



**2024 Physician Assistant Sciences Program Didactic Handbook**

**School of Graduate Studies**

**Meharry Medical College**



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## **Welcome**

Welcome to the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program! You are about to embark on a transformative educational experience that will not only shape your professional future but also provide you with the knowledge, skills, and experiences to make a significant impact in the lives of the patients you will serve. As you begin this exciting chapter, remember that you are not alone. Your journey is shared with a community that is here to support and empower you. Please feel free to reach out to your professors, advisors, and fellow students for guidance and camaraderie. We are confident that you will make the most of your time here, leaving a lasting mark not only on our program but on the lives of those you will serve as a Physician Assistant.

Best wishes for a successful and fulfilling academic journey!

## **Purpose of Handbook**

The policies and procedures established in this handbook serve as a guide to inform MMC PAS students of current administrative policies, rules and regulations implemented by Meharry Medical College, the School of Graduate Studies and the MMC PAS Program.

PA student learners are responsible for reviewing and adhering to the policies and procedures in the student handbook. All policies in this handbook apply to all PA student learners, principal faculty, and the program director 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; revise academic program; or alter regulations and requirements as deemed necessary and appropriate.

This handbook will be reviewed by the PA student learners during orientation week and student learners will sign an acknowledgment of understanding to be maintained in their student file (A3.02).

## **Mission School of Graduate Studies**

The mission of the School of Graduate Studies is to provide education, training, and professional skill development to enable our graduates to work across biomedical and clinical settings, with emphasis on eliminating health disparities.

## **Mission, Core Values, Vision & Accreditation Meharry Medical College**

### Mission

Meharry Medical College is a global academic health sciences 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

Meharry Medical College is a community of scholars and learners committed to excellence. These are our core values:

- Accountability with transparency

- Equity with inclusion
- Respect with collegiality
- Service with compassion
- Integrity without exception

*Vision Statement*

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. Enrolled in:
  - Medicine
  - Dentistry
  - Biomedical Science
  - Public Health
  - Health Policy
  - Health Economics
  - Medical Sociology
  - Data Science
  - Physician Assistant Studies
  - Biomedical Engineering
  - Bioinformatics
- Enrolled 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 on inter-professional training for aspiring students and working professionals
- 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 the 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 specialty physicians, dentist and oral surgeons, advance practice nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, optometrists, nutritionists, behaviorist, 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.

### Accreditation

Meharry Medical College is accredited by SACSCOC to award: Doctor of Dental Surgery, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Physician Assistant Sciences, Master of Public Health, Master of Health Sciences, Master of Science in Clinical Investigation, Master of Science in Biomedical Data Science, Master of Science in Data Science. Questions about the accreditation of Meharry Medical College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)).

## **Mission, Goals, Accreditation MMC PA Sciences Program**

### Mission

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.

### Goals

**To increase the number of students from underrepresented groups in medicine (URiM)\* into the PA profession**

Metric: Admission's data

Benchmark: ≥ 88% annual graduation rate

**To maintain a competitive first-time PANCE pass rate**

Metric: NCCPA Program Data

Benchmark: Program annual first-time PANCE pass rate ≥ 85%

**Promote faculty development and demonstrate teaching innovation, scholarship, and service**



Metric: School of Graduate Studies Faculty Performance Data AT Doc, PAEA Data  
Benchmark: Annual faculty will participate in at least: once professional development opportunity, one external service opportunity, and submit at least one conference presentation or journal article proposal

### Accreditation

The ARC-PA has granted Accreditation-Provisional status to the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Meharry Medical College.

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.

Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class.

The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-meharry-medical-college/>.

## **Program of Study**

### Program Length

The academic program is designed to deliver the essential academic and clinical education necessary to prepare student learners for their professional roles and to satisfy the eligibility requirements to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). The didactic phase is divided into four preclinical academic terms over a 16- month period (68 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 student learners must plan on being available from 8am-5pm.** Student learners enrolled in the PA Sciences Program are expected to participate in all programmatic educational endeavors throughout the duration of the program.

### Academic Degree Offered

The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences (MMC PAS) Program will confer a Master of Physician Assistant Sciences (MPAS) degree upon successful completion of the 28-month educational program.

### Program Technical Standards (A3.13e)

The MMC PAS Program requires that all student learners 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.

**Critical Thinking:** Student learners 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. Student learners in the program must also be able to perform applicable demonstrations and experiments in the medical sciences.

**Communication Skills:** Student learners 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.

**Computer Technology Skills:** Student learners 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.

**Visual Ability:** Student learners 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:** Student learners 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:** Student learners 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:** Student learners 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.

Student learners 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 student learners with necessary accommodations.*

### Program Outcomes

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 this 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.

### **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

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### Standards of Professional Conduct

As members of the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program, student learners are required to abide by the provisions of the Meharry Medical College [Student Code of Professional Conduct](#). The code of conduct is designed to promote the professional development of student learners. However, unprofessional behavior that falls outside of those within this code are still subject to discipline. While this code of conduct is not meant to govern behavior of a student's private life disconnected with their academics, it should be noted that health professionals are held to high standards of conduct within society. Therefore, this behavior has the potential to come before the Student Disciplinary Committee for investigation.

In addition, the PA Sciences program has adopted the American Academy of Physician Associates (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.

AAPA – <https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf>

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

### Program Eligibility

Any changes in eligibility for the program should be immediately reported to the Program Director. Examples of eligibility changes include any arrests, indictments, 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.

### **Tuition & Fees**

Student tuition and fees described below are good faith projections for the Physician Assistant Sciences Program. They are, however, subject to amendment at any time at the discretion of the Program and the School of Graduate Studies and Research in order to meet its financial commitments and to fulfill its role and mission. Every effort will be made to provide advance notice of such changes.

Category	Item	MPAS Year 1	MPAS Year 2	MPAS Year 3	Totals
		Spring I Summer I	Fall 1 Spring II Summer II	Fall II (clin) Spring III	
<b>Tuition:</b>		\$29,739.04	\$44,608.56	\$29,739.04	\$104,086.65
<b>Fees:</b>					
	Student Life	\$192.50	\$385.00	\$385	
	Student Health Service	\$52.50	\$105.00	\$105.00	
	Student Meal Plan (\$500 / Semester)	\$500	\$1,500	\$1,000	
	Student Parking	\$275.00	\$275.00	\$275.00	
	Pre-Alumni	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	
	*Health Insurance	\$2,153.98	\$4,307.96	\$4,307.96	
	AAPA/TAPA Student Membership	\$125.00			
	Student Publications	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	
	Life/Disability Insurance	\$46.50	\$93.00	\$93.00	
	Malpractice Insurance	\$212.50	\$425.00	\$4.25	
	Software	\$30.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	
	GSA (Graduate Student Assoc)	\$20.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	
	Instruments	\$1,200.00	-	-	
	Clinical Uniforms	\$300.00	-	-	
	**Clinical Rotation & Maintenance Fee	-	\$3,003.49	6,006.98	
		<b>\$29,739.04</b>	<b>\$44,608.56</b>	<b>\$29,739.04</b>	\$104,086.65
		<b>\$5,267.98</b>	<b>\$10,354.45</b>	<b>\$12,857.94</b>	\$28,480.37
		<b>\$35,007.02</b>	<b>\$54,963.01</b>	<b>\$42,596.98</b>	\$132,567.02

**\*\* Fees are subject to change\*\***

### Student Refund Policy

Accreditation standards require PA Programs to notify prospective applicants of the program's refund policy. If a student leaves the PA Program for any reason-dismissal, withdrawal, drop period, transfer- tuition is refundable according to the Meharry Medical College [Student Refund Policy](#) (A3.12f).

## Didactic Curriculum

<b>Semester 1 – Spring</b>		
Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
GSPA 735-01	Medical Anatomy & Lab	5
GSPA 733-01	Pathophysiology I	4
GSPA 752-01	Physical Examination & Documentation I	4
GSPA 725-01	Physician Assistant Profession	2
GSPA 747-01	Applied Learning Experience I	2
GSPA 739-01	Medical Research & Information Literacy	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>

<b>Semester 2 – Summer</b>		
Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
GSPA 754-01	Pathophysiology II	4
GSPA 720-01	Clinical Laboratory & Medical Imaging	3
GSPA 753-01	Physical Examination & Documentation II	4
GSPA 724-01	Medical Ethics & Legal Medicine	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>

<b>Semester 3 – Fall</b>		
Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
GSPA 734-01	Pharmacology I	3
GSPA 728-01	Adult Clinical Medicine I	4
GSPA 714-01	Clinical Procedure Skills I	2
GSPA 754-01	Public Health	2
GSPA 755-01	Reproductive Health	3
GSPA 751-01	Introduction to Surgery	2
GSPA 748-01	Applied Learning Experience II	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>

<b>Semester 4 – Spring</b>		
Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
GSPA 744-01	Pharmacology II	3
GSPA 729-01	Adult Clinical Medicine II	4
GSPA 738-01	Pediatric Clinical Medicine	3
GSPA 732-01	Geriatrics	2
GSPA 726-01	Behavioral Medicine	3
GSPA 749-01	Applied Learning Experience III	1
GSPA 741-01	Clinical Procedure Skills II	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program does not grant Advance Placement. All courses are required, no transfer credit is accepted, and no credit is granted for past experiential learning.

Course Descriptions

**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 student learners 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 student learners 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 student learners 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 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 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.

**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 student learners 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 student learners to the four areas of medical ethics and provides them with the opportunity to develop skills in identifying, analyzing, and resolving ethical issues in clinical medicine. PA student learners will participate in research related to medical ethics and learn to apply medical ethics in clinical, research and community environments.

**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 student learners 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 student learners 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 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 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 student learners 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 student learners will have the opportunity to complete ACLS and BLS training.

**GSPA 732-01 Geriatrics (2 credits)**

This course is designed to provide student learners 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 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.

### Grading Scale

Grading will be in keeping with the policy for the MMC School of Graduate Studies and Research and will be as follows:

<b>Percent Grade</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
100-89.5	A
89.4-84.5	B+
84.4-79.5	B
79.4-74.5	C+
74.4 - ≤ 69.5	C
Below 69.5	F

## **Policies**

### Institutional Policies

**Student Alcohol & Drug Policy** - Meharry Medical College (“College and/or MMC”) strives to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all. Therefore, the College prohibits being under the influence of, or the unlawful use, manufacture, possession, sale, distribution or dispensing of drugs or drug paraphernalia (“controlled substances” as defined in the Controlled Substances Act, 21, U.S.C 812) and alcohol on the College property or during College sponsored or sanctioned activities. This includes off-campus clinical training and rotation sites. Individuals who engage in illegal activity or the improper use of alcohol and drugs are harmful to themselves, the wellbeing of others, the College’s mission, and patient safety during clinical training. A sustained finding of violation of this Policy as determined by the Student Code of Professional Conduct policy (“Student Code of Conduct”) will result in dismissal. All decisions are subject to appeal procedures as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct policy. The full policy can be found at [Alcohol-and-Drug-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Anti-Harassment Policy** - Unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment, is contrary to basic standards of conduct between individuals and is prohibited by state and federal law. It is the policy of Meharry to expressly forbid any form of unlawful harassment of, by or between employees, guests, volunteers and/or vendors. Any staff employee who engages in any of the acts or behavior defined below violates Meharry policy, and such misconduct will subject an employee to corrective action up to and including termination. The full policy can be found at [Anti-Harassment-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Non-Retaliation for Reporting** - The College prohibits any retaliation, retribution, or harassment to be directed against any employee who reports a Compliance concern. Anyone who is involved in any act of retaliation against an employee whom has reported suspected misconduct in good faith should be subject to disciplinary action. The full policy can be found at [Non-retaliation-for-reporting.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Policy for Managing Informal and Formal Student Complaints** - In keeping with the Meharry Medical College (“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. The full policy can be found at [Policy-for-Managing-Informal-and-Formal-Student-Complaints.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Sexual Misconduct and Grievance Procedures** - Meharry Medical College (MMC) defines sexual misconduct as any wrongdoing of a sexual nature. This encompasses sexual exploitation, harassment, violence, nonconsensual 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. The full policy can be found at [Sexual-Misconduct-and-Grievance-Procedures.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**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. The full policy can be found at [Social-Media-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Student Professional Conduct** - The Code of Conduct is designed to promote the professional development of students at MMC. However, it cannot include, nor foresee each potential infraction. Therefore, unprofessional behavior that falls outside of those within this code is still subject to discipline. These specific incidents will be considered in the context in which they occur. This code is designed to serve as a guideline for our students and includes activities and conduct during their time at MMC. While this code of conduct is not meant to govern behavior of a student’s private life disconnected with their academics, it should be noted that health professionals are held to high standards of conduct within society. Therefore, this behavior has the potential to come before the Student Disciplinary Committee for investigation. The full policy can be found at [Student-Professional-Conduct-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Students with Disabilities** – Meharry Medical College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, these laws are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Disabilities may include physical or mental impairments which substantially limit one or more of a person’s major life activities, and which necessitate modifications. Meharry Medical College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students with disabilities as required by applicable laws. Accommodations are tailored to meet the needs of each student with a documented disability. Specific concerns pertaining to services for students with disabilities or any disability issue should be directed to the ADA Coordinator, Jacqueline "Dee" Gardner via email at [jgardner@mmc.edu](mailto:jgardner@mmc.edu), phone (615) 327-6760 or in person, Lyttle Hall, Room 306. The full policy can be found at [Students-with-disabilities.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Whistleblower and Retaliation** - MMC encourages all members of the MMC community to report acts they in good faith perceive as being a violation of law and/or College policy, rules or requirements. This policy is intended to encourage the disclosure to the appropriate officials so that prompt and appropriate action can be taken. MMC is committed to protecting individuals from interference in making a good faith report of violation under this policy and from retaliation as a result of such good faith reporting. Individuals may not retaliate against any other individual on the basis of that person’s good faith report of a violation. Individuals may not use or attempt to use authority or influence related to their College position or association to interfere with another individual’s right to make a report of violation as provided for in this policy. The full policy can be found at [Whistleblower-and-Retaliation-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

#### School of Graduate Studies Policies

**Academic Honesty** - All students are subject to the regulations of the college's Honor Code. Instances of suspected plagiarism, cheating on examinations, or other violations of the Student Honor Code, should be reported either to the office of the General Counsel or the Office of the Dean, SOGSR. Plagiarism consists of presenting the writing, data, or ideas of another, as one's own without acknowledgment by citation or other appropriate and accepted means. Plagiarism constitutes a grave and fundamental violation of personal integrity and professional ethics. The Student Disciplinary Committee reviews allegations of plagiarism. The full policy can be found at [Academic-Honesty.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Procedures for Review and Appeal of Academic Actions** - A student’s academic status is determined by the appropriate Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee. The full policy can be found at [Procedure-for-Review-and-Appeal-of-Academic-Actions.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Procedure for Review and Appeal of Disciplinary Actions** – Full policy can be found at [Procedure-for-Review-and-Appeal-of-Disciplinary-Action.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**School of Graduate Studies Final Course Grade Policy** - In order for graduate students to be evaluated in a timely manner, and for grades to be sent to the Registrar’s Office, course coordinators must submit final course grades two weeks after a course has officially ended. [School-of-Graduate-Studies-and-Research-Final-Course-Grade-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**School of Graduate Studies Mistreatment 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. The full policy can be found at [School-of-Graduate-Studies-and-Research-Mistreatment-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Student Complaint Policy** - Students are encouraged to address their concerns with the individual involved, at the earliest possible time and on an informal basis. If no satisfaction is gained from the informal meeting, then a formal complaint should be filed. If it is an issue that falls under Honor Code Violations, Student Mistreatment, Sexual Misconduct, or Grade Appeal, the policies for these specific issues will take precedence. These policies, as well as this policy are addressed in this manual. A copy of this manual is distributed to entering graduate students, is located in the School of Graduate Studies and Research (SOGSR) Office, and can be retrieved on the SOGSR website. The full policy can be found at [Student-Complaint-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

### Program Policies

#### **Academic Promotion, Probation & Dismissal –**

##### Academic Progression (A3.15b)

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. To qualify for graduation from the MMC 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 complete 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 31<sup>st</sup>

#### 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. The full policy can be found at [Academic-Promotion-Probation-and-Dismissal-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Criminal Background Checks and Drug and Alcohol Screening** - Increasing numbers of hospitals and clinical partners of Meharry Medical College are requiring criminal background checks (CBCs) for students assigned to complete clinical rotations, electives at their facilities, summer research and internships. To meet these additional requirements, standardize the criminal

background check process and minimize the need for students to do multiple criminal background checks, Meharry Medical College will facilitate a criminal background check process for students as outlined below. A registration hold will be placed on the student accounts who do not authorize the background check by the deadline communicated. Criminal background checks and drug screenings will be the financial responsibility of the student. Safe and competent delivery of patient care requires all providers to be free of impairment from drugs and alcohol. Prior to matriculation and prior to beginning SCPEs, students must submit the results of a urine drug screen to the Program. At times, students may also be required to submit additional drug and / or alcohol screens. Students are responsible for the cost of drug and alcohol screens. Any student with positive findings on post-matriculation drug and alcohol screens are subject actions as outlined in the institutions Substance Abuse Policy: [2020-2021-STUDENT-HANDBOOK-Final-July-2020.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#). The full policy can be found at [Criminal Background Checks and Drug and Alcohol Screening](#).

**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 take those factors into consideration when reviewing the request for deceleration. Deceleration will only be offered in rare instances. The full policy can be found at [Deceleration-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#).

#### **Didactic / Clinical Phase Remediation Policy**

Students who earn 69.5% on the remediation exam will earn a “C” for that exam. Students will only be allowed to remediate each exam one time. If a student does not pass the remediation exam for a particular unit/module, the originally earned grade or the remediation score (whichever is higher) will be used to calculate the final course grade. Failure to achieve  $\geq 69.5\%$ , in the course after remediating any necessary exams, will result in an “F” grade for the course and is not subject to additional remediation. Full policy attached.

#### **Dress Code & Identification Policy**

This Dress Code and Identification Policy is implemented in order to promote professionalism and to ensure student and patient safety. Be aware that your appearance is reflective of the College, Meharry Medical College (MMC) Physician Assistant (PA) Sciences Program and the PA profession. The following procedures apply to all student learners in all phases of the program regardless of geographic location. Violations of the dress code may result in dismissal from class or clinical activity and may adversely affect your course grade.

Personal attire should be reflective of professionalism. Student learners 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 short, neatly trimmed and clean.
3. Student learners are not to wear hats or bandanas, or other head coverings (except for religious or medical reasons) inside any Meharry or affiliate facility.

4. Student learners are expected to wear clean, appropriate apparel (shirts, pants, dresses, skirts, assigned scrubs, etc.) and shoes when on campus, to all academic activities off campus, and when visiting any of our affiliate institutions.

Unacceptable attire for PA student learners include:

1. Short (mini) skirts or short shorts (garment should extend beyond the fingertips when arms are at the side),
2. Tee shirts with inappropriate inscriptions,
3. Halter tops,
4. Midriffs/crop tops,
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. Yoga pants/gym leggings,
13. Or any skin-tight clothing (tops or bottoms)

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 or 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.

**Evaluation of Occupational Exposure, Illness, and Injury** - Students who are accidentally exposed to blood and body fluids via needle stick, mucus membranes, or exposure of non-intact skin; or become ill or injured, as the result of a clinical assignment, will 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 in the community where they are assigned. The full policy can be found at [Evaluation-of-Occupational-Exposure-Illness-and-Injury-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#).

**MMC PA Faculty Serving as Healthcare Providers** - All MMC PA Program faculty, the Program Director and the Medical Director are prohibited from serving as health care providers or offer medical advice for students in the program in any capacity, except in emergency situations. The student health fee provides all current Meharry students access to the services provided at the Student Health Center. The clinical staff of Student Health Services is comprised of a certified family nurse practitioner and clinical faculty from the department of Internal Medicine. The services provided include:

- Acute illness and injury management
- Physical examinations
- Laboratory services
- Immunizations
- Tuberculosis screening
- N95 respirator fit testing

Services for physical examinations, laboratory services and immunizations are billed to the student's health insurance and are subject to co-pays and deductibles. The full policy can be found at [MMC-PA-Faculty-Serving-as-Healthcare-Providers-Policy\\_1.pdf](#)

**PA Program Campus Closure and Inclement Weather** - MMC PA Program follows the MMC Inclement Weather and Emergency Closing Policy. Please refer to the link below for the policy: [Microsoft Word - Inclement Weather-Emergency Closing Policy FINAL \(mmc.edu\)](#).

Additional Policy: Clinical rotations outside of the MMC campus will abide by the Preceptor decision at the clinic/hospital site regarding rotation attendance, including remaining at the clinical site if road conditions are hazardous. The student is to notify the MMC PA Program if not attending an off-campus rotation. A campus closed alert means that regularly scheduled classes are cancelled for all students on the closed campus. Course Directors will do their best to adjust subsequent class schedules to minimize the ultimate impact of lost class time. The full policy can be found at [PA-Program-Campus-Closure-and-Inclement-Weather-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

PA Student Employment and Serving as Instructional Faculty - Students are highly discouraged from participating in extra-curricular employment. History demonstrates these students are at high risk of dismissal due to poor academic performance attributed to the time conflicts that outside employment brings. Due to the intensity and high standards of the program, it is advisable that students be prepared and focused as they progress through the curriculum. Students are strongly discouraged from seeking or maintaining outside employment while enrolled in the MMC PA Program. If a PA student chooses to work during the program, it is his/her responsibility to ensure that employment does not interfere with or hinder academic progress. Program expectations, assignments, deadlines, examinations and other student responsibilities will not be altered or adjusted to accommodate a student's working schedule and it is expected that the student employment will not interfere with the student's learning experience. Course work or days missed as a result of outside employment will not be excused.

Student Service as Instructional Faculty or on Clinical Rotation

- PA students are not required to work for the PA program in any capacity.
- PA students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty. Students with specific prior knowledge, experiences, and skills may assist faculty and share their knowledge and skills, however, they are not to be the primary instructor or instructor of record for any component of the curriculum.

- Students must not accept payment or stipends for services rendered in connection with their performance on clinical rotations. Accepting payment or gifts could result in the loss of malpractice liability coverage for the student.
- PA students must not substitute for or function as clinical or administrative staff during clinical rotations

The full policy can be found at [PA-Student-Employment-and-Serving-as-Instructional-Faculty-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#).

**Counseling Services** - To inform students of counseling services available to them through the Institution. The full policy can be found at [Counseling Services](#)

**Sick Leave, Bereavement and Absenteeism** - 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 per didactic semester and three (3) days per clinical rotation. 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 or three (3) days in a clinical learning rotation seriously jeopardizes the educational experience and academic requirements of the program. For clinical rotations, the student may be required to make up that missed time. [Sick-Leave-Bereavement-and-Absenteeism-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Student Immunization Requirement** - 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 come in contact with 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, 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.

#### Physical Examination

Prior to registration, all students entering Meharry Medical College are required to have the Health Surveillance/Physical Examination forms completed by a health care provider. The physical exam should be performed within the last 12 months. If the health care provider has questions, please ask the health care provider to call Student Health Services at (615) 327-5757 for assistance. The full policy can be found at [Student-Immunization-Requirements-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](http://Student-Immunization-Requirements-Policy.pdf(mmc.edu)).

**Teaching Out** - The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant (PA) Sciences program's current programmatic accreditation status is Accreditation-Probation as issued by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). While all efforts have been put in place to bringing the program into Accreditation-Continued status, the program is preparing for all possible alternatives to Accreditation-Continued, including preparing a teaching out policy/plan in the event of receiving Accreditation-Withdrawn status after the ARC-PA Meharry Medical College PA program site visit and commission review in its June 2022 meeting.

Accreditation Standards: A1.02 The sponsoring institution is responsible for:

- H) teaching out currently matriculated students in accordance with the institution's regional accreditor or federal law in the event of program closure and/or loss of accreditation.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) good practices regarding closing a program, site, branch or institution are as follows: A decision to close an educational program, site, branch campus, or the entire institution requires thoughtful planning and careful consultation with all affected constituencies. Every effort should be devoted to informing each constituency as fully as possible about the conditions compelling consideration of a decision of such importance, and all available information should be shared. As much as possible, the determination to close a program, site, branch campus, or the institution should be made through a consultative process and only after alternatives have been considered, but responsibility for the final decision to close rests with the institution's governing board. Because the immediate interests of current students and faculty are most directly affected, their present and future prospects require especially sensitive and timely attention and involvement

If an institution decides to close an educational program, site, branch campus, or the entire institution, it must consider the following options:

1. The institution teaches out currently enrolled students; no longer admits students to programs; and terminates the program, the operations of a site or a branch campus, or

the operations of an institution after students have graduated. The institution must submit to the Commission a teach-out plan for approval.

2. If the institution enters into a contractual teach-out agreement for another institution to teach out the educational programs or program, the teach-out agreement requires Commission approval in advance.

See Commission policy "Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges," Procedure Three, for additional information on teach-out plans and agreements.

#### Closing A Program:

When the decision is made to close an educational program, the institution must make a good faith effort to assist affected students, faculty, administrative and support staff so that they experience a minimal amount of disruption in the pursuit of their course of study or professional careers. In all cases, individuals should be notified of the decision to close a program as soon as possible so that they can make appropriate plans. Students who have not completed their programs should be advised by faculty or professional counselors regarding suitable options including transfer to comparable programs. Arrangements should be made to reassign faculty and staff or assist them in locating other employment. The Commission on Colleges will work with the U.S. Department of Education and the appropriate State agency, to the extent feasible, to ensure that students are given reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional charge.

#### The Students:

Students who have not completed their degrees should be provided for according to their needs. Arrangements for transfer to other institutions will require complete academic records and all other related information gathered in dossiers which can be transmitted promptly to receiving institutions. Arrangements for the teach-out of programs should be in line with the requirements of the Commission's Substantive Change policy.

Agreements made with other institutions to receive transferring students and to accept their records should be in writing and in accord with Commission policy. Where financial aid is concerned, particularly federal or state grants, arrangements should be made with the appropriate agencies to transfer the grants to the receiving institution. Where such arrangements cannot be completed, students should be informed. In cases where students have held institutional scholarships or grants, appropriate agreements should be negotiated if there are available funds which can be legally used to support students while completing degrees at other institutions.

#### Academic Records and Financial Aid Transcripts

Arrangements should be made with the state board for higher education or another appropriate agency for filing of student records. If there is no state agency which can receive records, arrangements should be made with a state university, with the state archives, or with a private organization to preserve the records. Notification should be sent to every current and past student indicating where the records are being stored and what the accessibility to those

records will be. Where possible, a copy of a student's record should also be forwarded to the individual student. The institution must notify the Commission regarding the final filing of student records. The full policy can be found at [Teaching-Out-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#)

**Withdrawal Policy** - If a student withdraws from the program, 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. The full policy can be found at [Withdrawal-Policy.pdf \(mmc.edu\)](#).



## Didactic Handbook Acknowledgement Form

The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program

My signature below serves two purposes: First, it acknowledges my receipt of the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences 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.

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Student Name (printed)

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Student Signature

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Date