on authorization on posting PHI, contact MMC Compliance Office (615.327.6780).

2. Transparency

All persons covered by this policy must not suggest that they speak on behalf of MMC in blogs or personal webpages if they have not specifically been given that responsibility by the Marketing and Communication department. If referencing MMC, a visible and clear disclaimer shall be posted to make it evident that they are sharing personal views and not those of MMC.

Meharry Medical College must not be used in personal social media account names, nor shall the Meharry Medical College logo be used in social media sites, without prior written approval from the Marketing and Communication department. This potentially creates legal risk for individuals and the College.

3. Privacies and Copyright

3.1 All persons covered by this policy should protect their own privacy by not divulging personal facts or information that may compromise personal and professional privacy.

3.2 Faculty and Students should not discuss their clinical/placement/internship activities online if it has the potential to directly or indirectly identify or harm their patients and/or clients.

3.3 Confidential information about a student or other staff or faculty member should not be disclosed.

3.4 The intellectual property of others should be respected.

3.5 Students should exercise caution when they create online study groups. The materials contained within must have proper attribution and follow applicable copyright laws. Documents of exams or quizzes not approved by the respective faculty
members for sharing may result in sanctions up to and including dismissal from the College.

4. Professionalism

4.1 MMC requires that all individuals covered by this policy work together to maintain a professional environment. Be sensitive to cultural issues associated with indigenous and religious groups such as customs related to deceased people. Exercise caution on sensitive topics that could cause offense.

4.2 Proven instances of policy violation will be deemed as misconduct and disciplinary actions may include up to and including dismissal/termination.

4.3 Faculty, staff and students must refrain from posting to social media any language (text or audio) or images which portray or can be interpreted to portray or promote the following: Illegal activities, intoxication, harassment, profanity, obscenity, pornography, perceived sexual pictures, abuse to people or animals, defamatory or libelous matter, threats, infringement of intellectual property rights, invasion of privacy and hate. Also prohibited is discrimination on the basis of protected classes.

4.3.1 Images of the deceased (e.g., cadaveric specimens, prosecuted specimens) or images of clinical work performed, without prior patient consent, should not be posted on the Internet.

4.3.2 Students should respect their commitment to learning and should not use practical placement time for personal social networking. Such acts of unprofessionalism, if deemed problematic by the College, may result in disciplinary action.

4.3.3 It is important to adhere to the College’s values and institutional policies. This Policy does not supersede other existing policies including, but not limited to the Student Code of Professional Conduct and the College’s Code of Conduct, and students, faculty and staff should continue to abide by those.

5. Establishing boundaries between professional and personal lives

Online personal and business personas are likely to intersect. The College respects the free speech rights of all, but staff, faculty and students must remember that the community, colleagues, and others may have access to the online content they post. Be aware that Meharry staff may monitor social networking sites on occasion and egregious unprofessional postings could lead to disciplinary actions.

5.1 All persons covered under this policy should be aware that personal networking on social media sites could blur the student-faculty/staff relationship. It is advised that
staff and faculty refrain from accepting or soliciting request from/to current students on their social media.

5.2 Students should not accept personal networking requests (i.e., Facebook) from their patients/clients. Similarly, students should not send personal networking requests to their patients/clients. These types of relationships can blur professional patient/client boundaries. Students should communicate electronically with their patients/clients through mechanisms provided by the College that use encryption and password protection to ensure confidentiality.

5.3 The College recognizes that most individuals use some form of social media and advises that these applications be used with caution when the affiliation with the College is mentioned or can be inferred as postings shall be subject to this Policy.

5.4 The growing practice of using home computers, smartphones, iPad, tablets, and other portable devices for work-related purposes may increase the risk of confidential information being lost, stolen or inadvertently shared. The College community should ensure that work-related content is password protected when using technology devices for both work and personal purposes.

6. Breach of Policy

6.1 Non-compliance with this Policy will constitute misconduct, which may result in disciplinary action, including a verbal or written warning, or in serious cases, termination of employment or dismissal from the College.

6.2 As an academic health science center, students and faculty are held to a higher standard of professionalism. In addition to disciplinary action from the College, they may face disciplinary action from the professional society (if a member).

Electronic Device Use

Portable electronic devices, such as notebook computers, tablets, and cell phones allow access information that may be relevant to what is happening in the classroom. They can also be a source of distraction and disturbance. Use of these tools is allowed if disruptions to peers is limited.

Cell phones: All students must have their cell phones on silent/vibrate (so as not to disturb the class with personal phone calls/texts coming in), and the use of phones for personal purposes (reading/sending texts, etc.) during class is not permitted. In case of an expected urgent or emergent phone call, please let the instructor know that you may be expecting such a call and will step out of the classroom if it comes while class is in session.

It is acceptable to use the cell phone for reference material that is being covered in class, and to have your laptops/tablets for notes and/or Internet access. Any use of a computing device (smart phone, laptop, tablet, etc.) must be relevant to what is
happening in the course. The instructor reserves the right to ask students to leave if their device is distracting others, or they are using the device for unrelated purposes. Failure to comply with this policy is a professionalism concern and is subject to evaluation by the Committee on Student Progress and Promotion.

Cell phones or other electronic devices are not to be used or visible during exams. If a student has his or her cell phone or other unauthorized electronic devices out or available during an exam, the student will automatically receive a “0” on that exam. A second infraction will result in the student receiving an “F” for his/her final grade in the course. Any unauthorized use of electronic devices during an exam will result in a referral to the PA Student Progress and Promotion Committee.

Recommended Computer Technology

Computer Requirements and Laptop Configurations Because the Office of Information Technology cannot support an infinite variety of computer configurations, we frequently review the current needs of faculty, staff, and students. The minimum configurations shown below are necessary to ensure compatibility of newly acquired computer systems with the Meharry network. It is recommended that all students have an external hard drive to back-up their computer.

Recommended laptop specifications for new purchase:
- Processor: Intel Core i3, i5 or i7
- Memory: 4GB or more, Hard Drive: 500GB or more (Solid State Drive – 128 or 256)
- Optical Drive: CD/DVD – RW
- Network Connectivity: 10/100/1000 Ethernet/Wireless N
- Ports: USB
- Operating System: Windows 7 Professional or Windows 8 Professional
- Applications: Microsoft Office Professional 2010 or 2013
- Anti-Virus: There are several that are available. Laptops must have an antivirus program installed before they will be allowed to connect to Meharry’s network. AVG has a free version.
- Warranty: 3 years onsite (or Pro) support

Recommended specifications for currently owned laptops:
- Processor: Intel Core i3
- Memory: 2GB, Hard Drive: 256GB
- Optical Drive: CD/DVD – RW
- Network Connectivity 10/100/1000 MB Ethernet, Wireless
- Operating System: Windows 7 Professional
- Applications: Microsoft Office Professional 2010
- Anti-Virus: There are several that are available. Laptops must have an antivirus program installed before they will be allowed to connect to Meharry’s network. AVG has a free version.
Recommended Mac Specifications:
• Processor: Intel Core or Intel Dual Core
• Memory: 4GB, Hard Drive: 500GB or 256GB Solid State
• Optical Drive: DVD-RW
• Network Connectivity: Ethernet, Wireless
• Operating System: OSX 10.8 or above
• Applications: Microsoft Office for Mac 2011
### Section 4

**Preclinical Course of Study/Curricular Components**

Unless otherwise stated, all courses must be successfully completed in sequence and during the academic term offered in order to progress to the next term and to graduate.

#### Preclinical Year

**Semester 1 (Spring)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 735-01</td>
<td>Medical Anatomy and Lab</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 733-01</td>
<td>Pathophysiology I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 752-01</td>
<td>Physical Examination and Documentation I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 725-01</td>
<td>Physician Assistant Profession I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 739-01</td>
<td>Medical Research and Information Literacy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 747-01</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience I</td>
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**Semester 2 (Summer)**

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<tr>
<td>GSPA 745-01</td>
<td>Pathophysiology II</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSPA 720-01</td>
<td>Clinical Laboratory and Medical Imaging</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 753-01</td>
<td>Physical Examination and Documentation II</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPA 724-01</td>
<td>Medical Ethics and Legal Medicine</td>
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### Semester 3 (Fall)

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<tr>
<td>GSPA 714-01</td>
<td>Clinical Procedure Skills I</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSPA 754-01</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
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<td>GSPA 734-01</td>
<td>Pharmacology I</td>
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<td>GSPA 728-01</td>
<td>Adult Clinical Medicine I</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSPA 751-01</td>
<td>Introduction to Surgery</td>
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<td>GSPA 755-01</td>
<td>Reproductive Health</td>
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<td>GSPA 748-01</td>
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### Semester 4 (Spring)

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<tr>
<td>GSPA 706-01</td>
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<td>GSPA 729-01</td>
<td>Adult Clinical Medicine II</td>
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<td>GSPA 738-01</td>
<td>Pediatric Clinical Medicine</td>
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<td>GSPA 741-01</td>
<td>Clinical Procedure Skills II</td>
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<td>GSPA 732-01</td>
<td>Geriatrics</td>
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<td>GSPA 744-01</td>
<td>Pharmacology II</td>
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<td>GSPA 749-01</td>
<td>Applied Learning Experience III</td>
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**Course Descriptions**

**Semester 1 - Spring**

GSPA 735-01 Medical Anatomy and Lab (5 Credits)
This course provides a comprehensive survey of the gross anatomy of the human body, with clinical correlation and application. Topics covered include the back, upper and lower extremities, thorax, abdomen, pelvis and perineum, and the head and neck. This course will be taught in both lecture and laboratory format, with supplemental learning via virtual reality tools and platforms.

**GSPA 733-01 Pathophysiology I (4 credits)**
This course is the first of two courses designed to provide a foundation in normal physiology while providing associated pathology. The purpose of this course is to enable first year PA students to understand mechanisms that allow the body to function at the cellular, tissue, organ system and whole-body levels, with an emphasis on organ system and whole-body levels, and how these mechanisms are affected in pathologic states.

**GSPA 752-01 Physical Examination and Documentation I (4 credits)**
Physical Examination and Documentation I is a four-credit hour course designed to provide students with the skills and knowledge needed to elicit a comprehensive history and perform a complete physical examination. Discussions and demonstrations will introduce the appropriate use of diagnostic equipment, interviewing techniques, cultural awareness, patients’ rights, and confidentiality. The student will be taught to recognize and differentiate normal from abnormal physical examination findings and to record and orally present their findings in an organized manner.

**GSPA 725-01 The Physician Assistant Profession I (2 credits)**
Physician Assistant Profession offers students the opportunity to understand their professional environment, community resources, legal parameters, and ethical situations they may face. The course also addresses interpersonal dynamics in working with physicians and other healthcare providers.

**GSPA 747-01 Applied Learning Experience I (2 credits)**
Applied Learning Experience I is the first in a series of four courses designed to develop student skills related to integration of patient assessment and clinical medicine concepts from other courses in their curriculum. Student learners will review how to search, interpret, and evaluate the medical literature, then focus on a step-by-step approach to further develop and implement their group Capstone project. Student learners will gain an understanding of the principles of research via, patient-centered problem-based learning activities, critically appraising medical literature, and further developing their group capstone project.

**GSPA 739-01 Medical Research and Information Literacy (2 credits)**
This course is designed to help develop critical thinking regarding interpretation of evidence-based practice and medical research literature and its application to patient care to promote the evidence-based clinical practice research. MR/IL, we will integrate concepts of epidemiology, research study design, and biostatistics and apply them to interpretation of medical literature, with a goal of producing clinically relevant answers to
patient care-related questions.

Semester 2 - Summer

GSPA 750-01 Pathophysiology II (4 credits)
This course is the second of two courses designed to provide a foundation in normal physiology while providing associated pathology. The purpose of this course is to enable first year PA students to understand mechanisms that allow the body to function at the cellular, tissue, organ system and whole-body levels, with an emphasis on organ system and whole-body levels, and how these mechanisms are affected in pathologic states.

GSPA 720-01 Clinical Laboratory and Medical Imaging (3 credits)
This course will provide the Physician Assistant student with an overview of commonly utilized laboratory tests, and the principles of radiological imaging. The student will learn the appropriate application of these laboratory tests in a clinical setting, and the interpretation of selected clinical laboratory data. The student will also learn the principles of conventional x-ray, computerized tomography, angiography, magnetic resonance imaging, sonography and fluoroscopy as they are applied to the common pathological processes.

GSPA 753-01 Physical Examination and Documentation II (4 credits)
The second course in the series, Physical Examination and Documentation II is a four credit hour course designed to develop clinical decision-making while recognizing the medical needs and challenges within the healthcare system for specific patient population. We will utilize problem-focused case studies, simulations, small groups, and discussions to apply concepts learned in class. Focus will be on developing a differential diagnosis, collecting, and performing a problem focused history and physical exam and documentation in the medical record utilizing SOAP Notes and the electronic medical record. Emphasis is placed on effective communication skills, social, cultural and behavioral issues affecting health and disease and health literacy.

GSPA 724-01 Medical Ethics and Legal Medicine (2 credits)
This course introduces PA students to the four areas of medical ethics and provide them with the opportunity to develop skills in identifying, analyzing, and resolving ethical issues in clinical medicine. PA students will participate in research related to medical ethics and learn to apply medical ethics in clinical, research and community environments.

Semester 3 - Fall

GSPA 734-01 Pharmacology I (3 credits)
This course is designed to provide a solid foundation in pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, and the physiology associated with drug mechanism of action and interaction. Specific drug classes will be discussed, with attention given to individual drugs, their uses, side effects, similarities, and differences. The relative cost, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics for frequently prescribed agents for treatment of common diseases
related to the following organ systems will also be discussed: Cardiovascular System, Gastrointestinal System/Nutrition, EENT, Infectious Diseases, the Dermatologic System, Hematologic System, and the Renal System.

**GSPA 728-01 Adult Clinical Medicine I (4 credits)**
The main emphasis of all Clinical Medicine (CM) courses centers on the principles and provision of primary care medicine in all settings, especially rural and underserved areas. Adult Clinical Medicine I serve as the first course in the Adult Clinical Medicine course series. Adult Clinical Medicine I utilize an organ system approach to present disease processes in terms of epidemiology, etiology, clinical presentation, physical exam findings, diagnostic studies, differential diagnoses, treatment/management, patient education and health maintenance. Topics include diseases and conditions pertinent to the Cardiovascular System, Gastrointestinal System/Nutrition, EENT, Infectious Diseases, the Dermatologic System, Hematologic System, and the Renal System.

**GSPA 714-01 Clinical Procedure Skills I (2 credits)**
Clinical Procedure Skills I introduce students to essential procedures and skills necessary for practice, such as venipuncture; obtaining blood cultures; arterial blood gases, IV insertion; Injections; Endotracheal intubation; Nasogastric tube placement; and urinary bladder.

**GSPA 754-01 Public Health (2 credits)**
The Public Health course is a 2-credit hour course designed to explore the concepts of public health as they relate to the role of the practicing physician assistant and will examine such concepts as disease prevention, surveillance, reporting and intervention, patient advocacy and maintenance of population health. At the conclusion of this course, the physician assistant student will have an appreciation for the public health system, the health care delivery system, and health policy.

**GSPA 755-01 Reproductive Health (3 credits)**
This course offers a systemic study of the epidemiology, presentation, differential diagnosis, and management of OB/GYN and urologic disease processes essential to primary care practice.

**GSPA 751-01 Introduction to Surgery (2 credits)**
The course is designed to provide the students with an introduction and an overview to the discipline of surgery. The management of acute surgical problems, critical illness, and elective surgical procedures will be discussed, as well as the pre- and post-operative care of the surgical patient. The course will also introduce knot tying, surgical asepsis, and surgical instrumentation.

**GSPA 748-01 Applied Learning Experience II (2 credits)**
Applied Learning Experience II is the second in a series of four courses designed to develop student skills related to integration of patient assessment and clinical medicine concepts.
from other courses in their curriculum. Student learners will review how to search, interpret, and evaluate the medical literature, then focus on a step-by-step approach to the further develop and implement their group Capstone project. Student learners will gain an understanding of the principles of research via, patient-centered problem-based learning activities, critically appraising medical literature, and further developing their group capstone project.

**Semester 4 - Spring**

**GSPA 744-01 Pharmacology II (3 credits)**
This course is designed to provide a solid foundation in pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, and the physiology associated with drug mechanism of action and interaction. Specific drug classes will be discussed, with attention given to individual drugs, their uses, side effects, similarities, and differences. The relative cost, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics for frequently prescribed agents for treatment of common diseases related to the following organ systems will also be discussed: Topics include diseases and conditions pertinent to the Genitourinary System (Male and Female), Reproductive System (Male and Female), Musculoskeletal System, Pulmonary System, Neurologic System, Psychiatry/Behavioral Science, and the Endocrine System

**GSPA 729-01 Adult Clinical Medicine II (4 credits)**
The main emphasis of all Clinical Medicine (CM) courses centers on the principles and provision of primary care medicine in all settings, especially rural and underserved areas. Adult Clinical Medicine II serves as the second course in the Adult Clinical Medicine course series. Adult Clinical Medicine II utilizes an organ system approach to present disease processes in terms of epidemiology, etiology, clinical presentation, physical exam findings, diagnostic studies, differential diagnoses, treatment/management, patient education and health maintenance. Topics include diseases and conditions pertinent to the Genitourinary System (Male and Female), Reproductive System (Male and Female), Musculoskeletal System, Pulmonary System, Neurologic System, Psychiatry/Behavioral Science, and the Endocrine System

**GSPA 737-01 Pediatric Clinical Medicine (3 credits)**
Pediatric Clinical Medicine provides an introduction to the fundamentals of pediatric medicine, covering the age span from neonate through adolescence. Topics covered include normal growth and development, preventative care and anticipatory guidance, common pediatric illnesses and disorders and their diagnosis and management. Less common, but important disorders that are peculiar to the pediatric population are also included.

**GSPA 741-01 Clinical Procedure Skills II (2 credits)**
Clinical Procedure Skills II is the second in a series of two courses used to introduce students to essential procedures and skills necessary for practice, such as casting and splinting, local anesthesia, wound closure, wound closure and dressing techniques and
more. The students will have the opportunity to complete ACLS and BLS training.

**GSPA 732-01 Geriatrics (2 credits)**
This course is designed to provide students the principles of geriatric medicine to provide appropriate, evidence-based, compassionate care to older adult patients. The focus of the course will be on the clinical implications of changes associated with the expected physiologic aging process, as well as the common pathologies and treatment within this patient population.

**GSPA 726-01 Behavioral Medicine (3 credits)**
The course will present an introduction to the neurobiological, psychobiological, emotional, social, and cultural influences on health and illness in the practice of primary care medicine. Personality, sexual, emotional, and behavioral development across the lifespan including end of life issues will be reviewed. Normative and maladaptive responses to developmental tasks and life stressors in relation to physical and emotional health will be emphasized. Principles of violence, identification and prevention will be examined. Instruction and practice in basic counseling skills for patient health care management and implementation of healthier lifestyle practices will be an important focus throughout the course.

**GSPA 749-01 Applied Learning Experience III (1 credit)**
Applied Learning Experience III is the third in a series of four courses designed to develop student learner skills related to integration of patient assessment and clinical medicine concepts from other courses in the MMC PA Program curriculum. Student learners will review how to search, interpret, and evaluate the medical literature, then focus on a step-by-step approach to the further develop and implement their group Capstone project. Student learners will gain an understanding of the principles of research via patient-centered problem-based learning activities, critically appraising medical literature, and further developing their group Capstone project.

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**SECTION 5**
**Student Support Services**

**Center for Educational Development and Support (CEDS)**
CEDS is a comprehensive academic support unit, established to foster an environment that stimulates and nurtures excellence in learning and teaching in all three Meharry schools.

The Center is located in the Rolfe Student Center Building. Students have access to group study rooms, a classroom, conference room, as well as a break room. The lower level of the Rolfe Building houses areas for computer-based learning, instructional learning, and independent study rooms.

An educational skills specialist is available to assess students' academic profiles, develop learning plans, and assist in meeting students' learning needs. Peer tutoring is also available to all students in group or individual sessions.

Additional information can be found on their website: https://home.mmc.edu/education/anna-cherrie-epps-ph-d-center/

**MMC One Stop Center**

The One Stop Center provides current and prospective students a one stop for frequently asked questions that are related to admissions, financial aid, the registrar, and student life. The office is within the Division of Student Affairs suite, on the first floor of the Cal Turner Family Center for Student Education building and is open Monday-Friday 8:30a-5p.

Additional information can be found on their website: https://home.mmc.edu/student-affairs/

**MMC Student Health Services**

Multiple are offered through the MMC Student Health Clinic but should not be used in place of establishing primary or specialty medical care. A complete listing of services provided is available at: https://home.mmc.edu/student-affairs/student-resources/#1496696215524-d1bcd944-fb04

**MMC Counseling Services**

Meharry Medical College provides counseling services from professional providers at a conveniently located campus Counseling Center. The center is committed to a highly effective counseling support system that compliments the educational and human enrichment endeavors of the institution. Counseling services include individual, family and group therapies, crisis intervention, coaching, case management as well as academic counseling. Workshops related to stress reduction, time management and a variety of clinical presentations are regular features of the center.

The services of the Counseling Center are broad-based and encompass services to students' partners and dependents, as well as to faculty and staff. Below is a listing of
some of the services offered:
• Self-esteem problems
• Interpersonal relationships
• Adjustment problems
• Conflict resolution
• Time & stress management
• Short-term psychotherapy
• Marital counseling
• Lifestyle counseling
• Wellness counseling
• Examination anxiety therapy
• Disability counseling
• Medication referral services
• Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender counseling and referral services
• Psychological testing
• Alcohol and substance dependence recovery counseling and referral services

All counseling services for students and their immediate family are provided at no cost to the student. When referrals are made to mental health providers, these services are normally covered under the provision of the student’s health insurance policy.

Please be assured that all counseling services are strictly confidential. No faculty member, staff, peer, friend, or family member will be permitted access to a student’s counseling records without written permission from the counselee. Counseling session’s records are NOT a part of the student's academic records.
SECTION 6
Mistreatment Policy

The MMC PA Program strives to maintain a professional learning environment. However, there are instances when a student may feel as though they have been mistreated and these should be investigated. Examples of mistreatment include: 1) faculty speaks insultingly or unjustifiably harshly, 2) belittles or humiliates, 3) threatens physical harm, 4) physically assaults (hits, slaps, kicks), 5) demands personal services (shopping, baby-sitting), 6) threatens to lower a student’s grade for reasons other than course/clinical or professional performance.

The MMC PA Program follows the School of Graduate Studies and Research (SOGSR) Mistreatment Policy.

PURPOSE: To outline expectations of behaviors that promote a positive learning environment for Meharry Medical College graduate students and other learners and to delineate grievance procedures to address alleged violations without fear of retaliation. This policy offers a definition of mistreatment and provides examples of unacceptable treatment of graduate students, and describes the procedures available to report incidents of mistreatment in a safe and effective manner.

POLICY: Meharry Medical College is an institution rooted in the care of the whole person. Our motto promises the “Worship of God through service to mankind”; interaction between teachers, learners and administrative staff should emulate this founding principle. As such, Meharry is committed to creating and sustaining an educational environment that fosters the values and virtues of:

• Mutual respect
• Trust
• Honesty
• Collegiality
• Compassion
• Accountability

Such values are especially critical to effective relationships between faculty, students, and administrative staff. The graduate learning environment is expected to facilitate students’ acquisition of professional and collegial attitudes necessary to be effective biomedical researchers, clinical investigators, and public health workers. The development and nurturing of these attitudes are enhanced and, indeed, based on the presence of mutual respect between teacher, learner and staff. Characteristics of this respect are the expectation that all participants in the educational program assume their responsibilities in a manner that enriches the quality of the learning process.
Mistreatment of students can occur in a variety of forms and may seriously impair learning. Types of abuse include verbal power, ethnic, physical, and sexual harassment. Examples of student mistreatment include, but are not limited to repeated instances of single egregious instances of:

- Verbally abusing, belittling, or actions that can reasonably be interpreted as demeaning or humiliating
- Assigning duties as punishment rather than education
- Unwarranted exclusion from reasonable learning opportunities
- Threats to fail, give lower grades, or give a poor evaluation for inappropriate reasons
- Asking a student to carry out personal chores or errands
- Pressuring students to exceed reasonable work hours
- Committing an act of physical abuse or violence of any kind such as pushing, shoving, slapping, hitting, tripping, throwing objects at, or taunting remarks about a person’s protected status as defined by Meharry Medical College’s Nondiscrimination Policy Statement:

  Meharry Medical College is an EOE/AA employer and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, religion, color, national origin, handicap, veteran, or immigrant status in its admissions, employment, and education programs or activities.

PROCEDURE: Graduate students who themselves experience or observe other students experiencing possible mistreatment are encouraged to discuss it with someone in a position to understand the context and address necessary action. The individual considering making a report of mistreatment should first, if possible, attempt to resolve the matter directly with the alleged offender. Suggested options for graduate students include:

**Informal Resolution**
Students will be encouraged to utilize any of the informal mechanisms described below whenever possible:

- Direct discussion with the alleged offender
- Conversation with the Course Coordinator, Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)

**Formal Process**
When a student is unable to resolve a situation of abuse or mistreatment using informal mechanisms, he/she will contact the Department Chair. The student will give a written description of the circumstances leading to the complaint to the Department Chair, who will contact the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research (SOGSR). The complainant must be willing to be identified to the person against whom the complaint is directed. A Student Mistreatment ad hoc committee will be appointed by the Associate Dean of the SOGSR consisting of one
faculty member, the DGS (as appropriate) and one student. Selection will be matched to the specifics of the case (e.g. students on committees with student complainant). The DGS will serve as the chair. Particular attention will be made to considerations of continuity, experience, sensitivity to the concerns of students and faculty, and gender, racial, cultural and economic diversity when making appointments to the committee.

The ad hoc committee will be investigatory and advisory to the Associate Dean in questions regarding conduct of students, faculty, and staff. The recommendations and findings of the ad hoc committee will be reviewed by the Associate Dean, who will have the responsibility and authority to determine if the basis exists for referral to the Dean, Human Resources, or to a committee of the Faculty Senate for further review:

- The ad hoc committee will convene within 10 working days after the Chair receives the written complaint. Any member with a conflict of interest will be replaced.
- The ad hoc committee will conduct an investigation by interviewing all parties involved with any witnesses available. Legal counsel is not permitted at this point and the accused or any witnesses have the right to refuse to appear without prejudice against their case.
- All materials will be reviewed by the ad hoc committee and any conclusions regarding the investigation will be reported to the Associate Dean within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. The ad hoc committee will determine:
  - There is no significant basis to conclude that mistreatment or abuse did occur;
  - Find that mistreatment or abuse probably did occur
- The Associate Dean will review the findings and make a decision on corrective action to take. Notification for the involved parties will occur within 10 working days after receiving the recommendations of the ad hoc committee. The Associate Dean will work with the appropriate Department Chair, Dean, etc. to assure corrective action is taken. Referral to the appropriate authority will ensue.
- The Dean and ad hoc committee will be notified of the final disposition

If the allegation of mistreatment is against the Associate Dean, the Dean will serve in the role specified for the Associate Dean.

Graduate Students requesting complete anonymity should be made aware that doing so may interfere with the Graduate School’s ability to investigate the concern and their ability to receive information about the follow-up investigation.

Graduate Students may also choose to pursue claims of unlawful discrimination or harassment as noted below as noted by the College’s statement:

Inquiries concerning the College’s non-discrimination policies may be referred to the Office of the General Counsel, S.S. Kresge Learning Resources Center, (615) 327-
6102, or to the Affirmative Action Officer, Office of the President, (615) 327-6904.

**No Retaliation**
Retaliation is strictly prohibited. Individuals who believe they are experiencing retaliation are strongly encouraged to contact the Associate Dean. Alleged retaliation will be subject to investigation and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion.

**Appeals**
Students have the right to appeal to the Dean of the SOGSR.
Policy for Managing Informal and Formal Student Complaints

Purpose: In keeping with the Meharry Medical College mission, the college seeks to maintain a safe and amicable environment for students, faculty, and staff. The College understands that occasionally students will face a challenge or concern that requires assistance or intervention. To promote appropriate communication between students and departments on campus with whom they interact, this policy provides the venues where students can share feedback, and outlines procedures that are established to manage informal and formal concerns and complaints presented by students.

Definitions

- **Student** – This policy specifically addresses concerns and complaints lodged by students who are formally enrolled or on an approved leave of absence from the academic programs offered by the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, and Graduate Studies and Research.
- **Informal Complaint** – Concerns or complaints are presented verbally during open forums (i.e., Student Life Committee meetings, President’s Town Hall meetings, school wide general assemblies, and student officer meetings with the Deans) or conversations with chief residents, attending physicians, course coordinators, other faculty, or staff members are considered as informal concerns/complaints. Students are encouraged to resolve informal concerns/complaints with the participation of all affected parties before filing a formal complaint.
- **Formal Complaint** – Concerns or complaints are presenting in writing to the designated administrative office/administrator in each school or the Division of Student Affairs are considered formal complaints. The written complaint must be signed and provide contact information for the signatory (e.g., phone number, address, email address). A formal, written complaint should be submitted by students to the designated administrative office when the situation is not resolved through informal mechanisms.

Procedure: Students have several avenues for presenting and seeking resolution to their informal and formal complaints. The designated administrative areas for handling the following concerns and complaints include

- **General Concerns, Non-Academic Complaints, and Suggestions** may be reported to the Division of Student Affairs Office of Student Life

- **Academic Complaints** may be reported to:
  - School of Dentistry: Offices of Student, Academic, and Clinical Affairs
  - School of Graduate Studies and Research: Office of the Dean
Each School has established specific procedures for handling informal and formal complaints from students. Students and other members of the campus community may access descriptions of the procedures for resolving concerns and complaints through the following offices:

**Offices** | **Contact Number**
---|---
School of Medicine | 615-327-6413
School of Dentistry | 615-327-6076
School of Graduate Studies and Research | 615-327-6533
Division of Student Affairs | 615-327-6792

**Non-Retaliation Clause**
Retaliation against complainants who make good faith reports regarding violations of College policies is prohibited and may result in disciplinary actions and/or sanctions.

**Informal Resolutions**
The Office of Student Life will pursue resolution of concerns and informal complaints wherever practicable. Offers by respective parties to reach informal resolution, via a campus mediator, will be accepted by the Office of Student Life and will be extended to the other party. To the extent appropriate, the Office of Student Life will assist with the resolution of concerns and informal complaints.

**Formal Resolution**
The process to resolve students’ formal complaints begins when the written complaint is received by the designated office. The steps to resolve the issue include the following:

- A record of the complaint will be created, logged, and maintained by the designated office/administrator.

- The administrative staff will perform due diligence to investigate the complaint. A record of conversations, actions, and documents will be kept and updated to include dates and actions taken to resolve the complaint.

- A proposal to resolve the issue will be forwarded to the complainant and discussed as needed.

- A notice of the formal resolution will be presented to the complainant by the designated administrator.
A copy of all documents will be retained in the designated office.

Office of General Counsel/Compliance Sexual Misconduct Policy and Grievance Procedures

The policy was created and approved to comply with the requirements of Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act; to define what forms of sexual conduct is prohibited by Meharry Medical College ("MMC"); to set forth the manner in which allegations of sexual misconduct will be addressed by the College; and to provide resources for victims and those accused of sexual misconduct.

This policy applies to all students, administrators, faculty, and staff of MMC.

Introduction

Meharry Medical College (MMC) defines sexual misconduct as any wrongdoing of a sexual nature. This encompasses sexual exploitation, harassment, violence, non-consensual sexual contact, and non-consensual sexual intercourse. MMC considers sex discrimination in all its forms to be a serious offense. Sexual Misconduct violates MMC’s sexual discrimination policy and Federal Civil rights laws. MMC is committed to creating a safe and responsible environment by fostering a community that promotes prompt reporting of all types of Sexual Misconduct and fair and timely resolutions.

As a recipient of Federal funds, MMC is required to comply with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities. To ensure compliance with Title IX and other federal and state civil rights laws, MMC has developed policies and procedures that prohibit sex discrimination in all of its forms. This policy extends to employment with and admission to the College. Consistent with due process, all accused are presumed innocent until proven otherwise under this Policy.

Definition of Prohibited Conduct

A. Harassment

1. MMC defines harassment as any unwelcome conduct based on sex or on gender stereotypes as verbal or physical conduct based on a person’s race, color, religion, creed, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, age, sexual and affection orientation/associations, genetic information or mental/physical disabilities that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, persistent or patently offensive that it has the effect of unreasonably interfering with that person's work or academic performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working, educational or living environment, from both a subjective (the complainant's) and an objective (any reasonable person's) viewpoint.
2. MMC defines non-discriminatory harassment as verbal or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, persistent, or patently offensive that it has the effect of unreasonably interfering with that person's work or academic performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, educational or living environment, from both a subjective (the complainant's) and an objective (any reasonable person's) viewpoint.

3. MMC defines sexual harassment as unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, educational or living environment. A form of quid pro quo (this for that) sexual harassment exists when submission to or rejection of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature results in adverse educational or employment action or the threat of such adverse action or limits or denies an individual's educational or employment access, benefits, or opportunities.

4. MMC defines retaliatory harassment as verbal or physical conduct that occurs in response to a complaint of harassment. Zero tolerance extends to those who retaliate for complaints of harassment. MMC views retaliatory harassment to be just as severe as the initial harassment itself.

B. Sexual Misconduct

Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing sexual exploitation, harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, and non-consensual sexual intercourse. Sexual Misconduct can occur between strangers or acquaintances, including people involved in an intimate or sexual relationship. Sexual Misconduct can be committed by men or by women and it can occur between people of the same or different sex.

In order for individuals to engage in sexual activity of any type with each other, there must be clear consent. Consent is permission, freely given by word or action, by both participants in a sexual activity. Since two people may experience the same interaction in different ways, it is the responsibility of both parties to make certain that the other has consented before engaging in any sexual activity. Silence cannot be assumed to show consent. Consent to some form of sexual activity cannot be automatically taken as consent to any other sexual activity and consent may be withdrawn at any time. Persons using alcohol or other drugs are considered unable to give consent if they cannot appreciate the nature and implications of a sexual interaction. All individuals who consent to sex must be able to understand what they are doing. In order to give consent, one must be of legal age, which is 18 in the state of Tennessee.
Consent cannot be procured by use of physical force, compelling threats, intimidating behavior, or coercion. Coercive behavior differs from seductive behavior in the type of pressure someone uses to get consent from another. When someone makes clear that he or she does not want sex, wants it to stop or does not wish to go past a certain point of sexual interaction, continued pressure beyond that point is coercive.

Persons who have sexual activity with someone whom they know to be - or could reasonably be expected to know to be - mentally or physically incapacitated (substantially impaired by alcohol or other drug use or unconscious) are in violation of this policy. This policy also covers someone whose incapacity results from mental disability, sleep, involuntary physical restraint or from the taking of so-called "date rape" drugs. Possession, use and/or distribution of any of these substances (including Rohypnol, Ketamine, GHB, Burundanga and others) is prohibited and administering any of these drugs to another for the purpose of inducing incapacity is a violation of this policy.

1. Non-Consensual Sexual Contact is any intentional sexual touching, however slight, with any body part or object, by a man or a woman upon a man or a woman, without effective consent.

2. Non-Consensual Sexual Penetration refers to any sexual penetration (anal oral or vaginal), however slight, with any body part or object by a man or woman upon a man or woman, without effective consent.

3. Sexual Exploitation occurs when a person takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another to benefit or advantage anyone other than the one being exploited, and that behavior does not otherwise constitute another form of sexual misconduct. Examples of sexual exploitation include, but are not limited to, prostitution, non-consensual video or audio-taping of sexual or other private activity, exceeding the boundaries of consent (e.g., permitting others to hide in a closet and observe consensual sexual activity, videotaping of a person using a bathroom), engaging in voyeurism or engaging in consensual sexual activity with another person while knowingly infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or other sexually transmitted disease (STD) and without informing the other person of such infection.

**Consensual Relationships**

MMC does not intrude upon personal relationships that do not violate the policies of the College, cause harm to the safety of the MMC community or increases the risk of harm to the safety and well-being of the MMC community. Consensual romantic or sexual relationships in which one party retains a direct supervisory or evaluative role over the other party are unethical, create a risk for real or
perceived coercion and are expressly a violation of the College’s Amorous Relationship Policy.

Therefore, person with direct supervisory, evaluative, grading, or academic advising responsibilities who are involved in such relationships must bring those relationships to the attention of their supervisor or the Deans (if relationship involves a student) and will likely result in the necessity to remove the employee from the supervisory, evaluative, grading, or academic responsibilities.

Procedure

Reporting Guidelines

A. Reporting an Incident of Sexual Misconduct

Employees and students have a duty to report violations of this policy immediately upon receiving a compliant for sexual misconduct or observing or learning of conduct that is reasonably believed to be in violation of this policy. The Office of Human Resources (615.327.6336), the Office of the Dean in his/her schools; Office of Student Affairs (615.327.6435) the General Counsel’s Office (615.327.6102), the Title IX Coordinator (615.327.6552) and Campus Safety & Security (615.327.6254) are equipped to receive such reporting. The Office of General Counsel shall be contact for any allegation(s) involving a faculty member.

B. Other Reporting Options

In addition to the duty to report sexual misconduct to the proper College representatives, in some circumstances there is a duty to report allegations of criminal conduct to law enforcement. A victim of sexual misconduct has the option to report the incident to the appropriate local law enforcement for the purpose of filing a criminal complaint and/or seeking and enforcing a no contact, retraining or similar court order and has the right to be assisted by the College in exercising this option. Please call 911 or the Metro Nashville Sexual Abuse Unit at (615.862.7540).

A criminal investigation into an allegation of sexual misconduct does not relieve MMC of its duty and authority to conduct its own review of a compliant. The College will not wait for the conclusion of a criminal investigation to begin its own prompt investigation and resolution of an allegation of sexual misconduct. Conduct that may not be subject to criminal prosecution or sanctions may still be addressed through the College’s disciplinary process and/or findings of “not guilty” in a criminal case does not preclude a finding of responsibility in a campus disciplinary proceeding for violating MMC policy. Victims are advised to preserve physical evidence to support their compliant in the event they wish to pursue criminal actions.
Retaliation

MMC will take steps to prevent and address any form of retaliation against the complainant. Information about the College’s stance on retaliation can be found at http://intranet.mmc.edu/policies/policies/compliance/nonretaliationreporting.pdf

Rights Afforded to Sexual Assault Complaints

Victims of sexual assault are entitled to specific rights, these rights include:

• The right to a prompt and equitable investigation and resolution of a complaint

• The right to file a complaint with the appropriate local law enforcement authorities for the purpose of filing a criminal complaint and/or seeking enforcing a no contact, retraining or similar court order.

• The right to be assisted by the College in seeking assistance from the local law enforcement.

• The right to request and receive a change in his/her living situation if such a change is reasonably available.

• The right to request and receive a change in his/her academic situation if such a change is reasonable.

• The right to be referred to on and off campus counseling, mental health, or other student services for victims of sex offenses.

• The right to file a complaint on campus and to avail him/herself of the process for doing so including, but not limited to, adequate reliable and impartial investigation of the complaint; an equal opportunity to present relevant witnesses and other evidence.

• The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits a school to disclose to the student victim information about the sanction imposed upon a student who was found to have engaged in volatile behavior when the sanction directly relates to the victim. Furthermore, when the conduct involves allegations of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense, a post- secondary institution is required to simultaneously provide written notification of the final results of a disciplinary proceeding against the alleged perpetrator to both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, regardless of whether the institution concluded that a violation was committed.

Resolution of Sexual Misconduct Complaints
MMC will act promptly in response to information that an incident of an assault, harassment or other form of sexual misconduct has occurred. Any conduct that is in violation of the Sexual Misconduct policy will be investigated and addressed in a timely manner.

**Title IX Coordinator Offices**
Office of the General Counsel: 615.327.6552 or 615.327.6921
Registrar’s Office/Student Services: 615.327.6806
Office of Human Resources: 615.327.6336

**Support Resources**
Campus Security- 615.327.6254
Counseling Services and Office of the Chaplain: 615.327.6975

**Meharry Medical College Hotline Number: 1.888.695.1534**
Metro Nashville Police- Domestic Violence Unit: 615.880-3000 (8am-10pm) and 615.862.8600 (after 10pm)
Tennessee Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-356-6767
YWCA Crisis and Information Line: (615) 242-1199 or toll free 1-800-334-4628.

**Sanctions**
Against Students: Disciplinary sanctions for student violations of this policy will be imposed in accordance with the “Student Professional Code of Conduct. Sanctions may include expulsion.

Against Employees: Disciplinary sanctions for employee violations of this policy, which may range from a disciplinary warning to termination from the College, will be imposed in accordance with applicable College policies.
Didactic Handbook Acknowledgement Form

The Meharry Physician Assistant Sciences Program

My signature below serves two purposes: First, it acknowledges my receipt of the MMC Physician Assistant Didactic Handbook and that I was given ample time to read as well as discuss any questions I have regarding the content therein with the program faculty and administration.

Second, it confirms my willingness to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the program’s physician assistant student guide.

________________________________________________________________________
Student name (printed)

________________________________________________________________________
Student Signature Date